

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

In the "Church Family Newspaper" of the 21st ult. appears an article by Sir William F. Barrett entitled "The Unseen Universe." He writes with approval of the preceding article by the Rev. R. J. Campbell referred to in LIGHT of the 29th ult. (p. 411). Sir William alludes to the labours of the S.P.R. as being marked "by an honesty and care that none can dispute, and a wisdom that grows by experience," and deplores the fact that there are

not a few, both in the scientific and in the religious world, who pour scorn and condemnation on those seekers after truth whose only motive and reward is to win knowledge, the result of which would free mankind from the blighting and soul-destroying grip of a German materialistic philosophy. Surely it is the paramount duty, both of science and religion, to lead the way in the fearless pursuit of truth, and show us either that the particular quest is vain and profitless, or, if it be hopeful, point out whatever dangers and illusions may beset the unwary. An indiscriminate condemnation by the educated, and wonder-loving credulity by the ignorant, are the two most dangerous elements with which we are confronted in this obscure and difficult inquiry.

We are glad to note that Sir William refutes the calumny that Spiritualists are either knaves or fools, or at best a feeble-minded, godless company; he remarks:—

Spiritualists, who number many thousands, chiefly among our humbler fellow-citizens, are, as I know personally, more earnest, devout and reverent in their religious services than perhaps the majority of church-goers.

Part of the article under notice is devoted to a rebuke of Dr. G. N. W. Thomas, who appears to belong to that numerous order which are ready to judge a matter before hearing it. There are some remarks on the early Church councils which began by condemning Spiritualism as the work of the devil, although afterwards (900 A.D.) the Church denounced it as mere illusion and imposture. The question whether Spiritualism is a religion, Sir William naturally answers with an emphatic negative; but he points out that for "the agnostic and the troubled spirit, Spiritualism removes one of the great sources of doubt and despair—that our conscious life begins and ends with our bodily existence." Having uttered a warning on the dangers of the subject—a question, by the way, which may easily be exaggerated—the famous scientist passes on to the subject of telepathy, and writes:—

While there is undeniable evidence that telepathy exists not only between the living, but occasionally between the incarnate and ourselves, it is so mingled with the subconscious thoughts and prepossessions of the percipient that the inter-

pretation of automatic messages which come through this means is a matter of doubt and difficulty.

Sir William handles ably and well this discussion of a difficult subject in a difficult atmosphere. As regards telepathy, we only wish that this were the *only* matter clouded by "subconscious thoughts and prepossessions." Our own experience is that these things obscure the clear perception of most new subjects for the majority of minds. The expositions of these should be strong, lucid, bold and, above all, honest. We far prefer the virile and whole-souled condemnations of sturdy, if misinformed, opponents to the timid, vacillating utterances of anæmic minds which damn us with faint praise, and are "neither hot nor cold," but merely "lukewarm"—pillars of the church of the Laodiceans.

Sir William Barrett, it will be noticed, makes a point of the fact that Spiritualism (or Spiritism, as he would prefer to call it) has within it the possibility of freeing mankind from the "blighting and soul-destroying grip of German materialistic philosophy," and in doing so he is amply justified by the facts. We are very weary of the Devil argument. It is irresistibly suggestive of infantile babblings about bogies. But if a devil-inspired science and philosophy is to rid us of a soul-destroying materialism, then indeed we have the spectacle of Satan casting out Satan. Certainly the best argument on the subject is that of Colonel Baddeley in his letter on "Theological Objections" last week. As he points out, rank materialism has been rampant in the civilised world with Germany as its centre or hot-bed, and the "devils" had only to abstain from giving any evidence whatever of the existence of an unseen world and the world would "go fast enough the way devils presumably would wish it to go." This is an excellent point, although we have sometimes wondered whether amongst free and intelligent minds having no fear of Bishops or Presbyteries the matter was quite worth discussing at all. If ever there was a time when the world wanted virile and valiant counsels of courage and common-sense, rather than the mewlings and pulings of invertebrates and degenerates, it is now. There are sufficient "devils" and "snares," "pitfalls" and "insidious devices" of all kinds in this present world. The same faith and manliness which protect us from these will protect us from all others. Our faith is in an intelligently ordered and Divinely governed Universe. We do not expect the materialist to share that faith, but somehow we feel that we have a right to look for it in the churches. And we feel, too, that it is time for them to "put away childish things."

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Spiritualists, who number many thousands, chiefly among our humbler fellow-citizens, are, as I know personally, more earnest, devout and reverent in their religious services than perhaps the majority of church-goers.

Part of the article under notice is devoted to a rebuke of Dr. G. N. W. Thomas, who appears to belong to that numerous order which are ready to judge a matter before hearing it. There are some remarks on the early Church councils which began by condemning Spiritualism as the work of the devil, although afterwards (900 A.D.) the Church denounced it as mere illusion and imposture. The question whether Spiritualism is a religion, Sir William naturally answers with an emphatic negative; but he points out that for "the agnostic and the troubled spirit, Spiritualism removes one of the great sources of doubt and despair—that our conscious life begins and ends with our bodily existence." Having uttered a warning on the dangers of the subject—a question, by the way, which may easily be exaggerated—the famous scientist passes on to the subject of telepathy, and writes:—

While there is undeniable evidence that telepathy exists not only between the living, but occasionally between the disembodied and ourselves, it is so mingled with the subconscious thoughts and prepossessions of the percipient that the inter-

pretation of automatic messages which come through this means is a matter of doubt and difficulty.

Sir William handles ably and well this discussion of a difficult subject in a difficult atmosphere. As regards telepathy, we only wish that this were the *only* matter clouded by "subconscious thoughts and prepossessions." Our own experience is that these things obscure the clear perception of most new subjects for the majority of minds. The expositions of these should be strong, lucid, bold and, above all, honest. We far prefer the virile and whole-souled condemnations of sturdy, if misinformed, opponents to the timid, vacillating utterances of anemic minds which damn us with faint praise, and are "neither hot nor cold," but merely "lukewarm"—pillars of the church of the Laodiceans.

Sir William Barrett, it will be noticed, makes a point of the fact that Spiritualism (or Spiritism, as he would prefer to call it) has within it the possibility of freeing mankind from the "blighting and soul-destroying grip of German materialistic philosophy," and in doing so he is amply justified by the facts. We are very weary of the Devil argument. It is irresistibly suggestive of infantile babblings about bogies. But if a devil-inspired science and philosophy is to rid us of a soul-destroying materialism, then indeed we have the spectacle of Satan casting out Satan. Certainly the best argument on the subject is that of Colonel Baddeley in his letter on "Theological Objections" last week. As he points out, rank materialism has been rampant in the civilised world with Germany as its centre or hot-bed, and the "devils" had only to abstain from giving any evidence whatever of the existence of an unseen world and the world would "go fast enough the way devils presumably would wish it to go." This is an excellent point, although we have sometimes wondered whether amongst free and intelligent minds having no fear of Bishops or Presbyteries the matter was quite worth discussing at all. If ever there was a time when the world wanted virile and valiant counsels of courage and common-sense, rather than the mewlings and pulings of invertebrates and degenerates, it is now. There are sufficient "devils" and "snares," "pitfalls" and "insidious devices" of all kinds in this present world. The same faith and manliness which protect us from these will protect us from all others. Our faith is in an intelligently ordered and Divinely governed Universe. We do not expect the materialist to share that faith, but somehow we feel that we have a right to look for it in the churches. And we feel, too, that it is time for them to "put away childish things."

TIME and the hour rides through the roughest day.—SHAKESPEARE.

"WHO'S WHO."—This invaluable publication has now reached its seventieth year of issue. Revised up to July last, the volume for 1918 is bigger than ever—swelled as it naturally is by the inclusion of an immense number of military biographies. The publishers are Messrs. A. and C. Black, 4-6, Soho-square, W., and the price a guinea net.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

THE SPIRIT WORLD, SPIRIT MINISTRY AND OTHER MATTERS.

On Friday evening, the 21st ult., at the rooms of the Alliance, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under the inspiration of her well-known guide, Morambo, answered questions from the audience on a variety of subjects relating to mediumship and other-world conditions. The proceedings commenced, as usual, with a pianoforte recital by Mr. H. M. Field, whose musical services at these and other meetings are highly appreciated by the audiences and gratefully acknowledged by the Council of the L.S.A. We give below a brief account of some of the questions and replies.

"You have stated, I think," ran one of the questions, "that you have a sky and sun overhead and solid ground beneath your feet. What is the shape of the solid body on which you stand? Is it round like the earth? If not, what are its boundaries?"

The Control replied: "As I have frequently stated on previous occasions, it is difficult to answer such a question because of the difference in physical and spiritual, or psychical, conditions. Between this earth and some of the planets there are realms or states inhabited by spirit people. That is the 'spirit world' associated with the earth. It is somewhat in the form of a zone, spheres within spheres stretching away therefrom. I could not undertake to state the mileage between these spheres or between the earth and some of the higher realms of spirit existence. It may be claimed that the earth itself is the first sphere and interpenetrating this are other states. Some of the substance upon which spirits stand is in close association with the earth. It may, indeed, be just a few feet from the surface. It may even be beneath the surface. Bear in mind that the physical structure of the earth may be very ephemeral to the perception of the spirit, so that the solidity of the earth, the depth you may dig or penetrate into it is of little moment to spirits, although it may be of moment to some of them who have not outgrown the earth condition. So, without in any way referring to supposed 'hells,' we may even find some of the substance of spirit realms in the bowels of the earth. Although I do not clearly recollect making any definite claim in regard to the sky of the spirit world, I may say that it is a radiance that penetrates all spiritual conditions."

Proceeding, the Control explained that the appearance presented by spiritual realms was largely conditioned by the degree of consciousness in the individual spirit, by the extent of the powers of concentration and aspiration. In the spirit of advanced mind there was a high range of perception. His vision would penetrate beyond and above those conditions which limited the vision of the less developed. There were really no limits or boundaries. The spirit spheres more closely associated with the earth passed through its substance, and there were ever ascending grades or zones interpenetrating each other, the finer permeating the grosser. The difficulty in describing the matter in any geographical way arose from the wonderful alteration in the form of perception which took place when the spirit rose beyond the limits of physical vision. That which once seemed real and substantial, answering to conceptions of length, breadth and thickness, became ephemeral, practically non-existent, and a new standard of ideas was set up. To reconcile that which was known in one grade of experience with that known only in another was really an impossible task. And as the spirit advanced, there was a continual transcending of old limitations. Conceptions of substantiality and unsubstantiality were continually being changed. As one grade of experience succeeded another, a new standard of reality had to be set up. What was before apparently solid and objective became with the advance of consciousness visionary and ephemeral. It was a question of whether the manifestation of external surroundings was in true unison with the nature of the spirit being. To that extent they were real and permanent. But until that stage was attained there was no true reality. The reality then was an interior one. It depended on the interior growth of the spiritual powers. Yet the spirit world was a very real world. Spiritual experiences were very clear and decided. A man's experiences on passing from earth into the

spirit world did not involve such a vast change as might be supposed. There was a continuity of life and experience. What degrees of change he passed through as his expanding consciousness introduced him to new vistas of perception could be recognised readily enough because of the sequential nature of the process.

To a question as to whether "embodied" persons could reach "disembodied" spirits "whom one believes to be in darkness," the speaker replied by explaining that the "darkened" condition associated with certain spirit people arose from their undeveloped state of consciousness. It was necessary on the spirit side of life for the mind to be responsive to its conditions, to have something active within it. The darkness meant that the spirit could not truly reflect its conditions; it was out of harmony with its environment. The term "disembodied" used by the questioner was misleading, because, although disincarnate, the spirit had a body adapted to its new conditions. People on earth could reach their departed friends through potent thought, keen desires and prayerful feelings, reaching out successfully to those with whom they were in any way linked. Part of the efforts made by spirit people on behalf of "the spirits in prison" was continually to surround them with a thought-atmosphere calculated to arouse them. It might take months or years before the effect was produced, but the spirit ministrants did not weary in well-doing. Sooner or later there was a response, and then the darkened soul was led forth into light and set on the way to true spiritual advancement. In some cases great good was done by the prayers and thoughts of those on the earth; they could reach the darkened spirits more effectively than the efforts of those in spirit life by reason of the fact that such spirits were more in affinity with the conditions on earth than those of the spirit world. Love was the mighty power involved in such work of awakening, quickening and advancing the undeveloped soul.

In dealing with questions regarding the dangers of automatic writing, the Control said all human activities were liable to abuse. Those who had natural psychical powers could use them safely while they used them wisely. When they were active they could be employed to the advantage of the possessor and the benefit of his fellow creatures.

On the subject of clairaudience he stated that the cases of perfect clairaudient powers were very rare. As a rule the clairaudient gathered only fragmentary impressions, a statement which throws considerable light on the unsatisfactory nature of much of the evidence that comes from this source. There is clearly much opportunity for misunderstanding and mistaken interpretation. On the question of asking advice from spirits on mundane matters, the counsel given was that there was nothing inherently wrong in this, but as a general rule it was better that the consultant should try to solve his own difficulties by the aid of his own powers. If spirits could always be relied upon to solve our difficulties the purpose of earth life to develop character and self-reliance would be defeated. "Before consulting your spirit friends, ask yourself whether you are not capable of solving your problems for yourself."

A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF JANUARY 7TH, 1888.)

Mr. R. J. Lees, of London, has been healing the sick at Newcastle. Mr. Milner Stephen professes to have cured cancers in London. We have put the evidence in the latter case before our readers. In the former we have a public letter addressed to the Newcastle "Evening Chronicle" which concludes thus: "Now for the proof. I will give introduction to any reasonable intelligent sceptical person who is in search of truth, to the parties themselves who have been restored through Mr. Lees' mediumship; although I am fully aware that not one in ten who have been benefited has made his or her case known or returned to give thanks.—Yours, &c., Bevan Harris, Newcastle."

The Bradford ghost is attracting attention in Suffolk. It is a repetition of the familiar story of which the best known instance is the "Rochester rappings." The children in this case are both under twelve years of age. The curious may find full details in a December file of the "East Anglian Daily Times."

—From "Jottings."

A BREATH FROM THE PAST.

THE BROKEN MESSAGE OF A OUIJA BOARD.

By B. M. GODSAL (SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, U.S.A.).

I should like to draw attention to a psychic incident recorded in a book entitled "In the March and Borderland of Wales." It consists merely of a Ouija-board success in giving a name quite unknown to all the performers in the experiment, which subsequently was found to be that of a young lady who in former years had been a frequent visitor at the house.

Of course the average Spiritualist knows of hundreds of such cases; but it takes many stones to build a bridge, so perhaps I may be allowed to present this one to the readers of LIGHT in the form of a summary, for the book may not be either well known or easily obtainable.

The incident took place in a manor house romantically situated in a wild part of Wales. For a couple of generations the house and shooting had been let on short leases to many different tenants. In the summer of 1901 some intimate friends of the author's who had occupied the house for five years were about to leave on the termination of their lease. By way of passing an hour one evening, the hostess, Mrs. A—, and her guest, Miss B—, an old friend from the other side of England, thought of trying a "Vega" board (apparently the same as Ouija board), which Miss B— was conveying as a present from some friend in the South to other friends with whom she was about to visit.

The answers, which were written down, were of such a curiously pessimistic and gloomy description as to make some impression on the operators, the most realistic of those decipherable beginning, "Jealousy is stronger than death." . . . The name of the speaker was called up. Now the answer made by the pointer, which I may not give literally, was the name of a woman. The first was actually Catherine: as to the second it was a surname that . . . is remarkably rare. I have never, myself, come across anyone bearing it, nor had either of the ladies in this adventure, which is more to the point; I will call it "Fallow."

On inquiry it was found that no one about the place had ever heard of a person bearing that name. But a few days later Mrs. A— thought of asking the postmistress of the adjoining hamlet. We read:—

To her astonishment and, I may venture to add, to her dismay, the old lady did not shake her head like the others. . . . She recalled the fact that a Miss Fallow used to visit as a guest at the Lodge, a matter of twenty-five or thirty years back. She couldn't recall her Christian name, or for the moment what she was like, but the letters that used to come for her were quite clear in her recollection, as was her frequent presence in the place.

But even better testimony was forthcoming. When Mrs. A— asked the agent of the property—a lawyer of old standing—if he had ever heard of a "Catherine Fallow," he replied, "Kate Fallow—I should think I had. I knew her quite well when I was a boy. She used often to visit here when the So-and-so's rented the place [mentioning tenants of some thirty years back of name unknown to the others], and she frequently came to our house in — to see my mother." The lawyer was able to recall her as a young woman of perhaps twenty-five, of ordinary looks and ordinary personality. He remembered, however, that she was supposed to be engaged to a young officer who was about in the neighbourhood at that time, but that the affair was broken off. All he had ever heard afterwards of Miss Fallow was a rumour of her death. He remembered also the name of the young man, for which "Campbell" will serve. Nothing was said to the agent, nor for that matter to anyone, of what had happened. An unfortunate reticence, almost universal—except amongst Spiritualists—which in this case shut the door in the face of sad Catherine Fallow, closing a portal of communication through which her pent-up heart might perhaps have obtained relief. For it happened that about a month later a middle-aged, military-looking man called to look over the house with a view to taking it, and dropped the remark "that it would seem strange to be shown over a place which he had known

quite intimately as a young man, and spent so many pleasant days in." And it was not until after he had gone that Mrs. A— noticed his card bearing the name "Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell."

Altogether it seems a fair case of proven identity, scarcely explainable by coincidence, and less so by telepathy—except, of course, in minds that have a preference for the *ignotum per ignotius* method of explanation.

It is interesting to note the effect of such an incident upon minds unaccustomed to psychic research. We read: "The impression it made on the two parties concerned was wholly unpleasant, and of that kind which makes for reticence. For there was no explanation possible. Predisposition, indigestion, hysteria, optical delusions were of no help here whatever; everything was most uncannily simple," &c. In short, whatever tends to prove that the "dead" are around us and can at times communicate is "wholly unpleasant," whereas anything that casts doubt upon that fact—whether it be an unbalanced mind, a disordered stomach, or other complaint—is welcomed as a help out of a desperate situation!

Blessed be Spiritualism that shows us our dead as the decent companionable folk they surely are, and that brings down the saints out of their stained-glass windows—even though at times it may seem to draw speech from the throats of the gargoyles!

Our thanks are due to the author, who, indeed, seems to have the makings of a Spiritualist in him, for it requires pluck of a kind to include the story in his book; and although he is profuse in excuses and explanations—still, there it is.

THE HORSE GUARDS MEMORIAL SERVICE: AN INSPIRING SERMON.

A deeply impressive memorial and intercession service was held at Christ Church, Albany-street, N.W., on Sunday morning, the 23rd ult., for the officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the Horse Guards who have fallen in the war. In the course of an eloquent sermon, the vicar, the Rev. F. Fielding-Ould, M.A. (who is also the chaplain to the Horse Guards), said that the deeds of the men who had laid down their lives in the great struggle were built into the history and interwoven into the fabric of their race. They had passed through death, but they were not dead; not even asleep. They were intensely living, and it might well be that they were present at that service to commemorate their great sacrifice. They lived to-day a life suitable to their characters and degrees of development. Death was only the end of the first act of the great Drama. The curtain fell, but it rose again on new scenes and a new stage of existence. Death and resurrection were the same thing. What looked like death to us might, and doubtless did, look like birth to those on the other side of the veil. We were all immortal spirits. Those we thought of as dead had only discarded a fleshly envelope, had put off what was merely like an overcoat. To-day the veil between the two worlds was wearing thin. The centre of our interest now was being carried beyond the things of this life, and we found the key to the riddle of death in the vital and fundamental importance of the spiritual. In an apostrophe to the fallen, the preacher said, "We greet you, brave men! You are not forgotten; you will never be forgotten. The cause for which you died is safe in our hands, and we will maintain it to the end." At the close of the service the band of the Horse Guards played Chopin's "Funeral March," and the Last Post was sounded by the buglers of the regiment.

THE BREATH CELESTIAL.—All of us, faithful and faithless, Christian and agnostic, have stood, once at least in our lives, upon holy ground. In the dim aisles, perhaps, of some great cathedral consecrated to the service of God by centuries of worship, as the organ sobs forth its passionate invocation; as the choir, in full-throated chorus, gives articulate meaning to each throbbing note, there has come, upon the wings of melody, a whisper from the world unseen, a sigh from the infinite too subtle to be interpreted, an exquisite crystalline essence, distilled, we feel assured, from divine pity, sympathy, and love unspeakable.—HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

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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.

1918: PROSPECTS.

Let us begin by reference to things temporal, local and particular, the nearest to hand, and, therefore, in one sense, of the first importance. Like Charity, we begin at home; we start at the centre and proceed outwards. First, then, it may be said that the London Spiritualist Alliance enters on the New Year with a great accession of new members, many of whom are completely strange to our subject, but a goodly proportion of whom, as we have remarked with pleasure, are so plentifully endowed with intelligence, sympathy and sincerity that they have been able rapidly to assimilate the preliminary knowledge, to summarise, in a few weeks, lessons which the less intellectually alert needed as many years to master, and even to cast new lights on some of the old problems. All this is hopeful, and augurs well for those future ordeals which will purge out all the elements which militate against progress and efficiency. In the days to come, under the scourings of calamity and the dearth of material satisfactions, the world will have more and more need of our gospel. We have, as we said once before on this page, to bring in a new world to redress the balance of the old. And it is our conviction (not, so far, greatly supported by concrete instances) that the work of the Alliance will be lifted and enlarged to a higher plane of usefulness, strengthened and carried forward with all that equipment of intelligence and initiative which, so far, has been almost monopolised by institutions designed entirely for pecuniary profit. The power is there; it is growing continually. It will make its own centres of operation if the existing ones are not made suitable for its expression. We have the nucleus of a fund designed to enlarge and improve the activities of the Alliance on the material side of things. We hope concurrently with the growth of that fund to see an influx of what is of even greater importance than money-power—life-power, service-power. It is not of much importance whether some things be large or small, so that they be intensely alive—able to react healthily against every circumstance of their environment, with powers of growth, adaptation and progression. In the trying days ahead of us only these things will survive.

As to our journal *LIGHT*, it has shared the tribulations of its contemporaries in the Press, but has fully held its own, and in some directions strengthened its hold on the affections of its readers. How it will go with us in the year before us is "on the knees of the gods," where we are content for the present to leave it. We have aspired,

in a way the smallness of which has only been redeemed by its sincerity, to be the medium of those immortal beings, Ideas, which, quenchless in life and power, persist through all changes of form, and which when one channel is blocked speedily open another. So we go forward with quiet confidence, knowing that nothing is final and nothing fatal, and that the forms and institutions which are doomed to perish in this great ordeal of the world are only those that can no longer subserve the needs of the great wave of spiritual evolution that is now surging around us. It is hardly to be recognised as yet, for destruction comes always before construction.

A year is a trifling matter as time goes, but our years grow more and more packed with epochal events. We are at the end of one cycle, on the verge of another. And we feel that 1918 will be even more fully charged with matters of world-wide significance than any of its immediate predecessors. Things are tending to a focus and that focus is intimately concerned with the subject for which we stand. If this world and its life were all, if there were nothing but matter, then no mighty catastrophe would have been possible or necessary. The Spirit has come in to shatter and destroy all that obstructed its expression. It will remain with us to renew and transform, and to carry us to realisations of harmony and achievement from which we shall yet look back on these troublous days as on a bad dream out of which we have thankfully awakened.

THE MAINTENANCE OF "LIGHT."

LIGHT, as we have much testimony to prove, is more than ever needed, yet the accession of new readers serves, we learn, only to offset the number of those whose resources are now so reduced that they are unable any longer to subscribe to the paper. The journal has never had the benefit of that vigorous business organisation and equipment which belong to newspapers founded as commercial enterprises. It only continues to exist by the exercise of a rigid, almost parsimonious economy, aided by a small income derived from securities, the gift of a well-wisher, held by the London Spiritualist Alliance in trust for the paper. It has always been conducted at a loss. The appeal issued at the time when mediums' advertisements were withdrawn resulted in donations amounting to £173 2s. 4d. But in spite of the diminished size of *LIGHT*, the annual increase in the cost of paper and printing, at the present time, is £260, the prospects pointing to still further increase as time goes on. We are fully conscious of the acute financial difficulties which the war has produced in every quarter. Nevertheless we trust that those readers who can help us will do so. It is not so much a question of increased circulation. The margin of profit in this direction is of the slightest. It is to their advertisements that papers look for support nowadays; although there is no great scope for these in *LIGHT*. So we are forced to ask for donations to enable us to "carry on" without diminishing our usefulness by raising the price of our journal.

The heart has its reason of which the intellect knows nothing.—From the French.

INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION AND FRIENDSHIP.—Intellectual co-operation only achieves its greatest possibilities where its basis is enthusiasm for a common cause and personal friendship; and experience shows that the intellectual activity and receptivity of each is raised to the highest pitch when that fellowship is not in work alone and in discussion, but in jest and prayer as well—for humour and common devotion, when both are quite spontaneous, are, though in different ways, the greatest solvents of egotism and a well-spring of fellowship and mutual understanding. Such fellowship and co-operation is not always an easy thing to compass, but when it exists persons of quite modest gifts and moderate experience can do, relatively to their capacity, great things.—CANON B. H. STREETER.

"RAYMOND" RE-STUDIED.

By ELLIS T. POWELL, LL.B., D.Sc.

An Address delivered to the Members, Associates and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday evening, December 13th, 1917, at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, Mr. H. Withall, acting President, in the chair.

In opening the meeting THE CHAIRMAN announced that that evening's lecture would be the last which would be given in that hall for six months, as for several reasons the Council had come to the conclusion that it was inadvisable to continue the meetings. They did not want, however, to curtail the programme of the Alliance, and had therefore arranged with Miss H. A. Dallas, whose name and writings were so well and favourably known, to give a course of Monday afternoon lectures in the rooms of the Alliance on some of the leading spirits of the Spiritualist movement in the past—those who had made it what it was to-day. The world was looking at Spiritualism and Spiritualists in a very different way from that in which it at one time regarded them. Many of the old Spiritualists lost their positions or their opportunities of worldly advancement through their adherence to the cause. The first president of the Alliance, the Rev. W. Stainton Moses, would have become head of the University College School but for the prejudice attaching to his association with the subject. Their second president, Mr. Rogers, also suffered. They had been reminded in recent lectures at their rooms of how in ancient times people persecuted their brethren from a wrong sense of right. That spirit in regard to Spiritualism was not quite dead, but there had been a great change, and it had been very largely due to men like Sir Oliver Lodge, and now Sir A. Conan Doyle, risking their reputations in defence of what they held to be truth. Most of his (the speaker's) hearers had probably read "Raymond," but it was difficult at the present time to give much concentration to their reading. Dr. Powell was a man exceptionally gifted with the power of concentration. He had found in a second reading much more in the work than he had at first grasped and would give them the benefit of his deeper study.

Dr. POWELL began by expressing his conviction that the publication of "Raymond" had marked an epoch in psychic research, and had revolutionised the position of the science in its relation to the world. As the head of the great business University of Birmingham, one of the leading physicists of the day, a mathematician and man of the world, the author of that work united in his personality an authority and a sincerity which conferred a unique prerogative upon his conclusions, and rendered it impossible for the sceptic to ride off on the hypothesis that his utterances represented the irresponsible ravings of an unbalanced mentality. And he claimed to speak under direct prompting from the beyond. Dr. Powell here alluded to Raymond's impassioned appeal at the Peters' sitting on October 29th, 1915: "For God's sake, father, do it. Because if you only knew and could only see what I see—hundreds of men and women heartbroken—and if you could only see the boys on our side shut out, you would throw the whole strength of yourself into this work."

"He wants me to speak out," says Sir Oliver, in obvious allusion to this and other appeals. "He wants me to speak out, and I shall." And those who have observed Sir Oliver are well aware that he is guided by what Huxley called "that enthusiasm for truth, that fanaticism of veracity." His public attitude in this great matter of psychic truth is the realisation of Huxley's ideal. "The longer I live," said that great scientist, "the more obvious it is to me that the most sacred act of a man's life is to say and to feel, 'I believe such and such to be true.' All the greatest rewards and all the heaviest penalties cling about that act." Add to a passion for truth a tenacity of conviction when truth is discovered, and you have the type of mind which is worthy to lead the human spirit onward into all the vast realms of knowledge that lie awaiting exploration in the centuries that are to come.

To make a beginning in the search for truth, especially where the quest led into such difficult regions as those of

psychic investigation, involved a certain mental alertness, and the speaker saw an instance of just such alertness on the part of Sir Oliver in seeking at once the clue to the meaning of the "Faunus" message, purporting to have been sent by F. W. H. Myers, with an account of which the second part of "Raymond" opens. The message forecasted a blow which would be weakened or lightened. On September 17th Sir Oliver got the news of his son's death. The blow had fallen, but it was lightened by Sir Oliver's knowledge of his son's continued life on another plane. Dr. Powell continued:—

On the 25th, Lady Lodge, sitting with Mrs. Leonard, to whom she was then a complete stranger, received the message, "Tell father I have met some friends of his." To the question, "Can you give any name?" the reply was, "Yes, Myers." There seemed to be every effort to convey assurance of the identity of Myers. At an anonymous sitting by Lady Lodge with Mr. Peters on September 27th, his control, "Moonstone," sensed chemistry and a laboratory in the surroundings—obviously Sir Oliver Lodge, and with him "a man, a writer of poetry closely connected with Spiritualism," and now on the spirit side. This man, said Moonstone, passed away out of England and wrote poetry—which is quite true, for Myers died at Rome. Finally, with great emphasis, Moonstone dictated a message, "Not only is the partition so thin that you can hear the operators on the other side, but a big hole has been made." This is an obvious and unmistakable reference to a passage in Sir Oliver's "Survival of Man." On October 29th Raymond showed the initials F.W.M.S.T.P., another evidential incident to those who know F. W. Myers' poem "St. Paul"—one of the most beautiful productions of the nineteenth century.

Dr. Powell then dealt with that highly evidential episode—one of the most discussed portions of "Raymond"—which relates to the group photograph. He agreed with Sir Oliver Lodge that it is an exceptionally good piece of evidence. He then passed on to the incident of the table-sitting with Mrs. Leonard at which the letters N O R M A were spelt out in reply to a request that Raymond should give the name of a brother. This was quite unintelligible to Sir Oliver, even when taking it to be what was clearly intended—"Norman." He suggested that Raymond was confused and that he should try again.

The new beginning resulted in the name Noel, which as the name of one of Raymond's brothers was correct. But on October 10th, at another sitting, Raymond said there was a special meaning to the previous message because he and his brothers always called their brother Alec "Norman." And then, as a result of Sir Oliver's inquiries amongst his sons, he learned the fact, previously unknown to him and Lady Lodge, that "Norman" was a kind of general nickname among their boys and had been specially used by Raymond as a species of rallying cry to his brothers when they were playing hockey. To the invitation that he should give the name of a brother he offered the best possible reply by giving a comprehensive nickname which fitted them all through, and—that is the strong point—that fact was totally unknown to both the sitters, so much so that they took the name to be a mistake and told him so. At a still later stage at a family sitting one of Raymond's brothers said "Pat, do you remember Norman?" and then, with only Sir Oliver's daughters touching the table, it spelt out "Hockey." Sir Oliver rightly says that the incident is "quite distinct, unforgettable and of first importance." As these facts were unknown to Sir Oliver or the medium we can only get rid of the conjectural presence of Raymond by a hypothesis which makes a far greater strain upon the factor of credibility, to wit, the supposition that the medium fished the facts out of space, so to speak, by a species of telepathy which enables her to drop a bucket into the vast and immeasurable ocean of floating fact and reminiscence and to bring up something identifiable by the sitter who happens to be present at the moment.

Dr. Powell then referred to the attitude of Sir Oliver Lodge's family, who at first showed a healthy and genial scepticism towards their father's psychic investigations, but eventually, after Raymond's death, had their attitude completely changed by receiving unmistakable proof in a form largely devised by themselves. Dealing with the first sitting by one of Sir Oliver Lodge's sons, called Alec, who was accompanied by his mother, on which occasion there was striking evidence that the medium was controlled by Raymond under strong emotional stress, Dr. Powell alluded to his own experi-

ences of cases in which the personality of the spirit was powerfully impressed on the medium. It was an interesting question ultimately to be solved, no doubt, by the psychic investigator, whether some of the alleged instances of the resurrection of the dead which had come down to us from ancient times were not cases of a re-entrance of the spirit into its own body in a manner analogous to that which takes place when there is actual control of the medium by a manifesting spirit. In such cases, of course, it was hardly to be supposed that the cord which bound the spirit to its body had been absolutely and finally snapped.

In cases like that of Elisha's raising of the widow's son or the miracle at Nain it does not seem an unreasonable hypothesis that the presence of a psychic adept of immense power like Elisha or Christ might result in such an accession of force as enabled the spirit to recover control of the mortal body and so to commence life again, so to speak. One might have hesitated to say these things a few years ago, but nowadays when the occurrence of "control" is recognised by men of the highest scientific eminence—as for instance Sir Oliver Lodge himself—the hypothesis becomes entitled to consideration. What we have to remember is that psychic law and psychic phenomena are not new. What is new is our recognition of them as parts of the normal operation of perfectly natural forces. The result is that episodes once classed as utterly abnormal and miraculous can be placed in the category of natural events, no more irregular or portentous than a transit of Venus or an eclipse of the sun.

Dr. Powell then described the now well-known episode in "Raymond," the central feature of which was the word "Argonauts." The answer by Raymond in reply to a question was that the word recalled to him a certain telegram which he had signed in that way. Other evidential messages, such as those dealing with the songs "My Orange Girl," "Maggie Magee," and "My Southern Maid," were also reviewed by the speaker from the standpoint of their value as proofs of identity.

They are evidences of continued existence and of possible communication across a boundary, supporting an hypothesis which, Sir Oliver Lodge says, has been forced upon him by the stringent coercion of definite experience. "The foundation of the atomic theory in chemistry" is to Sir Oliver no stronger. The evidence, he says, "is cumulative and has broken the back of all legitimate and reasonable scepticism." Since the book was published more and better evidence has accumulated, but the stress and anxiety to communicate has subsided. "Now that the fact of survival and happy employment is established," says Sir Oliver, "the communications are placid—like an occasional letter home." Possibly it may occur to many readers of the book (and to many others who in these strenuous times cannot find time to read it) that the facts which are proofs to Sir Oliver Lodge may not exert the same compelling force upon other people. That, I think, must frequently be true where spirit identity is concerned. The evidence must often be so delicate, so gossamery in its texture that only those who are near and dear to the communicating spirit can appreciate the strength of the texture. But this need not discourage us. For where we are debarred from personal investigation we have to take all the fundamental scientific facts—gravitation, spectrum analysis, the composition of the air we breathe—we have to take them all on trust from first-hand investigators. And outside the region of mathematics we can seldom reach absolute demonstration. That is to say, scepticism does not of necessity mean insanity. If, after reading Euclid's demonstration that any two sides of a triangle are together greater than the third, an intelligent man declares himself unconvinced, we can only assume an obscure intellectual infirmity. But in other fields of investigation proof is not necessarily and always such a complete demonstration as to make any alternative belief impossible, but only the amount or quality of evidence which brings home conviction to the mind. In many criminal cases—such, for instance, as a murder—the crime may not have been witnessed by anybody, and yet we may be able to build up a fabric of demonstrable facts and events which compel us, by their cumulative force, to conclude that A B is the guilty man. The conclusion may, indeed, amount to a judgment not that the alleged fact is directly proved at all, but only that the circumstances are such as to be inconsistent with any other result than the truth of this fact—that is to say, they afford the strongest possible probability of its truth. If I find a man with a blackened face and a false beard under my bed at night, if he has a jemmy and a dark lantern, and if I subsequently discover that the kitchen

window has been forced, and that there are footmarks which agree with the visitor's rubber slippers, all these facts, taken together, are not absolute proof that he intended to rob my house. But they are of such a nature as to be utterly inconsistent with any other hypothesis, and a jury, supposing them proved at the Old Bailey, would infallibly find the prisoner guilty. That is to say, we have here a moral certainty, in the shape of evidence such that a strong and sound mind, in the jury-box, would act upon the evidence with full assurance of being right. It falls very little short of a degree of assurance frequently unattainable, however ardently desired, viz., absolute certainty. Mathematical reasoning can, of course, compel our assent. Other degrees of assurance are obtained more by persuasion than compulsion, and the effect of the same evidence may be different upon different minds. But in all cases it is the balance of probability which ultimately determines our judgment. And in allowing ourselves to weigh the probabilities in the balance, and forming an intellectual judgment, in such an investigation as that which centres around "Raymond," we must remember that both in the daily course of our lives, and in the administration of the criminal law, we are constantly bound to act upon evidence which falls short of demonstration, though it may approach it with greater or less closeness, according to the circumstances. If we always insisted upon absolute certitude, never allowing the mind to leap, so to speak, across the region of presumption as contrasted with demonstration, we should in many of the affairs of life be frequently brought to a standstill. Locke tells us that "He that will not stir till he infallibly knows the business he goes about will succeed, will have little else to do but to sit still and perish." A presumption may be weak or strong. When Aristippus, cast away on an unknown shore, saw geometrical figures traced on the sand and therefore inferred that the inhabitants of the country had some acquaintance with mathematics, the presumption was of the strongest.

(To be continued.)

THE LATE MR. W. J. COLVILLE.

SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS.

The appearance of the late Mr. W. J. Colville's book, "The Religion of To-morrow" (noticed in *LIGHT* of 22nd ult.), lends appropriateness to the following reminiscences given to us by Mr. J. S. Rann, who was personally acquainted with him in Vancouver.

Mr. Rann writes:—

Mr. Colville passed over at the comparatively early age of 58. True, he was physically frail, but he vibrated with life from head to foot, and to many of us consequently his departure from earth came as somewhat of a shock. My personal acquaintance with him was confined to a few weeks when he visited Vancouver, B.C., and lectured under the auspices of the Spiritualist Church there. During that time I saw much of him and we had many long talks together.

In his career as a lecturer Mr. Colville triumphed over many natural defects. He never failed, however, to interest his audiences and especially the thinking part of them. For Mr. Colville's appeal was to reason. He had worked out a complete and original philosophy of life, and was ready with an answer to every question and a solution of every difficulty.

Wit and repartee appealed to him greatly, and he was in the habit of diversifying more serious matter with anecdotes and quaint illustrations.

Few men had studied so deeply the various branches of occult knowledge or brought to bear so impartial a judgment.

He had no faith in the supreme merits of any particular Master, but took from all what his reason told him was true. As a natural clairvoyant, he believed in the use of this faculty for the benefit and enlightenment of mankind. He was a healthy man himself, and believed in the power of mind to make and keep anyone healthy.

He told us once how, when he was a boy, his mother—who passed over while he was very young—used to come and talk to him and tell him things which had happened long ago.

His aunt was greatly alarmed and sent for the doctor and the clergyman, but the one pronounced him sound in body, and the other said it seemed to be very natural that a mother should come back to her child.

It was curious to notice how his mind reacted after a lecture. At such times he delighted to be trivial and fantastic, and would imagine people in strange situations and ask his companions what they would do in such cases.

He was very fond of giving people odd nicknames, and deftly avoided giving offence by adopting one for himself.

He was, I should say, a very happy man. Once when I spoke to him of bad social conditions, he rejoined, "This is not a very advanced planet, you know."

When some four years ago I went to take leave of him on the night of my departure for Liverpool he said that he did not "get me" coming back to Vancouver, and he clearly anticipated the Great War.

I understood at that time that his books were yielding an income sufficient for his needs, and I had hoped that he would settle down in his favourite California and write much more.

If the material for a biography exists, it is to be hoped that someone will undertake to trace the story of a life so rich in occult experience in many parts of the world.

THE VEIL WITHDRAWN.

THE STORY OF A FULFILLED PRESENTIMENT.

The following striking story of a devoted life and its long foreseen close is narrated by M. Clare, under the simple heading, "An Experience," in the "St. Dominic's Parish Magazine" for October:—

It is not so many years ago since the folks in a northern town went off to church, as folks will do, to see a pretty wedding. The bridegroom belonged to a Catholic family of Warrington, and was accounted a clever student. He had studied to some purpose, and now encouraged by the M.A. affixed to his name, had taken up teaching as a profession, and was what the world would call "doing well." His bride was a good girl and a beautiful girl, so beautiful that the good Lancashire folk, as they watched the procession down the church after the ceremony, whispered to each other that she "looked an angel" and was "too good to live." They were evidently right, these simple unconscious prophets, for a very few months later she sickened and was brought nigh to death. Doctors said, "A bad case of rapid decline." Wiseacres shook their heads and said they were not surprised. The broken-hearted husband said nothing. He kept silence, and he prayed and left himself in the hands of God; but the agony was almost more than he could bear. For nights he watched by her bedside, unconscious of fatigue, because he knew she was asleep when he was near; and then one night a strange thing happened. Later, in relating the phenomenon to some intimate friends, he could not say decisively whether he was asleep or awake. He felt as if asleep. A drowsiness came over him—his surroundings vanished and he saw himself lying dead in an unknown room—laid out in the vestments of a priest. He looked well at the face of the corpse. It was himself without doubt, yet he felt no fear—for, without noise of words, certain events were being made known to him in a way he was powerless to explain. "I felt," he used to say in relating the story, "that my wife must die, and that I myself should follow her at the age of forty, dying as a priest, in a strange place, surrounded by priests and yet alone." He could give no explanation of this last contradictory sentence, but would repeat simply: "That's all I was told—surrounded by priests and yet alone." The night after this "dream" the little wife who was "too good to live" gave up her soul to God happily, willingly, gladly, and he, kneeling by, ratified her offering and joined in her sacrifice.

I did not know him in those days. We met long after, when he was a fully-fledged priest working hard as a curate among the people of a large Lancashire town. Intensely sympathetic, his personality attracted all who came within his influence. Bright, merry, with a keen sense of the ridiculous and a power of quick repartee, his company was eagerly sought and his friends were many. He spoke very bad French with an appalling accent, which he never took the trouble to improve, and it was impossible to listen seriously to the torrents of eloquence which he would pour forth for the amusement and benefit of some French nuns who, exiled from France, had come to the parish. He was good to these nuns and lessened many of their hardships by his geniality, his sympathy and his amusing stories. As a preacher he did much good—and his Mass is described as quick, but very reverent and devotional. He had a marked love for the Curé of Ars [Father Vianney], and for St. Philomena—the former as his ideal of the priesthood, the latter as the little wonder-worker of these later times. At one time he suffered much from an ulcer in the leg. It resisted all remedies and would not heal. He knew the nuns burned a lamp before a small statue of St. Philomena, and he one day called at the convent for a little oil from the lamp. His request was granted: he used the oil on the ulcer, and on the third day of anointing it closed. His gratitude to his little saint was such that he procured from France a large and beautiful statue of the saint, and he gave it to the nuns for

their chapel. He used to say he liked the Curé of Ars because he had so much to do with the unseen world. Had he any like experiences? He was walking by the sea with a friend in the summer of 1907. The friend was going to France and remarked: "I shall not see you again for three years." This friend knew nothing at the time, but was struck by the calm assurance of the answer: "Oh, I shall be dead by then!"

In 1908 he was transferred, and from being curate in a huge city he became rector in a small town only six or eight miles away. Here he was simply idolized—and the good he did was enormous. A characteristic story is told of this time. The collection on Sundays was wondrous small—and the collector was suspected by the priest. On a given Sunday the latter got a friend to put a sovereign in the collecting-plate, but when the plate came to the sacristy, the sovereign was no longer there. The collector was sent for. "Look here, Mr. N.," said the priest, "I want you to give me the sovereign you have taken from the plate. I'll forgive you the rest and leave you your charge, and I'm sure I can trust you for the future." The man restored all he had taken, and proved perfectly honest ever after.

In the July of 1909 this good priest set out to make his retreat at St. Joseph's College, Upholland, and his friends noted he took leave of them as if going on a long journey. To one or two he confided: "I am forty next week"; but he was lively and amusing as usual. The retreat to the clergy was given that year by Fr. Vassell Phillips, C.S.S.R., and began on the evening of Monday, July 25th. Next day Father N. did not appear—and on going to his room they found him where he had fallen, half-dressed—dead! He was aged forty and one week—he was a priest—and he had died surrounded by priests and yet alone.

The French nuns who knew him so well have now removed to a convent near London, and in their chapel is a statue of St. Philomena, at the base of which we read: "Pray for the soul of the Rev. A. J.—, who died July 26th, 1909.—R.I.P."

THE SYSTEM OF UNITY.

ITS CORE AND CENTRE.

BY THE REV. ROBERT DAVEY.

The more deeply I can penetrate into the interior meaning of what in a previous article I described as "The System of Unity" the more clearly I see that the question of questions is—"What is a Thing?" And there is only one other question to compare with it in vastness and richness, and that is, "What is Life?" To understand a drop of water is to know every drop and all drops in the sea. To understand a "Thing" is to know every thing and all things in the universe.

A Thing consists of the seen and the unseen. Things which are seen through our senses stir the inspiration of our greatest men of science to understand them, from the stars in the heavens to the flowers of our fields.

To understand the Things which are unseen requires far loftier powers. The system of Dualism tells us that a great gulf is between the two sides and no bridge has been discovered to pass from the one side to the other side. Our system of Unity proclaims that no gulf exists, so that no bridge is needed. The thoughts and volitions of the Eternal Mind create the vibrations of the ether of space, which run through our nerves of sense to the brain to blossom in our consciousness of "air waves or other tremors into sensation of sound of definite pitch or light of definite colour." And the divine unseen Reality is in every thing we see and know on earth and in eternity—for the divine unseen Reality blossoms again in our consciousness of the things in the new world of eternity. And our divine Lord leads us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

When free from the categories of Dualism the system of Unity will cast new light on the world whereby we shall see God in everything and life will become a life of praise and prayer to "Him in whom we live and move and have our being."

THE "Weekly Dispatch" prints a series of New Year greetings from famous people to the United States, "our greatest Ally." Amongst these are messages from Major-General Sir Alfred Turner, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir A. Conan Doyle, and Dr. Ellis T. Powell.

FROM A SOLDIER'S NOTEBOOK.

SPIRIT VOICES IN A HOME CIRCLE.

Our contributor "M.E." (D.S.O.), sapper and engineer at the Front, was recently home for a few days' leave, during which interval he spent an evening by invitation at the residence of the well-known medium for the direct voice, Mrs. Roberts Johnson, through whom he has in the past had so many satisfactory evidences of the continued interest and sympathy of our friends in the unseen in the welfare of those who still abide on "the shores of time." After picturing the pleasant gathering of the little family circle round the fire after tea and the interchange of experiences, he writes:—

The fire having burned low, the gas was put out, and we simply sat on waiting for the trumpet to be used—it had been placed, as usual, in the circle—but it was soon noticed that the moon shone so brightly that it made the room light in spite of the curtains. More curtains had consequently to be put up. After this had been done, we had not long to wait before David Duguid's voice was heard, and from 7.15 to 10.15 we sat talking first to one and then to another as our spirit friends severally visited us. My brother in spirit-life came and spoke of our father and mother, who are now getting on in years. Four and a-half months ago, when I was home last, I had been considerably disturbed in my mind by the state of health of my old parents, and through the mediumship of Mrs. Johnson had asked my brother to see what could be done in the way of removing the causes which lay at the root of their ill-health, so that their declining years might be free of pain and suffering. He agreed to do so, and in this he was successful—indeed, to such a degree that their own medical adviser marvelled, telling me personally, when I paid him a friendly call, that he did not understand it, as he did not feel he had in any way been accessory to the improvement. My friend and helper, who calls herself "Silver Star," spoke with me for a long time, telling me of many little changes for my health, comfort, and security which she had assisted in bringing about in my surroundings; it is difficult to express in writing the intense feeling of happiness such a conversation gives, sitting in an easy chair—myself and a brother being the only visitors to Mr. and Mrs. Johnson—and in this privacy conversing freely and easily with a young Indian lady who often impresses what she has to say by touching my shoulder, arm or hand. We talked of my adventures and narrow escapes out here, and she knew all about them, and only laughed when I expressed my astonishment at the way difficulties and danger had been easily passed. Here David Duguid spoke, and explained how she used her powers for my assistance. He further explained that it was the faith I placed in my spirit friends which opened a clear road for them to come and help, and went into detail of auras produced by faith and thought, providing a channel of spirit aid.

How thankful I feel that my reason has brought me to place implicit faith in the truths of Spiritualism. These meetings to me partake of a sacred nature, and each succeeding one seems to bring me closer and closer to those on the other side, who are my personal friends and protectors. There is no hesitancy about them: they come close to me with a clear voice, which I immediately recognise; our conversation is always of an intimate friendly nature, and I feel that there is a mutual pleasure in our meeting once more. I do not seek to know the future nor do I seek business advice, but if they see things of the future which they want me to know, they tell me, and I accept it as true because it always is true.

There was nothing formal about the sitting, only our own personal spirit friends came. Mrs. Johnson's son in the spirit world came and teased his sister, sitting on the couch beside her. A friend of Mr. Johnson came who had passed over lately on the field of battle. There were pauses now and again for the speakers to gather new energy, but of the many sittings I have had this was to me the most real of all experiences, and now I may be out here another four or five months away from this channel of communication, yet full of happy recollections, full knowledge of the presence of my powerful friends and looking to a future meeting. It feels good to live with such knowledge and it can be no hardship to die.

In a letter accompanying his description of the above sitting, "the recollection of which will serve to cheer me through many a dark night and weary day," "M. E." adds that some of the voices were so strong that they spoke from the roof; he noticed too that "Silver Star" spoke much purer English than she used to do and was becoming more serious in expres-

sion, and also, as a rather curious feature, that he was able, when David Duguid spoke near to him, to distinguish a sound suggestive of the movement of the materialised muscles which produced the voice.

SPIRIT REST.

Living on the material plane, you cannot fashion the spiritual one. Everything is a state, not a place. There is no actual resting-place, yet we rest; we do not sleep as you do, but take repose from our work; when thought-tired, we stop for a time to gather in fresh store. To learn, to think, that is rest. Our rest is tranquil thought—something that elevates us. Those of us who have care of earth and its sorrows go away and rest.

We have no [physical] bodies, therefore do not need support.

You are puzzled between spirit and matter. There is one language of the soul. Languages are nothing to us. In the spirit world all races are merged into one, but in different degrees of progression.

Friend meets friend, and soul attracts soul by thought attraction and spirit influence, even in your world; how much more, then, here.

Everything here, is done by thought, as thought can take form.

From "Thought Lectures,"

By FATHER STEPHANO.

KNOWLEDGE.

I tell you the shadows are growing thinner
Between this world and the world of the dead;
And only the fool cries, "Fool!" or "Sinner!"
To one who looks into the life ahead.
I tell you the curtain is being lifted—
The silence broken, the darkness rifted—
And knowledge is taking the place of faith
On that vast subject, Death.

Yes; now in the place of faith comes knowledge,
For the soul of the race is awake to truth,
And it rests no longer on school or college,
Or the crude concepts of the world's first youth.
From a larger fountain our minds are drinking—
The deep, high Source of divinely thinking—
And searching for God in the heart of man;
It is so we are learning the Plan.

Yes; searching for God in the heart of a brother,
And not on a far-away throne above,
Is a surer method than any other
Of finding the Centre of truth and love.
And out of that Centre a voice is crying
That our dead are not in their low graves lying,
But are living and loving us, close and near,
So long as we hold them dear.

Yes; living and loving, and trying to guide us—
Invisible helpers, by God's sweet will,
Who oftentimes move through the day beside us,
But aiding us most when our minds are still.
I tell you the curtain is being lifted—
The silence broken, the darkness rifted—
And knowledge is taking the place of faith
On that vast subject, Death.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX
(in the "Cosmopolitan").

THE Rev. Susanna Harris, of 18, Endsleigh Gardens, N.W. 1, extends to all her friends her best wishes for a prosperous New Year.

THE HUSK FUND. — Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwells, Elstree, Herts, acknowledges with thanks the following subscriptions: Per C. M. B., 10s.; Vice-Admiral W. Osborne Moore, £1.

"I Heard a Voice; or, The Great Exploration," by A King's Counsel (Kegan Paul, 6s. net), is a book descriptive of experiences in spirit communication through the psychic gifts of the author's two young daughters. We shall deal more fully with it in a later issue.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, DEC. 30th, &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.*—Excellent address, "Spiritualism and its Relation to the Bible," by Mr. Horace Leaf; good attendance. For Sunday next, see front page.—G. C.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13b, *Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W.*—Morning, Dr. W. J. Vanstone on "The Fruit of the Spirit"; evening, Mr. Paul Tyner on "The Old and the New." For Sunday next see front page.

CHURCH OF HIGHER MYSTICISM: 22, *Princes-street, Cavendish-square, W.*—Christmas morning, at 30, York-street, Baker-street, short service. Sunday, instructive inspirational address by Mrs. Fairclough Smith. For Sunday next, see front page.

WIMBLEDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION.—Stimulating address by Mr. Harry Fielder. For prospective announcements see front page.

FOREST GATE, E.—**EARLHAM HALL, EARLHAM GROVE.**—Address by Mr. Gwinn and answers to questions. Sunday next, 6.30, in No. 13 room, Mr. Gwinn, New Year's address.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—**SURREY MASONIC HALL.**—Morning, excellent address by Mr. H. Ernest Hunt; evening, uplifting address and clairvoyance by Mrs. Annie Boddington. Sunday next, 11 a.m., church service; 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Cannock.

CLAPHAM.—**ADJOINING REFORM CLUB, ST. LUKE'S-ROAD, HIGH-STREET, CLAPHAM, S.W.**—Sunday next, 11 a.m., questions dealt with; 7 p.m., Mrs. Annie Boddington. Friday, 8, public meeting. 13th, Mrs. Mary Gordon.—M. C.

BRIGHTON.—**THE SPIRITUALISTS' CHURCH (AFFILIATED TO NATIONAL UNION OF SPIRITUALISTS), WINDSOR HALL, WINDSOR-STREET.**—Sunday next, 11.15 and 7, Mrs. Mary Davies, addresses and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8.

HACKNEY.—240a, **AMHURST-ROAD, N.**—Mr. Dougall, vice-president, trance address. Sunday next, 6.30, Mrs. Gordon. Monday, 8 p.m., Mrs. Brookman. Tuesday, 15th, 8 p.m., Mrs. Gordon, lecture in aid of the funds, "The Use of Colour."

TOTTENHAM.—684, **HIGH-ROAD.**—Mrs. Mary Davies spoke on the significance of Christmas, and gave clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, 7 p.m., Alderman D. J. Davis; 3 p.m., Lyceum.—D. H.

MANOR PARK, E.—**THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.**—Mr. Watson, interesting address; Mrs. Marriott, clairvoyance. Sunday next, 6.30, Mrs. Jamrach, address and clairvoyance. Monday, 3, ladies' meeting, Mrs. Jamrach. Wednesday, address and clairvoyance.—E. M.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—**PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD, PLUMSTEAD.**—Mrs. Mary Clempson, address, "The Scientific and Religious Aspect of Spiritualism," and clairvoyance. Sunday next, 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7, Mrs. Neville, address and clairvoyance.—J. M. P.

BRIGHTON SPIRITUALIST BROTHERHOOD.—**OLD STEINE HALL, 52A, OLD STEINE.**—Sunday services, 11.30 and 7; Lyceum, 3 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, 7.45, meeting for enquirers, questions and clairvoyance. Friday, 7.30, Young People's Guild. Sunday next, Mr. Macbeth Bain. 13th, Mr. Vout Peters.

BATTERSEA.—45, **ST. JOHN'S HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.**—Usual morning circle; evening, Mr. and Mrs. Liddiard. Sunday next, 11.15, circle service; 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Mrs. Podmore. 10th, 8.15, Mrs. George. 12th, 8 p.m., Study Group. 13th, 5 p.m., tea; 6.30, Mr. G. Prior, Members' Quarterly Meeting after service.—N. B.

HOLLOWAY.—**GROVEDALE-ROAD (NEAR HIGHGATE TUBE STATION).**—Morning, Mr. Brenchley gave his life story; evening, Mrs. E. Neville, on "Prayer," also splendid spirit delineations; good audience. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., Mr. T. O. Todd, address, "A Dream in a Desert"; 3 p.m., Lyceum. All welcome. 7 p.m., Mr. A. Punter. Wednesday, Mrs. Podmore.—R. E.

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