

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

There is an old fable in verse—a popular recitation in the later years of the last century—which tells of the visit paid by a bumptious young man to a barber's shop, where a stiff and unnatural-looking owl sat on a perch in the corner. The young fellow, desirous of displaying his wit, chaffed the barber unmercifully on the unscientific way in which the bird had been stuffed: any man with the slightest knowledge of ornithology could have done it better, no real owl ever looked like it—and so forth. "But the barber went on shaving" observes the poet at the end of each of the stanzas which set forth the critic's objections. The climax arrives with the last verse, which tells how the owl suddenly shifted on its perch and solemnly hooted, to the great confusion of the youthful wisacre. It is a "fable for critics"—a lesson on the importance of ascertaining what a thing really is and not how it looks. There have been times and circumstances when this subject of ours has presented or seemed to present a distinctly unnatural appearance—it has appeared to be undignified, grotesque, vulgar, repellent, and many thousands of articles and sermons have been devoted to proving how impossible it was that such a thing could belong to life and Nature. And then something has happened to prove that it was not only living but was even greater than an owl. Not all of its followers, however, had the quiet philosophy of the barber in the story who went on calmly with his work, allowing the subject of the criticism to demonstrate its reality in its own way. They insisted on "arguing the point."

\* \* \* \*

Argument is an excellent thing in its way, especially as a means of brightening the wits—"talking makes a ready man"—but we take leave to doubt whether argument ever proved any truth in any convincing fashion. We cannot, in fact, arrive at truth by any logical process. We either see it, or we do not. The logic comes in when it is a question of testing its real meaning and significance, and of casting out errors in our perception of what we have seen. To those who see intuitively the spiritual nature of life and the reality of an unseen world, the facts of psychic science are a matter of interest as demonstrating the truth of an interior conviction. If they have not awakened to that stage of perception they might go through the whole gamut of psychic evidences without being in the slightest degree advanced towards a clear apprehension of their meaning. To many a scientific Peter Bell the supernormal phenomenon is just a supernormal phenomenon, and

"nothing more." The worth of it he cannot tell. We have listened for years to much vociferation concerning the importance of our "facts"—how the whole subject rests upon them, and much more to the same purpose. The truth is that to the genuine thinker a fact is of very little account until it is related to some central principle. There are scientific facts which point to the existence of the Ether, but until imaginative genius got to work upon them with a great idea which made them all coherent and consistent as revolving around an unseen reality, the facts were of little account. That tremendous scientific truth, the existence of the Ether, is a matter rather outside the purview of "common sense." In fact, it flatly contradicts "common sense" in some ways. And in that respect it resembles an even greater idea—the spiritual nature of man, which explains and co-ordinates psychic facts, but does not in any way "rest upon" them.

\* \* \* \*

One of the old pioneers of this great inquiry into the nature of man and his life here and hereafter, inadequately described as Modern Spiritualism, once remarked that man is a mathematical point through which the Universe is constantly flowing. It was a fine generalisation, although open to the charge of vagueness by those intent only upon things which shall be immediately intelligible. It would be more satisfactory to the Greek mind, perhaps, than to the disciples of Mill and Bentham. We recalled it the other day when confronted with the question as to whether, if the human spirit dwelt outside of Time and Space, it was of any use trying to understand anything about it. The point is that, as our old philosopher truly observed, the Universe is all the time flowing into and through the human consciousness—we are for ever bringing into the circle of knowledge fresh tracts of reality hitherto unexplored. The Unknown World of to-day is the Known World of to-morrow. The boundaries we lay down are all arbitrary, self-imposed limits which we are continually transcending. In a few years we shall probably have mapped and planned the regions of human life immediately beyond the further shores of Death. And then we may discover that Time and Space are not merely relative ideas but are capable also of infinite extension and expansion. In the meantime, if we use imagination to illuminate and extend the province of our facts, and our facts to check any unwarranted excursions on the part of imagination, we shall do well.

"ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE UNSEEN."—Sir William Barrett writes that his new book under this title, summarising his experiences and the conclusions he has arrived at after forty years' experimentation in connection with Spiritualism and Psychical Research, is still delayed by the difficulties in the publishing trade, but he confidently expects that it will be ready very shortly. The book, it may be mentioned, will contain an account of Sir William's investigations at the Goligher circle in connection with Dr. Crawford's experiments.

## THE BORDERLAND OF NEW WORLDS.

MR. J. ARTHUR HILL'S INVESTIGATIONS.

BY H. A. DALLAS.

The name of Mr. J. Arthur Hill is well known as that of a writer of many interesting articles and books on psychical research. These have always borne the hall-mark of the cautious investigator, the truth-lover who fears to commit himself to any opinion of which he is not wholly convinced; this character has been so prominent that many readers have felt some uncertainty as to whether Mr. Hill was convinced that psychic experiences prove survival and communication between the incarnate and the discarnate. This last book ("Psychical Investigations," Cassell & Co., Ltd., 6s. net), leaves no doubt whatsoever on that point. He says:—

It took several years and many sittings to convince me of this [*i.e.*, that mind reading and fraud might not account for certain experiences], for I wished to make the ground thoroughly sure before risking an advance; but my accumulated facts ultimately gave me an amply solid basis for the new conclusion of the genuine agency of discarnate intelligences" (p. 201).

The value of the work is enhanced when we remember that this was the attitude in which the author approached the investigation. He began his inquiry as a rationalist, without, as he tells us, any emotional bias in favour of the conclusions he has reached. He faced alternative theories and explanations with an honestly open mind. No one can read this book without recognising that his temperament is exceptionally fair and just. I say "exceptionally" because the quality is rather rare; even those who are just to individuals (not a universal trait) are often far from just to facts and opinions. It is not every day that we meet a person capable of estimating evidence fairly, and considering *pros* and *cons* with the impartiality exhibited by the author of "Psychical Investigations." I lay stress on this feature of the work because, even apart from the intrinsic value of the evidential matter presented, the fact that it is the product of a mind of this quality and the result of many years of cautious deliberation on experiences gives it a place in the literature of the subject of considerable weight and value.

Honest inquirers will find here guidance which they can trust; their doubts and difficulties are understood because they have been experienced. To attempt to coerce belief is both impossible and dishonest; no undue pressure is brought to bear on the reader, but whilst his judgment is given plenty of scope, he cannot fail to be impressed by the reasonable manner in which facts and interpretations are presented.

A valuable feature of the book is that it gives verbatim reports (taken down in shorthand). All that was said during the sésances, including Mr. Hill's own remarks, are recorded. In most books the reader is given extracts or abbreviated reports of what passed. This is often unavoidable, but it leaves the student at a disadvantage and with a sense of uncertainty as to whether fuller knowledge might not affect his judgment of the matter.

The evidence for survival and communication in these records is of a rather unusual kind. The medium with whom Mr. Hill chiefly worked has a good faculty for transmitting double names and details. Identification was thus made easy. Special importance attaches to instances in which persons unknown to the author manifested; in many cases he was able subsequently to verify these descriptions and data, and often he could trace the connecting links which brought the unknown persons into association with him. (See pp. 18-20 and 171-173.)

The chapters devoted to these evidential matters are valuable and interesting, particularly the discussion of instances which suggest that those who have passed on returned to meet their friends when they too "crossed the bar." These will repay careful consideration. The subsequent chapters dealing with various problems are not less valuable; if I were to select special chapters for commendation I might choose those on Telepathy, Rapport-objects, and Psychical Research and Religion; but there are no dull pages, and selection is probably

determined rather by the personal equation than by any intrinsic superiority.

The book is very opportune; such a work is needed at the present juncture; it can be unhesitatingly recommended to inquirers to whom the subject is comparatively new. The clear, crisp style makes it easy and pleasant to read; the balanced, sane treatment cannot fail to impress; the fine reverence with which great themes are touched, all these qualities conspire to make the book a worthy contribution to a great subject, and to commend it even to the prejudiced and sceptical. I would like also to add that it is a book with an atmosphere. Works on chemistry, physiology, and other physical sciences can dispense with atmosphere, although perhaps not without some loss of value; but in dealing with psychical matters the element which I have termed "atmosphere" is far more necessary to the apprehension of truth. It is not enough to see the facts by the "dry light" of science; they must also be viewed in the light of the idealism and the spiritual aspiration of mankind if their trend and significance are to be rightly apprehended.

It is in this double light that Mr. Hill presents the facts. The facts he records will bear scrutiny; he is still a rationalist in the true sense of the word, because his convictions are based upon a rational interpretation of experience; but as we turn the pages of his book we become conscious of what Wordsworth calls "something far more deeply interfused"; this is what I have called the "atmosphere" of the book. It is this which gives it colour, it is this which makes the reader realise that psychical investigations are, if rightly understood, the porch and antechamber to that Reality before which we wonder and worship, and towards which we aspire.

### A PREDICTION ABOUT THE TSAREVITCH.

In his astrological notes in this month's "Occult Review" Mr. Ralph Shirley reminds his readers that in an earlier issue he drew attention to the contrast between the horoscope of the Tsar—which, though indicative of excellent mental powers, contained a fatal warning of vacillation and intellectual instability—and that of his son, the Tsarevitch Alexis, "where decision and force of character are most markedly indicated." Mr. Shirley advises the political world generally to "keep a very careful eye on this vivacious and intelligent boy of twelve. If he survives, as in all probability he will, some crises in his early life, there are few indeed of the rising generation who are destined to play so marked or so notable a part in the history of Europe. His father's abdication on his behalf is little likely in the end to stand between him and the throne that he is destined to occupy. Nor will the Russian people refuse their assent to the claims of one whose popularity with the masses will never wane, whatever enemies he may meet with among the nobles or the bureaucracy. One woman of rare fascination and beauty will play a vital part in this boy's career and smooth away many difficulties from his path in life."

EXCEPT for a few men like Sir William Barrett, Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Dr. A. Russel Wallace, our scientific leaders have not led. . . . It was the early Spiritualists who laid the foundations, found the facts, bore the obloquy, but forced the phenomena on the attention of the "leaders."—"Psychical Investigations," by J. ARTHUR HILL.

WHY THE WAR CAME.—Some are asking, Is God dead? Why does He permit the war? The answer is easy: Because we will not think whither materialism and selfishness lead till we have been filled with the fruits of them. Because we make the time of peace a time of intellectual indolence and moral softness. Because, like the Pharisee of old, we seek to serve God by creeds and mammon by practice. The "New Way of Life" is 1,900 years old, aye, and much older. It is the Christianity which a man comes to when he has seen the variety of religious experience, the futility of arguments and the inadequacy of definitions; it is the unformulated Christianity of Christ which knows God as the Father of all mankind, not of any section. Such Christianity is sublime common sense—common sense applied to spiritual causation.—From "The Science of Peace," by STANLEY DE BRATH.

## PSYCHIC COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE LIVING.

Mrs. A. L. Gardner (of Burnley, Lancashire), writes:—

I think the following facts may interest you, and I also write in the hope that you may be able to offer some explanation of what is to me a big puzzle. After reading "Raymond, or Life and Death," I formed a table circle. The three friends who sat with me were more or less sceptical; I had but one motive for my investigations, that of gaining more knowledge. At the first sitting—January 22nd—we had quick and startling results. An intelligence spelled the name Mary; I asked "Mary Law?" "No," and "Thedham" was spelled, that being the name of my grandmother, dead many years. On February 2nd we sat again, same sitters and place. Speaking to the intelligence, M. T., I asked, "Do you know anyone there who knows me?" "Yes, M. L." I impulsively said, "Oh! I'm so glad; will you give her my love?" Of course there was much else at these sittings, but I am trying to pick out that only which relates to M. L. Before the third sitting I had previously said to one of the sitters, while at tea, "I would like to get in touch with M. L." For a long time that evening the table did not move, and when it did it was uncertain and weak; the name eventually spelled out was that of M. L. in full.

I must explain about M. L. and myself. About twenty years ago she and I became friends through corresponding together. We lived far apart—she a chronic invalid, I leading a busy and ordinary life in the world. A sincere friendship was formed, although we never met, nor expected to in this life. Her letters were sometimes frequent, long and interesting, with intervals of silence broken by a scrawl, "I am too weak to write," or "Think of me often and pray for me. I feel I cannot endure this awful pain!" About nine years ago the letters became more rare and at last stopped altogether. At length I wrote to M. L.'s mother, asking for news. It was to the effect that M. had become "wrong in her head" and had had to be taken away, Mrs. L. herself being ill and unable to look after her. As I heard nothing more I concluded that my friend was dead, and was therefore not surprised when at that third sitting she seemed to be present. But the nature of the replies and messages puzzled me. I asked, "Is it easy for you to communicate?" Answer: "No . . . because of the barrier . . . of the flesh." There was always great insistence on *writing*. I asked if she was happy. No reply. Whether she had passed out of the body. No reply. Whether I could make her happy. "Yes, by your prayers and your pen." The messages scrawled in her weakness and pain were repeated, as "I am too weak to give you a message," and "Think often of me." At the fourth sitting, when she seemed stronger, she said, "I want you to write home." Asked, "Your home?" she replied, "No"; and my home was indicated. Asked why I should, she said, "They need your help." The following day I wrote to my own home, and got a reply verifying the message. I also wrote to Mrs. L. at the old address. At the next sitting I was told that I would have a letter that would "give you joy." To make a long story short, I must omit some details, all of which established—to me—the identity of my friend M. L. Therefore my amazement was profound when, instead of a letter from her mother, I received one from her. And she had forgotten me. Since the critical period of her illness, she wrote, she had forgotten many things. Since receiving that letter, at our last sitting, she seemed to be present, and gave, "You will strengthen me by communicating with me." "How?" "By writing; it is more difficult than you know by table."

[There are several instances of psychic communications from the living. The late Mr. W. T. Stead had some curious experiences in this direction. The mystery is lessened by remembering that we in the flesh are as much spirits as those who have passed into the next world. But some of our readers may like to comment on Mrs. Gardner's story.]

"WAR AND THE FUTURE."—In the last few years I have developed a religious belief that has now become to me as real as any commonplace fact. I think that mankind is still, as it were, collectively dreaming and hardly more awakened to reality than a very young child. It has these dreams that we express by the flags of nationalities and by strange loyalties and by irrational creeds and ceremonies, and its dreams at times become such nightmares as this war. But the time draws near when mankind will awake, and the dreams will fade away, and then there will be no nationality in all the world but humanity, and no king, no emperor, no leader but the one God of mankind. This is my faith. I am as certain of this as I was in 1900 that men would presently fly. To me it is as if it must be so.—H. G. WELLS.

## "THE HIBBERT JOURNAL."

SIR OLIVER LODGE ON DISCARNATE MIND.

Under the title "After Twenty-five Years," Sir Oliver Lodge, in "The Hibbert Journal," sets out some of the results of his long investigations into "what are sometimes called 'occult' subjects." The first and major part of his article consists of the substance of a paper which he read and amplified to a discussion society in Liverpool, called the Philaletheans, in 1892. In this paper he included among the facts regarding thought transference to which the process of time had constrained him to accord a respectable measure of credence, the statement that "exceptional kinds of epileptiform seizure and some forms of more normal and less pathological trance may occasionally leave a patient so thoroughly in the sensitive state that his organism reacts for a time as if under the control of a mind other than his own," and that facts known to him "render it more probable than not that occasionally the 'minds other than their own' . . . are not limited to those still associated with material bodies on this particular planet." This presumed agency of discarnate minds of course contemplates a possible independence between mind and brain, and in his additional comments on the collocation of statements which he made twenty-five years ago Sir Oliver singles out this particular item as the one which will generally excite most repugnance:—

. . . it will be said, how can mind act at all if it is discarnate? how can thoughts exist save in association with a brain? Well, I not only deny that the absolutely necessary connection between individual mind and individual brain has been so thoroughly established that facts of a broader character cannot even be considered, I go further and deferentially deny that the universal concomitance between mind and brain in general has been rigorously proved, even here and now. It is, indeed, vehemently asserted, and it is not at all improbable. The assertion *plus* the probability are supposed to do instead of proof. But they will not do instead of proof if trustworthy facts can be adduced to the contrary. Nor would the admitted present concomitance necessarily involve a permanent concomitance. . . . We are only *accustomed* to find mind associated with brain: we do not in the least understand the association. Nor have we any grounds for maintaining that nothing like mind can in any part of the universe exist without brain.

The April number of the "Journal" is altogether an exceptionally strong one—the contributions including such subjects as "Science is one of the Humanities," by Prof. J. B. Baillie; "Punishment and Reconstruction," by Prof. L. P. Jacks; "America's Self-Revelation," by Prof. H. B. Alexander, of the University of Nebraska; "Drudgery and Education," by Edmond Holmes; "Force in Christian Ethics," by G. F. Barbour, D.Phil., and other important topics.

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## THE WORLD INTELLIGIBLE.

If it were possible to conceive of a race of creatures of human intelligence but not of the human order, who, knowing nothing of our own species, were told that such a species actually existed, we could easily proceed to imagine its difficulties of belief. Evidences of the reality of Man would be offered in vain to many of our imaginary non-human creatures. They would discover all kinds of objections to the possibility of our existence, and even if, in the end, the evidences were too strong to dispute, we can picture some of the more critical of the "creatures" protesting their bewilderment. "To be sure Man exists," they might say, "but how he lives, why he lives, and where he lives are puzzles quite beyond us."

In short, the attitude of the creatures of our conjecture towards us would be very much the same as our attitude towards spirits. Some of us who have the "scientific" mind but who have nevertheless had to give in to the idea of spirit existence, find it terribly hard at times to reconcile it with our notions of probability, or even of possibility. We lack the daring subtlety of some of the old thinkers who, like Tertullian, came to the conclusion that a thing may be true *because* it is "impossible." Science has not yet quite risen to the height of that great argument. But to that it must infallibly come, because ultimately it must subscribe to the idea of a spirit man, than which we know of nothing more "unscientific" or "impossible," even preposterous.

Of course to the Seers and to the great community of the simple-minded, there are no difficulties at all. The former accept what they see and the latter what they hear, without question. But the thinkers amongst men, who embrace many classes, from the narrowly intellectual to the greatly intelligent, are in a different case. Their impulse is to challenge every new fact and to dispute its passage, although their motives differ. The small thinker wishes to keep it out altogether as something likely to upset a scheme of things on which he has already passed a final judgment. The great thinker merely wishes to ascertain, first, whether the thing is true, and, next, its precise relation to other things concerning which he has already satisfied himself. The former erects a barrier marked "No Thoroughfare"; the method of the latter may be likened to the establishment of a Customs House

or an Immigration Bureau at which the new arrival is temporarily detained for examination and inquiry, to be freely admitted, and even welcomed, on being found eligible.

As regards this subject of spirit existence, we may put aside the sceptical class of thinkers, or rather critics. ("Thinker" is too honourable a term to apply to an order of minds which obviously does not think, or it would instantly perceive that the existence of discarnate man is no greater a miracle in its way than the existence of man incarnate. When it can understand Matter it will be time enough for it to lay down the law about Spirit.)

Let us take up the question with those intelligent inquirers who, accepting the existence of spirit man, are frankly embarrassed how to account for or to explain him. Their problem is quite natural and legitimate—it is certainly hard to conceive of man in another state of being carrying on existence in a body which is a replica of the physical one, and yet dwelling in conditions where much of the physical equipment is unnecessary. But the objection is only *scientifically* valid, because it relates merely to the one principle for which Science stands—the principle of Use. The Artist would take another view, and the Universe is certainly as much the province of the Artist as of the Scientist. He would laugh at the idea that a spirit man should not have mouth or teeth because he no longer has to take in food and deal with it in the old physical fashion. He would ask where, without lips or teeth, would be the beauty of a smile. In a word, he would show that there is a higher principle than Use—the principle of Beauty, which the perfect human body is intended to subserve. But he would probably, being a man of imaginative insight, admit that in the higher evolution of the human form some modifications may take place in which certain organs (those of digestion for instance) which had neither use nor beauty to perpetuate them might disappear. So at one stroke would go the argument based on physical peculiarities and limitations.

And so, after centuries of doubt and indifference, of a vast deal of misdirected logic and an interminable quantity of word-spinning, we should get back to the simple proposition of Paul, "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." But the efforts would not have been wasted, for it is one thing to accept a fact in a mute, unreasoning way and another thing to hold it up to inquiry until it has become intelligible and ready to take its place in the rational order of things. That process represents the difference between the animal and the man—it is for man to add to faith knowledge. He can proceed no step without one or the other. If he is lacking in both, then indeed his position is deplorable. But it is not hopeless, for the men who will not move of themselves are ultimately moved by the irresistible powers of the greater Intelligence in which their own minds are enfolded. Let us move of ourselves, for that is the purpose for which we were placed here—to develop self-consciousness, self-direction, the power to see for ourselves, to act for ourselves, and ultimately to take control of that province of life assigned to our rule. At present that realm (which is represented by the planet) is in a state of insurrection. The things which we should have subdued and made obedient have broken away from our feeble grasp and all is welter and confusion—"things are in the saddle and ride mankind," as Emerson put it. Well is it for us that our destinies are in the hands of a Higher Intelligence, inexorably just but infinite in patience, prepared to place the direction of our lives and fortunes in our own hands just so soon as we are prepared to take it.



## IS SPIRITUALISM OF THE DEVIL?

ADDRESS BY THE REV. F. FIELDING-OULD, M.A.

(Continued from page 118.)

We are asked sometimes, if this thing is of God, why has it so recently come to light? Did not our ancestors need it too? Well, I suppose the time was not ripe, a certain degree of scientific development and enlightenment was a necessary preliminary; but in spite of that, no doubt the message *would* have come before if man had not been so zealous in burning the mediums whenever he could lay hands upon them. So our forefathers threw away a hundred natural products as mere refuse, until some wiser men arose to teach us how we might use them for human profit and advantage.

"The new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it."

Then we come to the serious question, *What does the Bible teach on the subject, and how is it to be understood?*

I suppose that whatever our views may be on religious matters, we should all listen to the venerable Scriptures with a certain deference and respect.

It has been the custom to put the Bible into the hands of babes and naïvely to assume that anybody who can read has all revealed truth spread out before him "as plain as print." The fact is that to interpret the Bible aright an immense learning is required. Modes of speech and ways of thought have changed, symbolism and fact are strangely intermingled; the ancient text, copied and recopied for centuries by hand, is often uncertain. Some acquaintance with the history and customs of half-a-dozen nations is necessary, some knowledge of the science of comparative religions; the commentaries and deductions of the principal experts through some eighteen centuries must be read, and we must have other qualifications in addition, or we are always liable to misinterpret the real significance of any given text, and may found an entirely wrong course of action on some apparently conclusive passage of Holy Scripture.

Nevertheless, we may admit at once that the Old Testament forbids Spiritualism (in the usual sense of the word) in the most unequivocal and categorical manner.

"There shall not be found with thee anyone that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, one that useth divination, one that practiceth augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer, for whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto the Lord" (Deut. xviii. 10). "A man or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death" (Lev. xx. 27).

Now for many devout people this ends all discussion of the matter, the will of God is revealed about it, and there is nothing more to be said.

But we have learned (and that only in the last few years) that an isolated text, without due consideration of the context and the conditions prevailing when it was spoken, may be most misleading. And note the dilemma of the adherents of unquestioning and literal obedience. If we are to obey the Old Testament, every medium in London must forthwith be stoned to death—that is the end prescribed—and that whether they can help their peculiar constitution or not.

But, as St. Paul says, we are not under the Law. He was a Jew, and yet rejected its claims. The code of Moses was a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, and the schoolmaster's function is over when the child grows up.

The Church deliberately threw off the old obligation of circumcision, and very much of the old system soon followed it. We are not conscious of any breach of the laws of God when we eat pork or jugged hare, yet to the Jew three thousand years ago, and I suppose to-day, it was sin. We are beginning to understand that the prohibitions and regulations were not for all time, nor even then binding on all mankind, but that they were *economic, local and transitory*. They were in the first instance addressed to the Jews, and in many cases had no further application. They were formulated with a

definite educative end in view, and at a time when the conditions demanded such safeguards.

Spiritualism was much practised among the heathen nations surrounding the Hebrews and seems to have been the root and occasion of a false theology, of Pantheism, the deification of dead heroes, ancestor-worship and of many vile and cruel rites (II. Kings xxi. 6). And we can readily understand how important it was that the Hebrews, who were under special training for the high function and destiny which lay before them, should not become contaminated with such evils. The aim generally speaking, of the necromancer seems to have been to gain his ends by supernatural powers *apart from righteousness*: the occult and religion, power and morals, were divorced, and it is to be noted that whenever in the Bible the two came into conflict (as in the case of Jannes and Jambres, Elymas or Simon Magus) the servants of religion were invariably victorious.

Spiritualism was forbidden to the Jews just as we forbid to children things which may be right enough for their elders, but which would be most injurious to them (see Deut. xviii. 14, R.V.). Wine and cigars are not in themselves evil, but they would be "abomination" to a child.

It seems clear, if this reasoning is sound, that it was not the occult sciences which were "abomination to the Lord," but first, the evil things often connected with them, and secondly, the promiscuous use of the occult, its substitution for the authorised and covenanted means of approaching the unseen. Saul was breaking the law in consulting the witch at Endor, but not in asking Samuel to find his father's asses by equally occult process.

"When they shall say unto you," says Isaiah, "Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto the wizards that chirp and mutter, should not a people seek unto their God? On behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead?" (Isaiah viii. 19, R.V.).

But note this: the "seeking unto God" of Isaiah meant, in Saul's day, recourse to the official medium, the authorised dealer with the unseen, as we read in I. Samuel ix. 9: "When a man went to inquire of God, he said, Come and let us go to the seer."

It is clear that the promiscuous dealing with mediums was not to take the place of the *regular means of enlightenment* provided by the Jewish religion. The Jews were not advanced enough to be able to distinguish Truth from Error, and so the whole thing was forbidden them. One "sensitive" might be as developed as another, but the "controls" would not be equally trustworthy, and the only safe course was to confine oneself to dealing with the official seer or prophet of the day.

I think we may find a hint for our own times in all this. *We are not to make of Spiritualism a new religion*, a dignity which the higher spirits do not claim for it. The function of Spiritualism is to throw light on certain aspects of Christianity, and is not meant to be a substitute for it or a rival faith.

One of my first experiences at a materialisation séance was to see my father, who had died many years before, come to me and say, "My dear boy, I am glad that you have found out this wonderful thing, but don't let it draw you away from the true religion."

It is said that Julian the Apostate was seduced from Christianity by the Spiritualism of one Maximus, a magician who could make a marble statue seem to laugh.

We are to beware of error and not to swallow every doctrine greedily which comes through a medium. "Believe not every spirit," says the apostle, "but try the spirits, whether they be of God."

With regard to the New Testament we may notice the significant fact that there is no *direct prohibition* of occult practices such as are found so often in the Old Testament. . . . The omission in the New Testament is the more remarkable as the literature of the Rabbis shows that the Jews of the first century were firm believers and no doubt practicers of many forms of magic. Josephus was the first writer to hold that they were malignant *human* spirits which were expelled by exorcists; popular belief pictured *devils* of another order of being. They were believed to frequent ruined buildings, gardens, vineyards.

and all foul and dirty places. Hence the supposed danger of walking there after nightfall, unless there were three people together, which insured safety. Devils were thought to be the cause of various *diseases*, such as asthma and croup, but they might be expelled by magic formulæ. This no doubt explains the belief of the Scribes that the cures performed by Jesus were wrought by the invocation of superior diabolic agents. (Everheim's "Messiah," Appendix 759 f.f.)

The Teraphim, once or twice mentioned in the Old Testament, most authorities think were not merely household divinities, but were used for Spiritualistic practices. The carved image was sometimes surmounted by a mummied human head which was made to give forth a voice and utter oracular counsels.

Ephesus, of which we read so much in the "Acts," was crowded with necromancers and sorcerers, many of whom on hearing St. Paul's message brought their valuable books and burned them before him. The books, no doubt, contained magic formulæ and the mystic words engraved upon the crown, girdle and feet of the famous statue of Artemis. This burning of the books is often pointed to as a proof that the practice of Spiritualism is inconsistent with a belief in Christianity. It is to be remembered, however, that the worship involved the most hideous abominations and unclean iniquity performed in the name of religion. There was, no doubt, much in the magic books and in the practice of the mediums that all modern Spiritualists would hold in abhorrence, much that was quite inconsistent with the pure religion which the people heard St. Paul preach. It is not remarkable that in accepting the new faith the magicians should renounce the occult practices altogether which they now saw had been the occasion of defilement and profound error.

It has been argued that Spiritualism is implicitly forbidden in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, where Abraham declines to send Lazarus back to earth to warn the brethren of Dives. Abraham does not, however, refuse the request because spirit intercourse is unlawful, but, as we are clearly told, because he considers the expedient would be useless.

There is evidence that Modern Spiritualism is an organised attempt on the other side to produce certain results on earth. There seem to be a great number of spirits engaged in the work—spirits of various grades and different degrees of enlightenment. I believe myself that there is a body of *enlightened spirits* working through these strange methods by God's will and for our highest good.

But if this is so, it does not prevent mischievous and malignant spirits—devils, in fact—from intervening as opportunity serves and doing their best to discredit and nullify the good work. And we cannot forget these methods have a rather sinister history and are familiar ground for evil spirits. A public telephone may be used by a burglar as well as by a bishop, and the difficulty is for the man at the receiver to determine which is speaking. "Freedom to return to earth," says a spirit, "is open to all alike, and the minds of men are far more in sympathy with those who are undeveloped [*i.e.* in the earth condition] than those who are above them. This constitutes the danger I want you very clearly to recognise. The (discarnate) souls who feel the first attraction to return and are more generally welcomed, are those who *know nothing at all* of real spiritual life and government." ("The Life Elysian," p. 100.)

The branch of the Church which is the most implacable enemy of Spiritualism would desire to be itself judged by what is best and noblest in its history, and rightly so. The devil has spoken through popes and pastors often enough in the horrible massacres and persecutions they have inaugurated, but in spite of such lapses in its every branch, I myself firmly believe that the great Church of Christ is founded upon a rock and holds a Divine commission. But let Spiritualism claim an equally fair judgment; let its source and mission be determined by the consideration of its noblest teaching and not by the babblings of the ignorant and undeveloped, the tricks and lying of impostors on either side of death.

Fools and knaves are not far to seek, but how often does it happen that spirits of low development return not to trick and deceive but to implore our help (*e.g.*, see "Stead the Man,"

p. 159), crying out of the darkness and entreating our prayers on their behalf. Far from proving a diabolic origin for Spiritualism, such incidents tend to show that it is a thing which in God's mercy may be used for the benefit and uplifting of souls on the other as well as on this side of the veil.

A cousin of my own, who shot himself in London, appeared to a little girl he was educating at a convent in Brussels and implored her prayers. For two months he appeared every morning at her bedside, and as she continued to intercede for her one-time benefactor, the old smile at last returned to his face and he ceased to come.

(To be continued.)

## EGYPTIAN LITERATURE.

Continuing his discourses to the Psychic Class on ancient Egypt, Dr. W. J. Vanstone dealt on the 12th inst. with its literature—a literature which, he said, had influenced writers and thinkers through all the subsequent ages. The earliest Egyptian manuscripts, dating back to 3000-4000 B.C., were religious and included a code of morals. The papyri in the various libraries of Europe and the British Museum contained writings two thousand years older than any other literature in the world. They dealt with ethics, mathematics and geometry, theology, history, astronomy, medicine, metaphysics, law, agriculture, warfare, and magic. The treatises on warfare, composed about the time of the country's greatest warriors, Thothmes III. and Rameses II. and III., showed that military tactics had reached in those days a high degree of development, even trench warfare being not altogether unknown. It was evident, indeed, that the world's history was made up of a series of cycles, in which past achievements were repeated. In regard to written language the earliest known method of expressing ideas was that of picture signs or hieroglyphics. Later the priests, finding it difficult to convey complex ideas by this means, introduced an abbreviated system—the hieratic—peculiar to themselves. The first hieratic papyrus went back to 3000 B.C., something like 1,000 years before Abraham went down into Egypt. Some papyri were written in what was called the Demotic or epistolographic style, which combined Greek characters with the hieratic and the old hieroglyphic. Dr. Vanstone mentioned the names of the scholars of different nationalities who did pioneer work in endeavouring to translate these old documents. The difficulties were almost insuperable till, through the defeat of the French in Italy in 1802, we came into possession of the Rosetta Stone, a block of basalt found near Rosetta in the Nile delta. This bore a threefold inscription—written first in the old hieratic characters, secondly in demotic script, and thirdly in pure Greek. Directly the scholars saw the Greek they possessed the key to the interpretation of the papyri. The most wonderful MS. discovered was the Book of the Dead or the Book of the Coming Forth into Light, which dealt with the whole philosophy of the Egyptians regarding the immortality of the soul. The papyrus in the museum at Turin (2000 B.C.) was regarded as the most valuable book in the world, the next most interesting being the Ebers MS. in the Leipzig Library, which dated from the sixteenth century B.C., and contained one of the six Hermetic books on medicine. The Prisse papyrus in the Museum of Paris, attributed to Ptahhatip, but for its antiquity one might imagine was a reproduction of the proverbs of Solomon. In another papyrus (belonging to the nineteenth dynasty) in the British Museum we had practically a parallel to the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, while the most recently discovered papyrus contained psalms which were almost identical with some of the psalms of David. In conclusion, Dr. Vanstone recommended the study of Egyptian philosophy as tending both to broaden the reader's mind and to deepen his sympathies.

THE WORLD CRISIS.—The address at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, on Thursday, the 26th inst., will, as already notified, be delivered by Miss Felicia R. Soatcherd, who will speak on "The World Crisis."



## THE DARKENED CITY.

A DREAM PARABLE.

BY LADY GLENCONNER.

As I lay in bed (it was in the month of April, 1899) I was thinking of the sorrow that comes through sin and the sorrow that falls into men's lives who have lived uprightly and kept their duties towards God. I wondered whether it could be true that, if we disregard God, He can no longer regard us; if it be true that the entire responsibility lies with us, or if there is that grace of God that can act on darkness and make it light. I wondered if after many years of spiritual deterioration on our part, God Himself becomes powerless to save. To say this limits, surely, the omnipotence of God, and exaggerates, almost to a point of dread, the responsibility of man. I prayed very earnestly that I might be given the truth; that even in my thoughts I might be guided. And then I must have fallen asleep, for I remember thinking I was telling myself a story. I heard a voice speaking in a very measured tone, as if it had been speaking already for some time very quietly; and I thought it was my own voice, and yet I knew that I was listening, and that in some way that I cannot explain the voice was outside my own consciousness. I heard myself describing a most desolate city:—

Many years after Christ had left this earth, there wandered a company of men of God over the land, faring simply and helping others, and holding their hearts within them worthy of the light. In the course of their wanderings they came to a darkened city, on which so great a plague had fallen that the dead lay unburied in the streets. The houses stood empty, the doors hung broken on their hinges, and the men of God, as they wandered through this city, left unwittingly white footprints among the stones.

Their names were not known, nor was their calling manifest, but they were men of God. As they went, one said to another, "This city is deserted and her people have fled"; and his fellow answered, "There has surely been a most sore plague, and none have escaped it"; and a third said, "The cloud still hangs over the city, and no ray of sunlight falls within the streets." And as they fared—though they knew not they did so—they left white footprints among the stones.

And now see this darkened city! The ways are polluted and foul; there is no life in its habitations, and the dead lie unburied in the streets. And wild dogs inhabit it, and bones lie in the ways thereof, and these bones the wild dogs do eat.

Now as the men of God passed through the city an aged man looked out from a ruined house, and his face was evil. He leaned on crutches, and his voice, as he uplifted it, was as the howl of a wolf and the wail of a lost child. Very terribly it rose against God, and the beauty of light, charging God with forgetfulness.

"O ye who pass by, look on me," he cried, "for I am one that was a servant of God, and at length hath known his Master. The greatness of God was at my heart, and those of my household clave unto the truth. We sought not evil, and evil has been given us; we waited for morning and we beheld no light. There is no one who can show us any good, for we are alone in our misery; we loved the Truth and we have not found it, and our life has been turned to worms. O my God, verily Thou art Master, but Death is the Lord of all."

His voice rang out harsh and discordant, as when metal is smitten suddenly against metal, his crutches fell from him, and he caught at the air, falling headlong upon the ground.

And as the men of God passed through the city they left white footprints among the stones.

Then the dark cloud hanging over the city broke and revealed the sky. The air that was putrid rose like a vapour and a quiet rain fell; and the wild dogs left the city, for it no longer could be their home. The bones of the dead that lay upon the ground were gathered in the rushing of the waters, and in the waters were cleansed, and were tombed for ever in the sea.

But God took knowledge of them that they had been.

And the men of God faring through the city left white footprints among the stones.

Now this was the story in my dream; and before I woke a voice had expounded to me the veiled meaning.

The darkened city is a type of an individual life. The aged man within it is the expression of one voice, the dark despondency within that life. The dead in the city, her once population, are the myriad thoughts, desires, wishes, doubts, deeds and temptations, that dwell in the individual life. The men of God symbolise the various forms which divine help may take towards us, differing with different individuals. For to some it may come through religion, to others through art, love, pity, work, joy, or sorrow; and even (though this is a great mystery) through the revelation of sin.

Their unconsciousness of their own effect touches on the aloofness of whatever is wholly spirit or divine. It can permeate lower planes of life and base conditions; but it is totally untouched by defilement in dealing with planes alien to its nature, and (as the story repeats so often) knows not that it leaves white footprints among the stones.

The bones of the dead are the refuse, the *débris*, the husks, of our lower selves, and the wild dogs stand for the form of life that can arise from and be sustained by corruption, as worms in decay.

The aged man's cry had two notes, the hungry wolf and the lost child. The voluntary alienation from the good within us—and the suffering and homelessness of that same good—the loneliness of incarnation.

The man's crutches are external helps, things which seem important and are yet among the most mutable; they fell from him when he admitted a greater force than his own endeavour—

So that if goodness lead him not,  
That weariness may toss him to my breast.

The sudden revealing of the sky (in the broken cloud of the pestilence) was consequent on the advent of the men of God. This is a symbol of the power of the Highest over darkness however dark, over desolation however desolate.

However deeply man has sinned, however full of the dead bones of ill-kept laws your soul may be, still in the moment of revelation these bones are tombed for ever in the cleansing sea, and you are reborn from above.

And all over the country-side—and universe—faring here and there, passing this way and that, on their self-subsisting errand and ministry, go the men of God; and the "white footprints they leave among the stones," surely figure the capacity of what we call material, to hold and express the result of spiritual force.

Of a truth, my masters, this is no door,  
Yet it is a little window that looketh upon a great world.

## THE WARNING VOICE.

Captain Wm. McKenzie, one of the Salvation Army chaplains with the Australian Forces, who was recently decorated by the King with the Military Cross, attributes his many hairbreadth escapes to what he regards as a Divine voice prompting him in moments of extreme danger. On one occasion (according to a weekly paper) he was burying single-handed the bodies of a number of men. While thus engaged he found it necessary to go on to a ridge in full view of the enemy from two points, and they began sending over "whizzbangs" and later big shells close to him.

"I was burying the seventh body, when I heard a voice say, 'Get away from here quickly.' Not having quite finished, I worked like a fury, but had only managed three more spadefuls when again the voice said, 'Run at once.' Then I made off, but had got away only some twenty-five yards when a big explosive shell landed directly on the spot where I had been standing. . . . I could give at least six instances within a single week where prompt attention to this unseen voice saved me from big shells."

It is a legitimate speculation that what we term chance may be the result of direction from "the other side."

## PROBLEMS OF WAR AND PEACE.

A BOOK BY THE AUTHOR OF "PSYCHIC PHILOSOPHY."

The "Science of Peace" (Geo. Allen and Unwin, 4s. 6d. net) is to our mind one of the most valuable contributions to the discussion of the political and social problems of the time. The war, its origin, its meaning and its outcome are handled with a strength and lucidity that become explained when we discover that the mind at work on the question is the same which gave us "Psychic Science," for Captain Stanley De Brath is the "V. C. Desertis" whose name is so well known to all instructed students of our own subject. His present work only touches that subject by implication. Nevertheless it is a book of such illuminating interest that we cannot forbear giving it a cordial welcome. A few excerpts from its pages will serve to give an idea of its quality:—

Given the spiritual facts—a Germany directing organised Intelligence for Dominion, and a Britain refusing the thought and self-sacrifice which adapts means to ends—this war was inevitable. It is a life-and-death grapple between scientific and disciplined brute force which recognises no law and no faith on the one side, and free nationalism on the other. It must end in the domination of Europe by a single State or in a great peaceful alliance which will be the beginning of a New Order of things in the world and will mark the Sunrise of the New Age.

Men alone cannot end war; the systems they create do not touch its root causes. But men and women in alliance can end war. But they can do so only in one way. Not only by dwelling on its awful horrors, its appalling waste and its ruinous madness, but by realising two ultimate spiritual facts:—

1. That the roots of war are the unchecked desires of mankind, both of men and of women—the get-rich-quick greed which seeks unearned wealth; the ambition which aims at unearned honours and titles, and the desire for sensuous pleasures without the corresponding duties. If we trace back the actions of those who bring about wars in all grades of society we shall always find such desires as the primary motives. Behind the desire for dominion is the desire for spoils.

2. That woman's demand is the chief factor which determines the social standards in food, dress, housing, and all the externals of civilisation, and therefore the social supply. According as it is wasteful or economical, tasteful or meretricious, useful or useless, so is the national standard of living. Therefore women, primarily, set the moral tone of the nation.

## A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF APRIL 23RD, 1887.)

"DAWN."—In a review of Mr. Rider Haggard's most powerful work "She" (LIGHT, February 26th, 1887) it was pointed out that he was fairly well up in some recent psychical literature. That this is so, and that, as was further indicated his mind is that of a born Mystic, Occultist, Spiritualist—call it by what name we will—is again apparent in his more recently published "Dawn."

PROFESSOR BARRETT.—I crossed to Liverpool in the "Sardinian" with the Professor and about one hundred members of the British Association as fellow passengers. The Professor furnished us with a lecture one evening in the saloon on psychical subjects, giving a *résumé* of the efforts made to investigate. Up to that time I had given no thought to such subjects . . . but you will be pleased to hear that the Professor's lecture led me to see that I had a hidden power hitherto unknown . . . and I am pleased to know that I have been of much assistance to members who are investigating psychical subjects.—(From a letter from Mr. John M. Hockin, of Nova Scotia.)

OUR FOOD SUPPLY.—If every person will eat one pound of bread less per week we can easily survive the submarine menace. The real danger is not a shortage of potatoes or sugar, but of wheat, and this danger may be passed if everyone will practise economy in the consumption of bread and wheat flour.

## PAIN AND PROGRESS.

"Spiritual development through the ordeal of pain and suffering" was the subject dealt with by the inspirer (or inspirers, as we understood was the case on this occasion) of Mrs. M. H. Wallis at the Rooms of the Alliance, on the 13th inst. It was maintained that physical sufferings and disabilities were usually the result of some infringement of Nature's laws, either on the part of the sufferer or of others, and that it was a mistake to regard them, as many good people did, as expressly sent by a Beneficent Power in order to minister to the soul's spiritual advancement. On some types of character they had a softening and sweetening effect; others they tended rather to harden and embitter. As all wise teachers knew, reformation could often be brought about without the infliction of suffering. There were persons, again, who were too ready to persuade themselves that certain evils should be suffered patiently as being divinely appointed and inevitable when in reality they were neither the one nor the other, but ought rather to be regarded as spur, stimulating to self-reformation if the individuals were themselves the sufferers, or to active search for a remedy if the trouble was endured by some section of the community. The people with whom the spiritual teachers and helpers on the other side had most difficulty were not so much those who on earth had been guilty of clear breaches of the moral law, as the merely lethargic souls—self-centred folk, who probably lived reputable lives, and did nothing particularly bad, but never really concerned themselves about their fellows. They needed to be stabbed awake, roused into some kind of feeling, even should it first take the form of sharp resentment—anything to stir them out of their self-contentment and complacency. As pain attended the recovery by frozen nerves of their sensibility, so the arousing of these souls from their deathlike stupor was necessarily painful, but to the physician the evidences of such pain were a hopeful augury, for they meant the first stirrings of a new life.

## THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE.

A little book which has made a deep impression in mystical circles is "The Silent Voice" (G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1s. net). Although the first series of these teachings was issued only a few months ago, a second series under the same title has already appeared. It is not easy to describe precisely what the book represents. It appears to have been received inspirationally by a lady in Devonshire, the communications being always made during prayer. To say that they are personal communications from Jesus would be a quite inaccurate description: they deal with the Universal Spirit rather than a personal intelligence. As we read them we were reminded of one of those sayings of Jesus recorded on papyrus, recovered some years ago at Oxyrhynchus, "Raise the stone and there thou shalt find Me; cleave the wood and there am I." Perhaps it would be better to offer a few quotations from the book:—

My love is the light you see, the sounds you hear, and the air you breathe.

My power is in all that is. I am the greatness of the storm, and I am the weakness of the newborn child.

Love is the only power. Love is the ground you kneel on and the very enwrapment that encircles you. By my law of love am I indeed bound, and by your love am I set free to fulfil.

Love is the motive power of my work. I am Love—more than a spirit incarnate can ever comprehend; yet do you all use this might and so are in accord, in unison with Me. When love is not, then are you in discord and darkness. By love only can fulfilment come and perfect harmony be attained.

ALAS for him who never sees  
The stars shine through his cypress trees;  
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,  
Nor looks to see the breaking day  
Across the mournful marble play;  
Who hath not learned, with quickened breath,  
The truth, to flesh and sense unknown,  
That Life is ever Lord of Death  
And Love can never lose its own,

## SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, APRIL 15, &amp;c.

**MARLBOROUGH SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.**—*Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.*—"Why I am a Spiritualist," by Mrs. Cannock; intensely interesting; large audience deeply appreciative; excellent discourse throughout. Pianoforte solo brilliantly rendered by Mr. Field.—D. N.

**LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION:** 13B, *Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W.*—Mrs. Mary Davies spoke on "Trinity and Unity," and Dr. W. J. Vanstone on "Man's Spiritual Equipment." For Sunday next see front page.

**CHURCH OF HIGHER MYSTICISM:** 22, *Princes-street, Cavendish-square, W.*—Mrs. Fairclough Smith conducted the services and gave illuminating addresses full of inspiration and power. Sunday next, 11.15, open meeting; 6.30, answers to written questions.

**WIMBLEDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION.**—Most stimulating address by Mr. E. Hunt. For prospective announcements see front page.—R. A. B.

**TOTTENHAM.**—684, *HIGH-ROAD.*—Mr. A. H. Sarfas gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., the speaker will be Alderman D. J. Davis.—D. H.

**BRIGHTON.**—*WINDSOR HALL, WINDSOR-STREET (OFF NORTH-STREET).*—Sunday next, 11.15 and 7, and Monday, at 8, Mr. Alfred Vout Peters.

**HACKNEY.**—240A, *AMHURST-ROAD, N.E.*—Mrs. Neville gave an address and recognised descriptions. Sunday next, 6.30, Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Smith. Monday, 8 p.m., Mrs. Sutton. Tuesday and Thursday, Mrs. Brichard.—N. R.

**BRIGHTON SPIRITUAL MISSION.**—1, *UPPER NORTH-STREET* (close to Clock Tower).—Sunday next, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. F. T. Blake (President S.C.U.), addresses and clairvoyance; 3 p.m., Lyceum. Friday, 8 p.m., public meeting for inquirers.

**CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.**—*SURREY MASONIC HALL.*—Morning, service conducted by members; evening, uplifting address by Mrs. Mary Davies. Sunday next, 11 a.m., church service; 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Mary Gordon, address and clairvoyance.

**MANOR PARK, E.**—*THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.*—Mr. Hayward, interesting address; Mrs. Hayward, clairvoyance. Sunday next, 6.30, address, Mr. Fielder. 23rd, 3, ladies, Mrs. Tilby. 25th, 7.30, Mrs. Jamrach. 28th, Social.—E.M.

**CRYDON.**—*GYMNASIUM HALL, HIGH-STREET.*—Mr. R. King lectured on "Some Methods of Occult Training." Sunday next, at 11, address by Mrs. Julie Scholey, and circle; at 6.30, Mr. H. Ernest Hunt.

**WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.**—*PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD, PLUMSTEAD.*—Address and psychometry by Mr. J. Lewis Wallis. Sunday next, 7 p.m., address and clairvoyance by Mrs. A. Boddington.

**CLAPHAM.**—*HOWARD-STREET, WANDSWORTH-ROAD, S.W.*—Sunday next, 11.15, public circle; 6.30, Muslim speakers. Friday, at 8, public meeting. 29th, Messrs. Owen and Berry, National Union representatives.—M. C.

**FOREST GATE, E.**—*EARLHAM HALL, EARLHAM GROVE.*—Meeting conducted by Miss E. Shead; address by Mr. Geo. Taylor Gwinn, "The Light that is Within." Sunday next, Mr. D. Hanneford, small hall, 6.30 p.m.—F. S.

**RICHMOND.**—14, *PARKSHOT (OPPOSITE PUBLIC BATHS).*—Mr. Smith gave an interesting address and Mrs. Smith clairvoyance to a large audience. Sunday next, Mr. Symons. Wednesday, Mrs. Neville.—B. S.

**HOLLOWAY.**—*GROVEDALE-ROAD (NEAR HIGHGATE TUBE STATION).*—Sunday next, 11.15, Mr. A. W. Parry; 7, Mr. and Mrs. Tilby. Wednesday, 25th, at 8, psychometry by Mr. J. Sims. Saturday, 28th, Social.

**PROCKHAM.**—*LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.*—Addresses and clairvoyance by Mr. Peters. Sunday, 29th, 11.30, Messrs. Todd and Hanson Hey; 7, Messrs. Oaten and Wright. 30th, 8, Mrs. Stair and Messrs. Yates and Owen.—T. G. B.

**BATTERSEA.**—45, *ST. JOHN'S HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.*—Morning, usual circle; evening, Mr. Smyth, address, and Mrs. Sharman, good clairvoyance. Sunday next, 11.15, circle; 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Mrs. Neville. Wednesday, 8.15, developing circle (members only). Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Sutton; doors closed 8.30 sharp.—N. B.

**READING.**—*SPIRITUAL MISSION, 16, BLAgrave-STREET.*—Mr. Brett spoke morning and evening on one subject, "In His Steps."

**NATIONAL UNION FUND OF BENEVOLENCE.**—The honorary financial secretary, Mrs. M. A. Stair (14, North-street, Keighley, Yorks.), acknowledges with thanks the following subscriptions received in March: *Rothsay Circle*, 19s.; *Krugersdorp Society* (South Africa), 18s.; *Miss Kathleen Newman*, 2s. 6d.; *A Friend* (Sheffield), 5s.; *Mrs. Crane* (quarterly sub.), 2s. 6d.; *Sambo's Box*, £1. Total, £3 7s. The month's disbursements amounted to £17.

## THE VAGRANCY AND WITCHCRAFT ACTS: A PUBLIC PROTEST.

It is felt by many of the more active spirits in our movement that an important part of the work entailed in obtaining an amendment of the antique and effete legislation which places the Legislature in the position of denying the existence of any other world than the present one, should take the form of public meetings of protest. A mass meeting is therefore being arranged to take place on Monday, the 30th inst., at 8 p.m., at the South Place Institute, Moorgate-street. It is expected that several distinguished figures in the movement will be amongst the speakers or present to support them on the platform, but further particulars on this point will be given later. In the meantime information on the subject of the gathering may be gathered from the following resolution which it is proposed to put to the meeting:—

Resolved that this Mass Meeting of Psychic Students and Spiritualists, convened by the Spiritualists' National Union, the London Spiritualist Alliance, the London Union of Spiritualists, and associated Societies and Churches in the Metropolitan area, Protests against the retention on the Statute Book of enactments making illegal the proper use of psychic faculties, thereby hindering progress in the science of psychical research. And Further Resolved that while expressing our abhorrence of the use of the psychic faculty for purely mercenary purposes or for the exploitation of the public, and declaring our willingness to support the Government in the elimination of all forms of charlatanism, we Demand such amendment of the Vagrancy and Witchcraft Acts as will allow the honest investigator and the adherent of Spiritualist religious organisations the right to employ such faculties as part of their legitimate activities.

**THE PROSECUTION OF MR. HORACE LEAF.**—Mr. F. J. Ball, secretary, Church of the Spirit, Camberwell, sends us some testimony which should have appeared in conjunction with the letter from Mr. Leaf in *LIGHT* of March 10th (p. 79). It seems that a letter from Mr. Ball, which contained this, mis-carried, and after a reference to the fact Mr. Ball writes: "Mr. Leaf gave a lecture on Dr. Crawford's book, 'The Reality of Psychic Phenomena,' not on clairvoyance as stated by the police spy. His lecture was much appreciated by the audience at Camberwell. After the address Mr. Leaf gave several clairvoyant descriptions and helpful messages, which were very successful. It is regretted by the members at Camberwell that Mr. Leaf should have been the victim of a police spy."

MR. RALPH SHIRLEY's editorial notes in the April "Occult Review" consist of an appreciation of the teachings of Plotinus (though he does not think that philosopher solved the riddle of the Sphinx), a brief biographical sketch of the late W. J. Colville, illustrated with an excellent portrait of its subject, and some reflections on Astrology and the War. Dr. Helen Bouchier relates her early psychic experiences, which appear to have been of a rather nerve-shaking character. H. G. B. heads an article on "Lycanthropy" with the definition taken from a popular dictionary—"a species of insanity in which the patient imagines himself to be a wolf and acts and howls like one"—but proceeds to show that it does not cover the ground. "An Adventure in Wonderland," by Mr. David Gow, is a travesty on recent events in connection with the persecution of psychics, the quaint and inconsequent methods of the characters of "Alice in Wonderland" furnishing an effective vehicle for the satire. In "The Doris Case: a Study in Multiple Personalities," Mr. A. E. Waite sets out and examines the facts in a very strange but well-vouched-for story. He regards it as "the most remarkable record we have of the persistence of personality."—R.

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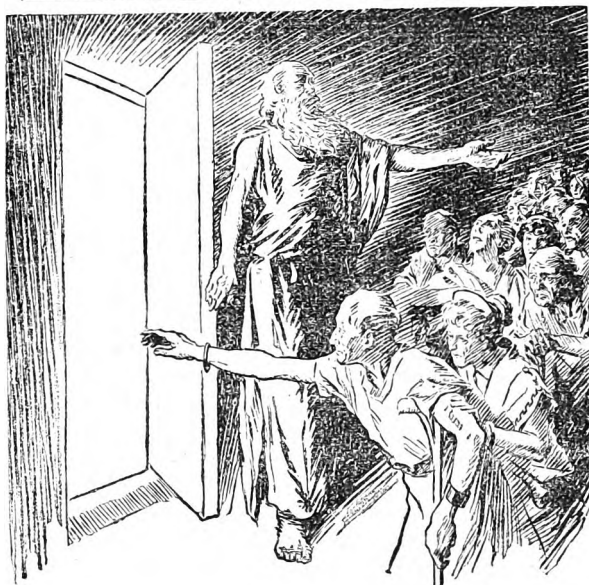
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