

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

An interesting judgment was that given in the House of Lords recently whereby it was decided that a gift of the residue of his estate by Mr. Charles Bowman, of Ventnor, Isle of Wight, to the Secular Society (Ltd.), was valid. The heir-at-law and the next of kin of the testator contested the validity of the gift on the ground that the Company was constituted for illegal purposes, namely, the subversion of the Christian and all other religions. Mr. Justice Joyce decided in favour of the Secular Society, and the Appeal Court affirmed his decision. The majority of the House of Lords upheld these judgments. Amongst other important expressions of opinion by the law lords, Lord Sumner's view is worth quoting. He said that with all respect for the great names of the lawyers who had used it, the phrase "Christianity is part of the law of England" was really not law, but rhetoric. "Thou shalt not steal" was part of our law. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" was part of our law. But another part, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," was not part of our law at all. Christianity had tolerated chattel slavery; not so the present law of England. The judgment and the views expressed will be of interest to many persons outside the particular Society concerned. Our friend Dr. Powell has more than once referred to the phrase "Christianity is part of the law of England" in his addresses, when dealing with the Vagrancy and Witchcraft Acts. He has pointed out how utterly fatuous the dictum is, seeing that the Legislature has stamped Christ and St. Paul as a pair of rogues and vagabonds. So far as the dictum itself is concerned, however, we now have a pronouncement from one of the highest authorities. Those of the well-wishers of the London Spiritualist Alliance (Ltd.) who wish to benefit the Alliance by will can now rest secure that their bequests to it will be quite valid, for the Alliance is in the strong position that it is not only a corporate body able to acquire property by gift, but it exists in effect to uphold (rather than to subvert) Christianity by proving that the miraculous element in the Christian religion rests on a basis of scientific fact.

* * * *

"Some Views Respecting a Future Life," by Samuel Waddington (John Lane, 3s. 6d. net), commends itself to us mainly because of the artistic quality of its printing and binding. Its importance as a contribution to a study of the subject with which it deals is relatively small. We are told of the views entertained on the question by Plato, Buddha, Huxley, Haeckel, Maeterlinck and a few score of other writers and thinkers, and the author adds some

peculiarly inconclusive conclusions of his own. But we get very little of Mr. Waddington and a great deal of the various writers upon whom he relies. He refers with approval to Sir E. Ray Lankester's suggestion concerning telepathy and a belief in ghosts being the outcome of cerebral disease; he is in agreement with Sir Hiram Maxim that the soul, the mind or the spiritual part, "like electricity, is *only a condition of matter*," and he tells us in another place, after a lengthy citation from the writings of Mr. A. Clutton Brock, that "it has always been my view, the main tenet of my religion, that in all things, and above all things, Truth and Truthfulness should be the objects of our worship." At intervals Mr. Waddington gives us quotations from his own poetry, but even these do not help us very much. He is struck with the great diversity of opinion on the possibility of a continuation of life after death. What we are astonished by is his ignorance of the fact that the question has long passed beyond the stage of opinion, that opinions are no longer of the slightest consequence, whether they emanate from the pulpit or the study. It is no more a question of "What do you think?" but "What do you know?" Mr. Waddington knows what other people have thought about it, and what he himself thinks. And that is all. If some of the views he sets forth are true, then the Christian Church is founded on a delusion, and the spiritual element in the New Testament has no better basis than cerebral disease. Fortunately Psychic Science exists to prove the essential truth of both. And that is not at all a question of Views but of Facts.

* * * *

Although a formal review of Sir William Barrett's new book, "On the Threshold of the Unseen," has yet to appear in *LIGHT*, we cannot forbear making some quotations from the book, which fulfils one of the standards of good literature in being highly quotable. Here, for instance, is a passage that should be of value to those numerous readers of *LIGHT* who are only at the beginning of their investigations:—

Every Spiritualist knows the mischief of promiscuous sittings of ignorant people, and many feel as strongly as I do that paid professional mediums who have been convicted of fraud should be sedulously avoided. The best sittings I have had have been in full light; so with Sir W. Crookes' wonderful observations. In fact, Home, I believe, always refused to sit in the dark; and probably with any medium by patience and perseverance the light could be gradually increased without serious injury to the results and with enormous gain to the accuracy and precision of the observations.

Again, after remarking that confidence is not synonymous with credulity, our author says:—

It is the most experienced investigator who is the least credulous, and it is also unquestionably true that it is those psychical researchers who bristle with suspicion that have never been able to obtain conclusive evidence of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism. They are not abler or more critical investigators than Sir W. Crookes and other scientific men who have had overwhelming proofs, but they bring with them a psychical atmosphere that is as unfavourable to success as a damp atmosphere is to the working of a frictional or Holtz electrical machine.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' ANNUAL CONVENTION.

(Continued from page 166.)

MR. RICHARD BODDINGTON then read his paper. He commenced by remarking that it was the first time in the history of the Union that the President and his two vice-presidents found themselves on the same platform at one time. Perhaps at no time in human history had the peoples of this planet been called upon to make such momentous decisions, both individually and nationally, as during the past three years. Many conventional ideals and systems had gone by the board, and a new assessment of values had to be made. Even humanity's estimate of itself had in some measure to be revised. These years had witnessed a vitalising of the human consciousness in which self had taken self to task. In millions of young, generous souls selflessness had replaced selfishness. Both the nadir and the zenith of human conduct were being exhibited in the present conflict, and in each case by professed Christians. One of the natural consequences of the present state of things was that a more than merely curious interest was being taken in Spiritualism. People who never before had a serious thought concerning it were now hoping it was true. One great problem they, as Spiritualists, were faced with, was how their Spiritualism should be presented. They had, he felt, made it too cheap in the past—even allowing on their rostrums so-called clairvoyants and others who twelve months before knew nothing of the subject. One medium had been heard to give the same indefinite descriptions, absolutely identical, at six successive meetings. But much of the trouble he deplored in society work Mr. Boddington traced, not to the fact that some of their mediums were either undeveloped or fraudulent, but to the fixing of a date for the exhibition of their clairvoyant powers, when they had to appear whether they were in a properly psychic condition or not. He pleaded for the abolition of all sensational and theatrical elements in platform work, and suggested that a society should not accept members too easily. They should be made to pass through a period of probation as associates. The following passage from the paper is well worth quoting as showing the penetration and judgment with which Mr. Boddington envisaged his subject:—

One of the dangers of democracy is a tendency to a spurious sense of equality in which everyone is apt to regard himself as the equal of everybody else. So far as human beings are spiritual units that is undoubtedly true, but from the standpoint of the varying grades of character and ability there are such obvious differences between individuals that where pushful mediocrity gets its foot in, a distinct danger to progress is indicated. Let us not lose sight of the fact that the strength of Theosophy, Christian Science and other schools is due not so much to the novelty or value of their teachings as to the fact that people of culture and discernment will not work or worship with mental inefficiency in positions of authority. Therefore, in order to avoid the constant mortifications arising from uncongenial associations, they betake themselves to organised bodies where some idea of the fitness of things obtains.

It was not, Mr. Boddington pointed out, that these people thought themselves of finer clay than those whose company they left. It was that they had certain standards of dignity, refinement, reverence and educational efficiency, standards which were continually ignored by those small-minded, ignorant, bumptious and self-seeking persons who made the work of earnest and progressive Spiritualists a real and constant sacrifice.

He concluded with a strong adjuration that Spiritualists should add to their spiritual gifts the Gift of the Spirit, the inspiration that would make their movement a living thing—full of beauty and dignity, going from strength to strength.

At the close of his paper Mr. Boddington answered a number of questions from the audience, in which, and in the animated discussion later, Mrs. Wesley Adams, Mrs. Stair, Mrs. Cannock, Mrs. Jamrach, Miss Trimmer, Mr. Brown (of the Camberwell Society) and Mr. Connor took part. The most vigorous, if not the most important, part of the criticism which was evoked by the paper came from Alderman Davis, who

uttered a vehement protest in especial against the proposal that public phenomena should be abolished.

Mr. Boddington, in the course of his reply to the various comments made, reminded his friends that he had stated at the outset that his paper was not a literary production but rather a stimulative agenda. Alderman Davis had asked whether he was out to produce a new movement. His reply was that he was out to produce a Spiritualism that would demand and deserve respect. (Applause.) They made great claims and those who made great claims should be able to justify them by great evidences. Two of the greatest assets to Spiritualism were conduct and culture. As regards public phenomena, what he asked was that it should at least take place under conditions which gave both the medium and the spirit agencies a fair chance to produce something better than the paltry stuff which was given from many platforms Sunday after Sunday. He wanted to make mediumship a sacred power instead of a commercial one. (Applause.)

THE EVENING MEETING.

In the evening MR. MEADS spoke on the subject of spirit identity—a matter which he regarded as of paramount importance, as if we did not feel secure on the question of the identity of the person with whom we were communicating the whole of our superstructure was in danger of falling to the ground. What with theories of reincarnation and of disused "shells" of astral celebrities being seized upon and foisted on a credulous public, Spiritualism as a vital force and an expression of the immortality of love, Divine and human, seemed to him to be in danger of failure as an agent of good in the world. As honest men and women they must examine themselves. There was not an art or profession or trade in which a man could succeed without effort and patience. In every case it was necessary to learn and obey the laws that governed its practice. And yet Spiritualism, the most subtle thing we knew of—that which had to do with the spirit of man—was frequently treated in a manner which seemed to argue complete lack of common sense and judgment. A man absorbed in making money went to a professional medium and expected to receive wisdom and inspiration from the most enlightened spirits in return for a money payment. Spiritualists were themselves to blame in this matter. They ought to be fair to their mediums. A medium was a finely tuned instrument; coarse, materialistic blunderers should not be encouraged to come in and put that instrument out of tune. It was a fundamental law in mediumship that the aura of the sitter had to blend with the aura of the medium and that the spirit made use of the result. If the sitter's aura was contaminated with dishonesty or doubt or fear could we expect the result to be good? A glorious landscape appealed differently to different spectators according to their varied moods. It would strike one as a fine site for an hotel; another would regard it as a delightful spot on which to build himself a beautiful residence; a third would enjoy the exquisite combinations of colour and see in the varied features of the scene a parable of the life of man; a fourth would experience in its contemplation a feeling of awe as if he were touching the hem of the garment of God. On the principle that like attracts like, we could judge what kind of visitors from the other world would be drawn to these four types of men. To the first it would probably be the spirit of a money-maker; to the second, an individual who had lived in comfort and luxury; to the third, a painter or a poet; and was it unreasonable to expect that the fourth would attract one of those lofty spirits who might truly be called "sons of God"? If we would have our intercourse with the spirit world yield us of its best we must lay aside all sordid and worldly aims and take with us only that which was aspiring. Some people had a theory that it was easy for an undeveloped spirit to return, but difficult for one who was highly developed. But where did the difficulty come in? It really rested with ourselves. Where the kinship of love and sympathy existed there mutual communion might also exist. Once set in motion, love, that mightiest of all forces, could not fail of response. It could reach up to the highest saint and down to the lowest sinner, and both would respond if they had the opportunity and were acquainted with the

method. One of the greatest charms of Spiritualism lay in its variety: it was varied because we were varied, because we each attracted those spirit friends who were most akin to ourselves. Regarding mediumship as a high and holy gift, we should feel it to be our duty to protect and help mediums all we could. By our understanding sympathy, we could make things easier for them and aid them to keep their wonderful gift pure and clean, like a new coin fresh from the mint. Half the present trouble had come about because that coin, which should have been so bright, had become soiled and defaced.

MRS. M. H. WALLIS, in the course of a short address, said Spiritualism had come to stay. It came to them vouched for by those who *knew*, because in the reality of the larger life they were sure of the facts they sought to demonstrate. Mediumship revealed the fact that in the next world there were multitudes not only able but eager to give their message, to proclaim something of what they knew. They often sought diligently for opportunities to voice what they had themselves proven and demonstrated. And on this side there were many questioners equally eager and ardent who were receiving through the channel of mediumship in some fashion the answer to their inquiry as to whether there was really another world. The recognition of this truth linked up into sympathy and union large numbers of people belonging to different churches or to no church. Of course, there were those who sought to forbid inquiry, and to restrain the growing desire to know whether life is continuous. These claimed that thought must be held in check, and that the average man and woman were not capable of judging certain questions properly, and must be under the control of authority, or they would be misled in their search for truth. "But," said the speaker, "we claim that if they are misled, it is because their minds have been dwarfed, because they have not been trained to face the truth and to follow it wheresoever it may lead." (Applause.) But those who took up the attitude of authority should be taught that the people they despised were quite capable of putting two and two together. There were intellectual Spiritualists, emotional Spiritualists, and materialistic Spiritualists. There were those who would use their Spiritualism for their own material advantage. But man was a complex being, and there were many degrees of evidence and varying methods of presentation of that truth which had for its central expression the fact that man survived the change of death and passed into another world by a law as natural as that by which he was born into this.

Concluding, Mrs. Wallis asked her hearers what Spiritualism had done for them? Had it swept from their minds the fear of death? Had it irradiated their lives and brightened their homes? Did they understand more clearly that they themselves were spirits and regard their bodies as temples of the living God? Were they making this world a better place to live in? Spiritualism had come to stay, but in what fashion was it to stay? What the method of its future expression? Let them at least prove their right to think, their right to interpret and their power to apply.

An impassioned speech followed from Alderman Davis. "This," he began, "is a Spiritualist Convention." He wished to remind his hearers of that fact and of what it meant. Quoting Paul's counsel to his Corinthian converts, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith," he said that the word "faith" represented there a system of thought. The time had, in his view, arrived when Spiritualists should examine themselves and see whether they were in the faith. Spiritualism was distinguished from all other schools of thought by the fact that it was not built up by scholars and that it was not built on either tradition or speculation. The rain would descend and the floods come and if they built on the sand of tradition they would go down. He was not a pessimist, but he could not shut his eyes to the fact that the day of trial for Spiritualism as an organisation had arrived. He believed in criticism if it was honest and healthy, but he strongly objected to criticism by way of insinuation and misrepresentation. A trying time had come. "Don't suppose," exclaimed the speaker, "that it is the Bond-street people they are after. They are not after them—they are after you!" Recently

scientific men had been compelled to admit that at least there was something in the Spiritualist's position. Since those men had come forward, machinery had been put in motion. They had stirred up a nest of opponents who would do anything to prevent the progress of the cause in future. What were they, as Spiritualists, going to do? Were they going under? No; if there was anything in Spiritualism worth holding tight they must stand by it, whatever the consequences! (Applause.) He was not a candidate for prison, but if it was a matter of denying their principles and, in denying those principles, denying God, then it was better to face the fiery furnace. (Applause.) Another distinguishing mark in the school of thought of Spiritualism was that it was not born on this side of life. The world had drifted into materialism, and they believed that to bring it back to the fold, God had raised up modern Spiritualism to convince it that the grave was not its goal. Twelve months ago he had stood by the grave of his only sister, and he could not but note that the minister prayed for her husband, for himself (Mr. Davis)—for everybody, in fact, except for his sister. If, as they knew, at death the released spirit entered into a new and unfamiliar environment, surely it should not be denied our prayers. Mr. Davis wanted his hearers to remember that the whole fabric of Spiritualism depended on its phenomena. On this point he expressed himself very strongly, even going the length of declaring that the day they announced that phenomena would be taken from their platform he would go outside the movement. In conclusion, he wanted it to go forth from that Convention and from each one of the societies, that they were not afraid of prison bars or anything else. (Renewed applause.)

In the course of the evening, Miss Louie Watson sang two fine solos. The total collection taken on behalf of the funds of the Union at the three meetings was £11 3s. 9d.

A PSYCHIC HOSPITAL.

AN OLD SUGGESTION REVIVED.

Writing from Camberwell, J. M., an old reader of *LIGHT*, who is now lying on what he expects to be his deathbed, refers to a letter he contributed to our columns in May, 1900, supporting the suggestion of a correspondent, "An Anglican Clergyman," for the establishment of a psychic hospital, in which patients should be treated by magnetic healers. Our correspondent desires to revive the suggestion, and mentions the case of a man going to three ordinary hospitals without avail, and then curing himself by the aid of advice received from the unseen world. Several people supported the suggestion at the time, one of them, a nurse, proposing that a house should be taken, with public wards for poor patients and private accommodation for paying patients. Dr. Hector Waylen, of Mill Hill, took a great interest in the proposal, and an effort was made to provide funds, but we heard no more of the matter, although it was suggested that such a hospital would be a worthy memorial to that gifted woman, Emma Hardinge Britten, who passed away in October of the previous year. Perhaps the effort of a sick man to revive interest in the idea may bear better fruit.

THE LATE LADY STAPLEY.

In *LIGHT* of March 24th last appeared an obituary notice of Lady Stapley, who passed to the higher life in the early part of that month. Following it was an allegory, "The River of Death," taken from a little work published by her in 1902. We have now received a small memorial volume, "The River of Death and Other Allegories," containing some of the writings by which, as Sir Richard Stapley tells us in the Foreword, she was best known beyond her own immediate circle of friends. The book is prefaced by an elegiac poem by Mr. Cloudesley Brereton—a delightful ode inspired by the fragrant life of love and service on earth, which is Lady Stapley's best memorial. Then follows a series of apologues from her pen, told with simplicity, yet with a picturesque art and a flavour of deep wisdom. The allegory from which the book takes its title, and another, entitled "The Wheel and the Furnace," are amongst the best. A poem, "The Hidden Name," of high quality both of thought and diction, rounds off the contents of the little book, which is published by John M. Watkins (1s. net).

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THE LINES OF ADVANCE.

A SURVEY AND SOME REFLECTIONS.

The addresses and discussions at the Convention of the Union of London Spiritualists at South-place Institute on Thursday, the 17th ult., were, as will be seen, concerned with questions of principles and policy in connection with Spiritualism as an organised movement—with definite propagandist aims. Some of them were vital questions, and it is well that they should be thoroughly ventilated and discussed. In the meantime, however, it may be permissible to offer some remarks on the subject from our own standpoint.

It has long seemed to us that the followers of our movement may be divided broadly into two great parties—the organised and the unorganised. Those who are only familiar with its societies and groups have little idea of the great number of persons who, although they accept the facts of Spiritualism and follow with interest the career of the movement in its periodical literature, take no part in its propaganda work, and who, indeed, are in many cases generally opposed to the making of converts. We have heard this attitude hotly denounced many times, although experience has shown us that there is a great deal to be said for it. In the last analysis, of course, the matter resolves itself into a question of the individual judgment of each person concerned. After becoming convinced of psychical facts and accepting the only interpretation which covers the whole ground, everyone has the right to decide for himself whether he will become a propagandist or, on the other hand, proceed quietly on his way and reserve his testimony until it is asked for. Of course, there are extremes in each case—the "hot gossellers," full of zeal untempered by discretion, and the coldly indifferent "believers" who, while accepting the facts, are content to surrender themselves entirely to other interests. Both are to be condemned, as extremes always are. Our concern at the moment is with the many earnest people whom the subject of organisation and propaganda divides into two classes. Amongst our readers, as we know, are large numbers who are none the less loyal and useful adherents that they do not belong to any local society or attend the many Sunday evening services which signalise the existence of Spiritualism as a religious movement.

Now, it is an important thing to recognise the existence of both these forces, moving, as they do, on lines more

or less parallel with each other, but rarely coming into touch, because unless both are taken into account no accurate judgment can be formed of the power and influence of Spiritualism as a whole. Quite frequently we have heard this movement spoken of as though its activities were wholly included in the statistics of the various societies throughout the country, to which, or to most of which, it presents itself in a religious aspect. It is well to remind those who take this view, of the large unorganised power represented by thousands of persons who are never likely to be drawn into organisations avowedly Spiritualistic, but who yet serve the truth in their own fashion as centres of information and guidance to those kindred minds who desire to be enlightened on what to-day has become the most vital question of the time, although its full importance has not yet been manifested.

Long ago, after a review of the propagandist activities of our missionary friends, we expressed the view that the progress and development of Spiritualism, as a *truth* as well as a body of facts, would come from without rather than from within. We found on the inside of the subject a depressing amount of parochialism; it seemed in some quarters to be crystallising into mere sectarianism with a standard of values altogether out of relation with the facts of existence at large. There was a lack of the sense of proportion, a tendency to exalt mediocrity and to confer distinction on those who were notable only in the narrow limits which had been imposed on the subject, and quite unknown outside of it. It seemed to us, rightly or wrongly, that some large influx of the life of the outer world, although it might at first appear to wash away certain lines of demarcation, could not fail in the end to have a quickening effect on the movement. We had no fear of the results. The essential truths would, we felt, ride the incoming waves as lightly as seabirds. There is no such "stormy petrel" as a truth.

As to the question of propaganda, that undoubtedly has a large and important place, and we have always recognised the fact, although unable to endorse all the claims made for it. We have said before that the number of heads counted by any movement was of comparatively small moment—it was more important to discover the quality of intelligence which those heads happened to represent. We doubt not some of the criticism directed against propagandist methods has been evoked by those displays of official incapacity, stupidity and unfitness the existence of which was lamented at the Convention. A small army of thoroughly efficient units is more valuable than an untrained horde, however numerous. But on this question of propaganda we are inclined to take high ground. All vital truths like this of life after death have a tendency to *propagate themselves* in ways not perceptible to the superficial observer. There is a mental and spiritual contagion by which ideas pass from mind to mind without speech. The best form of propaganda is that which relies on the quality of spiritual attraction. A great thinker once said that if a craftsman could make some common object—it might be a knife or a shoe—better than any of his fellows, the men who wanted his wares would find him out if he lived in the middle of a dense forest. When we offer only the best, the world will come to us; we shall not need to go to it, to argue or to persuade. A great truth makes its own finest appeal—we may even mar its effect by standing between it and those who feel its attraction. That, briefly and inadequately expressed, is our own attitude towards this question of propaganda, but we should never wish to enforce it upon others, any more than we would wish to impose upon them the central truth for which we stand.

When the man is ready for a revelation, the revelation infallibly comes. The spirit attracts truth as the magnet attracts iron.

Finally, a word on the subject of the hostile demonstrations and the attacks, overt and covert, which are made on the subject, with the idea of suppressing it. While we may meet these in varying ways, each appropriate to the particular line of thought and action most natural to us, it is well always to remember that those attacks which are inspired by malice, ignorance, fear, or other unworthy motives, contain within themselves the seeds of their own defeat. If that which we hold as a truth cannot survive the most furious onslaughts of its enemies and emerge the stronger and the brighter for the ordeal, then it is not a truth, and we have no use for it. But it has survived all its previous seasons of trial, and to-day is growing in power and influence, imperceptibly, it may be, but surely. Moreover, there is no better test of the fitness of those who serve it than that now afforded by a period of adversity which is more on the surface of things than in the heart of them. Efficiency is a great thing, but loyal devotion is even greater. It instructs the ignorant, ennobles the humble, strengthens the weak, and it adds a new lustre to those who, being intelligent, advanced and strong, give of their best to its service.

THE MEDIUM'S FEE.

By MRS. PHILIP CHAMPION DE CRESPIGNY.

The suggestion at present much in the air that mediums whose conditions of life place them under the necessity for earning money should be in some manner subsidised or made independent of the usual fee, does not, it seems to me, quite meet the case. Any benefit arriving directly or indirectly, whether promiscuous fees on their own account, or a settled salary under the auspices of college or committee, leaves their position open to the same objection—temptation in stress of circumstances to “fake” in order to preserve their means of subsistence. So long as they are liable by failure to forfeit anything, the objection holds good, and one presumes that no college or society would settle upon them a fixed income for life whether their mediumistic gifts failed or not. The vexed question remains, how are they to live?

Why should the world at large expect to benefit by their invaluable gifts and give nothing in return? Why should the artist, whose inspiration is supposed to be derived from the highest sources, sell the results of that inspiration to the highest bidder without incurring contumely? The answer would probably be, because in the artist's profession opportunity for deception is not so easily at hand; but does not this argue that the true reason on the part of the public for objection to the medium's fee is its own protection at the least exertion to itself? Why should the public be spared the onus of separating the wheat from the tares in that particular profession more than in any other? That lawyers have been known to cheat is no reason for advocating that the lawyer's fee should be done away with!

Surely the rational remedy for the situation is that the public should get rid of one more “old time” prejudice and acknowledge the right of the medium to compensation for the exercise of a gift that draws upon her very life-force and generally unfits her for a more strenuous form of work.

Why people should expect to be “spoon-fed” along this line more than any other seems somewhat of a mystery.

MATTER, were it never so despicable, is Spirit, the manifestation of Spirit. Were it never so honourable, can it be more? The thing Visible, nay, the thing Imagined, the thing in any way conceived as Visible, what is it but a garment, a clothing of the higher, celestial Invisible?—CARLYLE.

THE DEEPER PROBLEMS OF PSYCHIC RESEARCH.

SOME LARGER ASPECTS OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

An Address by Dr. Ellis T. Powell delivered at Steinway Hall on Sunday evening, May 20th, 1917.

The enquiry and the propaganda which have their focus in societies like the Marylebone Spiritualist Association are very largely confined to one subject, the individual survival of bodily death. It is a sublime subject. Taken by itself, it is probably the most supreme problem which can occupy the mind of man. But it may be doubted whether our various societies do well to confine themselves so entirely to this one aspect of psychic research. After all, man's survival of bodily death may be the central fact of psychic science, but it is by no means the whole, or even the greater portion thereof. An entire lifetime might be absorbed by the scientific study of the sun alone; but an astronomer who should thus devote himself exclusively to the central luminary would miss all the fascinating beauty and suggestion that are to be found in a science that also includes within its scope the planets and satellites of our own system, the suns of other systems—called by us the fixed stars—as well as the comets, the nebulae, the spirals, and all the other stupendous phenomena of the stellar universe. I cannot but think that we similarly warp our minds when we allow the problem of human survival, taken by itself, to fill practically the whole psychic arena. Psychic science, properly so called, is concerned, and deeply concerned, with a whole multitude of happenings and manifestations, many of them only remotely connected with the immortality of the spirit. For instance, from the moment when we are assured of survival, a true psychic science must ask *where* the life is perpetuated, under what conditions, with what new faculties suited for the fresh environment, and with what prospects of still further progress to yet higher planes of existence? All these are cognate subjects, and all of transcendent importance. They are the problems of our part in, and our relationship to, the cosmos. I want to turn your attention this evening to some of these collateral fields of investigation, to what I have ventured to call the Deeper Problems of Psychic Research. Even in the middle of a world-war, a little hard thinking will do you good.

By its advent into these collateral fields of investigation psychic science has already removed the greatest stumbling block from the path of Christianity. It shows that many of the events which signalled the life of the Founder of Christianity are demonstrably within the range of ascertained scientific law. In course of time it will doubtless bring every fact of Christ's life within the orbit of its ambitious research. It will show that all the events of that wondrous life were within, and not without, the realm of law.

Long ago, in fact, St. Paul declared (Coloss. i. 15-17), that “Christ is the visible representative of the Eternal God, the first-born and Lord of all creation. For in Him was created the Universe of things in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, thrones, dominions, principedoms, powers—all were created, and exist, *through* and *for* Him. And He is before all things, and in and through Him the Universe is a harmonious whole.” (Dr. Weymouth's translation—James Clark and Co.)

These great words (as Dr. Dale says) give us a glimpse of vast and fruitful provinces of truth which are almost unknown to us. They have been traversed from time to time by the solitary path of adventurous speculation, but the Church has never made her home there: the golden harvests are unreaped; not even a wandering sect has pitched its tents and fed its flocks on those rich and boundless plains. They belong to a remote and glorious realm lying far beyond the frontiers of familiar truth—a realm whose mountain ranges and whose rivers are laid down in no theological survey which the Church has accepted as authentic, and whose wealth has never enriched the common thought of Christendom. All things were created “in Him,” “by Him,” “for Him”; “in Him all things consist”—these wonderful words are still “dark with excess of light.” They affirm the existence and define the character of relations between the Divine personality of the Lord Jesus

Christ and the universe which we have never been able to grasp ; but a clear conception of these relations is indispensable to a satisfactory theory of the Atonement.*

The existence of relations, obviously psychic, between Christ and the universe, so subtle that the boldest speculation of Christendom has never attempted their analysis, may well emphasise our realisation of the truth that the demonstrated survival of bodily death is but an elementary fact of psychic science, and that all the great ocean of psychic truth lies to be discovered still. But in survival we have the key and the path.

Thus the facts of Christianity cease to be a suspension or a defiance of the laws of the Universe. They are no longer a kind of confusing intrussion into an otherwise orderly sequence of phenomena ordained and ruled by God. They are a deeper fulfilment, not an arbitrary breach, of law. If we ask ourselves wherein, then, lies the importance of Christ's work, the answer is that He possessed what was, in the time of His mortal life, a unique knowledge of the laws of the Universe. He was in some adeptual relation to it—as St. Paul definitely declares—and therefore He was capable of bringing life and immortality to light. In a word, your psychic searchlight irradiates a gloom which all the candles of dogmatic theology have failed to illuminate. But there is obviously much more here than the mere question of the survival of personality. That, as I said, is one fact of a vast science, just as the discovery of Neptune was a solitary, though a magnificent, triumph of mathematical and astronomical research—tremendous by itself, but by no means so colossal when regarded in relation to a thousand related achievements.

The materialist tells us that the physical brain makes consciousness as the liver secretes bile. Destroy the brain, says he, and you destroy consciousness, for thought is only a function of the brain. To that alleged truism telepathy makes answer, by demonstrating, as we believe, the fact of discarnate consciousness where there is no physical brain to secrete it. So that here, if we are right, we find thought without brain. And no sooner does your psychic science place you upon *that* promontory than you see that it reverses the old conception of the respective positions of matter and spirit. Matter does not produce consciousness, but simply limits and hampers its manifestations. Matter keeps mind within the limits of sensation, while the free spirit roams the boundless realms of intellect and insight. I am looking through a window at a beautiful view. Suddenly somebody draws down a dark blind and shuts out the prospect. Has the landscape ceased to exist because I can no longer see it? By no means. My power of vision is unimpaired in itself, though it has been subjected to an intervention in the shape of the blind, which momentarily destroys its efficacy. At the side of the blind, maybe, I can just catch a glimpse of the obscured beauty outside. Maybe it is raised a little at the bottom, so that by stooping I can again look out, perhaps only with difficulty, upon the vista. Even so does consciousness, our means of contact with the eternal realities of the spirit world, stream through our brain in various ways—here in the shape of clairvoyance, there as clairaudience, here again as healing magnetism, and there once more in dream and trance, when the spirit for awhile shakes off material fetters and wings its way to its native habitation. Matter has been aptly compared to a great dam or breakwater, against which the waves of spirit are for ever breaking. Here and there, as the tide rises higher, they break over the dam and the spray comes flying into our cognisance in the shape of messages from that other world that lies beyond. In the vivid language of the late Professor William James, "We need only suppose the continuity of our consciousness with a mother sea, to allow for exceptional waves occasionally pouring over the dam"—and opening the mind with a new influx and a new insight, into contact with that infinitely greater life whence it comes, and whither it shall return. Only thus far we have concentrated our attention on the dam of matter, ignoring the great ocean of spirit that lies beyond. And psychic science has brought us again to right perspective, by reminding us that we want to

sail out upon that ocean, instead of remaining for ever forlorn upon the breakwater, the physical life which hampers and confines faculties otherwise boundless in ambition and potentiality. But here are deeper problems than the mere survival of physical death.

(To be continued.)

THE AMENDMENT OF THE WITCHCRAFT AND VAGRANCY ACTS.

A DISSENTIENT VIEW.

Though opinion at the recent meeting at South Place was unanimously in favour of agitation for the amendment of the Witchcraft and Vagrancy Act, Spiritualists are not all agreed on the matter. At least one dissentient voice has been raised. In a long letter from Newcastle, Lieut. W. J. McIntosh (who informs us that he is a keen Spiritualist, known in Stratford, E., as well as in the town from which he writes, and where he has been stationed after suffering from shell shock at the Front), deprecates the attempt to obtain amendment of the law as it affects Psychic Science. He thinks the effort will be futile. We do *not*; having, perhaps, better opportunities of knowing the *latent* strength of this movement than our correspondent. Having registered this opinion he thus proceeds (we can only give portions of the very long letter he sends):—

Facts must be faced unflinchingly, even though they cause pain to those we have considered friends. There is not the slightest doubt that absence of some check on the rising tide of tricksters and charlatans who have performed spurious imitations of psychical phenomena, in the name of Spiritualism, has proved in the highest degree derogatory to this great cause. The medium who charges a guinea or half a guinea for a gift that should be looked upon as sacred is, in my opinion, not true to the philosophy of Modern Spiritualism, and should not be permitted, with the connivance of any law, to ply his trade, for nothing tends to generate fraud more than commercialism, and commercialism and philosophy can never be well mated.

As the result of some conversation I have had with representatives of the law, I have come to the conclusion that the law is not opposed to the private practice of Spiritualism, but only to the gallery-playing of the fortune-tellers, and to the counter-jumping tactics of the would-be prophets. Therefore I regard the law as a potential friend and ally.

If it be possible to collect £5,000 for such a questionable objective [as amendment of the Vagrancy and Witchcraft Acts], why could it not be equally possible to gather £100,000 towards the birth of an endowment for the maintenance of accredited mediums, who would then be paid reasonable salaries, and at once be elevated to the dignity of ministers of any other religion? I confess that a feeling of nausea possesses me every time I hear the chairman of a meeting begging for the speaker or medium. It is dignity we require, not squalor and secrecy.

The true Spiritualist should not put material position first, though, of course, he need not neglect it; and if his materialistic contemporaries try to impair his worldly standing, I do not think they will succeed: Sir Oliver Lodge is still an authority in the world of Science in spite of the production of "Raymond."

After all, it is not the law we are fighting, it is the impurity of our movement, the materialism of ourselves, lack of universal sympathy among us, and paucity of financial and educational unity in the various societies.

It is the scientific investigator who will at length procure our egress from the embryonic state, and he cannot do this in a moment; there are ages of bigotry to be conquered, miles of territory to be explored, before we have the right to try to force our convictions on the world. Till we have perfected intercommunication between the discarnate and ourselves, our position of righteous indignation is untenable, and even presumptuous.

I do hope this abortive effort will not be allowed to come to maturity, and that the contemplated expenditure of hard-earned money will be diverted into a loftier, healthier channel. There is a hideous war rampant, and poverty and pain are stalking the erstwhile pleasant pastures of our island. Those evils must, in my opinion, be mitigated before anything else.

In a postscript to his letter, Lieut. McIntosh writes:—

Spiritualism is not altogether despised by the officers I have met—indeed, I have convinced quite a number that "there is

* Dr. Dale, "The Atonement," p. 7.

something in it," and their general attitude is that "it seems impossible, but, of course, I don't know."

Spiritualism, we may tell our correspondent, is a very much stronger thing than he appears to suppose. The various points he makes as regards the legal position are well understood by those principally concerned in the agitation. He apparently fails to realise that we are not asking for a repeal of the law, but merely its amendment, in which provision for the punishment of tricksters shall be preserved.

MATERIALIZATION SEANCES AND THEIR AFTER EFFECTS.

A SUGGESTED SAFEGUARD.

By J. W. MACDONALD.

Some sixteen months ago, in company with Mr. W. H. Robinson, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, I had a sitting with a lady, who is a medium—not professionally so. One of the controls who manifested through her was a lady whom Mr. Robinson had known in earth-life, and with whom he had sat for materialisations. She said she had changed her opinions since she had passed over to the other side, and regarded sitting for materialisation phenomena as dangerous, for the elements or substances to produce the materialisations were taken from the sitters, used and then put back, and often the elements were not put back to the same sitters from whom they were respectively taken; hence a healthy person might receive back an unhealthy element or substance which might not belong to him or her.

This factor has, undoubtedly, to be reckoned with: and in any case what is returned is in a diminished condition. Is there a remedy?

In the "Harbinger of Light" (Melbourne) is appearing a series entitled "Leaves from my Psychic Diary," consisting of communications received through a well-developed psychic by automatic writing. They are of extreme interest, and in the issue of October, 1916 (p. 200) is a message purporting to be from Paracelsus, the celebrated magnetic healer (born 1493, died 1541), in which he says:—

The power of many mediums, as you well know, is derived from those sitting in your circles, plus that of the disembodied spirits who mix the two qualities of magnetism to enable them to produce the phenomena. Especially so is it in materialisation, when the vital force or magnetism, which has been, for the time being, taken from the medium, is returned, minus some magnetism that has been dissipated or burnt up in the process. As the body is composed for the greater part of water, the loss is most rapidly made up again by drinking a quantity of water immediately after the phenomena have ceased, for then the conditions are more favourable to the transmuting of the fluid (water) into the natural fluids of the body.

If any are in the habit of sitting for materialisation and feel depleted after it, the above remedy might be tried and the results noted as to whether it is effectual to meet the need.

AN OXFORD WORTHY.

From the "Daily Chronicle" of the 23rd ult:—

To-day Oxford is celebrating the tercentenary of the birth of Elias Ashmole, "the greatest virtuoso and curioso that ever was known or read of in England before his time." As astrologist, alchemist, herald, antiquary, engraver, his thirst for knowledge was insatiable. He was made an M.D., had Government offices, became an early Freemason, followed the Rosicrucians, and had "the true matter of the philosopher's stone bequeathed to him as a legacy." His large library of printed books and MSS. he handed over to Oxford University. As the final load departed, he wrote: "The last load of my rarities was sent to the barge and this afternoon I relapsed into the gout." A humorist, too!

The old attitude towards astrologers compares curiously with the modern one.

It is only by revealing the Divine that is in us that we may discover the Divine in others,—MAETERLINCK.

LIFE THAT LIVES FOR EVER.

"THE GLORY OF GOING ON."

Few of our readers will need to be convinced of the reality of human survival of death. But immortality, the eternal persistence of the individual soul, is another question, although it may well be argued that survival of death is in some sort a demonstration of immortality. In a recent issue of the "Christian Commonwealth," the Rev. Joseph Fort Newton dealt with the matter in a sermon entitled "The Eternal Values," from which we make the following extracts:—

Surely the whole question of immortality is a question of the conservation of the values of life. First Affirmation, then Realisation, and finally a treasuring up of the ineffable wealth of moral and spiritual worth. What are the supreme values of life? Not in what we possess, not what we know, not even what we do, but what we are. They are personal qualities. The noblest thing earth has to show the stars is a pure, refined, valiant personality. The ideal and goal of the universe, so far as we can know its purpose, is the growth of heroic human souls. St. Paul saw in the groans and travail cries of Nature the birth-throes of the Sons of God, and his vision is verified by the science of to-day. What is evolution but a tracing of the age-long story of the struggle of Nature upward out of mud to mind, out of matter to spirit, out of savagery to saintliness? They ask too much who ask us to think that these treasures, so high and hard-won, are cast at last as rubbish to the void. How, then, are they preserved in face of death?

There are those who say that personal immortality is not needed to conserve the values of life. Only God is eternal, and such values as our little lives have return to Him, absorbed in His life as a candle fades into the sunlight, as a dewdrop slips into the sea. No moral worth is ever lost. Such an idea seems very lofty and profound, but the poet who wrote the lines—

"The forces that were Christ
Have taken new forms and fled,"

wrote words without meaning. It is impossible for two reasons. First, they are personal forces, and if personality ends in death they end too. The notion of love as a quality of God, of which Jesus was a fleeting form, and the value of which He, dying on the Cross, surrendered, is absurd. Second, such qualities are not entities to be abstracted from persons and absorbed by another. They cannot be transferred.

No, if the bells are tolling a march to everlasting death in which Jesus and Judas sleep together, all moral value erased in dust, let us face the fact, and not attempt to muffle their tones with seductive phrases. Stately, grave and noble were the lines of George Eliot, who, when she lost faith in personal immortality, prayed that she might join the Choir Invisible—

"Of those immortal dead who live again,
In minds made better by their presence,"

but they tell us very little. Our influence and example may impress our fellows for good or ill, becoming a part of the body of law by which the race is ruled. But what is the nature of that influence? It is not that our spirit passes into them, but that it evokes in them like qualities of their own. What though Sappho sing divinely and her song go sobbing adown the years, if she be choked in dust? Wherefore the lives of saints and martyrs, if it be only that in a dim far time a few men shall be utterly good and wise? Then what? At last the earth will grow cold, the race will vanish, and the Choir Invisible will no longer be the gladness of the world! Death will reign and every moral value vanish!

What of it? someone will ask, seeking a last refuge from "the malice of obliterated life." Is not virtue its own reward, its own sweetness and satisfaction? Is not morality worth while, even if pity be the root of it? Assuredly; but what is the reward of virtue if it be not the glory and the opportunity of more virtue, the glory, as Tennyson sang, of going on and still to be, that we may be better? Else it were better if the earth had remained like the moon, "a mass of slag, idle and without a tenant." No, no: think it all through, and you will see that personal immortality is the only imaginable way of conserving the precious values of love, mercy, justice, character—values which the universe toiled through long eras to achieve, and which humanity has aspired so long to realise.

We are asked to announce that during the continuance of "summer time" the Sunday evening services of the Marylebone Association at Steinway Hall will commence punctually at 7 p.m.

EARTHLY OPINIONS AND SPIRITUAL REALITIES.

A STORY FROM SWEDENBORG.

In one of his "Memorable Relations" Swedenborg describes a conversation in the spirit world between ancient Sages and three strangers bringing fresh reports from our earth. When told of the discoveries made by Swedenborg's open vision, the Sages asked, "What do the people on the earth think of such information?" . . . Then the Priest [who was one of the strangers] said, "Those of our order when they first heard such relations called them visions, then fictions; afterwards they insisted that the man had seen spectres, and lastly they hesitated and said, 'Believe them who will; we have hitherto taught that a man will not be in a body after death until the day of the last judgment.'" Then the Sages asked, "Are there no intelligent persons among those of your order who can prove and evince the truth that a man lives after death?" The Priest replied, "There are indeed some who prove it, but not to the conviction of others. Those who prove it say that it is contrary to sound reason to believe that a man does not live a man till the day of the last judgment, and that in the meantime he is a soul without a body. What is the soul, or what is it in the interim? Is it a vapour or some wind floating in the atmosphere, or something hidden in the bowels of the earth? Have the souls of Adam and Eve, and of all their posterity for six thousand years, been flying about in the universe, or been shut up in the bowels of the earth, waiting for the last judgment? What can be more anxious and miserable than such a condition?" . . . On hearing these things the Grecian sages said, "We, during our abode in the world, from the inductions of reason, believed in the immortality of the souls of men; and we also assigned regions for the blessed, which we call the Elysian Fields, and we believed that the soul was a human image or appearance, but of a fine and delicate nature, because spiritual."

After this the assembly turned to the second stranger, who in the world had been a politician. He confessed that he did not believe in a life after death, and that respecting the new information which he had heard about it, he thought it all fable and fiction. "In my meditations on the subject," said he, "I used to say to myself, How can souls be bodies? Does not the whole man lie dead in the grave? Is not the eye there; how can he see? Is not the ear there; how can he hear? Whence must he have a mouth wherewith to speak? Supposing anything of a man to live after death, must it not resemble a spectre, and how can a spectre eat and drink? Whence can it have clothes, houses, meats, &c.? Besides, spectres, which are mere aerial images, appear as if they really existed; and yet they do not. These and similar sentiments I used to entertain in the world concerning the life of men after death, but now, since I have seen all these things, and touched them with my hands, I am convinced by my very senses that I am a man as I was in the world; so that I know no other than that I live now as I lived formerly, with only this difference that my reason now is sounder. At times I have been ashamed of my former thoughts."

The Philosopher [the third stranger] gave much the same account of himself as the Politician had done; only differing in this respect, that he considered the new relations which he had heard concerning a life after death as having reference to opinions and hypotheses which he had collected from the ancients and moderns. When the three strangers had done speaking, the Sophi were all in amazement; and those who were of the Socratic school said that, from the news they had heard from the earth, it was quite evident that the interiors of human minds had been successively closed; and that in the world at this time a belief in what is false shines as truth, and an infatuated ingenuity as wisdom.

THE many friends of Madame D'Espérance in this country will feel much relieved to learn that she is no longer in Germany, having arrived safely in Copenhagen on the 18th ult. Her address is c/o Mr. J. S. Jensen, 16, Vesterbrogade, Copenhagen, B.

THE LADEN NET.

We take the following from the "Daily News" of the 22nd ult. It is not a unique instance. An author well-known in the literature of Spiritualism is said to possess the same gift, and has many times been a welcome passenger in fishing boats:—

Here is a remarkable story, sent me by a correspondent. The owners of a little fleet of fishing vessels offer a prize of £300 each year to the skipper with the best haul of fish. It is almost invariably won by the same man, whose aptitude for his calling is such that time and again, when his comrades, the skippers of the little fleet, are minded to put back, certain that there is no fish to reward them, he will push on, saying, "I don't know how I know it, but I know we'll get summat." "He can smell it," they say, laughing. From a distance of 120 miles he has been known to make for the coast of Scotland without any obvious reason, and find there again and again a great haul of fish. Perhaps heredity may have something to do with this remarkable gift. I should like to know the man's history.

A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF JUNE 4TH, 1887.)

Professor Elliott Coues delivered this year an address at the commencement of the National Medical College at Washington, which he has now published under the title of "A Woman in the Case." . . . The address is an earnest plea for the admission to equal rights with men in the study and practice of medicine. . . . When Dr. Coues came to consider the reasons why woman has been systematically excluded from access to the tree of knowledge, he put his finger on three great stumbling-blocks in her way: Religious intolerance, scientific insolence and social tyranny. For the first says, practically, "You cannot be trusted with your own soul. I will take charge of that, and tell you what to believe." The next says, "You cannot be trusted with your own mind. I will do the thinking for you." The last says, "You cannot be trusted with your own person. I will regulate your conduct."—From "Notes by the Way," by "M.A. (OXON.)."

Public exhibitions of hypnotism have been interdicted in Germany, Italy, and Austria. This is but one side of the shield, however, and brilliant therapeutical results have been reported by the skilled coterie of French physicians that has advanced our knowledge of hypnotism so much within the past few years.—From an article by WILLIAM NOYES.

ADVERTISEMENT COMPENSATION FUND.

Following is a list of donations received since those acknowledged in our last issue:—

	£	s.	d.
Miss E. Bonus	0	5	0
Croydon Spiritualists' Church	0	10	6
F. W. Grubbe	0	9	2
J. O.	0	5	0
Mrs. H. S. Robertson	0	5	0
Mrs. A. B. Webb	1	10	0

Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead, but fill their lives with sweetness now. Speak approving and cheering words while their ears can hear them, and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them. The kind things you will say after they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffin bestow now, and so brighten and sweeten their earthly homes before they leave them.—F. H. ROSCOE.

I CANNOT give the reason for it, but all history, both ancient and modern, attests the fact that no great misfortune happens either to a town or a province which has not been foretold by someone possessed of the power of prophecy, or else it has been announced by prodigies or other celestial signs. It is very desirable that the cause of this should be discussed by men acquainted with things both natural and supernatural, an advantage which we do not ourselves possess. Whatever may be the explanation, the thing itself cannot be questioned,—MACHIAVELLI.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, MAY 27th, &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. 1.*—Instructive address, "Spirit," by Mrs. Mary Davies, pianoforte selection by Mr. Field.—At 77, *New Oxford-street, W.C. 1.*—21st ult., Mrs. Florence Sutton, clairvoyance. Sunday next, Mr. Horace Leaf, see front page.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, *Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W.*—Address, "The Human Aura," by Mr. Horace Leaf; inspirational address by Mr. E. W. Beard. For Sunday next see front page.—I. R.

WIMBLEDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION.—Elevating address by Rev. Wm. Garwood. For prospective announcements, see front page.—R. A. B.

TOTTENHAM.—684, *HIGH-ROAD.*—Mr. Ernest Meads gave an address on "Spiritualism." Sunday next, conference with the Union of London Spiritualists, 3 and 7 p.m.—D. H.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—*PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD, PLUMSTEAD.*—Address by Mr. B. Wilkins. Sunday next, address by Miss Violet Burton.

RICHMOND.—14, *PARKSHOT (OPPOSITE PUBLIC BATHS).*—Mr. Stockwell gave an address; violin solo by E. Seller. Sunday next, Mrs. Neville. Wednesday, Mrs. Maunder, address and clairvoyance.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—*SURREY MASONIC HALL.*—Morning, Mrs. E. M. Ball; evening, Mr. H. Ernest Hunt, on "The Day of Pentecost." Sunday next, 11 a.m., Mr. G. T. Brown; 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. J. Vanstone.

MANOR PARK, E.—*THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.*—Address and clairvoyance, Mrs. Briggs. Sunday next, 6.30, address and clairvoyance, Mrs. Jennie Walker. 4th, 3 p.m., address and clairvoyance. 6th, 7.30, address and clairvoyance, Mrs. Podmore.—E. M.

READING.—*SPIRITUAL MISSION, 16, BLAGRAVE-STREET.*—Mr. E. B. Deadman gave addresses, morning and evening. Sunday next, Mr. J. J. Morse.

WRITING from Adelaide, a correspondent asks if we can give him any information concerning a writer named Edmunds, who, he believes, was a young poet and Spiritualist in 1882-83. We infer from our correspondent's letter that Mr. Edmunds was living in England at that time.

FAITH is not a bull-dog holding on to creeds we have outworn or convictions we have lost . . . faith is a willingness to receive God's truth however it may come to us. Faith is a readiness to change one's conviction the moment it has died. God teaches us anew every day.—E. S. STEVENS.

SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL.—On Whit Monday a well-attended and most successful Social and Dance in aid of the Parliamentary Fund was held by the Little Ilford Society of Christian Spiritualists. Thanks are due to the following artistes: Mrs. Agnes Watson, Miss Doris Hall and Mr. Watson (songs); Mrs. Marriott and Mr. Pleasance (recitations); Mrs. Wheeler (pianist). Dances were indulged in and were thoroughly enjoyed. All arrangements were carried out by Mr. Watson (president), who also acted as M.C.—E. M.

THE name of Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny will be well known to readers—to some as a contributor to *LIGHT*, to many others as an accomplished novelist and painter. Mrs. de Crespigny has just published a book of short stories—"Stories of To-day and Yesterday" (Mills & Boon, 6s.). Sunny and humorous sketches, they are well calculated to afford relief to those over-taxed by the tribulations of the time. They may even prove in some cases a welcome distraction to readers who seek a temporary change from too much psychic literature!

GARDEN CITY LECTURES.—At the evening service last Sunday at St. Jude-on-the-Hill, Hampstead Garden Suburb, the Rev. B. G. Bouchier, M.A., the vicar, announced two lectures on "The Life Beyond" by Dr. Ellis Powell, to be given at the Institute, in the Garden Suburb, on the 5th and 12th of June, at 8.30 in the evening. The lectures are primarily intended for churchpeople who desire to know something of the latest achievements and conclusions of psychic research and to obtain the information from one of themselves, for Dr. Powell is a member of the Anglican communion. Tickets and further details can be had from the churchwardens at St. Jude's.

Just before the outbreak of the great war, the German Socialist journal "Vorwärts" said, "England is right. At the point we have reached, the decision depends on Wilhelm II." And in that fatal August of 1914, Maximilien Harden, at that time the most famous and feared of German journalists, made the following candid avowal, "What is the use of miserable excuses? Yes, we have provoked this war. We rejoice in it. We have provoked it because we are sure of victory."

"HEALTH WITHOUT MEAT," by Mrs. Eustace Miles (Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1s. net) is a reissue, revised and enlarged, of a work entitled "Economy in War-Time," based on her husband's well-known dietetic principles, which was first published by the authoress in September, 1915. As explained in the introduction Mrs. Miles writes less for the food-reformer than for the meat-eater who is obliged to give up meat because of its present scarcity and high price, her main object being to suggest what to eat instead of meat, and how to cook it. The book contains a hundred and sixty recipes (including new ones) besides many useful culinary hints.

In the introduction to her little book, "Seven Visions of the Coming of Christ" (R. H. Allenson, Ltd., 1s. net), Mrs. R. J. Fox tells us that these visions came to her in May, 1911, on seven nights in succession, while she was staying at Bristol, where she had gone for healing treatment for rheumatism in her right arm, and that on awaking from each vision she wrote out what she had seen and heard, using her right and left hand alternately. Those of our readers who agree with the ideas so eloquently expressed in the Rev. F. Fielding-Ould's recent address at the Salon will probably sympathise with the following statement taken from one of the messages Mrs. Fox received: "The time is very near when the truth will be known that the division between the two worlds, visible and invisible, is very thin; but unless men see the spiritual connection with Jesus Christ, the knowledge will do them harm and make them proud and self-sufficient."

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