

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Gotha.

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

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This Alliance has been formed for the purpose of affording information to persons interested in Psychical or Spiritualistic Phenomena, by means of lectures and meetings for inquiry and psychical research.

Social Gatherings are also held from time to time. Members are admitted free to the Tuesday afternoon seances for illustrations of clairvoyance, and both Members and Associates are admitted free to the Friday afternoon meetings for "Talks with a Spirit Control," and to the meetings on Thursday, all of which are held at the rooms occupied at the above address.

Rooms are occupied at the above address, where Members and Associates can meet and attend seances for the study of psychic phenomena, and classes for psychical self-culture, free and otherwise, notice of which is given from time to time in **LIGHT**, and where they can read the special journals and use the library of works on Psychical and Occult Science. The reading-room is open daily to Members and Associates from 10 to 6 (Saturdays excepted).

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* Subscriptions should be made payable to the Hon. Treasurer, Henry Withall, and are due in advance on January 1st in each year.

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CONTENTS.

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|-----|
| Notes by the Way | 401 | Christmas Customs and Super- | 405 |
| The Power of Prayer | 402 | stitions | 405 |
| The Cheriton Mystery | 402 | L.S.A. Social Meeting | 405 |
| A Christmas Message | 403 | The Ghost of Borda Gardens | 406 |
| A Brave Clerical Utterance | 403 | Water Divining | 403 |
| A Generation Ago | 403 | Reading Spiritual Mission | 408 |
| Christmas, 1917 | 404 | Propaganda Work in Spirit- | 408 |
| Dr. Powell's Address | 404 | ualism | 408 |

The Christmas Holidays.

The offices of "LIGHT" and the London Spiritualist Alliance will be closed on Friday evening, 21st inst., and re-opened on Thursday, the 27th.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

In the Christmas Double Number of the "Strand Magazine" Sir A. Conan Doyle gives some interesting "personalia" about Mr. Sherlock Holmes, from which we gather that many people have the impression that Sherlock Holmes is an actual person—a conclusion distinctly complimentary to the creator of that character. Accordingly problems have been submitted to him from the real world. One of these was "rather upon the psychic plane." It came from a lady who had been given a curious old ring, snake-shaped and of dull gold. This she took from her finger at night. One night she omitted to do this and "had a fearsome dream in which she seemed to be pushing off some furious creature which fastened its teeth into her arm." She awoke with a pain in the arm, upon which appeared the imprint of a double set of teeth. After that she discarded the ring for some time. When she put it on again the strange nocturnal experience was repeated, and the ring was destroyed by being dropped into the hottest corner of the kitchen range. It is, as Sir Arthur remarks, an interesting little problem. We know the phenomena well enough under the names of psychometry and the stigmata; but who can explain them? In the same issue of the "Strand" Sir Oliver Lodge is the author of the first of a series of papers by the most eminent scientific men of the day dealing with the question, "What is likely to be the next great discovery or invention?" Sir Oliver suggests a reply by discoursing of the utilisation of Nature's more secret stores of energy—intra-atomic and etherial.

paratively small compass the work covers an extraordinary range of subjects, all connected more or less with its main thesis. It discusses Religion in all its fundamental aspects, treating also of spirit communion, reincarnation, Karma, Theosophy, Christian Science and other modern cults. Finally we have an impressive statement of the author's views concerning the Religion of the future, in the nature of a general prophetic forecast. Throughout we are struck by the well-balanced judgments, the judicial impartiality, with which the various religions and allied movements are reviewed. Withal there is, what is equally important in such a review, a high degree of insight and sympathy.

* * * *

Here are some of Mr. Colville's conclusions looking to the future of religion:—

If religion is to continue to exist in any organised forms [it] must be so intensely practical and unmistakably serviceable on its practical side that it will be impossible for any sane lover of social righteousness to complain that the Church is an indifferent force where social integrity is concerned. More and more are thoughtful persons coming to agree in large measure not only with Matthew Arnold, but also with Thomas Huxley, who, though an avowed agnostic, saw in an established Church a possible engine of social righteousness of tremendous power, provided that the Church lived up to its possibilities for conserving and directing energies directly bearing upon our pressing social and industrial problems. . . .

We shall look in vain for any definite revelation from the higher spiritual regions until we once for all turn away from the contentious wrangling of ambitious men and women who love arrogant rulership and still seek to compel the world to bow to their haughty declarations of assumed infallibility.

It may be mentioned as an example of the extent of Mr. Colville's survey that even the remarkable doctrines of Pastor Russell come under discussion. The book ends with a sentence the deep truth of which is often obscured by the triteness of the metaphor, "All trees must and will be judged finally solely by the fruits they bear."

* * * *

*** To all our readers we offer heartfelt wishes for the best the Season can bestow. If the New Year bring us not an honourable Peace, then may it give us all Courage, Calmness and Confidence to endure the worst that may befall.

THE ALLIANCE AND ITS WORK.

The late Mr. W. J. Colville was widely known not only as an eloquent speaker but as the author of several books on mental and psychic subjects. Shortly before his death, a year ago, a new book from his pen was in course of printing. This book, necessarily delayed, has now been published by Messrs. Rider and Son, Ltd. (3s. 6d. net). It is entitled "The Religion of To-morrow: A Study in the Evolution of Religious Thought," and is a good example of the clear style and breadth of view which characterised all Mr. Colville's utterances, spoken or written. In a com-

On the 18th August last we acknowledged the receipt of £50 from Mrs. T. R. Marshall, the first instalment of £100 kindly promised by her for providing the Alliance with a home suitable for the extension of its work, the establishment of a psychic laboratory, and other features. We have now gratefully to acknowledge the remaining £50, this generous donation forming the nucleus of a fund which we hope to raise shortly for the purposes indicated. We trust that by the co-operation of many friends, new and old, we may be able to place the Alliance on a basis of solid and efficient service, for which there is a great and growing need.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

A MESSAGE FOR THE DAY.

BY ERNEST MEADS.

More than once have we been told that our Divine Lord is permitting His world to purify itself. Even as the surgeon's knife is salutary and necessary to cut away a baneful growth, so this war had to be permitted that the elements of hatred and evil might destroy themselves. Many lives that would have been self-indulgent and useless have been stirred into heroic activity.

In the early part of the first week of October, amid the nerve-trying experience of air raids, the following message was received from a spirit who lived on earth long ago, leaving behind him a great reputation as a philosopher and seer:—

All goes well, very well! The means are having the desired result. The stream of life has started to flow afresh; and looking up the valley of time I see the dry bed moistening; further up the valley the tiny stream is trickling! I watch its slow growth and progress, how it freshens all it touches—I see the dry sticks and leaves starting to float in it as it trickles around the stones and pebbles, moistening their dry surfaces. I see it growing in volume as it comes down; and, standing on its bank, we are satisfied. . . . Animals and birds, scenting from afar the fresh water, come and revel in it, and in their way are refreshed as we are.

The dry, hard stones. What is it that moistens them? The terrors. Those places that you shrink from I see redolent with prayer—with terror first, but prayer comes out of it. Never mind how. Prayer comes from love, it also starts from fear. Life comes into the multitude out of death—the death that threatens them now from above. The dead bones shall rise up and shall live; they shall be a mighty host, and smile at the means that brought them life, the joy of living.

Mighty things of old I lived through, mighty things I have experienced. I tell you solemnly this: Each phase of life has its mighty marvels, different, but no less wonderful in each. As one who has had experience of many planes, I stand silent; as a spectator, seeing the wonderful sight of the heavens at night, can find no words wherewith to speak, but feels in silence. This feeling I have experienced on each plane, fresh marvel on marvel. We have but experienced one to experience another.

Age after age passes, but He is inexhaustible. He has no beginning, no end, no finality, no wearying, no limitation, only life, fresh life.

Oh, if you could but detach yourselves for a short space of consciousness and see, know, and feel the edge, the fringe of things that are—not will be, may be, or can be—but are!

Nothing that is, is shut off from the meanest. Nothing which is His, but it shall be thine and mine and all men's. It is His will, and we know it. He has said it: "Thou and every child of man art mine."

The paramount importance of prayer has, in a previous communication, been emphasised thus:—

Were you to take a spade and upturn a mass of leafy earth, you would disclose a number of worms wriggling and hurrying hither and thither; each resembles his fellow, there is no individuality in any of them: but suppose one of them were to raise himself and appeal to you by name, that one would become to you an individuality, marked and different from the struggling crowd hastening to hide themselves from the sunlight.

So, the masses of men, provided for by the Divine Father's wondrous laws—which, observed, bring success, but violated by ignorance or malice bring forth sorrow and failure—are without individuality until such time as they raise themselves from the earth and pray. At that instant the link is formed, the individuality developed, and they become known personally to the Father, living under the influence and guidance of higher and spiritual laws.

MISS FELICIA SCATCHERD is now editor of "The Asiatic Review."

MR. PHILIP L. CHAMBERS, a Canadian correspondent, writes: "Recently I took down from my bookshelf 'The Story of Creation,' by Edward Clodd, and, opening it at the introductory chapter, found my attention caught by the following citation from Spencer's 'First Principles': 'Positive knowledge does not and never can fill the whole region of possible thought. At the uttermost reach of discovery there arises and must ever arise the question, What lies beyond?'"

"THE CHERITON MYSTERY."

BY N. G. S.

The accounts of the "poltergeist" performances at Cheriton, appearing recently in the papers, exhibit the lay press in its usual attitude of never having heard of anything of the sort before. This attitude is probably quite honest; for the ignorance of the Press and of all our self-appointed critics is only surpassed by their assurance. But readers of LIGHT know well that these curious disturbances are very old and world-wide. Sir William Barrett gives several cases in his "Psychical Research," and ends his account with a confession of bafflement and perplexity. But in all these I do not find that the simplest method of investigation was ever employed. It is obvious that no research into matters of this kind can be complete unless some means are used for getting into touch with the poltergeist himself.

The discovery and investigation of an "unknown force in Nature" will not carry us far. The character of the disturbances shows clearly the action of an intelligent operator. Objects are thrown with definite aim; and sometimes they are not thrown, but show by their movement that "someone" is carrying them. Feet have been heard pattering along the passage. Clearly the assistance of a psychometrist, a clairvoyant, or an automatist is "indicated." We want a message from the poltergeist. (The psychical powers of the boy Penfold should be tested in the Cheriton case.)

One of Sir William Barrett's stories comes from ancient Greece. The poltergeist has been met with as far away as South Africa and India. In the case I have in mind, a girl at Kimberley was said to have had a spell cast over her by a Malay with whom she had had a love affair. Her food and the blankets on her bed would catch fire, and things were thrown about in the usual manner. Sir William Barrett mentions the Drummer of Tedworth, and seems to suggest that the phenomena were connected with the arrest of a vagrant drummer by the magistrate at whose house they occurred. Some years ago I visited a cottage in Herefordshire, where a "racketing ghost" had been playing its pranks for a week. By that time they had ceased, and the tenant's wife told me a gipsy had come to the cottage and informed her that the mischief was caused by the mother-in-law, who was still alive, practising witchcraft against them. The gipsy, it appears, had performed some sort of exorcism, and the pots and pans resumed their usual quiet demeanour.

Is it possible that we have here genuine cases of witchcraft surviving into the twentieth century? One thing everyone will have noticed. The poltergeist is mischievous, even malicious, but not murderous. He will break your crockery and pull the clothes off your bed, he will cut off your hair, he will throw bricks at you and cause you wounds, but he will not kill you. If he is a demon, he is not an utterly abandoned demon. I think sometimes he is just a spirit who unflatteringly and unaccountably prefers your room to your company. Perhaps you may be preparing a dug-out and disturbing his bones. I wish to emphasise this: that the agent is not a new and mysterious "force" but a person—a spirit of some kind—either a double of the living, a psychic body of the dead or a sub-human entity, of nature as yet unknown. The objects are not attracted to you by an obscure form of magnetism, but thrown with hands.

A THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY.—We rejoice in life because it seems to be carrying us somewhere; because its darkness seems to be rolling on towards light, and even its pain to be moving onward to a hidden joy. We bear with incompleteness, because of the completion which is prophesied and hoped for. —PHILLIPS BROOKS.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE.—At the special service at Steinway Hall to-morrow (Sunday) evening, the 23rd inst., Mrs. Wesley Adams will speak on "The Angels' Message." The soloists will be Mrs. Clare Godley, Miss Ethel Zillhart (cello), and Mr. H. M. Field (piano). The service will commence with an organ recital by Mr. A. Clegg, at 6 p.m.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE.

It is not the case, as is commonly thought, that Christ preached absolute self-sacrifice. Life cannot rest on a negation, and Christ realised that as much as anyone. To Christ, self-sacrifice was a means to an end, a condition of self-realisation, of life. And if Christianity, or any other religion, cannot bring life to men, make possible a richer, fuller experience, it must fail. Christ deliberately said, over and over again, that He came that we might have life: not existence merely, but a "more abundant life." Moreover, Christ lived an intensely social life; which fact, along with His definition of "the whole duty of man," viz., to love God, and one's neighbour as one's self, proves that He believed that life ought to be spiritual in its social, or man-to-man, relationships, as well as in his relationship with the Supreme Being. The sacrifice which Christ preached was always the sacrifice of the lower for the higher, of the material and temporal for the spiritual and eternal. To sacrifice wealth for love is not to sacrifice life, but to gain it: for it is to establish oneself in a profound spiritual environment, and thus to clothe one's life with new reality, with love and beauty. It is matter, the love of things physical and transient, that slays and enslaves men; and if we saw things truly, we should realise that only as we subordinate the material to the higher and purer love of the spiritual, do we really come into touch with the deeper springs of being, become true men and sons of God.

Materialism has had a long reign, but the day of its termination is at hand. For over fifty years we of the West have been developing our minds and quickening our wits; but, lacking the gift of love, we are threatened on all hands with strife and discord, with the result that some of the most "advanced" nations of the earth are being brought to the verge of ruin and despair. The hope of our age lies in the cultivation of this higher principle of love, in the discovery of the life-yielding power of fellowship. At all costs, materialism and selfishness must be abandoned; for, in an age so full of spiritual possibilities as ours they are suicidal; a huge menace to well-being and progress. Happily there are signs of a great spiritual awakening. Above the roar and rattle of the street and market-place we can hear the call of the enlightened; beneath the surface of our clamorous life we can feel a new pulse beating; beyond the glare and glamour of our lurid and over-coloured life we can see a clear white light breaking. The dawn of a new day is at hand, the day of our salvation. The love triumphant is approaching; the love that opens the door to the greatest thing in the world—Life; the love that is of God, and that, like God, is infinite and eternal.

WILFRED WELLOCK (From "Bibby's Annual").

THE VAGRANCY ACT.

H., a legal correspondent, writes enclosing the following note copied from one of the law journals. He thinks it well that this should be put on record, so that the trend of modern decisions may be known by all interested in mediumship. As will be seen by those who know the facts there are two slight inaccuracies in the description of the defendant but we give the item exactly as it appears:—

On a charge of pretending to tell fortunes contrary to Sect. 4 of the Vagrancy Act 1824, is intention to deceive one of the essential ingredients of the offence?

DAVIS v. CURRY (34 T. 24; 144 L.T. 10).

Yes, said the Divisional Court (Darling and Sankey, JJ.; Ivory, J., diss.), and the defendant is therefore entitled to call evidence to show that he honestly believed himself to possess the powers which he claimed to exercise, e.g., pretending to tell fortunes.

(See R. v. Entwistle (1899), 1 Q. B. 846, and Penny v. Hanson, 18 Q. B. D. 478) (C. & M. 364).

If any reader of LIGHT is willing to pass his copies on when read, Miss Dallas will be grateful if they may be sent to a Methodist minister: Rev. P. Willenburgh, Parava-street, Foot, Galle, Ceylon. He has expressed a strong wish to see LIGHT regularly.

A BRAVE CLERICAL UTTERANCE.

The Holy Trinity (Upper Chelsea) Parish Magazine for December contains a notable sermon by the Rector, the Rev. Dr. F. Homes Dudden (preached on the Sunday before All Souls' Day), in which he frankly affirms his belief that one principal function of the so-called dead is to minister to the living. "Why," he asks, "should such sacred ministry be deemed incredible?"

Suppose a man dies in battle who is a husband and a father, must not his first thought be to go back to his wife and children? Can you think that he would have any peace or happiness in the other world if he were to be separated entirely, for an indefinite period of time, from those who to him are the nearest and dearest? Why, of course he would not. How could he? He must long to reach his dear ones; and it seems to me hardly credible that a longing so natural, so eminently reasonable, should not be gratified. Is it likely, do you think, that God, who is Himself essential Love, and the Author, Sustainer and Sanctifier of all human love, would deny that legitimate craving of love, unless to gratify it were impossible? And obviously it is not impossible. Obviously there is nothing in the nature of things to make the return of the dead impossible. On the contrary, is it not true that the evidence at our disposal—the evidence of the Bible, the evidence of secular historians of every nation and every age, the evidence of folk tales and popular traditions, the evidence which in our own time is being collected and investigated by the Society for Psychical Research—is it not the fact that this immense accumulation of evidence points decidedly towards the conclusion that the dead can return and often do return, that they are still interested in the living, are still in touch with them, still commune with them, still in various ways affect them?

MISS LIND-AF-HAGEBY ON SPIRITUALISM AND RELIGIOUS RECONSTRUCTION.

On Tuesday, the 11th inst., at the Montgomery Hall, Sheffield, Miss Lind-af-Hageby delivered what is described by the "Daily Independent" as "a long and closely-reasoned address" on the subject of "The Place of Spiritualism in Religious Reconstruction." Councillor W. Appleyard, J.P., deputy Lord Mayor, presided over the meeting, which was very large, and held under the auspices of the district committee of the S.N.U. In the course of her address, Miss Lind said that she had investigated Spiritualism for twenty years, heard so-called spirit voices, and seen forms take shape which she recognised as those of people now dead whom she had known in the earth life. There was no doubt that these things were possible. The bulk of evidence was incontrovertibly in favour of the truth of the phenomena. She could not understand a Christian saying that Spiritualism was anti-Christian. It was the most ridiculous statement ever made, for the whole Christian creed was Spiritualism. In the coming reconstruction, Spiritualism must play an important part because it satisfied that hunger for knowledge which the Christian creed failed to satisfy.

A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF DECEMBER 24TH, 1887.)

DEATH OF PROFESSOR BALFOUR STEWART.—We regret to notice the premature cessation of a very busy and profitable life. Balfour Stewart, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S., Professor of Natural Philosophy in Owens College, Manchester, passed away in his sixtieth year on December 20th. . . . He had received the Rumford Medal of the Royal Society for his discovery of the law of equality between the absorptive and radiative powers of bodies. He was the author of a large number of scientific works of universally admitted weight and value. But he was best known to those interested in our subject by some too brief and rare addresses delivered from the President's chair to the Society for Psychical Research, and as joint author with Professor Tait of "The Unseen Universe."

ALL this scoffing talk about "spooks" can only come from people who do not believe at all in continued life. If they knew that those they loved were actually living on the other side, they could not apply a comic and vulgar word to them.—SIR A. CONAN DOYLE in "The Christian Commonwealth."

OFFICE OF "LIGHT," 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
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APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C. 2.

CHRISTMAS, 1917.

The great war, which was to have lasted three months, six months, a year, and other periods of similarly fallacious estimate, is now well into its fourth year and once more we approach those "so hallowed and so gracious" days which to the Christian world are sacred to the memory of the Prince of Peace. Learning caution by past experience, we speak with no certainty—something unforeseen may happen with dramatic suddenness between now and the time when these lines will appear—but it seems all too likely that once more we shall pass a Christmas racked with the pain and terror of war and all its brood of evils. Such a world-purging as that through which we are now passing is bound to test to the uttermost every resource of faith and fortitude. Only those who have finally assured themselves of the reality of the spiritual order "beyond these earthly mists and vapours dense" are protected against the attacks of despair.

Whenever the outer fringes of the Unseen World make themselves dimly manifest in the form of "psychic phenomena" we hear allusions from the outside to their mystery and unnaturalness. It is a queer inversion of the truth. We find the really strange and unnatural things in this world. One of them is the fact that a revelation so mighty and far-reaching as that conveyed by the word Spiritualism still takes so small a place in human counsels. The old tendency to make the trivial thing tremendous and the tremendous thing trivial is not yet outgrown after more than three years of an experience that must in the end infallibly open the eyes of the blind and give us a new and juster sense of human values. Nevertheless the old order is changing and the signs of it are before our eyes. Materialism, once so strong, boastful and self-confident, has become but a shadow of its old self. The arguments upon which it once relied have become effete, and when produced awaken only contempt and amusement amongst intelligent onlookers. The atmosphere of thought has undergone a great change. It is fatal to the superstitions of Materialism; for the case is altered to-day. The ideas of those who hold by the reality of the Unseen World are found to contain the germs of reality yet to grow into new and shapely forms, vital to the healing of the nations. The notions of Materialism as regards that world are seen to be the real superstitions, having no root in the Universal life and hastening to decay.

Human survival is a great message, attested now by intellect as well as by intuition, by science as well as by

theology, by practice no less than by theory. But our message is larger even than that, and it may well be repeated as the contribution of true Spiritualism to a festival that for many might otherwise be a dark shadow of its old self. Our message is the survival not only of man but of everything that is of real importance to his welfare. Nothing perishes but that which has in it the seeds of mortality, and was therefore bound to perish at some time. But all else survives, and that which remains being the only permanent is the only good. *Cetera desunt*—this is "all that matters."

Christmas, then, while it comes to throw into deeper relief the spectacle of a desolated world, has for us a golden core. The old forms are shattered—the Spirit remains, to renew itself in higher and brighter forms in the days to come. We can hardly look for a merry Christmas in the old sense of the words. Let us, then, desire one that shall be calm, courageous and confident, for our hope is sure.

DR. POWELL'S ADDRESS.

A SEASONABLE QUOTATION.

Dr. Ellis T. Powell's able address entitled "'Raymond' Restudied," delivered before the L.S.A. on the evening of the 13th inst. at the Suffolk Street Salon, was well calculated to help his hearers to a fuller understanding and appreciation of Sir Oliver Lodge's invaluable book. We find it necessary, owing to Press exigencies, to defer publication of the full report until after the year has closed, and it will commence in LIGHT of January 5th, 1918. In the meantime, however, we take an excerpt from the address, as being appropriate to Christmas (Raymond, it may be mentioned, had on an earlier occasion promised his mother, through Mrs. Leonard, that he would join the family circle at Christmas—making it a bargain, however, that "there must be no sadness"; he did not "want to be a ghost at the feast!").

On December 17th, 1915, Sir Oliver was talking to Mrs. Kennedy, when her hand began to write. There was a greeting, which cannot be read without emotion, between father and son, and then Sir Oliver said: "Raymond, you know it is getting near Christmas now?"

"I know," was the reply. "I shall be there. Keep jolly, or it hurts me horribly. Truly I know it is difficult, but you must know by now that I am so splendid. I shall never be one instant out of the house on Christmas day. . . . Father, tell mother she has her son with her all day on Christmas day. There will be thousands and thousands of us back in the homes on that day, but the horrid part is that so many of the fellows don't get welcomed. Please keep a place for me. I must go now."

The promise was actually fulfilled. On Christmas day of 1915 the family had a long table-sitting. It was a friendly and jovial meeting with plenty of old songs interspersed, which Raymond seemed thoroughly to enjoy, and, as it were, "conduct." I know nothing in the range of our existent psychic literature which is so intellectually revolutionary, when you analyse it, as this story of the Christmas presence of a departed son. For when you remember that this story comes from one of the recognised leaders of science, the head of a great university, a man whose word with regard to the occurrence of any ordinary incident would be accepted without a moment's hesitation—when you find this man calmly writing how his son, one of the so-called "dead," pledged himself to join the Christmas festivities; when you hear that a chair is put for him; when you are told that he was there, and conducted some of the old songs they used to sing while he was still in the flesh; and, best of all, when you know, as so many of you do, that these things are so—then I think we may say that our patient psychic science has put a new triumphant meaning into the Apostle's challenge, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?" I hope that, thanks to this noble work, the chairs will be placed in thousands of stricken homes this coming Christmas-tide, and that, instead of finding in our restricted Christmas cheer something inopportune, misplaced and ghastly, many a bereaved heart will take courage from this assurance of a deathless presence, and face the darkened future with a new and glowing certainty of reunion.

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

Two popular observances belonging to Christmas are more especially derived from the worship of our pagan ancestors—the hanging up of the mistletoe and the burning of the Yule log. In the religion of the Druids (we quote from that compendium of curious lore, “The Book of Days”) the mistletoe was regarded with the utmost veneration, though the reverence paid to it seems to have been restricted to the plant when found growing on the oak—the favourite tree of their divinity Tutanés—who appears to have been the same as the Phœnician god Baal or the sun. At the period of the winter solstice a great festival was celebrated in his honour. Scandinavian mythology has the following legend regarding the mistletoe: Balder, the god of poetry and eloquence and second son of Odin and Friga, communicated one day to his mother a dream which he had, intimating that he should die. To protect her son from such a contingency Friga invoked all the powers of Nature—fire, air, earth and water, as well as animals and plants—and obtained an oath from them that they should do Balder no hurt. The latter then went and took his place amid the combat of the gods and fought without harm in the midst of showers of arrows. Loake, his enemy, resolved to discover the secret of Balder’s invulnerability, and accordingly, disguising himself as an old woman, addressed himself to Friga with complimentary remarks on the valour and good fortune of her son. The goddess replied that no substance could injure him, as all the productions of Nature had bound themselves by an oath to refrain from doing him any harm. She added, however, with strange simplicity that there was one plant which from its very insignificance she had passed by, as it was impossible that it could cause any hurt to her son, being but a feeble little shoot growing on the bark of the oak. At once Loake ran and procured the mistletoe, and having entered the assembly of the gods said to the blind Heda, “Why do you not contend with the arrows of Balder?” Heda replied, “I am blind, and have no arms.” Loake then presented him with the arrow formed from the mistletoe, and said, “Balder is before thee.” Heda shot and Balder fell dead.

The burning of the Yule log is an ancient Christmas custom transmitted to us from our Scandinavian ancestors, who at their feast of *Jutul*, at the winter solstice, used to kindle huge bonfires in honour of their god Thor. In feudal times the bringing in and placing of the ponderous log on the hearth of the wide chimney of the baronial hall was the most joyous of the ceremonies observed on Christmas Eve. After having served its purpose the half-consumed block was removed to be preserved carefully in a cellar or other safe place till the next anniversary of Christmas, when the new log was set alight from the charred remains of the old one. The observance of this custom was regarded as of great importance, it being believed that the preservation of last year’s log was an effective insurance against the house catching fire! We are further told that it was considered a sign of very bad luck if a person who was bare-footed or who squinted entered the hall when the log was burning, though even more to be dreaded was the arrival of a flat-footed woman.

A beautiful phase in popular superstition is that which represents a thorough prostration of the powers of darkness as taking place at this season. The cock is then supposed to crow all night long, and by his vigilance to scare away all malignant spirits. The idea is beautifully expressed by Shakespeare, who puts it into the mouth of Marcellus in “Hamlet”—

It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever ’gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour’s birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm;
So hallow’d and so gracious is the time.

A belief was long current in Devon and Cornwall that at midnight on Christmas Eve the cattle in their stalls fall down on their knees in adoration of the infant Saviour. Bees were

also said to sing in their hives at the same time, and bread, baked on Christmas Eve, it was averred, never became mouldy.

On the adoption of a new system of faith by most of the northern nations of Europe in the sixteenth century, the Lutheran and Anglican Churches retained the celebration of Christmas and other festivals, which Calvinists rejected absolutely, denouncing the observance of all such days, except Sunday, as superstitious and unscriptural.

In reference to the superstition anciently prevalent in Scotland against spinning on Christmas or Yule day and the determination of the Calvinistic clergy to put down all such notions, the following amusing passage is quoted from Jhone Hamilton’s “Facile Traietise” :—

The ministers of Scotland—in contempt of the vther halie dayes obseruit be England—cause their wyfis and seruants *spin* in oppin sicht of the people upon Yeul day; and their affectionate auditeurs constraines their tennants to yok thair pleuchs on Yeul day in contempt of Christ’s Natiuitie, whilk our Lord has not left vnpunisit; for thair oxin ran wod [mad], and brak thair nekis, and leamit [lamed] sum pleugh men, as is notoriously knawin in sindrie partes of Scotland.

Underlying all these old rites and superstitious observances, as we are gradually discovering, were elements significant of the dim gropings of the human spirit, half-conscious of unseen worlds and spiritual mysteries, after things beyond its purely animal estate. Many of them represent strange distortions of ideas concerning the psychic or spiritual powers latent in man. As we advance in our investigations of the matter, new lights are thrown on these old problems, which group themselves so especially around the Christmas season. In the ages to come, these things will in new forms take their true place in the spiritual order, and the Christmas season will become in the truest sense a hallowed and a gracious time.

L.S.A. SOCIAL MEETING.

An enjoyable “social” of Members and Associates of the L.S.A. was held in the society’s rooms, 110, St. Martin’s Lane, W.C., on the afternoon of the 13th inst., Mr. Henry Withall, acting president, in the chair, the proceedings being pleasantly varied between conversation, music and bright talks from the platform. Mrs. H. Kelway Bamber, in a narrative marked by refreshing clearness of style, told how she obtained convincing evidence that her son who had fallen in battle was still with her—evidence which no theory of telepathy from the sub-conscious self could explain away. Mr. Engholm, newly back from a first visit to the United States, gave in a piquant and vivid style his impressions of our latest ally, dwelling especially on those experiences which helped him to realise her illimitable resources, colossal energy and marvellous efficiency. Mr. H. M. Field’s pianoforte selections are always a musical treat. On this occasion he played with exquisite finish and expression selections from Wagner and Liszt. In voicing the audience’s appreciation, the president alluded to the difficulty as well as expense attending the hiring of a really good upright piano, and suggested that some friend possessing such an instrument and desiring to find safe and suitable storage for it might easily do worse than place it in the charge of the Alliance!

It is our trust
That there is yet another world to mend
All error and mischance.

—BROWNING.

THE LACK OF ORIGINALITY.—The evil, I suppose, lies in our education. We standardise our children. We aim at making them like ourselves instead of teaching them to be themselves—new incarnations of the human spirit, new prophets and teachers, new adventurers in the wilderness of the world. We are more concerned about putting our thoughts into their heads than in drawing their thoughts out, and we succeed in making them rich in knowledge but poor in wisdom. They are not in fear of the stake, but they are in fear of the judgment of the world. . . . The truth, I fear, is that thought does not thrive on freedom. It only thrives under suppression. We need to have our liberties taken away from us to discover that they are worth dying for.—“Alpha of the Plough.”

THE GHOST OF BORDA GARDENS.

By C. B. WOODS (IN "MEXICO TO-DAY").

Ever since Mexico has had a history, Cuernavaca has occupied a prominent and important place in it. Hernan Cortez, the first of the Spanish Conquistadores, found it in possession of a tribe of Indians who had made it even then—if tradition may be believed—a compact and beautiful city. The Great Conqueror added to its renown by taking up his residence there and erecting three buildings which are to-day among the notable show-places of Mexico.

Emperor Maximilian, of unhappy memory, made Cuernavaca the summer capital of his Court, occupying as the official seat of government the far-famed Borda Gardens. These gardens were laid out by Dr. Don Manuel de la Borda, with the idea, it is said, of reproducing in its terraces, walks and fountains, the famous gardens of Versailles, French landscape gardeners and workmen having been brought to Mexico for the purpose. It is estimated that a million dollars or more was spent in the work, which was begun in 1762, the Gardens being about a hundred years old when Maximilian rented them for Government use and as a summer home for himself and the unfortunate Empress Carlota.

In the Emperor's time the large building at the front of the garden was all *en suite*, but some years ago it was divided into four separate apartments for renting purposes. None of these apartments connects in any way on the inside, nor is any communication between them possible except through the entrances fronting on the street. The property, first and last, has been the scene of many interesting events, among which may be numbered the one that this article purposes to describe.

An American family, consisting of the mother and several children—the father was detained in the city by his business ties and only visited Cuernavaca at intervals—had been compelled by the illness of some of its members to leave Mexico City and seek a milder climate. They rented the apartment just south of the main entrance to The Gardens and used it as a residence for nearly a year without experiencing anything unusual, when, without warning, the ghost began to walk. We will let the lady who was one of the witnesses to his appearance tell the story in her own words.

"On the night of May 20th, after we had been living in the house nearly a year, we had all retired as usual. I left two lamps burning, one in the kitchen at the rear of the house and the other on the broad window ledge beside my bed. This was my nightly custom, as there were a great many bats in The Gardens, which we were most anxious to keep out, the house having been infested with them when we first moved in, owing to its having been unoccupied for a long time. I must have slept for about two hours when I was awakened without any apparent reason, and finding my lamp out, began to search for matches. I looked on the window ledge, on the different articles of furniture in my room, and then went into the three adjoining rooms in our wing of the house. I even aroused my eldest daughter, who was asleep in a room next to mine, and explained to her the object of my search. Not finding any matches, I started along the broad corridor, intending to get the lamp from the kitchen, but to my surprise I found that it also was out. I then entered the bedrooms at the rear of the patio (an inner court, without a roof, containing a fountain, trees and flowers—a well-nigh universal feature of Mexican homes) looking for matches there. In the first room, my twelve-year-old daughter Beth was asleep with her little sister Panchita, both occupying the bed. Both were sleeping soundly. I stooped over the bed and drew up over them the covering which they had thrown off. As I was passing into the connecting room, Sofia, my fifteen-year-old daughter, called out to me:

"Is that you, Mamma?" I answered. "Yes. I am looking for matches." She replied, "There is not a match in here."

"All right," I said, and passing Sofia's bed, crossed to the corner of the room where McAfee, my six-year old, was sleeping. As I stooped to cover her, Beth called out from the other room:

"Who's that?"

"Why, it is Mamma," I answered, when she said, "No, who's that walking in the patio? It is a man!"

"Nonsense!" I replied, being of course incredulous, as I had just walked all through the corridor beside the patio and had seen no one. Beth answered me by saying, "Come here and see him."

"I hurried into her room and said, 'Where?' but before she could reply, I saw beyond any shadow of doubt the figure of a man of medium height and build, in black clothing, with a black slouch hat drawn down over his face, with his arms folded across his breast. He was enveloped in a black cape and was standing against a pillar. I thought at once that it was a burglar, and wondered what I should do. After midnight, with no possible chance of outside aid, three helpless children in the rooms in front and four beside me, my pistol in my room fifty feet away and what looked like a man between me and it! Even in my fright I wondered that he should have shown himself while we were talking, and I also wondered at his clothing, for burglars in this country usually wear blankets and not capes, and do not dress in black. After looking around in vain for something with which to defend myself, I concluded to make an effort to get my pistol, so I started back over the long corridor—which never seemed so long before—towards my room where I had left it. As I neared the pillar where the man was standing, I was nearly paralysed with fright, but managed to get by. I expected him to try to grab me as I passed, and thought that while he was occupied with me, the children might have an opportunity to run to the front windows and call for help from the street. But the man made no movement whatever, which frightened me more, and I could hardly force my shaking knees to carry me on. I never took my eyes off of him as I passed, and looked back repeatedly until I regained my room. As I went by my oldest daughter's window—which opens on the corridor—I awakened her and told her to come at once to my room, which she did. I then lighted my lamp and loaded my revolver and told her to follow behind me with the lamp. The minute I started back with my pistol in my hand, I entirely recovered my equilibrium, and a determination to have it out with the burglar took the place of fright. As I stepped into the corridor, I distinctly saw the man just where he had stood at first, and he was plainly visible until I got within a few feet of him. It was my intention to march him out to the street at the point of the pistol, and I did not expect much resistance, arguing that he would not have let me pass in the first instance, had he been in a position to attack me. As I went by the second pillar from the corner, I noticed with surprise that the figure did not look so distinct, and when I got within a few feet of the man, there was absolutely nothing there. Beth, who had been sitting up in her bed watching him from the other side, called out, "Why, he's gone! Where is he?" and came running towards me. She said that there was a sort of fascination about the figure which made her keep her eyes fixed on him all the time I was getting my pistol. He disappeared to her at the same moment evidently that he did to me, and my oldest daughter, Lisle, did not see him at all, though she carried the lamp right up to the pillar. Beth had seen him pass the door of her room and take the stand by the pillar, where he was when I saw him. I did not see him in motion.

"After we recovered a little from our surprise, we lighted three more lamps, and went carefully over all the house, looking behind curtains, under the furniture, &c., but found nothing unusual, which I had felt from the beginning would be the case. All the doors were fastened as usual, and there was no opening where any person could have gone out. One incident that attracted our attention was the conduct of the old black cat, which stood near the pillar where our visitor had disappeared, with his back up, his tail ballooned, spitting and showing other signs of displeasure, to account for which there was no visible cause whatever. Only Lisle, Beth and I knew of the incident, the other children not having awakened. We retired, and although I lay awake until after four, we were not again disturbed.

"The next morning we were careful not to discuss our midnight experience, as I did not want to frighten the younger

children. We were so nervous and wakeful the following night, that on the succeeding day I moved all the beds into the front suite, after which we rested better.

"Five nights later—the 25th of May—I read until the big clock in the church tower near by struck quarter past twelve, when, turning my lamp around so that the reflector threw the light across the patio and into the corridor beyond, I deliberately resolved to try to go to sleep. I must have succeeded almost immediately, but was aroused by Sofia, who cried out, 'Mamma! There is the g-o-a-s-t,' trying in her fright to spell the word, in order to prevent Cortie, the five-year-old child who stood beside her, from understanding what she was saying. I went immediately to the corridor, but saw nothing unusual. Just then the clock in the tower struck half-past twelve. Cortie told me clearly, without any questioning, the following story:—

"I was asleep when I heard a noise, and I thought it was rats, so I sat up and looked out of the window, and there was a man walking in the corridor. I tried to waken Lisle (who slept with Cortie), but she wouldn't get up, so I ran into Sofia's room—I was so scared—and woke Sofia up."

"Sofia said: 'I was awakened by Cortie, who called me and pulled my arm and said, "Sofia, get up, there's a man in the corridor." I jumped out of bed, went to the door, but saw nothing. I found Cortie so frightened that I put her in my bed, but she would not lie down; she insisted that a man was walking in the corridor toward our room. I went to the door a second time, but saw nothing. I tried to make Cortie lie down, thinking she had a nightmare, but instead she sat up in bed and said, "Look at him now—here he comes—see how his shoes shine—his back's all broken" (by this the child meant a hunch-back, her sister having told her a short time before that a hunch-back was a person whose back had been broken). With that I went to the door again, and saw distinctly, right where the lamplight fell, the figure of a man facing towards me, with his hat well drawn over his forehead, head bent, figure bowed forward, hands crossed on his breast, enveloped in a black cloak with cape, knee breeches, buckles at the knee and low shoes of some shiny leather. I noticed the black stockings, also that the calf of the leg was well defined. His clothes were old and shiny, or so they seemed to me.'

"After this second apparition, we told our neighbours what we had seen, and upon describing the figure, any number of persons, including some of the most prominent of the town, said with one accord, 'Don Manuel—that's the way he looks—that's the way he has always appeared!' from which we learned that our visitor had not only a local habitation, in which we had unwittingly intruded, but a name as well.

"We were deluged with ghost stories connected in some way with this property, some of which are more interesting than the one I have related; but they are not my stories, and I will leave the telling of them to others.

"Since the experience described in the preceding paragraphs, we have twice thought we saw our ghostly visitor—once Sofia and I, and another time Sofia alone. But we are not sure, and the relation would add nothing of consequence to what has already been said. I have been told by many people recently that this property was haunted, but I have never heard a story of that character before we had our novel experience. The apparition seems to be connected in the average mind here with buried treasure and hidden documents, but of such things I have no personal knowledge.

"My three older children have complained frequently of the difficulty at times of passing through the corner of the long corridor where we located 'our ghost.' They claim to have felt invisible obstructions, such as tables, boards, rope or even wire, which seemed to have been placed across the end of the corridor. I never consciously experienced any difficulty until one evening, between the hours of seven and eight, I had a most peculiar sensation when turning the corner in question. I was in a hurry, and thinking only of material things, when my feet began to lag, and I could walk with difficulty. I made a heroic effort to overcome the condition and was overtaken with a choking sensation. As soon as I had gone ten feet from the corner, I recovered entirely."

NON-MATERIAL MATTER.

M. Sabatier, a French writer on psychology, discussing the manner in which souls may possibly be formed, propounded the idea that they may be built up little by little by the combination of various elements which are the products of energy through evolution. He thought that in this way a soul might be formed which would not return to its original elements at death. This view, which draws a comparison between the growth of a soul and that of a body, seems applicable rather to what we sometimes call the spirit body than to the soul as a monad or unit, and we know of nothing to prevent our regarding the spirit body as a composite structure analogous to the material body, but formed of a different class of matter imperceptible to our ordinary senses.

M. Sabatier held that nothing allows us to affirm that there exists no matter different in nature from that with which we are familiar. He quotes and approves the opinion of Rücker, who said:—

No *a priori* argument presents itself against the possibility of the existence of *quasi-material* substances which are yet distinct from matter. No argument of this kind can exist. It is in no way a self-evident proposition that no substance other than matter can have a real existence, just as real as that of matter itself. A more subtle, less material matter than our present one, an unalterable matter, might serve as a basis and bond to the elements of the soul when separated from the earthly body.

Scientific Spiritualists have given the name of "perisprit" to this subtle organism, the existence of which is no longer hypothetical, since its reality has been demonstrated.

THE AGE OF THE EARTH.

We have seen . . . that the epoch in the history of the world, when the building up of the atoms by means of evolution had been completed, namely, when matter had reached the apex of its complexity and commenced to disintegrate by radio-activity, was 340 millions of years ago. If we conclude, as I think we reasonably may, that this was the time when the temperature of the earth had become such that protoplasm could exist, we seem to have the time in the distant past when life actually had its commencement. Perhaps in some marvellous way, at present beyond our ken, the enormous energy let loose for the first time by the action of disintegration caused by radio-activity was itself the means by which this wonderful new force came into existence. If this is the case we have in the short period of each month of embryonic life the record and therefore the memory, if we only possessed the power to recall it from the past, of approximately thirty-eight million years of evolution, viz., one ninth of the whole life history of this planet.—"From the Watch Tower," by SYDNEY T. KLEIN.

THE HUSK FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwells, Elstree, Herts, acknowledges with thanks the following subscriptions: Mr. T. J. Barker, 10s.; C. M. B., 5s.

DR. CRAWFORD'S EXPERIMENTS.—Dr. Crawford informs us that some extremely interesting results have recently been obtained at the Goligher circle in Belfast. All the experiments are conducted under rigid test conditions.

PROGRESS IN THE BEYOND.—It is not purging that we shall need, but enriching. In the very word Purgatory there is already a perversion of what we really mean by it. . . . Purging would not make us fit for Heaven, there would not be enough of us left for it when we were purged. We shall be purged enough by leaving this world and its phantoms behind us: but we shall be weak and empty after the process. In some cases that thread of self connecting this life with another will be very thin. There will be little to remember from the past when all the phantoms are forgotten, but in that small residuum of reality will be the faint beginnings of the future life. Whatever we have known of reality here will help us to recognise reality there. Whatever we have really loved here will be there to be loved again, to be recognised like the sound of bells from an old city church, like the swinging open of gates, like the sunrise over the mountains, like all those things that are eternal to us, that seem to call us into that place when no more time shall be, "but steadfast rest of all things firmly stayed upon the pillars of eternity."—A. CLUTTON BROCK in "Immortality."

READING SPIRITUAL MISSION.

A two days' bazaar and sale of work was held by the Reading Society on Wednesday and Thursday, the 11th and 12th inst. The opening ceremony on Wednesday was performed by Elizabeth Lady Mosley, so long a generous patron and supporter of the society, who in the course of a graceful speech referred to the absence of Mr. Percy Street, who had been the mainspring of the work in Reading, and expressed the hope that Mrs. Street's courage in taking the responsibility of the bazaar would be rewarded by a record sale.

Miss Felicia Scatcherd opened the bazaar on Thursday. In the course of a bright and characteristic address Miss Scatcherd said that the Spiritualists of to-day were amongst the most active of social and political reformers. The profession of belief in Spiritualism no longer barred a man or woman from any position of responsibility. Proceeding, Miss Scatcherd said that Spiritualism had penetrated the inmost recesses of the human heart and head. It had dispelled the mists of superstition and dissolved the accretions that distorted and crippled religion, it had given science a heart and soul, just as it had added reason and knowledge to religion.

Miss Scatcherd ended by conveying to the numerous friends present messages of sympathy with the objects of the bazaar and good wishes from Lady Glenconner, Lady Muir Mackenzie and Miss Estelle Stead.

A large number of friends attended the sale during each day. The stall and stallholders were as follows: Fancy Stall: Mrs. Street and Miss Thurston. Useful Articles: Miss Spalding. Old Rectory Home of Rest Stall, consisting of articles made by the patients: Miss Patsy Primrose and Miss Sheila McNeill. Miscellaneous Stall: Mr. Reggie Churn. "War-time Experiments" (*i.e.*, cakes made by ladies of the Mission): Mrs. Saunders.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Water Divining.

SIR,—You have done a public service in publishing Sapper Kelley's remarkable successes as a diviner in finding water for the army in Gallipoli and Suvla Bay. It is nothing less than a scandal that after his services had been so much appreciated by the troops, he was treated by the authorities in such a paltry manner. Imagine a pension of 7s. 6d. a week for saving an army whilst many thousands are getting large pensions for comparatively nothing! But prejudice, red tape and snobbery have almost had their day, and Sapper Kelley may rest assured that public opinion will demand justice for him without much delay.

Everyone whose psychic gifts are of service to the community has as much right to reasonable payment as doctors, lawyers, clergymen or engineers; but they should be as practical and insist on legal agreements. Fortune-telling and dabbling in "futures" is quite unnecessary and foolish.

I can get remunerative employment for any water diviner who will give me full particulars and proofs of his successes, and undertake on reasonable terms, to act promptly and energetically when required.—Yours, &c.,

W. CHRIMES.

25, Granville-road,
Fallowfield, Manchester.

Peculiarities of Personality: A Problem.

SIR,—A friend of mine is unable to wear and make ordinary use of a watch, although any other member of his family can and does use and wear any watch the family possess. No watch will keep time and "go" regularly in any pocket of the clothes my friend wears. He is not engaged in any electrical trade or in any business where magnetisation is likely to occur.

Another curious fact about him is that his participating in a game of billiards puts all his opponents "off their game." To such an extent is this the case that players refuse to join him on any billiard table.

It occurs to me that there may be a sort of psychic cause for all this. I am quite satisfied that the circumstances are as stated. I never heard of such a case before, and am quite at a loss to know what the explanation can be.—Yours, &c.,

H. Y.

PROPAGANDA WORK IN SPIRITUALISM.

Mr. James Hall, of Arbroath, has strong views regarding the importance of propaganda work in connection with Spiritualism and sends us a long and interesting letter on the subject. In his experience such work is necessary to the progress of the cause. Speakers at society meetings do not always make their position clear to outsiders. The stranger entering a meeting for the first time and listening to an abstract address on the subject of Spiritualism will find himself very much at sea. This fact emphasises the need for definite propaganda work. Some time ago Mr. Hall himself presided at the second of a series of Sunday evening meetings in the Camperdown Hall, Dundee, which have been inaugurated for this purpose by a well-known Scottish medium, Mrs. Ogilvie, supported by her friends in the movement. Both at the opening meeting and the one at which Mr. Hall took the chair the place was crowded to its utmost capacity. The great advantage of special meetings of this kind is that people find their way to them without of necessity being identified with the movement; their interest is excited until at last they know where they stand and what Spiritualism means. Unfortunately there are among us many earnest men and women who, though they personally realise the soundness of the teaching associated with Spiritualism and the incontestable evidence for a future life afforded by its phenomena, do not seem to grasp the fact that it is something which concerns the world at large and not merely themselves and the little group of people holding similar convictions with whom they happen to be associated. With regard to the growth of the movement Mr. Hall states that a few years ago statistics showed that new Spiritualist societies were being formed at the rate of one a month. This may still be the rate of progress, though the present abnormal condition of the country may have interfered to hinder it. But real progress cannot be gauged by rapid growth in numbers. Such growth may resemble that of Jonah's gourd which sprang up in a night and withered next morning. To be permanent it must be accompanied by corresponding growth in knowledge. Looking at the half-hearted efforts made to spread the light, "one would be inclined to think," says Mr. Hall, "that Spiritualists regarded their creed as a self-acting system which, having once been set in motion, would work automatically. This is not the case. Neglect, ignorance and self-confidence have to be contended with here as well as in other systems."

THE UNEXPRESSED.

Fair are the flowers and the children,
But their subtle suggestion is fairer;
Rare is the rose burst of dawn,
But the secret that clasps it is rarer.
Sweet the exultance of song,
But the strain that precedes it is sweeter;
And never was poem yet writ
But the meaning out-mastered the metre.

Great are the symbols of being,
But that which is symbolled is greater;
Vast the created and seen,
But vaster the inward Creator;
Under the joy that is felt
Lie the infinite issues of feeling;
Crowning the glory revealed
Is the glory that crowns the revealing.

A WARNING TO PROPHETS.—The "Star" has been expressing a quite natural amusement over the failure of a prophecy by that remarkable person, Mr. F. L. Rawson. In November, it seems, Mr. Rawson, undeterred by the pitiable failures of the war prophets, issued a pamphlet at 2s., entitled "The End of the World"—an event which he courageously fixed for the 3rd or 4th inst. His authorities seem to have been numerous (and mixed). There were Pastor Russell, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, Abdul Bahai, "an Arab sheikh who taught Mr. Rawson the Science of Numbers," the Book of Daniel, and the Great Pyramid. The only authorities lacking seem to have been Reason, Experience and Good Sense.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, DEC. 16th, &c.

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

No Report or Announcement can be inserted next week unless received by the first post on the Monday morning.

MARYLBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W. 1.—Mrs. Mary Davies, thoughtful address, also clairvoyance; Mr. H. M. Field, pianoforte selection.—77, New Oxford-street, W.C. 1.—10th inst., Mrs. Annie Brittain, excellent clairvoyance. Sunday next, special Christmas service, preceded by organ recital at 6 p.m.—G. C.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W.—Spiritual addresses by Mr. J. J. Morse: Morning subject, "Life and Death"; evening, "What is Man that thou art Mindful of Him?" For Sunday next see front page.

CHURCH OF HIGHER MYSTICISM: 22, Princes-street, Cavendish-square, W.—Morning, members gave interesting spiritual experiences; evening, Mrs. Fairclough Smith spoke on "The Great Experience." Sunday next, see advt. Christmas morning, 11 o'clock, at 30, York-street, W.

WIMBLEDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION.—Good address by Mrs. Mary Gordon. For prospective announcements see front page.—R. A. B.

TOTTENHAM.—684, HIGH-ROAD.—Mr. Kirby's guide answered questions from the audience. Sunday next, 2.30 p.m., Lyceum; 4 p.m., address by Mr. D. Hanneford.—D. H.

FOREST GATE, E.—EARLHAM HALL, EARLHAM GROVE.—Alderman D. J. Davis, continuation of his last address, "Spiritualism Moving On." Sunday next, Mr. Mead, at 6.30, in No. 13 Room.—E. S.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Addresses and clairvoyance: Morning, by Mrs. Mary Gordon; evening, by Mrs. Podmore. Sunday next, 11 a.m., church service; 6.30 p.m., Experience Meeting.

EALING.—95, UXBRIDGE-ROAD.—Mr. Todd, "Light of Asia" (third part); Mr. Ensor, solo. Society meets in new hall, 5A, The Broadway (back of Post Office and facing Christ Church), 7 p.m., January 6th.

CLAPHAM.—ADJOINING REFORM CLUB, ST. LUKE'S-ROAD, HIGH-STREET, CLAPHAM, S.W.—Sunday next, 11 a.m., public circle; 7 p.m., Mr. G. Taylor Gwinn, president U.L.S. Friday, at 8, public meeting. December 30th, Mr. G. Prior.—M. C.

BATTERSEA.—45, ST. JOHN'S HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.—Good circle; evening, Mr. Smyth gave address. Sunday next, 11.15, circle service; 3, Lyceum and Study Group; 6.30, Mrs. N. Bloodworth. No Thursday meeting.—N. B.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD, PLUMSTEAD.—Afternoon, Lyceum; evening, Mr. H. E. Hunt, address. Sunday next, 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7, Mrs. Orlowski, address and clairvoyance.—J. M. P.

BRIGHTON SPIRITUALIST BROTHERHOOD.—OLD STEINE HALL, 52A, OLD STEINE.—Uplifting addresses by Mrs. Campbell. Sunday next, 11.30, open circle; 7 p.m., Mrs. Mansell, address and clairvoyance. Christmas Day, 11.30, open circle. Thursday, 7.45. Friday, 7.30, Young People's Guild.—J. J. G.

MANOR PARK, E.—THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.—Interesting address by Mr. Hanneford. Sunday next, 6.30, Miss Dalgrew, address. Monday, 3 p.m., ladies' meeting, address and clairvoyance. Tuesday, no meeting. 29th, 6 p.m., Lyceum Christmas Treat.—E. M.

READING.—SPIRITUAL MISSION, 16, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—Sessions 11.30 a.m. and 6.45 p.m. Miss Felicia Scatcherd delivered valuable addresses on "Psychical Phenomena," taking in the morning the "Subjective" and in the evening the "Objective" phases of the subject. Sunday next, morning, Christmas Message from Mr. Percy R. Street; evening, address by Mr. J. Jackson.

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BRIGHTON.—THE SPIRITUALISTS' CHURCH (AFFILIATED TO NATIONAL UNION OF SPIRITUALISTS), WINDSOR HALL, WINDSOR-STREET.—Sunday next, 11.15 and 7, Mr. Alfred Punter, addresses and descriptions. Other meetings to be announced. Lyceum at 3.

HOLLOWAY.—GROVEDALE-ROAD (NEAR HIGHGATE TUBE STATION).—Morning, Mr. Parry, inspired address; evening, Mrs. A. de Beaurepaire, delightful address and clairvoyance; large audience. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., Mr. and Mrs. Jones; 3 p.m., Lyceum, special visit of the L.L.D. Council; 7 p.m., Mrs. Podmore. 29th, Lyceum Christmas treat. 31st, society's monthly social, 7 p.m. to midnight. Note: Annual General Meeting, Wednesday evening, January 2nd, 1918.—R. E.

NATIONAL UNION FUND OF BENEVOLENCE.—The hon. financial secretary, Mrs. M. A. Stair (14, North-street, Keighley, Yorks), sends us the following list of subscriptions received from societies and friends in November in connection with the annual effort on behalf of this fund. In expressing her thanks to the donors she desires to remind those who have not already subscribed that the list closes on December 31st:—Rothsay Circle, 10s.; Barnsley, 11s. 6d.; Clitheroe, 7s. 6d.; Crewe, 10s.; Brighton (Windsor Hall), £1 1s.; Bedlington, 6s.; Sunderland (Derwent-street), 12s.; Clark's Yard, Preston, 10s.; Portsmouth Temple, £3 10s.; Millom, £1 5s.; Northampton, 15s.; Bradford (Otley-road), 7s.; Salford Central, 19s.; Fulham, 10s.; Saltley, £1; Stockton Advance Mission, £1 5s.; Benwell, 12s.; Rishton, 5s.; Runcorn, 5s.; Hirst, 12s. 1d.; Mexboro, 17s. 6d.; Parkgate, 10s.; Camberwell, £2 2s.; Chesterfield, 15s. 6d.; Shipley, 13s. 10½d.; Darwen, £1; Bristol (Thomas-street Circle), 3s.; Bradford (Ripley-street), 6s.; Blackpool, £1; Manchester (Market-street), £1; Bradford (Ivy Rooms), £1 3s.; Middlesboro, £1; O. G. (Sheffield), 5s.; Three Friends (Barnsley, S.N.U.), 6s. 6d.; Hackney, 6s.; Mrs. Lonsdale, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. D. Hunter, 5s.; Mrs. Sutcliffe, 2s. 6d.; Slaithwaite, 5s.; Stockport Lyceum Church, 11s.; Whitley Bay, £1 5s.; Merthyr Tydfil, £1; Morecambe, 15s.; Leeds Psycho, 13s.; John Stevens, £1; Bolton (Henry-street), 10s.; Newcastle (Rutherford-street), £1 5s.; Brixton Faithist, 6s.; Barrow Psycho, £4 10s.; Batley Carr, 10s.; Sambo's Box, £2 2s.; Manor Park, 17s. 6d.; Hull Psycho, £1 1s.; Belfast, 17s. 6d.; Mrs. Wesley Adams, 10s.; Southampton Church and Circle, £10 5s.; Cardiff First, £1 10s.; Tottenham, 13s. 4d.; Attercliffe, £2 2s.

S.N.U. PARLIAMENTARY FUND (WITCHCRAFT ACTS AMENDMENT).—The sums now subscribed to the above fund amount to £534 12s. 0½d. Varying sums of 5s. upwards were pledged for December, 1917. The committee would be pleased if those whose pledges are yet outstanding would remit their amounts to the treasurer, Mr. T. H. Wright, 10, Victoria Avenue, Sowerby Bridge, during the current month, in order that they may be given effect to during the present financial year. Mr. E. W. Oaten (president of the Union) and Mr. R. H. Yates (secretary) write:—"While we are deeply conscious that the times are in many ways abnormal, and that many calls are being made upon us, yet this agitation and the securing of the proposed amendments are so important that it demands every effort, even to the extent of sacrifice, to bring about reforms so long overdue. We shall be pleased if those who have given pledges will accept this intimation to bring their remittances into the present financial year."

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