

# LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF SPIRITUAL  
PROGRESS & PSYCHICAL RESEARCH



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Hon. Principal:  
J. HEWAT MCKENZIE.

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Friday, March 17th, at 3 p.m. ... MRS. BRITAIN.

Tuesday, March 21st, at 3.30 p.m. ... MR. A. VOUT PETERS (Psychometry).

Friday, March 24th, at 8 p.m. ... MR. PUNTER (Luton).

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SUNDAY, MARCH 19th, at 6.30 P.M. ... KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN, B.A.

MEMBERS & ASSOCIATES' MEETINGS, DENISON HOUSE, 295, VAUXHALL BRIDGE RD. Near Victoria Station.

TUESDAY, MARCH 21st, at 7.30 P.M. ... MRS. G. CRAZE.

FRIDAY, MARCH 24th, at 7.30 P.M. ... MRS. C. O. HARDY, "Phrenology."

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MONDAY, MARCH 20th, at 2.30 P.M. ... MRS. E. A. CANNOCK.

" " " at 8 P.M., Study Class, MR. F. BRITAIN.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22nd, at 11 A.M., Healing Free to ALL requiring Treatment.

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" " " 8 P.M., MRS. E. M. NEVILLE.

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13, Pembridge Place, Bayswater, W.

SUNDAY, MARCH 19th.

At 11 a.m. ... MR. G. PRIOR.

At 6.30 p.m. ... MISS LONGLAND.

Wednesday, March 22nd, 7.30 p.m. ... MR. ROBERT KING.

Wednesday Concentration Class (Members only), 3.30 p.m.

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Thursday, March 23rd, at 3.30 p.m. MISS MCCREADIE.

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## Wimbledon Spiritualist Mission.

BROADWAY HALL (through passage between 4 & 5, The Broadway).

Sunday, March 19th, 11 a.m. ... MR. G. F. ROWELL

Subject, "Destiny," followed by Clairvoyance by Mrs. A. J. Beaumont-Sigall.

6.30 p.m. ... DR. W. J. VANSTONE.

Wednesday, March 22nd, 3 p.m., Healing Circle. Treatment, 4 to 5.

MR. & MRS. LEWIS.

7.30 p.m. ... MRS. M. E. ORLOWSKI.

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March 19th, 7.15 p.m. ... MRS. MARRIOTT.

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MORTIMER STREET, LANGHAM PLACE, W. 1.

SUBJECT:

## "THE PATH of the DIVINE MYSTERIES: Mysticism, in Truth and Practice."

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" " 27—The Seven Gates of Attainment.

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on

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# LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF  
SPIRITUAL PROGRESS & PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 2,149—VOL. XLII.

[Registered as]

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 1922.

[a Newspaper]

PRICE FOURPENCE.

## What "Light" Stands For.

"LIGHT" proclaims a belief in the existence and life of the spirit apart from, and independent of, the material organism, and in the reality and value of intelligent intercourse between spirits embodied and spirits discarnate. This position it firmly and consistently maintains. Its columns are open to a full and free discussion—conducted in the spirit of honest, courteous and reverent inquiry—its only aim being, in the words of its motto, "Light! More Light!"

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

And as the moon from some dark gate of cloud  
Throws o'er the sea a floating bridge of light,  
Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd  
Into the realm of mystery and night—  
So from the world of spirits there descends  
A bridge of light connecting it with this,  
O'er whose unsteady floor, that sways and bends,  
Wander our thoughts above the dark abyss.

—LONGFELLOW.

### THE SURVIVAL OF SPIRITUALISM.

Spiritualism persists and continually extends its influence because of its intrinsic truth. Never probably has any subject been so heavily handicapped by its circumstances. It has been conspicuous by many things which lent themselves to derision either because they were misunderstood or had no true place in it. It has been lampooned by a thousand pens. It has been the easy target for every form of shallow wit. It has been the objective of Press campaigns, Church crusades and the onslaughts of Materialism and Rationalism. It has been "killed" over and over again, but has revived mysteriously and broken out again, often in some quite unexpected quarter. It has preached the deathlessness of the human spirit and enforced the lesson by showing itself invulnerable alike to the bitterest assaults of its enemies and the worst excesses of some of its friends. Human survival, which to the scientific sceptic is the most impossible and irrational of doctrines, is perhaps not a greater miracle than the survival of Spiritualism amongst a people whose chief idea of reality is drawn from the material world, and to whom a brick or an iron bar is vastly more real than a thought or an inspiration which can transform the whole face of physical existence.

### A SOLEMN QUESTION.

Mr. B. Macdonald Hastings, the dramatist, writing in the "Referee" of Sunday last, asks:—

Will any educated Spiritualist tell me why it is that I, who am sane and excessively broad-minded, cannot read any book on Spiritualism without experiencing the emotion of contempt, or of anger, or of laughter? Why is it that

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my sympathies are never aroused? . . . What is the matter with a creed with such powers of repulsion?

And he proceeds to indicate that it leads him "to despise, to rage and deride." It is, indeed, a puzzle, and one that, at the first blush, we should be disposed to "give up." One might hazard the suggestion that it is due to the mental make-up of the propounder of the puzzle. Even then, however, we should observe that as an argument it is distinctly weak. Because some Spiritualist, at least equally as sane and as excessively broad-minded, might ask why *he* should take up an exactly opposite attitude! One cannot settle questions of fact by the consideration of personal emotions. History is crowded with examples of new ideas and discoveries that excited in some of those who heard of them precisely the same feelings as those to which Mr. Macdonald Hastings confesses. But the ideas and discoveries were none the less true.

\* \* \* \*

### SOME LIGHTS ON THE PROBLEM.

Further on in the letter under notice we get some revealing glimpses of the writer's attitude. We read of "the shallow, the semi-Christian, those of little faith," who "would insult God and tear their sons and husbands from Heaven"; who "believe that those whom the Lord taketh away can be borrowed back for an evening," and "whose idea of God is connected with a dark room, a tilting table, or a gramophone trumpet." What a number of gratuitous assumptions and one-sided arguments we discover in this part of the letter! Are dark rooms, tilting tables and gramophone trumpets such very terrible things? If they are, they are certainly not so objectionable as other matters of which we have been reading in the newspapers of late—deadly drugs, for instance. And if all these things are in the Universe, they must be in some way, however remote, connected with the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. They could not exist for an instant without His permission. The fact is that there are no evil things in the world, but there are a multitude of things which are turned by men to *evil uses*. One may talk with some of earth's saintliest souls through the same telephone which is used to carry on conversations that may lead down to death and hell. That much is quite clear. Many thousands of persons have found their minds enlarged and their lives raised and purified by their contact with the men and women of higher worlds—sometimes through the humblest intermediaries. That is another and larger side of the question. It must be taken into account by those who approach it without a full knowledge of the matter and handicapped with a multitude of petty prejudices and preconceptions.

"Who shall tempt with wandering feet  
The dark, unbottomed, infinite abyss,  
And through the palpable obscure find out  
His uncouth way; or spread his airy flight  
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive  
The happy isle?"

—MILTON, "Paradise Lost."

# THE PROGRESSION OF MARMADUKE

Being sketches of his life, and some writings given by him after his passing to the spirit-world. Given through the hand of Flora More.

(Continued from page 147.)

April 15th, 1917.

## THE GROWTH OF A SOUL.

"Do you know the soulless man—the man who has no care but for himself, and no wish to be of benefit to anyone? If you know such a man, you know a miserable being. What can change him; sordid, selfish, unfeeling, and apparently unreflecting? It is a problem. There seems no room in his heart for sorrow, for he cares for no one but himself. What then can touch him with the wand of regeneration? In the earth-life, nothing! But let him pass over and the matter wears a very different aspect. He at first consorts with the selfish in their particular section. Here he finds others as bad as, or worse than, himself, and he sees how the love of self can make a man a mere semblance of humanity, and he begins to wonder why he should be put amongst such people. Then a light breaks upon him, and he gains an insight into his own character and recognises that he shares the faults of those whom he condemns and despises. Once this perception has come to him then the slow and painful path of progression has been entered upon. The man even commences to feel a certain pity for his fellow-sufferers, and it may be that he tries to instil into their minds something of the enlightenment which has come to himself; but it is not always that a denizen of their own section can exercise an influence over others. At last he is ready to enter a higher sphere. Here he finds real work to be done, and so his nature grows and expands until he has cast off the last vestige of selfishness and lives the self-denying life which accompanies the true birth of the soul.

"How long will this take?"

"It all depends upon the man's nature. If his selfishness has been the result of bad education and bad example, it may be only a few of your earth years; but if it has grown by deliberate self-indulgence then it will take possibly even fifty or a hundred years. But you must not think that we count years as you do, or that they would seem as long as they would to you. If we could describe how time differs with us from that on earth you could understand this. You sometimes lie wakeful at night and the hours pass. Some you are conscious of by the striking of the clock; others pass imperceptibly. So it is with our time. If we chose, we might pass it in a semi-dream, but then there would be no progression, since for that it is necessary to work, and to love and help others. Now when a man casts aside his selfishness, or whatever has been his besetting sin, and emerges a freed soul, to take his place amongst other freed souls, he experiences a joy I cannot describe: he is purified, exalted, uplifted, and he cannot ever slip back into his old sins and errors. The higher spirits with whom he now associates, assist him by giving him an ideal to strive for, and he struggles to keep up to the standard expected from him. In time he reaches and passes it, and so goes on in ever upward progress."

April 22nd, 1917.

## THE "LIVING" AND THE "DEAD," WHICH ARE THE MOST ALIVE?

"How do we change when we pass over? You constantly hear that a man is the same five minutes after death that he was five minutes before, and this is true, but the conditions which surround him are altered, and he soon discovers that there are vast differences between the two states of existence, and all tending to raise him to a higher standard of conduct. In the spirit-world we cannot be deceived in anyone else's character; we can read it intuitively, and we have more reliance on ourselves; for we know we have to form our own character if we wish to rise to a higher level. Our more ethereal bodies, too, make such a difference to us; we can move about without any sense of heaviness; we never feel our bodies a hindrance; no disease attacks them, and there are no deformities to render them less useful to us. We can walk and run, but we more float than walk, and if we need to get anywhere quickly, our progression is just a swift launch through the ether which carries us in a moment where we wish to go. All this would be impossible to the denser earth-body but it is quite natural and easy here. Then also our mental faculties are more alert. It is much less trouble to learn

new facts and understand new inventions and the lecture-halls are always crowded with eager listeners, and there is not a pupil but could pass an examination in his subject afterwards. If we go with the stream of progress there is no let or hindrance to our advance, but if we choose to delay and procrastinate we have only ourselves to thank if our progress is slow. The man who comes over immersed in a narrow creed is not likely to get on quickly, for he is hidebound in his beliefs and cannot shake them off. For the earth-bound spirits, and those who do not wish to learn, there is no remedy but time, but all will see their errors sooner or later. Here the outward form is much more beautiful than on earth; for all who choose can be beautiful, and all wish to be so who are on the upward path. Our garments, too, though not part of ourselves, reflect our character, for we please ourselves in colour and shape, and there is no tame uniformity. As nothing ever soils here we need not renew our garments unless we wish to vary them; but we often do, because we feel that different occasions call for different attire, and we wish to be suitably clothed. But we do not put away old robes and wear them again; we have a way of re-creating the substance into a change of form and colour which is somewhat of thought-creation, and yet has sometimes a little of practical manipulation as well. All these things can hardly be described, for the processes are so different from those on earth, and yet the chemical changes which go on in a laboratory are somewhat akin to them. The chemist does not know how two different substances or liquids mixed together form a third which is unlike either of them. In the same way, we cannot tell how it is possible to exchange the substance of one thing for another, we only know that it can be done, and that it is easy when once we have learnt the procedure. There are schools for teaching these things, and it is not true that we automatically acquire all that it is necessary to know in this life. Some are more expert than others in learning, but a good deal depends upon former proclivities in the earth-life. I have tried to describe what I could in the time, but I feel there is still much to say."

April 29th, 1917.

## THE OBJECT OF PAIN IN EARTH-LIFE, AND COULD IT HAVE BEEN DISPENSED WITH.

"Many people think that pain is a pure and unmixed evil, and that the end to be aimed at is its total eradication. As far as the body is concerned, pain is the mentor pointing out some disease or lesion which would otherwise proceed unchecked. But I am now dealing with pain purely in its aspect as a mental factor. We here, who have lived and suffered in our previous life, know that often the mental torture of the loss of some dear friend or relative, or of finding out the unworthiness of someone dearly loved, far exceeds any physical torment to the body. Is such mental torture educative, or would these be better men and women if it did not exist? I answer most decisively, 'No'; the mental pain endured gives a fellow-feeling for others in like case, and a greater sympathy with sorrow and suffering.

"But suppose there were no mental suffering for anyone? Then you would have a dead world: a world where the physical bodies were moving about, but where all the higher parts of men's natures were slumbering. You may argue that mankind would sympathise with physical suffering even then and try to alleviate it. I doubt it. If there were no mental pain, men's minds would not respond to the physical pain of others. The mind is a very delicately balanced organism. It is not known exactly what it is, or what causes it to survive when the brain perishes, but we do know that the mind is the part of the spirit which is really the man himself, and the mind must be trained. The selfish are devoid of the power of realising the sufferings of others. Yet they were born with the same mind as others; capable of being trained in the same way. Most probably a tendency to selfishness has come to a child from some ancestor, and the parents have encouraged this by giving way to all his demands. There is no selfishness so ingrained in children that it cannot be eliminated if persistently repressed in early life; but how often a father or mother will say, when a baby cries for some forbidden article, 'Oh, give it him, or we shall have no peace!' The first few refusals would provoke a battle, but the child would soon learn, and later on

he should be taught to give up his own wishes to those of others, and little by little his character would be changed. Without pain I do not see how there could be any growth of character; nor do I see, under the earth conditions, how there could be the highest sympathy and love if everyone were perfectly happy and equally endowed with every necessary. That is not saying that there should be great inequalities of wealth, but it is evident that if men never had their pity and compassion called upon they would soon become as hard as the stones they tread on. One thing I believe will grow out of this most disastrous war, and that is a more perfect sympathy between the different classes of mankind, and a fellow-feeling amongst all ranks and stations of men. All this could have been attained by less drastic means, 'But ye would not!'

May 6th, 1917.

THE UPWARD PROGRESS FROM SPHERE TO SPHERE IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.

"This subject is one on which much can be said and which affords scope for detail. In the ordinary course, if a man has led a pretty normal life on earth, he will go on steadily advancing from sphere to sphere, though possibly slowly. Yet there are some who do not seem able to get beyond the first sphere for long years, though there is nothing against their moral character. But stay! Is there nothing? Nothing perhaps that on earth would have been reckoned a sin, or even a serious fault, but something which can hinder progression here. Such faults may be a narrow creed, a selfish disposition, avarice, a too close adherence to the letter of divine law and not to its spirit. These things are as bad for a man's future progression as absolute sin, and in some cases even more so, for there are very few who are unaware of their proclivity for positive sin, but many who have not recognised as such the failings which I have described, and therefore they do not see what they have to work against when they first come over, and it may be some time before light dawns upon them. We do try to make them conscious of these hampering tendencies, but it is difficult for them to realise their own shortcomings. There are others of a cold nature, not absolutely selfish but not easily roused to sympathy, and these also find a difficulty in progressing for, in our spheres, warmth of heart, and a sympathetic nature, are essential. It would be no use to raise a man to a higher sphere where all his work would be for others unless he had the feeling towards them that would make him desire to help them. I know you are often perplexed at a lenient judgment from our side on what you would consider serious sins, but we look to the motive-power which has urged on a man to that particular sin: whether temperament, environment, ancestry, or other causes. A man could resist all this, but few have sufficiently cultivated their will-power, and so we judge leniently in such a case. Now a man who is normal, or what you may call a good medium character progresses at a moderate rate until he may reach a sphere where he finds himself happy and contented, and from which he has no desire to go onward again. Will he then be left in the sphere to which he inclines? Will his further progress be stayed? No, he will remain in that sphere until he has seen others more lately arrived than himself, enter it, remain a little while, and then pass on to a higher state. At first this does not affect him, but at length a dissatisfaction creeps over him and he asks himself why he alone is stationary, and why he does not join in the upward progression. Then he commences to realise that nothing keeps him back but himself, and so the desire to progress gives him the power to do so. It will not be often that such a man will require a good lesson—one is generally sufficient to put him on the right path, and his progress will continue. I am not here referring to such cases as one or more of a family who, having left dear ones on earth, elect to wait in a certain sphere until these have joined them there, and they can then progress together. Such self-sacrifice is laudable, and does not in any way retard ultimate progression; and they can, at will, visit the higher spheres and gain an insight into the future life there. A good many husbands or wives, brothers or sisters, and not a few parents and children act in this way, and I have never heard any disapproval of their action, but they take the step deliberately for the benefit of others, and count the cost. To them the cost is worth paying, and the bliss and joy of reunion, when it comes, make up for the time of probation and the unselfishness thus manifested is repaid by a quicker progression hereafter."

(To be continued.)

SOME EVIDENTIAL MATTER IN PUBLIC CLAIRVOYANCE.

By GEO. E. WRIGHT.

It is the custom of most psychical researchers, and even of some definite Spiritualists to dismiss public clairvoyance as being of no evidential value. A brief note of certain evidential descriptions, which were given by the well-known clairvoyante, Mrs. Cannock, at the Large Hall of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 5, Queen-square, W.C., on March 1st, may therefore be of interest. Space only allows of reference to two cases, whereas the whole meeting was extremely successful, inasmuch as there was only one unrecognised description among eighteen. The salient points of the first description were as follows:—

"Man with black moustache and short beard, very much resembling a Spaniard, but not a foreigner. He met his death in an accident in a very wild country."

The facts of the case were that the lady to whom the description was given had a father who answered exactly to this description, who, although a Colonial, was generally taken for a Spaniard, and had been murdered by natives in a wild portion of West Africa.

The second case was as follows: Among the audience was a gentleman from Wolverhampton, who had not before attended a meeting of the Alliance, and who was personally unknown to Mrs. Cannock until the writer introduced them in his office shortly before the meeting, on which occasion nothing except a few casual remarks passed between the parties concerned.

Mrs. Cannock gave the following description of a spirit intelligence connected with this gentleman. She described "a big man, who had worn some sort of uniform many years before he served in the army during the great war. It was not a military uniform, but a civil uniform, something like that of a 'commissionaire.'" Mrs. Cannock was definitely impressed with the fact that the spirit intelligence had been communicating with the gentleman in question elsewhere, at a private circle, consisting of five sitters. She also said, "I get the name of Wilson." The facts were that the gentleman from Wolverhampton had for some time previously been sitting in a private circle with four other persons, at which a spirit who purported to be a deceased Salvation Army Officer had communicated and given his name as Wilson. The cross-correspondence between the private sitting and the public clairvoyance is striking.

It is to be regretted that those who attend public clairvoyance do not more frequently take accurate notes of any descriptions pertinent to themselves. Were this more often done I am quite sure that such meetings would contribute valuable evidence for spiritual communication.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE SUNDAY PRESS.

THE MERSEA ISLAND MYSTERY.

The "Referee" continues its publication of letters on Spiritualism. The principal communication, that of Mr. B. Macdonald Hastings, we deal with briefly in our "Notes By the Way." Other letters are concerned with the "Mersea Island Séances," but contain nothing of arresting interest. Too many questions, historical and psychical, are opened up for this subject to be handled in a few sentences. Full records should be placed at the service of painstaking psychical researchers for careful analysis and comparison with other and similar testimonies.

A CLAIRVOYANT'S EXPERIENCES.

A. V. E. in the "Weekly Dispatch" writes graphically on "How I See Spirits." Her articles are, in some respects, the most valuable contributions ever published by a popular newspaper on mediumship. They represent the work of one who is not only a fine clairvoyant, but is exceptionally clear-headed and intelligent, and they show an attitude of independent common-sense based on the only trustworthy foundation in these matters—personal experiences, clearly observed and impartially recorded.

OCCULTISM AND ZOOLOGY.—At a meeting of the S.P.R. on March 7th, Mr. J. P. Mills, I.C.S., read a very interesting paper on "Weir Tigers Among the People of the Assam Hills." The speaker gave many instances from his personal knowledge of these hill-tribes, of the curious relation which is held to exist between the medicine-men and individual leopards. The facts related seem to point to clairvoyant knowledge of the circumstances attending the hunting activities, and sometimes the fate, of particular animals, on the part of their human affinities. In this respect they differ from the folk-lore of were-wolves, and have never been put on record, except in a book published in the current year by Mr. Hutton, who was Mr. Mills' predecessor in the Inspectorship of this remote part of our dominions. This is another illustration of the way in which anthropology and psychic research can be of mutual service to each other.

A NEW SOCIETY IN BOWES PARK.—Spiritualists in Bowes Park and neighbourhood will be pleased to know that a new society has been formed in their midst. Shaftesbury Hall, adjoining Bowes Park Station (Down Line), has been taken for Sunday services, with the promise of a week evening later. The opening has been arranged for March 26th at 7 o'clock. The hall can be approached by No. 21 car from Finsbury Park or North Finchley, to Bowes Park Station, thence by footpath beside the line. And from Enfield or Finsbury Park by train (G.N.R.). All interested in the movement will appreciate this effort, as it will meet a long-standing requirement.—S.

## DR. JAMES M. PEEBLES. 1822—1922.

### THE "GRAND OLD MAN OF SPIRITUALISM."

The last issue of LIGHT briefly recorded the passing of Dr. Peebles, which occurred at his home in Los Angeles, California, on February 15th. On March 23rd he would have completed his hundredth year. For some months this grand old man had been sinking, but his amazing vitality and will power asserted themselves, causing him to rally just when it seemed that his mortal frame had come to its last strength.

Thousands attended his funeral service on February 19th, when many eloquent tributes were paid to his memory. It was stated that his last message was, "Let the truth go on."

James Martin Peebles was born in Vermont, U.S.A., on March 23rd, 1822. More than two hundred years ago a branch of the Peebles family from Scotland settled in the North of Ireland. In 1718 they crossed the ocean and settled in Massachusetts, and James, one of the hardy clan, penetrated into Vermont where he made a home. Here was born the son who was destined to become a great leader of men. As a boy his physical build was slender, but he had an elastic and enduring constitution. He was magnetic, genial, benevolent and witty, with a strong will of his own.

In 1842, after severe struggles to secure a good education, he became a minister of the University Church. At that period, in his twentieth year, he is described as, "tall, slim, having light hair, red cheeks, charming in the eyes of the maidens, wearing a white cravat, tall silk hat, and tight-fitting kid gloves." While he was pastor in Kelloggsville, Mr. Peebles was invited by Mr. Vincent Kenyon, a Universalist of Quaker descent, and spiritually inclined, to ride with him to Auburn to hear the "spirit rappings" which had just begun to grip public attention. The medium was Mrs. Tamlin. When he heard the raps he whispered to his friend, "A splendid trick," and the other replied, "Suppose you expose it." Mr. Peebles said, "Please rap on the wall," and to his astonishment "the wall seemed to speak." When, by this means, he received an intelligible communication from a deceased cousin he imagined it was due to thought-reading. Then, at a later date, he heard an uneducated boy deliver a wonderful impromptu trance-address on a subject of Mr. Peebles' own selection—"The Philosophical Influence of the Nations of Antiquity upon the Civilisation and Science of Modern Europe and America." The young clergyman was amazed. He says, "I went home thinking that there must be some power at the root of Spiritualism."

In his next sermon he ventured cautiously to allude to angels and to spiritual gifts showing evidence of inspiration. His heretical leanings were immediately detected, and he was reprimanded. The working of his mind at that early date will be seen from the following sermon he delivered on March 3rd, 1845: "Now, if it were in harmony with the divine laws of Deity to employ angels as mediums of spiritual truths; if in the economy of God's mercy in the olden times, and in the days of Christ and the early Christian Fathers, the Divine Being permitted angels from the higher spheres to appear to men, to converse with them, to cast off their chains, to open prison doors, minister to their wants and become guardian angels, why may He not now? If it were possible then, it is possible in this age of the world. If it subserved a good purpose then, it may subserve a good purpose now, under the grace and wisdom of the everlasting Father." Christian Spiritualism, as he termed it, began to attract his attention, and before many years he had grown too broad in his ideas for the narrow

denomination with which he was connected. But for a long time he was not convinced of the truth of the phenomena. He witnessed the manifestations of the Davenport Brothers, and was deeply interested. On a certain night the Davenport Brothers, Mr. J. K. Brown, of Buffalo, and Mr. Peebles occupied the same room. Mr. Peebles challenged the spirits to pay him a visit. It was a bright moonlight night, and while the blinds were raised raps began to sound about the room. Mr. Peebles was struck on the head, the clothes sprang off his bed, and the bed rocked. As he hastily rose he received an overwhelming blow on his back, and in pain and fear he exclaimed, "That hurts! Oh, I know you are spirits! I give it up, I will believe." One of the Davenport Brothers became entranced and a voice from the air said, "You dared us. Get your light, we'll do you no harm." Mr. Peebles enquired, "Why do you handle me thus roughly, if you be good spirits?" The Intelligence replied, "To give you evidence of our power, and complete demonstration of conscious immortality, that you may walk no longer by faith, but by sight. You are appointed for a great work; gird up your loins, buckle on your sandals, grasp the sword of truth. Go forth."

Reviewing this period Dr. Peebles wrote, "Morally afire with the gospel of Spiritualism, I voluntarily left the sectarian pulpit, advocating the gospel of knowledge instead of a tremulous faith in the soul's survival after death, and lecturing in the principal cities of the United States upon Spiritualism and reform subjects." He says he was spiritually impressed to go abroad, like Paul, the great New Testament Spiritualist. Accordingly, on August 23rd, 1869, he set out from New York for England. In the following year he delivered Sunday evening addresses in London at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street. At a farewell gathering on June 9th, 1870, before his departure for the United States, many enthusiastic tributes were paid to him. Mr. H. D. Jencken, Barrister-at-Law, said, "We have met this evening to say farewell to Mr. Peebles, to whom we are so much indebted for the exertions he has made



DR. JAMES M. PEEBLES.

in the cause of Spiritualism. He has not only organised the Sunday services in his room—services of no sectarian type, but free, liberal and comprehensive; but in many provincial towns, at Norwich, Halifax, Bradford, and elsewhere, he has promoted similar services, and successfully laboured to make the truths of Spiritualism better understood." On this occasion Mrs. Varley, on behalf of the ladies, presented Mr. Peebles with a purse of gold.

On September 11th, 1872, he started, under an Australian engagement for a voyage round the world. Five years later he again travelled round the world, *via* Australia, India, and South Africa, lecturing in each country. He left San Francisco on December 5th, 1896, for a third world-voyage. Friends and relatives tried to dissuade him from undertaking such a trip at his advanced age. His characteristic reply was: "Age! I spurned the thought. The soul knows nothing of age. . . . I am rollicking, glowing in the gorgeous morning and abiding youth." In all, this valiant spirit made five such voyages, particulars of which he embodied in his book, "Five Voyages Around the World."

While yet a young man Mr. Peebles had studied medicine, and after attending the prescribed course of medical lectures, he graduated from the Philadelphia University of Medicine and Surgery, and registered at once in Philadelphia as a practising physician. He also received

several honorary diplomas, and was a member of State and national medical associations. On his return from his second voyage round the world, in 1878, he devoted much of his time to medical practice.

In his full and varied life he edited several newspapers, and took an active share in the fight against slavery, and on behalf of Prohibition. He was a vegetarian, a non-smoker and eschewed tea and coffee. In the course of a letter to the Editor of *LIGHT* he wrote: "Now journeying joyfully along on my ninety-eighth path to the century post, I lay these decades of years largely to a fruit and vegetable diet, with the acceptance and practice of religious Spiritualism."

He found time to write many books, among which may be mentioned: "The Christ Question Settled," "Seers of the Ages," and "Spiritualism versus Materialism." He also published numerous pamphlets. Of the latter a famous one was his "How to Live a Century and Grow Old Gracefully."

This is a necessarily imperfect sketch of the life and activities of a truly remarkable and spiritually gifted man who has abundantly left his impress on the world in which he worked. And for Spiritualists his work has not ended. He has begun a new chapter. That is all.

L. C.

\* \* It may be added that Dr. Peebles addressed the London Spiritualist Alliance on the evening of Thursday, September 25th, 1902, at St. James's Hall, when Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, the late Editor of *LIGHT*, presided. The address was entitled, "Spiritualism in Relation to Life," and appeared in *LIGHT* of October 4th, 1902. On a subsequent visit in 1906 he delivered an address to the L. S. A. at St. Martin's-lane, on November 28th, of that year.

## REMINISCENCES OF DR. JAMES M. PEEBLES.

BY ABRAHAM WALLACE, M.D.

My introduction to the great work of the venerable Peebles was by reading his most interesting book, "The Seers of the Ages," in my investigating days, years before I had the great privilege of personal friendship with him. I was introduced to him by Mr. George Spriggs in the early days of the London Psycho-Therapeutic Society, when the Doctor was on his third "last visit" to London, and about to return to America after one of his missionary tours around the world in which he expended his great energy, both mental and physical, in propagating the good news of spirit return at a time when, to declare oneself to be a Spiritualist, required a strong honest personality with abundant courage.

On his second "last visit" to London in 1906, he arrived on the 26th October, one Thursday evening, when I was occupying the platform of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and as he entered the hall while I was speaking to the audience, upstanding at my request, received the illustrious veteran Spiritualist, and I know that he much appreciated his hearty reception.

When he last was in London I very frequently saw him, as he suffered from a sharp attack of bronchitis, during which Mr. Rex, the healer, kindly attended him, and his condition soon improved, for he had even at his advanced age, great recuperative power, which he humorously imputed to the good Scotch blood in his veins and to my Scotch "magnetic influence."

When in America I determined to visit my good old friend and went to California in the beginning of 1920, where I had much pleasant intercourse with him and Dr. Austin, both of whom greatly contributed to make my stay most interesting and enjoyable.

At Dr. Austin's kind instigation, I gave an address in one of the largest halls in Los Angeles. Dr. Peebles was chairman and gave me a most flattering introduction to a great audience, referring to my "loving help" while he was laid up in London.

Although in his 98th year he showed very little change in his mental activity, but his physical energy was declining.

While I was in Los Angeles his brother, Lorenzo R. Peebles, fifteen years his junior, passed on, and I had the privilege of taking part in the military funeral, which had been arranged by his veteran fellow-officers—the remnant of those who had taken part in the Civil War, during which Lorenzo had served with great distinction. I shall never forget the most impressive farewell oration which the Doctor made; addressing the form of his passed-on brother, whose face was visible through a window in the lid of the coffin, and speaking in terms which only a Spiritualist could express, sending messages of love to his mother and other relatives behind the veil, and indicating in joyful tones that he too would soon join the family circle in the "Summerland."

That same evening Dr. Wickland drove Dr. Peebles and me out to his sanatorium in which cases of insanity—demonstrated to be due to obsessing personalities—are treated by practical psychic methods. The Doctor and I dined with six female patients, who had been transformed from raving

lunatics to sane personalities by Dr. and Mrs. Wickland during the previous three or four weeks. Mrs. Wickland is a remarkable medium, and during a séance after dinner, his brother Lorenzo slightly controlled Mrs. Wickland and indicated his presence to the Doctor and manifested his joy at being able to tell of his appreciation of the changed conditions in which he found himself.

When saying farewell to Dr. Peebles on leaving Los Angeles he presented me with a copy of "The Spiritual Pilgrim," by J. O. Barrett, being an early biography of Dr. Peebles, published in 1878.

To me it has been a great honour to enjoy the friendship of such a man as Dr. James M. Peebles, whose mature judgment and youthful enthusiasm were a wonder and delight to all who came into close contact with him. Early in his professional life he realised the truths of Spiritualism. He ever afterwards taught, as stated in one of his later volumes, "The Spirit's Pathway," that "Death is Nature's process of laying down a fleshly burden and the rising of the spiritual into the brightness and beatitudes of Immortality."

Even when nearing the end of his long and eventful life he says—and here we leave our dear heavenward pilgrim—"Personally, I feel as though I had just begun to live—to see, to comprehend. Heights rise above me, and I am conscious of the might immensities lying beyond. I long to go—and yet—"

"If I can live  
To make some pale face brighter, and to give  
A second lustre to some tear-dimmed eye,  
Or e'en impart  
One thro' of comfort to an aching heart,  
Or cheer some wayworn soul in passing by;

"If I can lend  
A strong hand to the fallen, or defend  
The right against a single envious strain,  
My life, though bare  
Perhaps of much that seemeth dear and fair  
To us on earth, will not have been in vain.

"The purest joy,  
Most near to heaven, far from earth's alloy,  
Is bidding clouds give way to sun and shine,  
And 'twill be well  
If on that day of days the angels tell  
Of me: 'He did his best for one of Thine.'"

(From "The Pathway of the Human Spirit.")

## "THE FAITH OF SHACKLETON."

THE UNSEEN COMPANION.

IN *LIGHT* of March 11th (p. 152), there was an account of an interview with Sir Ernest Shackleton by Mr. Harold Begbie in which reference is made to a "Fourth Presence." For the benefit of those readers to whom the allusion was not clear, we give the following passage from the famous explorer's book, "South." It concerns that desperate journey across South Georgia, after passing over eight hundred miles of stormy Polar sea in a small boat:—

When I look back on those days I have no doubt that Providence guided us, not only across those snowfields, but across the storm-white sea that separated Elephant Island from our landing place on South Georgia. I know that during that long and racking march of thirty-six hours over the unnamed mountains and glaciers of South Georgia it seemed to me often that we were four, not three. I said nothing to my companions on the point, but afterwards Worsley said to me, "Boss, I had a curious feeling on the march that there was another person with us." Crean confessed to the same idea. One feels "the dearth of human words, the roughness of mortal speech," in trying to describe things intangible, but a record of our journeys would be incomplete without a reference to a subject very near to our hearts.

## "THE NURSERIES OF HEAVEN."

Her favourite doll, specially dressed by her mother, was placed in the coffin of a Fulham child named Davis at her burial. The doll, a dilapidated relic of babyhood, had been the child's "companion" for several years, and it was the girl's last wish that the doll was buried with her.

"We may be pretty sure," writes Dr. Ellis Powell, "that the doll was the first thing the child saw when she woke in the nurseries on the other side. The creative power of thought would be utilised to duplicate it in such a manner that the child would be unable to distinguish it from the material original, and would, in fact, suppose that the original was in her arms. It was the same power, employed to satisfy a temporary craving by the creation of something indistinguishable from whisky, which excited the derision of the ignorant critics of 'Raymond' some years ago."

# PROFESSOR RICHEL'S NEW BOOK\*

By STANLEY DE BRATH.

This volume is nothing less than a demand by the first physiologist of our time for the recognition of supernormal phenomena as a distinct branch of science. This treatise is its first text-book. It is written avowedly as a text-book. Professor Richet says:

In writing this book under the form usually given to treatises on other branches of science such as physics, botany and pathology, it has been my desire to remove from facts that have been called "occult," most of which are indisputably real, the complexion of supernaturalism and mysticism that has been given to them by those who do not deny their actuality.

Professor Richet says that his aim has been to present a purely scientific work: he has therefore confined himself to facts and to an examination of their actuality, bringing forward no theory of his own, and barely glancing at those advanced by others. The time has not come for theorising—it is necessary first to establish the facts in detail, to consider them collectively, and to determine the conditions under which they occur.

Those facts are numerous, authentic and dazzling. He reduces them to:

- (1) Crypt-aesthesia—the power of cognition by other than sensorial channels.
- (2) Telekinesis—a mechanical action, different from all known mechanical forces, exerted without physical contact.
- (3) Ectoplasmic forms (materialisations)—the formation of objects which, for the most part, seem to proceed from the human body and take on the similitude of material reality—clothing, veils and living bodies. He adds:—

This is the sum total of Metapsychics. It appears to me that to admit even so much is to make large admissions. To go further is to exceed the present limits of Science.

But I claim that Science, strict and inexorable Science, should recognise these three strange phenomena that she has, up to the present, refused to acknowledge.

This distinguished physiologist tells us that his method was to put aside unread the work of other men, so that approaching the matter without bias of any kind, he could satisfy himself by direct experiment of the validity of each order of alleged facts, and then to study the works of other competent observers, taking it as a principle that men such as Crookes, Lodge, Reichenbach, A. R. Wallace, Lombroso, William James, Schiaparelli, Myers, Zollner, De Rochas, Ochorowicz, Morselli, Barrett, Ed. Gurney, and Flammarion do not write without long and careful verification, and therefore that their experimental records can be relied on for facts, setting aside all theories soever as premature.

This is Professor Richet's standpoint. He commits himself to no theory and he affirms most strongly the reality of ectoplasmic forms, premonitions, telekinesis, telepathy, and nearly all the phenomena that have for seventy years been received with scoffing and abuse. He has even a good word for the poor Spiritualist, as having bravely upheld the reality of the facts themselves, though he regards their theories as "unfounded, or at least premature," and has some very trenchant remarks on their tendency to invoke



PROFESSOR CHARLES RICHEL.

the intervention of spirits as an explanation for all phenomena, even those that are obviously due to mental dissociations.

His treatment is rigidly scientific: he is concerned only with verified facts, and rejects the term "supernormal" along with the "supernatural." In Nature there are "usual" and "unusual" phenomena; but of ultimate causes we know practically nothing in either case. The cause of so common a phenomenon as gravitation is unexplained, and of the primary causes of birth, growth and even muscular action, we know simply nothing whatever. Being used to these things, they excite no surprise.

Agreeably to this attitude of mind, Professor Richet adopts a purely pragmatic phraseology. Fully satisfied by direct experiment, that the phenomena spoken of actually occur, he takes the evidence for them as undeniable by honest minds; that whatever their primary origin, their proximate cause is a variety of human faculty resembling, but different from, the ordinary senses is unquestionable. He therefore coins the term Crypt-aesthesia—sensation whose cause is hidden or latent—to cover the whole of the subjective phenomena, and relates this hidden faculty to the objective facts. These cover all the Spiritualist's phenomena except supernormal photography, which is not touched upon. The next great step in advance we may anticipate will be the recognition of this fact also. For no one can deny that the production of writing or a portrait on a photographic plate under strict test conditions is a proof of definite mental action; and if the image produced is of a deceased person unknown to the medium the presumption that the mind of the deceased is in some way concerned in the representation is difficult to evade. It will come in good time.

Meanwhile it will be amusing to see the antics of those who have derided the facts, in their efforts to show that they have only been exercising "scientific caution" in rejecting the testimony that Professor Richet accepts, classifies, and reinforces. It takes a big and honest man like Cecil Rhodes or Dr. Johnson to say simply, "I found I was wrong." Solomon told us long ago the character of the man who is always right in his own eyes.

I may perhaps be permitted to offer my respectful admiration of the courage involved in a public recognition by a man of assured scientific standing of facts to believe which has been branded, and still is branded, as crack-brained folly. Sir Wm. Crookes, Dr. A. R. Wallace and Sir Oliver Lodge have all been bitterly attacked and their first-class work depreciated by their testimony to the facts now stated to be authentic.

The attitude of the Paris Academy of Science is other than this: when last month Professor Richet presented his book, he said, "J'affirme solennellement la réalité des phénomènes metapsychiques. C'est le premier devoir d'un homme de science de dire ce qu'il croit la vérité." And the whole assembly cheered enthusiastically.

The first edition of the book is now said to be nearly exhausted.

\* "Traité de Métapsychique." Par le Professeur CHARLES RICHEL. (Felix Alcan, Paris, 1922, 40 fr.)

The article on "The Raising of Lazarus," by Dr. Ellis Powell, reprinted in our last issue from the St. Jude-on-the-Hill Parish Paper, was of course a mere outline sketch of the subject, which will be treated fully by Dr. Powell in his address at the Aeolian Hall on the evening of Palm Sunday next.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.—Referring to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's recent address to the students at St. Thomas' Hospital, a medical man, in a letter to us, says: "It should add much interest to their work as students, and more reverence. Indeed, I foresee a time when my profession will look upon their suffering or dying patients with other eyes and a truer knowledge than they do to-day. How few realise, as we do, how great and sacred is the responsibility of those who minister to the dying! I gather that Sir Arthur's lecture made a marked impression."

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA IN THE BIBLE.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's second lecture on Psychological phenomena revealed anew the wealth of such matter recorded in the Old Testament. The book of Exodus, which was dealt with, in which Eastern hyperbole could often be traced, had nevertheless a continuous record of psychic happenings. An interesting sidelight from "The Book of Moses"—one of the Apocryphal books, little known in the West—is thrown on the method of the magicians who sought to turn their wands into serpents to emulate Moses. It is stated that hollow wands were previously filled with quicksilver, and that these, thrown on the pavement heated by the sun, wriggled with the appearance of live creatures. We commend the experiment to the conjurers who pose as "psychic experts."

## CAPITAL PUNISHMENT: ITS ETHICAL AND PSYCHICAL ASPECTS.

P. H. F., a military correspondent, writes:—

Spiritualists now represent a very large body of the nation, capable of making their will felt by the Government. I therefore venture to suggest that the time has long arrived for the Capital Penalty in Law to be abolished.

Although Spiritualists, as a body, have not yet agreed as to the nature of the Intelligences with whom communication has been somewhat precariously established, yet they may on psychic as well as moral grounds accept something of the opinions of those who claim to have probed a little deeper into the mysteries of the Occult World.

The Capital Penalty is a negation of the highest civilisation. It is impossible here to do more than touch upon the grave reasons for a revision of the law in this respect; but they may be grouped shortly into its ineffectiveness as a deterrent, its liability to error in application; the moral depravity and brutalising effect of legal killing, and the disastrous psychic effects upon the nation generally.

Nations which have abolished the death penalty do not show records of murder in excess of those who preserve this relic of less civilised times. The English speaking races, who with some show of reason account themselves at the head of civilisation, are represented by daily newspapers teeming with murder cases in increasing frequency and apparently growing brutality. The psychology of murder is imperfectly recognised, nor can any line be distinctly drawn between homicidal mania, impulse, the effects of lower passions of varying intensity, and the results of hallucination. Double and multiple personalities, spontaneous and induced, are neither recognised nor even credited in this country.

Errors certainly occur in the administration of the law and are irreparable. At least one public hangman is said to have resigned his gruesome office and died of remorse for the execution of innocent men. Circumstantial evidence can never be conclusive, whilst many trials turn upon the eloquence of Counsel, of whom the Law retains the most capable.

The moral right of any community to deprive man of life, which it can never give back, cannot be sustained by any canon of religion or expediency. The protection of Society can be equally assured by segregation of criminals, based upon a careful study of each case.

Without going into details, no humane method of execution has been adopted by any nation adhering to this anachronistic custom, and the brutalising effect of association with such duties is undeniable. An ex-policeman has recently reminded us of the character of public executions within his own memory; and I suppose most people have read with varying emotions the morbid details of the last phase of Landru, and have wondered if, guilty or not guilty, it would have mattered much to the crowd.

The psychic effects of executions are simply disastrous to the nation, and they increase with the growing sensitiveness of the higher race types. No violent or sudden death is desirable. The effect of the holocaust of a great war has been obvious not only to psychics but to any observant person, from its commencement to the social troubles which threaten to overwhelm civilisation, for the moment, to-day. To dispatch criminals to the Borderland by violent methods, seeing that they remain in possession of all their faculties, coupled with a revengeful and purely animal instinct dominating their continued existence, together with unlimited power to indirectly indulge passions of the worst kind, means that these individuals are launched into existence as ghouls, attracted to haunts of human vice, to vicious personalities, and even to the dark séance room, whispering their evil counsels, influencing the weak minded, and gaining the vitality they crave from a repercussion of the sensual gratification of their excited victims. Clairvoyant vision can observe these vampires at work.

Controls and materialisations vary in character, but they are not all, or anything like all, of a desirable nature. It is not sufficiently realised by Spiritualists that the medium of the séance room is not alone in possessing that peculiar constitution which permits of the bridging of the two worlds, but that great numbers of men and women are "sensitive" to a certain degree, and their number is increasing. And herein lies the great danger of a persistence in this lamentable survival of our brutal Middle Ages, and something of the cause of which neither priest nor layman, statesman nor politician, can visualise the ultimate effect whose earlier symptoms are making every thinking man and woman uneasy.

DR. ELLIS POWELL AT GROVEDALE HALL.—We were favoured on Thursday, March 9th, with a visit from Dr. Ellis T. Powell, who lectured to a crowded congregation. He took for his subject "Spiritualism and Christianity," giving us the benefit of his extensive knowledge on the philosophy and phenomena of Spiritualism. Dr. Ellis Powell very kindly gave his services for the purpose of aiding our Building Fund. The meeting was in every way very successful, and our thanks are due to Dr. Powell for his gracious act.—Sec., North London Spiritualist Association.

## RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

I was saying something in this column about epitaphs a short time ago, and expressed a preference for brevity. A sympathetic correspondent sends me a newspaper cutting which tells how in a Worcester churchyard is a slab over a departed auctioneer bearing the single word, "Gone." In another instance (in Sussex) the epitaph is simply, "He was." A third brief tombstone motto, said to be found in Cane Hill Cemetery, Belfast, is "Left till called for." The auctioneer's epitaph contains the most truth, which suggests that the famous Duke, whose motto was, "I am here!" would, if he had been a Spiritualist, have had to have his motto altered as a tombstone inscription: "I am not here!" or "I am elsewhere."

Like Demosthenes the late Dr. Peebles had at first to struggle with a tendency to stammer. As a lad he attended a class for stammering boys. Part of the treatment was a pebble placed under the tongue.

Dr. Peebles, had he been so minded, might have compiled a volume of "Collections and Recollections" after the manner of the late Mr. G. W. E. Russell, and they could all have dealt with his own personal reminiscences and anecdotes of the many famous people he talked with during his eighty years of public life. When he first met Carlyle, that dyspeptic old philosopher observed, "Peebles, Peebles—ah, Scotch. Scotch, humph! Five millions of them in Scotland and most of 'em are fools." Dr. Peebles pointed out that he was an American. "American, eh?" said Carlyle, "ah, yes, America, that great maw which hatches out the world's fads!"

Of Walt Whitman, with whom he was on terms of intimate friendship, Dr. Peebles said, "Whitman regarded himself as an idea, a new idea, a new spirit and a new language for civilisation." Whitman's mysticism came out in the following deep saying to his friend: "What am I but you, what are you again but the same I, the two halves of a circle in the infinite circle?"

In his earlier days as a preacher in Baltimore, Dr. Peebles discovered that a very pious old deacon in his church had in pawn a black woman whom the deacon was about to sell in satisfaction of a debt. This was too much for the apostle of Freedom. He exposed the iniquity in a rousing sermon, with the result that he was called upon to resign, which he did. Years afterwards the congregation invited him to recant and return—they had missed him sorely in the meanwhile. They little knew the man when they asked him to surrender his deepest convictions in order to regain his post.

The "National Spiritualist" quotes an excellent definition of a friend as given by a schoolboy, who wrote that "A friend is a feller who knows all about you and likes you just the same."

The sceptic talked long and ardently. He had intended to tell me all he disbelieved, but a little tactful questioning kept him on another tack, and I gathered that he believed, amongst many other things, that psychic happenings through all the ages were the products of imagination, deception or disease; that all mediums were impostors or victims of hallucination; that none of the great scientists who testified to supernatural phenomena were competent judges; that telepathy was simply coincidence; that mediumship (when it was not pure imposture) undermined the health so that mediums nearly always died young or became insane. And so on. It was quite a long confession of faith, winding up with the remark, "So you will see I am a complete sceptic." I could only thank him (in a broken voice) and explain that never until that happy moment had I realised the true meaning of the word scepticism.

The headings to some of the psychic stories reported in American papers are almost as arresting as the stories themselves. Here is an example: "Scientist to Hunt Ghost: Canadian Biologist and New York Spook-Chaser Will Try to Get It: 'Poltergeist' says American Hunter." Could anything be more breezy and thrilling? It sounds like the "Hunting of the Snark." And it reminds me, in the attitude displayed, of the cynical observation of the philosopher: "It's a fine day, let's go out and kill something!"

When Leighton was President of the Royal Academy, a lady who knew him waxed eloquent over his social gifts. She told a party of friends of his graceful steps as a dancer, his perfect deportment, his brilliant conversation, and so forth. An artist who was present, bored by this long recital of minor accomplishments, cut it short by remarking sarcastically: "Yes, and he paints a little too, doesn't he?" When listening to long discussions on Sir Oliver Lodge's achievements in psychical research, I am sorely tempted, in the same way, to cut in with: "Yes, and he does a little in wireless telegraphy too, doesn't he?" I am convinced that to some people the information that Sir Oliver is a pioneer of "wireless" would come as a surprise. D. G.

## LIGHT,

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## THE PASSING OF DR. JAMES PEEBLES.

A CENTENARIAN SPIRITUALIST.

Almost at the moment of going to press with last week's issue of LIGHT, we received news of the transition of Dr. J. M. Peebles at his home in Los Angeles, on the 15th ult., and briefly recorded the fact. It was like the fall of a great oak, heavy with the weight of years, but green and living to the last.

It is doubtful if any veteran of the Spiritualistic movement had so long, so wonderful and so varied a career. His life covered a period of one hundred years, less about five weeks, that is to say, he would, had he remained on earth, have celebrated his century on the 23rd inst., so that it may be permissible to rank him amongst our centenarians.

Our first meeting with him was at the time he was verging on eighty, the "youngest old man in Spiritualism," still full of fire and energy, stark of his inches, for he measured six feet, and was upstanding as a ship's mast.

Five times had this grand old man journeyed round the earth, writing, lecturing and working in every way for human good. High on the roll of famous Americans, his name was known in almost every part of the world. At that time it would have seemed incredible that he had still more than twenty years of active life before him. Yet long after the age of ninety he had the buoyancy of youth, and was full of invincible hope and courage. Even in those days he proclaimed his intention of reaching the century mark, which is sufficiently suggestive of his own outlook on life. He was to within a short time of his death the indomitable fighting man, ready to be martyred for the truth he proclaimed, but resolutely determined to yield to no fate that was not beyond human resistance.

In the days before most of LIGHT's readers were born, Dr. Peebles was fighting against the evils of the drink traffic in his native country. Later he stood amongst the Abolitionists, fighting the curse of the slave trade side by side with William Lloyd Garrison and the other heroes of those great days, including John Brown, whose name is immortalised in the song, "John Brown's Body." He knew all or most of the great patriots of America in the stirring times which led to the great Civil War. He was a co-worker with Theodore Parker; he was intimate with Emerson, Walt Whitman, Professor Hare and Judge Edmonds, and, in Europe he met and in most cases made friendships with Carlyle, Victor Hugo, John Bright, Gerald Massey, William Howitt, and Robert Dale Owen. The list is too long to do more than select a few from the more outstanding names.

A true American, instead of fearing new ideas he welcomed them. And so it came about that many of those "dreadful innovations" which are now the beneficent commonplaces of to-day found in Dr. Peebles a foremost and fearless advocate. His great phrase was "Freedom of thought is the soul's birthright"; and he stood always for liberty.

Although he was born in a log cabin, he was not deprived of that academic instruction which was then so essential to secure the world's respect. He began at a High School, graduated, and in due course became an ordained minister in the Universalist Church. It was at about that time that Modern Spiritualism had begun to take hold of the American public, and although he was then making his strongest stand for the abolition of slavery, Peebles was soon drawn to investigate the evidence for human survival. In later years he became, as we all know, a medium and a world-missionary for the "New Revelation." Even a summary of all his doings in Spiritualism or out of it would fill many pages of LIGHT. We can do no more than shed a few gleams on the astonishing career of a man who made history in the cause of world-progress. He numbered his friends by the thousand amongst the men and women of many races, and was interested in the ideals of all. Wide-mindedness—that was an especial quality of the grey veteran who has "gone on." He championed the redskins when they were the victims of broken treaties; he faced howling mobs for the emancipation not only of the slaves but of women, for the battle for female suffrage was in those days at its bleak beginnings. He stood up against Col. Ingersoll in resistance to Agnosticism, and was one of the very few men who ever worsted the doughty colonel in argument. He lived according to Nature and was richly rewarded, for when well over ninety he had the robust health and undimmed faculties of the average healthy man of a third of his age. He was a great orator, for within a few years of his death he could address a vast audience in an animated speech of an hour's duration. He worked against cruelty to animals, against child-labour, against war, against religious bigotry. From the daybreak of his life to the going down of the sun he stood for religious and social freedom, and the great message of his later career was "There is no death." Only a small part of him is revealed in his books, for he was primarily a warrior; a life in action, one who, like John Knox, never feared the face of any man.

What more need we say of him in this place? It remains but to salute his memory; to give him Hail and Farewell, and to join in the welcome that received him into that Better Country, whose greatest and wisest still carry on that work of human service which in this world is a man's best title to greatness.

### DR. J. M. PEEBLES' SPIRITUALISM.

[The conclusion of an address delivered by the veteran Spiritualist at St. James's Hall, London, on September 24th, 1902.]

Spiritualism not only demonstrates a future existence, not only teaches the certainty of suffering in all worlds for wrong-doing, not only encourages invention, art, science, exploration, and all sanitary enterprises, not only shows memory to be the "recording angel," and self-denial, nobleness of purpose, purity of life and sweet spirituality to be the ascending steps to heaven, but it strikes the chains from millions of slaves and builds unsectarian universities. These angel ministries ever appeal to the silent, persuasive and most powerful incentives to a better life. And though no subtle chemistry can impart a more delicate odour to the rose, though no lapidary can burnish the stars, nor rhetorician's art add to the moral beauty and dignity of a true altruistic life, yet everyone can cultivate that patience which endures suffering, that gentleness which neutralises acidity of temper, that forgiveness which obliterates personal animosities, that sweetness of disposition which adds lustre to all the heavenly graces, that consciousness of right which inspires justice, and that tender charity which, combined with the other virtues that angel-messages inspire, make the Harmonial Man—Heaven on earth.

The golden age lies onward, not behind.  
The pathway through the past has led us up;  
The pathway through the future will lead on  
And higher. We are rising from the beast  
Unto Christ and human brotherhood.

Such a scent when evening closes  
Steals beneath the hawthorn trees,  
Mingled mignonette and roses,  
And delightful memories.  
Till the years slip off their pain.  
And the heart grows young again.

—CHRISTIAN BURKE.

## THE OBSERVATORY.

## LIGHT ON THINGS IN GENERAL.

Spiritualism entered the electioneering lists recently during the campaign in Wolverhampton West. The "Express and Star" of that city published the following report relating to two of the candidates on the eve of the election: "Mr. W. H. Jones (ex-secretary Wolverhampton Spiritualists' Society) informs us that on behalf of the Spiritualists of West Wolverhampton, the following question was submitted for the consideration of the two candidates: 'Will you assist our National Church to secure the same rights and privileges as are accorded to other religious organisations, and to urge that our National Church and its members shall not suffer the application or implication of certain Acts of Parliament?' The Acts referred to are the Vagrancy Acts and the Acts of George IV., which were framed many years before the inception of modern Spiritualism, and which were never intended to apply to any religious body, or form of religious activity, but are still enforced to the detriment of *bona fide* Spiritualists. Sir R. Bird replied: 'I am strongly in favour of complete religious liberty. Of course, if the law acts unjustly in any particular, that is a matter for Parliament; and if coming up for consideration while I were a member of the House of Commons I would give you my careful consideration and support.' Mr. Walkden says: 'In my view every shade of religious opinion is entitled to freedom of expression.'"

Mr. George R. Sims, who has recently been responsible for creating a good deal of correspondence on the subject of Spiritualism in the "Referee," is well-known to possess a deep sense of humour, a sense that has undoubtedly kept him not only young but extremely sane. We feel sure it is that appreciation of, in this case, pathetic humour that prompted him to publish a letter last Sunday in the "Referee" from a Mr. B. Macdonald Hastings, of St. Leonard's. We will give the opening paragraph only, the rest of the letter being too humorous even for us:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "REFEEER."

"SIR,—Will any educated Spiritualist tell me why it is that I, who am sane and excessively broad-minded, cannot read any book on Spiritualism without experiencing the emotion of contempt or of anger or of laughter? Why is it that my sympathies are never aroused? Why has no chapter, nor page, nor sentence wowed me even momentarily to a mood of tolerance? What is the matter with a creed with such powers of repulsion? Can I believe that God has anything to do with a teaching that leads me to despise, to rage, and to deride?"

We sincerely hope that no "educated Spiritualist" will attempt to explain the reason to Mr. Hastings. It would be a thousand pities to deprive him of enjoying such a variety of emotions at a time when Spiritualistic literature is so inexpensive and a stall at the Grand Guignol costs quite a lot of money in these hard times.

A. V. E., the London clairvoyante, writing last Sunday in the "Weekly Dispatch," describes how she sees spirits as follows: "Often the spirit with whom you wish to communicate does not know how 'to build up' so as to make himself visible to the medium, and so an old relative, ancestor, or friend appears first. If you, as the sitter, become annoyed and agitated, then you upset everything, but if you remain calm and patient and welcome them, your loved one will appear later. Some spirits appear strong, natural, fully dressed, and stand in the same place for some time. It is then that the medium can give such accurate descriptions as are so frequently heard. Sometimes spirits will build up in a very shadowy way. They look as if they were in a yellow smoke or fog. In such cases it is difficult to describe the exact shade of hair and colour of eyes. There are times when I experience considerable difficulty in describing a spirit at all. When a sitter has several friends on the other side, who are eager to make themselves known, they all appear together and there is almost a fight as each wishes to build up. First, I may see an old man, and before I can describe him I see a young girl and then an old lady. I cannot describe any of these until the one who has the most power eventually builds up fully. Even then the spirit is seen for only a short time; the form disappears in order that the power may be used for communications. Occasionally spirits appear as in a cinema picture, and occasionally as if they were far away in the distance. At other times I see them gradually build up from a sort of white smoke or vapour, but more often they just appear 'from nowhere' as it were. Then, again, they build up over the sitters' faces, using this as a kind of framework, and in these cases I do not see the sitter's face at all but only the spirit belonging to them. I see spirits anywhere and at any time. I am also very sure when I see a spirit form and not a material body, or a mental picture, though sometimes, at first sight, there is some little difficulty. Often I have seen spirits in my room at night, in the dark, so distinctly as to be able to describe

correctly how their hair was done and the kind of dress they wore. Sometimes I see spirits fully dressed, but more often I only see their faces and perhaps part of their figure. In these instances I am not able to judge their heights or even say whether they are short or tall. I see them in much the same way as you would see a head in the crowd or a face and shoulders at the window. Again, I see them in a very beautiful, brilliant light, which indicates that such a spirit has either been some time in the spirit-world or else has been a very good soul in earth-life."

"The Ghosts of St. Stephen's" is the heading of a paragraph on Monday last in that always interesting column entitled "By the Way," published daily by the "Star." The item reads: "It is certainly curious, as Mr. Walter Bell has been pointing out, that the Tower of London has no ghosts, for so much more modern a building as the Houses of Parliament can boast several. The most sinister of the ghosts of St. Stephen's is known as Big Ben, and is reported to appear whenever a death is impending in the Royal Family. A number of folk swore to seeing Big Ben on the evenings preceding the deaths of the Prince Consort, the Princess Alice, the Duke of Clarence, Queen Victoria, and King Edward. Another more orthodox parliamentary ghost is a dismal-looking female figure which some claim to have seen on the Terrace. She marches from one end to the other and then disappears, with a howl of anguish, in quite the best spectral style, into the river."

The Londoner in the "Evening News" of March 9th, has also something to say on the subject of ghosts. Writing under the heading, "The Black Ribbon," this graceful writer treats of the Tyrone Ghost in the following manner: "John Power, Earl of Tyrone, son of an Irish lord who died in the Tower of London as King William's prisoner, was an odd sort of young man to have been born to that turbulent plotter. He argued about Revealed Religion, he was tainted with 'the pernicious principles of deism.' His father, who had easily changed his religion with his politics, would never have understood such wranglings. But there was a young Miss Hamilton who understood. She and young John talked about Revealed Religion to their hearts' content. They made a treaty for settling these puzzling questions. They made solemn promise that the first of them to die should appear to the other and bring from the shadows a word of the true religion. Miss Hamilton did not marry her young theologian. She married a baronet who, so far as I know, had no doubts concerning Revealed Religion. They had a family of daughters: there is no more to tell of her until the October morning of 1693, when Lady Beresford came downstairs late for breakfast, pale-faced, a black ribbon twisted round her wrist. Nobody, she said, would ever see her without the black ribbon: nobody should ask her why she wore it. Also she said that Lord Tyrone was a dead man. And that was true: a black sealed letter soon brought the news that he was dead in Dublin. For twenty years she lived with the black ribbon upon her wrist. Her baronet had died; she had married again and chosen a soldier and a spendthrift. Before she died she told the tale of the black ribbon. Lord Tyrone had kept his word. His ghost had come to her in the night with its message: Revealed Religion was the true religion. For a sign he had told her that she should bear a son who should marry the heir of Tyrone. She still doubted, this obstinate lady: she called the ghost a phantom of imagination. Then another and terrible sign was given her. The phantom earl laid his chill hand on her wrist: the sinews withered at the dead man's touch. She bound her wrist with black ribbon before she went down to breakfast. Before it fitted away, the ghost, for a last word, had warned her that she should die at forty-seven. On her forty-seventh birthday she died, having given her children the story of the Tyrone ghost. When she was dead, her daughter stripped off the ribbon and looked on the withered wrist. That is the end of the story. They say that it was written down by Lady Betty Cobbe, a granddaughter of the lady of the black ribbon. Lady Betty Cobbe had never seen her grandmother. There was a portrait, they say, of a dame whose wrist was wound with black ribbon: nobody knows what has become of that picture."

The "Bromley Mercury" records the following interesting item showing that Bromley in Kent is indeed a progressive suburb: "Some time ago a few friends met together in Bromley to discuss the subject of Spiritualism. Two meetings have since been held, with the result that a Bromley Circle for Psychic Study has been formed and promises to attract a considerable number of members. The Circle held a meeting at the Literary Institute on Tuesday, when an address on Spiritualism was given by the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, whose interest in the subject is well known. Mrs. V. Allen presided. It was announced that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had promised to come and address them at some future date, and they were endeavouring to arrange for a visit from Miss Stead. Those who wish to join the Circle for Psychic Study should communicate with the Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. Hill, 75, Widmore-road."

# BOOK AND NEWSPAPER TESTS.

ADDRESS BY THE REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS.

Book and newspaper tests form an interesting department of psychic research, and as the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas is one of the best known and most successful investigators in this sphere, his address before the members of the London Spiritualist Alliance on March 9th, dealing with his experiences, was followed with the deepest interest by a large audience.

MR. GEORGE E. WRIGHT, who presided, said, in introducing the lecturer, that critics often declared that communications such as book and newspaper tests could be explained by chance coincidence. It was important, therefore, to remember that Mr. Drayton Thomas had exhaustively tested his results for coincidence and had shown quite conclusively that chance could not explain the messages he had obtained.

MR. DRAYTON THOMAS said that for a long time he had been having consecutive sittings with a well-known medium. Most of the results had come from that particular form of mediumship in which the sensitive in deep trance allowed her lips to be used by controls, who sometimes gave messages for herself and sometimes for others. One of the speakers was his father. The lecturer then proceeded to describe what he said was one of the most interesting cases he had encountered during his five years of psychic research. He received twelve messages for which at first no clue could be found, but subsequently all were proved to be correct. They related to a Wesleyan minister, a friend of his parents, who lived in retirement in a village some thirty miles from London. He was told that he would find the Christian name of the minister in "The Times" of a certain date, and at a certain place in a given column, and that close to the name would be the name of a place with which he had been much connected. Both statements proved to be correct, the names being "Samuel" and "Weston-super-Mare." He was able to visit the daughter of the deceased clergyman, and as the result of inquiries from her he found that every point touched on in the communications was verified. One strange circumstance to which Mr. Drayton Thomas called attention was that the clergyman did not die until eight hours after Mr. Thomas had received the messages and posted copies of them (for identification) to the Secretary of the Society for Psychical Research. It might be added that the gentleman in question, who was a great sufferer, was from time to time kept unconscious for long periods by injections to alleviate pain. The lecturer thought it possible that his father and sister on the Other Side, meeting him there, might have been uncertain whether he had been finally freed from his earthly body.

Another case dealt with was that of a lady whom he would call Miss Y., who lost her mother a couple of years ago. He had known the mother, but had not met Miss Y. since she was quite a child. She wrote and asked whether it was possible to get into touch with her mother. He asked his sister on the Other Side if she could get a message from the mother for her daughter. She said she would try, and as a result fifteen little messages were obtained, eleven of which proved to be quite evidential. Miss Y. was satisfied that her mother was communicating with her. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas then invited her to spend a few days with them. At his next sitting the communicator, to whom he had said nothing of his intention, expressed great pleasure at this coming visit. A fortnight before the date of the visit he received a message from his sister asking if Miss Y. had been worried about her eyes. It turned out that Miss Y. had spent her Christmas holidays with her brother's wife who had been greatly troubled with her eyes. When Miss Y. arrived, Mr. Thomas took her to a sitting and there she received some twenty-one evidential items. Her mother, speaking through the medium, called her by a pet name, at the same time placing her hand on her head. Both the name and action were entirely veridical. They were told to look in "The Times" of a certain date for the name of a place with a special meaning for her. On doing so they found in the place indicated the name Barwick, a village in which the lady had lived, and which had close associations for her.

On December 20th, 1921, Mr. Thomas's father said: "In to-morrow's 'Times,' column one of first page, about halfway down, will be the name of a man very recently passed over, about whom you have been talking lately."



REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS.

Mr Thomas had only recently been inquiring after the health of a Mr. Ray, and on the very evening of the day when the message was given he had heard of his death. In "The Times" of the next morning he found the name "Ray," one and a half inches below the exact half of column one. He looked in the previous day's issue, but the name was not there then.

On December 9th, 1921, Mr. Thomas was told to ask his wife, "what has gone wrong in the cupboard?" We got an idea that something had not been keeping well. At first they could find no clue to the meaning of this message, but later it transpired that one of the maids had placed a ripe pear in a kitchen cupboard and forgotten it, and some time after the cook, going to the cupboard, found the decaying mass of what had once been a pear. On January 20th Mr. Thomas received this message: "In column two near the top is a word, it is really a name, but one which he is making into a word to describe the mystery of the cupboard." In "The Times" of the following day he was thus able to find the word "Pearson," which admirably fitted the test.

In conclusion the lecturer said that the significance of these newspaper tests was that the unseen intelligences seemed to be able to discover in newspaper offices names that would be useful to them, and the approximate position in which they would fall. It was a mild form of foreseeing to guess whereabouts they would fall in the newspaper. There seemed to be only one explanation which covered all the phenomena, and that was the action of spirit agency. He was personally convinced that his father went to the trouble in order to give a demonstration, scientific and absolute, of human survival. To most of his hearers the fact of human survival was common knowledge. They had all had their proofs. They were not necessarily the better for such knowledge, unless they lived in the light of that knowledge. He suggested that if they knew that their friends were permitted to come and watch over them—to act the part of guardian angels—and did not live up to it in their lives, it were better for them if they did not know such facts at all. If they knew, by the grace of God, how to live in the light of this great knowledge, then life here and now became infinitely deeper and grander. (Applause.)

MR. WRIGHT, in proposing a vote of thanks to the lecturer for his most interesting address, said that newspaper tests seemed to him to derive an additional strength as evidence from the fact that they were the third step in a systematic endeavour on the part of intelligences beyond the veil to give tests which could not be explained by Telepathy. These endeavours started with Cross Correspondence, then came Book Tests, with which there was always the question whether they might not be explained by chance coincidence. Finally, there were the Newspaper tests, which entirely ruled out the possibility of Telepathy, for the contents of the front page of "The Times" were unknown in advance, to any single mind. He ventured to think that in these three methods they were witnessing systematic and successful attempts to offer evidence to mankind of the reality of the great fact of human survival. If that were so, were not the words of the late F. W. H. Myers worthy to be remembered? "It is not we who are the experimenters here. Experiments there are, indeed, but they are not the work of earthly skill. All that we can contribute to the new result is an attitude of patience, attention, care, an honest readiness to receive and to weigh whatever may be given into our keeping by intelligences beyond our own." Mr. Drayton Thomas had displayed in a high degree those qualities of attention and care, and he had shown an honest readiness to receive and to weigh, and (the Chairman) was sure that every member of the Alliance would join with him in heartily thanking Mr. Thomas for his address that evening. (Applause.)

At the close of the proceedings, Mr. Drayton Thomas was interviewed by a large number of inquirers, who sought further information, and who wished to thank him personally for his remarks.

The Rev. Ellis G. Roberts, Alberbury Vicarage, Shrewsbury, England, requests address of some reader of *Light* resident in North Island, N.Z., or well acquainted with the locality who will kindly answer a few questions regarding

## "PSYCHIC RESEARCH VERSUS SPIRITUALISM."

BY SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

Mrs. McKenzie's intimation that some change may be effected in the manner and methods of so-called "Psychic Research" will be very welcome to many of us who have seen how long it has been on wrong lines. I say "so-called" advisedly, because, while no one can deny the conscientious "research," the "psychic" has been far to seek. One looks in vain for any adequate application of the fact that the enquirers are dealing not with ordinary material substances but with soul questions in which such elements as sympathy, tact and kindly charitable understanding are of the first consequence. The methods have been conspicuous for meticulous exactness in small matters and disregard for the large and vital ones.

The true psychic researchers are the actual Spiritualists, for they give those conditions of sympathy and comradeship which the medium needs while they lose, or should lose, none of their determination to resist fraud. I was a psychic researcher before many who call themselves such were born, for I suppose that I am now one of the oldest members of the S.P.R. But I have not ceased to be a psychic researcher because I am convinced of the truth of the spirit doctrine instead of for ever moving in a circle and never attaining a goal. I cannot speak as yet for America, but I can imagine no set of men more capable of real psychic research than those who are representative of the Spiritualists in Great Britain. Yet these are the people who are constantly alluded to by the particular set of critics of whom I talk as if they were credulous dupes who would sit "gaping and marvelling" if any wonder were shown them. I use these verbs because they were actually employed in a letter to me by a prominent "psychic researcher" as describing the mentality of two of the most shrewd and experienced Spiritualists in this country. An attitude of this sort annoys, and it is rather comical afterwards to find the same people complaining of the natural results.

Consider the case of psychic photography. I entirely sympathise with the mediums in their refusal to submit their results to men who have continually shown an unfair and insulting attitude towards them. Take Mr. Whately Smith's pamphlet. What does it all mean in plain words save that psychic photographers are blasphemous cheats? After such an inference how could any self-respecting medium give a sitting to a person who clearly approaches the subject with an unsympathetic mind? Or take the case of Mr. Dingwall who recently applied the term "smudges" to the ordinary psychic photograph, giving the impression that a mere blur on the print was the result. I at once sent him copies of six photographs showing how like they were to the originals and how in some cases they were actually clearer than the sitters. He denied this, though no impartial person in the world could deny it, as I am prepared to demonstrate by sending these same photographs to any judge. After that I should never dream of submitting any psychic evidence to Mr. Dingwall, for if he was capable of denying those photographs it would be impossible to get his assent to anything. He was clearly out to disprove and not to prove—so why waste time? And yet Mr. Dingwall is now the official inquirer of the S.P.R. How can he possibly expect co-operation? It is this sort of criticism which nullifies and stultifies the work of the Society, so that many of us have turned to the little S.S.S.P. and to the Psychic College as the true centres of light and progress in this country.

The constant assumption that the medium is a rogue and the Spiritualist a fool has certainly created a feeling which has made it easier for us to turn to the general public than to these professed experts who so often make their own difficulties. Some little time ago I was privileged to attend a sitting of a private circle in a shop in the north of London, where the family had sat twice a week for seven years, strangers being hardly ever admitted. After a remarkable séance the physical phenomena continued after the light was turned on, a round platter of wood twisting and moving with no one near it. I need not say that I took this disc of wood into my hands and made sure there was no attachment. When I mentioned that this would interest psychic researchers the head of the house grew angry. "Such people shall never enter my house. I am not here to be insulted," said he. He was perfectly right. If unsympathetic enquirers had been admitted their attitude would have ruined the conditions; probably no results would have followed and the final report would have been that under "test conditions" the thing did not occur, and that if we said we had seen it with our own eyes it was clear that we were duped by a rascal. Why should people expose themselves to such an annoyance?

The recent report upon Eva C. is an example of what I mean. What can be the feelings of Madame Bisson or of the medium as they read that document? How they must regret their wasted time and energy! Even under conditions of extreme restraint it is admitted in the document and shown by photographs that the Committee did obtain results which so far as they went were very closely analogous to those got by Dr. Geley, who declares that in

his case deception was an impossibility. Since the conditions were in their own hands it was the business of the Committee either to prove how there could be fraud, or else to admit these results as valid. In the most illogical fashion they do neither. There seems to be no connection between the body of the report with its long record of abnormalities and the final summing-up which says that they have been unsuccessful in establishing the validity of the phenomena. The Committee seems to have lacked the courage, or the clearness of reasoning which would draw obvious conclusions from their own evidence. We can only sympathise with Madame Bisson and Eva C., who appear to me to have been very badly treated.

Some of the report seems to me really fatuous in its tone of incredulity. Fancy at this time of day alluding to Prof. Crookes' Katie King as materialisations "which were alleged to take place," and that "the data then presented did not permit of any confident judgment being expressed." With no desire to be rude to the Committee, is it not obvious that Crookes' name outweighs them all put together? Is it not insulting to the memory of that great scientist to imply that an enquiry which covered over two years of his life, which was supported by the fullest and closest observations and measurements and by a series of photographs, with the evidence of Mrs. Crookes and others in support, was really a delusion? It is the more inexcusable since there have been so many instances of ectoplastic personalities since then, corroborating his general assertion, as was testified to by Professor Charles Richet only a few weeks ago. It is incredulity of this kind which makes these psychical researchers such a drag upon progress. Unless their fiat is issued the opinion of the greatest minds, the Crookes, the Lombrosos, are dismissed as having no solid foundation—a contention which would matter little if it represented only their individual judgments, but is of great importance when it is circulated officially among the members of the S.P.R. and so tinges the thoughts of numbers of important people who have not the leisure to go into the matter for themselves, and who put full trust in their delegates.

I have written at somewhat greater length than I intended, but I think it of the greatest importance that the whole psychic body should move forward together with some relation between van and rear. It is therefore very necessary to clear the question up, and to make the psychic researchers realise what the general feeling is among Spiritualists, and how necessary it is that these enquirers should assume a humbler and more sympathetic tone if they really do desire any co-operation. I seldom hear any expression of bitterness against the McCabes and Clodds, who are consistent to their mid-Victorian materialism, but the unreasonable and unsympathetic attitude of certain "researchers" with their arrogant air of intellectual superiority when dealing with those who have gone far more deeply than themselves into occult matters, is very properly resented.

### MOVING OBJECTS BY WILL POWER.

"Thornton" writes:—

"I was interested in your remarks about the man in the Bradford café who moved things without contact. I am not so sure about the obvious hair-and-wax "explanation." Two friends of mine—acute business men, with good sight and alert to thread and hair possibilities—saw part of the man's performance, and they told me (next day) with great emphasis, that his hands neither touched nor went within several inches of the objects moved—matchboxes, purses, etc., some of them supplied by onlookers. Moreover, he made an empty coffee cup rotate in its saucer by describing a circle with his fingers, a few inches above it. Hair and wax wouldn't do that. My friends did not see the current incident; they were told of it but did not see it, and therefore expressed no opinion. The man told them it was 'an Indian business,' a weird power which he himself didn't understand; he had learnt how to do it in India, but could not explain the 'how' of it. It may have been conjuring, of course, but I'm not sure."

We also have heard similar stories giving an occult explanation of some of these performances. Indeed, we have met two gentlemen who are perfectly convinced, as eye-witnesses, of the possibility of moving small objects merely by the power of the will. But we prefer to wait for fuller demonstrations before launching on the theory as an alternative to the hair and cobbler's wax explanation, which is certainly the real one in ordinary cases.

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# DEATH THE GATE OF LIFE.

A REMARKABLE SERMON.

Many readers will be interested in the following sermon if only as a welcome example of how the influence of Spiritualism is permeating the churches. That it is a sermon by an American minister in no way detracts from its value, for we remember that the American is far more receptive of new ideas than the conservative Briton. The sermon was delivered by the Rev. Dr. James L. Gordon, of the First Congregational Church, San Francisco, and is reported in the "San Francisco Journal," the leading journal of that city, of February 20th, 1922.

Dr. Gordon commenced by pointing out that "danger and progress always keep company." This was his reply to those who spoke of the dangers of psychical inquiry. He cited mining, navigation, railroads, automobiles and aeroplanes as examples of pursuits attended with danger, and remarked that no progress was possible in any realm that did not mean hazard, the intellectual and spiritual not excepted. Proceeding he said:—

"The passage in I. Corinthians, xv., 51-58, beginning with 'Behold I show you a mystery,' is the description of the spirits' exit from the body and of what occurs when that takes place. When Paul says, 'We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,' he means not the body which sleeps in the grave, but the spirit which is the real man will be changed and lifted into the next higher realm, the astral, the ethereal, the psychic, the spiritual realm. I leave it with my hearers to imagine the soul separating itself from the body, while I speak to you for a little while upon the general subject of 'the sensations of the soul entering the spirit realm.'

## FIRST SENSATIONS.

"The first sensation is that of being self-existent aside from your own physical body. Every man attends his own funeral. Having been released from your physical body, you are permitted to turn and gaze upon the dead body of flesh which you have just shuffled off. In that hour you are getting many surprises. You are surprised at the grief of your friends. You are surprised at the efforts and attentions of your nurse who seeks to bring you back to life and consciousness. You are surprised at the presence of the doctor, the preacher, and it may be of the lawyer. You are surprised at the extreme whiteness of your physical face.

"The second sensation is that of youth, immortal youth. There are no old people in the spirit world. Every sensation is of health, supernal health, sensations of joy, lightness, strength, vitality, life, superabundant life, superabundant health. No consciousness whatever of weight or of burden. In that hour you will find yourself like a San Francisco seagull, resting on its wings and master of three worlds—sky, sea and air.

"The third sensation is the fact that you find yourself immediately in the care of a spiritual guide. This guide will not prove to be a stranger, but a familiar character. While you may not be acquainted with the guide you are surprised to find out that your guide is acquainted with you. This guardian seems to know all about you, like a coloured 'mammy' in the old plantation days. The guide seems to have lived with you all your life. He knows you like your mind. He knows you like your thoughts. He knows you like your memory. He knows you like your consciousness. He knows you like your inmost spirit. He seems to be your other self. He knows also all about the spirit-world.

## MAN AS A TRINITY.

"I am inclined to believe that man is a trinity like God. There are three of us, body, mind and spirit. Who is this third person of the human trinity? Did Christ make reference to this spirit-guide when He said, 'He will guide you into all truth'? Are we singing of this individual spirit-guide when we repeat the words: 'Holy Spirit, faithful guide, ever near the Christian's side'?"

"The fourth great sensation of the soul will be the absolute nothingness of all material things. We will be absolutely unable to appreciate the value of the spiritual

and the nothingness of material until we have been released from the bondage of the body. This is one of the first great lessons to be learned as we enter the spirit realm. Diamonds are but pebbles, silver is but tin, gold is but yellow metal. Radium is only burning dust. Money is nothing more than a hat check. Real estate is only a sand heap. Jewels are but Indian toys. Possessions—the good things of this world—are simply and only hand baggage. What is rank? What is fame? Nothing. What is station? Nothing. What is popularity? Nothing. What is position? Nothing. What is earthly glory? Nothing.

## TRANSFIGURED EARTH.

"The fifth great sensation of the soul in entering the spirit realm will be the dawning consciousness that the spirit-world is a glorified and transfigured earth. The spirit-world is just like this world, only finer, purer and better. Everything is better over yonder. They have cities just like our modern cities, only better. They have streets just like the street through which you walked this morning, only better. They have homes just like the home of the home of which you dream, only better. There are landscapes over yonder, quite like the landscapes which inspire you here, only the view is more magnificent, more thrilling more divine. They have stars over yonder just like our stars, but greater. They have suns over yonder which shine like our sun, only more gloriously. Remember the dying words of Frances E. Willard: 'I have entered it and everything is just the same.'

"The sixth sensation will be to discover that all our so-called physical senses have been intensified by the change from earth to the spirit realm. Our physical senses are screens designed to protect us like 'blinkers' on a horse. So long as we are not imprisoned in a physical body we are limited in the exercise of our spiritual faculties. There is a higher reason for this. If we saw everything we should be alarmed. If we heard everything we should be shell-shocked. If we felt everything we should be crushed. If we could inhale everything we would be intoxicated. 'Now we see through a glass darkly,' dimly, indistinctly, then 'face to face.' In the spirit realm they think quicker, move faster, see farther, hear deeper and feel more intensely.

## THE GREAT ADVANCEMENT.

"The seventh sensation will be that of a decided advancement even for the sinful and unregenerate. The lowest realm of the spiritual is better than the highest in our present material universe. The worst man on earth is a better man when released from his physical body. The larger view, granted by being admitted into the spirit realm, will have a beneficial and broadening effect on the worst culprit who ever lived on the earth.

"The eighth sensation will be to realise that in the spirit-world they have no more interest in a man's religion than they have in his politics, his business, his nationality or his race. In the spirit-world they have no preference in the matter of creed, church, theology, order of service, missionary program, or denominational enterprise. It may startle you, but there are no Protestants and no Roman Catholics, no Hebrews, no Christian Scientists, no Unitarians, no Universalists, no Dowie-ites, no Seventh Day Adventists, no Spiritualists over there—that world is inhabited simply and only by those who love God, and those who scorn His love. There are only two classes over yonder: those who yield to love and those who are dominated by hate.

"The greatest surprise and sensation of the soul will be the ease with which we pass from the material to the spiritual. The sweetest smile is the smile of death. I have attended hundreds of funerals during my ministry, and the usual remark of mourners is this: 'How peaceful and beautiful is the expression upon yonder face?' 'Asleep a Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep a calm and undisturbed repose, unbroken by the last of life. Dying is the most natural thing in the world. Living may be difficult, but dying is easy.'

A JESTER ON SCIENCE.—The Court "fool" in ancient days occasionally said wiser things than the Court sages. The American comic journal "Life," referring to the scientific computations concerning the age of the earth, which, it seems, vary from hundreds of millions to thousands of millions of years, observes: "When you have allowed the earth a million years of antiquity, the other millions do not matter . . . it is wonderful how the great

scientific gentlemen talk about these matters, and with what straight faces. The calculations they make on geology and heat and mineral changes are amusing gambles and that is all. Why do they try to connect time with creation at all? Time seems to be a mundane product that does not exist except in the minds of living men. No account was made of it at all until earth got far enough along to produce what Korzybski calls time-finders, meaning men.

## MEN, WOMEN—AND GHOSTS.

## WHAT IS THE USE OF IT?

"To what base uses we may return, Horatio!" We are not thinking merely of Hamlet's reflection that the dust of Cæsar "dead and turned to clay" might "stop a hole to keep the wind away." To Hamlet, the "earth" of Cæsar was the real Cæsar who kept the world in awe. Hamlet was clearly a materialist in spite of the ghost. How otherwise are we to explain his reference to the "bourne from which no traveller returns," when he had not long previously beheld a returned traveller in the form of his father? Of course there is a sense in which it may truly be held that no traveller to the other world returns, however real and life-like may be his apparent re-appearance on this mortal stage. But these are digressions. The "base uses" we had in mind were connected with the spectacle of the soul passing through this little span of earthly life, entering in a natural way on a higher plane of evolution, human as ever and no more or less divine, and then becoming, on any attempt to manifest its continued existence to its friends here, a "shade," a spectre, a phantom, a goblin, a spook—something to frighten children and the chicken-hearted amongst the older folk, something to lend a shuddering joy to a fireside tale, or to make a newspaper sensation with especial reference to the *Psychical Research Society* and professional conjurers and illusionists.

Is it not time now to attempt something in the way of summarising in a definite fashion the results of many years' work on the part of thousands of earnest students, investigators and thinkers in all ranks of life who have laboured not merely to understand the "ghost," but to present him as reasonable and human? It is strange, perhaps, that so much labour should be required to establish what to those who have made any degree of acquaintance with the fact of spirit return should have been sufficiently obvious. In a Universe so wondrously interlinked in every part the relationship should have been apparent even without the homely and intimate touches which, in so many cases, reveal the "communicating intelligence" to be a fellow-man. We are familiar enough with the old arguments against the position—the claim, for instance, that the next state must so vastly transcend this one that all the old human traits must have been left behind. We were always puzzled by the attitude of mind which this argument revealed. The suggestion seemed to be that man in the flesh is a degraded and deplorable creation, any continuation of whose existence, as a man proper, was wholly undesirable on artistic if not on religious grounds. And having thus (quite unconsciously) slighted the work of their Creator and indicated (by inference) their own abhorrence of themselves, the objectors of this class occasionally proceed to depict the kind of future life which they expect (although we doubt whether they deserve it). It is usually a blend of the Paradise conceived by the devout Churchman and the heaven described by Dante Gabriel Rossetti as the abode of "The Blessed Damozel." Well, we have no quarrel with refined ideals of any type. The Universe is very large. It doubtless holds many heavens—the heaven of the archangel, the heaven of the poet, of the musician, the painter, and even (possibly) of the lawyer and the stockbroker! Why this narrowness? And whence all the confusion and contradiction? Names, simple names. What are men and women? "Ghosts" in a physical world—"ghosts," a name soiled by ignoble use, but grand and pure in its original meaning—else why do we still speak of The Holy Ghost? And ghosts, what are they? Men and women of a finer mould—living in a world real enough to them, however unsubstantial it may seem to us—and akin with us, however exalted some of them may be in their spiritual estate, by the same law that holds the atom in affinity with the mightiest sun. And what is heaven? An interior state rather than an objective world.

If "nice customs cursey to great kings," then surely silly customs must give way before reasonable and resolute minds. It is a silly custom that bids those holding by the reality of a future life to regard its denizens either as supernal beings destitute of any human traits, on the one hand, or as spooks and gibbering ghosts, haunters of old houses and churchyards, or half-witted spectres "conjured up" by mediums, on the other. For the origin of the first of these views of the spirit—as being a celestial and supernatural creature—we must look to centuries of false teaching based on the idea of the depravity of human nature, while the other view—that which classes spirits as "fantastic sprites"—owes its existence partly to folk-lore and partly to the impishness of the unregulated imagination. And now as to the lack of intelligence alleged to be shown by the visitors from the unseen at some of those gatherings known as seances. The average drunkard's impression that all the people he meets are intoxicated is not more ludicrous or pathetic than the delusion entertained by some amiable experimenters in psychic matters that they are wholly intelligent persons, and their unseen correspondents only partially so! To some of those spirit visitants vainly trying to present some intelligent and intelligible evidence of their presence the sensation must be very like that of an author whose compositions have to be dictated to a parblind, partly deaf and wholly stupid amanuensis. We have only, to complete the picture, to imagine the

We are continually being asked, "What is the use of your Spiritualism, anyway? What has it done that we could not do without it? What has it told us that we did not know before?" One answer to that would be, that it has helped in the discovery of hitherto undiscovered things, and that it has communicated thoughts and ideals beyond the average level of knowledge and hope. But, for the matter of that, what have our tens of thousands of pulpits and preachers done to advance discovery, or to communicate unknown truths? Spiritualism need fear no comparison with Protestantism on this score at any rate.

Another answer would be something like this:—How do you know what Spiritualism has done or taught? Spiritualism is not an affair of opinions, but of aspirations and facts. The man who lives only on the merely material plane, as a well-groomed animal, will probably receive impulses from the material plane only. The man who lives on the plane of dogma or ritual is not likely to rise into the finer regions beyond these—unless, indeed, he uses dogma and ritual as symbols only; but when he does that he mounts beyond them and leaves that plane. The true Spiritualist, on the other hand, is of necessity consciously linked with the vast subtle unseen world, and lies open to spirit influences; and it is not easy to trace the influence of that, though it must be vital.

This cannot, however, be pushed too far, because spirit influences do not entirely depend upon faith and desire. Receptivity here may depend largely upon temperament; and it is quite likely that thousands of men who have denied the existence of a spirit world have been largely influenced by it in relation to scientific discoveries and political aspirations. The advantage the Spiritualist has, in any case, is that which results from a knowledge of what is happening.

But the greatest or the most general use of Spiritualism is that it gives a basis for rational belief in modes of life other than this, and superior to this; and, as to the importance and value of that, it is impossible to exaggerate. Hence it is a million times more important to get evidence of this, however simple, than to get, by means of it, knowledge beyond our present limits, however wonderful; and just in the same way that the fact of telegraphic communications being set up between London and New York is a million times more important than any message that could be sent. The communications that come from the spirit world could never to any appreciable extent equal in value the bare fact that the spirit telegraph works. It is comparatively unimportant whether the message is, "Are you there?" or the blindest outpouring of wisdom.

In the light of this consideration, the question, "What is the use of your Spiritualism?" is, beyond all expression, shallow, frivolous and unwise.

J. P. H.

## "LIGHT": MORE COMMENDATIONS.

Let me again express my appreciation of the high standard of excellence LIGHT has attained. It is a journal which I can pass to a critical and incredulous investigator without an apology.—EWING.

LIGHT is and always has been a delight to read, and even sceptics can but admit its convincing impartiality.—L. THOMAS.

Let me take this occasion to tell you how much I appreciate your journal and what you are doing for the cause. You have made great progress in every way, and I always find much of interest in every issue.—DR. ERGENE R. CORSON.

I take the opportunity to express the pleasure your esteemed journal always gives me. I hope it may meet with all success.—H. STROMBERG (Sweden).

(Continued from previous column.)

amanuensis expressing disappointment at the general want of intelligence on the part of authors!

No, the "ghosts" are intelligent enough, sometimes even more so than those men and women who have not awakened to the realisation that they are themselves ghosts, spirits enmeshed for a time in matter to test their powers and unfold a thousand possibilities of progress in wisdom and happiness. Some exceptions there are, true, in the case of "ghosts" who, carefully nurtured (while in the flesh) in a false notion of the reality of matter and the unreality of Spirit, carry their delusion with them. These are the "Borderlanders" who, having lost touch with earth, have no sure foothold on the other shore, where they remain bemused and inarticulate until, in the great Providence that enfolds all, they are awakened to a consciousness of their true condition.

It is a great subject, and one can do little more than glance at it here. There is plenty of work for all of us—men, women and ghosts—and it will all be well and truly done if we pursue it in a spirit of earnestness leavened, and plentifully leavened, with common sense—without poses or vain pretensions, and, above all, without too many prejudices.—G.

## SLATE-WRITTEN MESSAGES.

### A REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE.

The following record of an astonishing experience in connection with slate-writing is sent us by "Ewing," an old and valued contributor and correspondent. He is the head of a business corporation in San Francisco:—

One of my first experiences holds an important place in memory due to the fact that it was entirely unpremeditated. Its spontaneity may be judged from the fact that it was the finale of a social gathering in the Palace Hotel in this city.

A member of the staff of the Governor of the State of California was entertaining a dozen or more of his friends, among whom was the writer. During the evening it was whispered around that a little lady from Texas, a guest of one of the party, had had some very wonderful experiences of a psychic nature. In brief it was related that on one occasion when she was alone with a child desperately ill with a high fever she received a communication on a slate written by an invisible hand and signed by her deceased father (he was a practising physician at the time of his death) in which he gave her instructions as to what she should do.

This experience attracted considerable interest and local discussion in Texas, with the result that it got to be a regular thing for her to hold the slate for sick friends, and seldom failing to get either a prescription or helpful suggestions.

The story seemed to me so improbable that I took but little interest in it, but it would not "down"; and the little widow was soon the centre of interest. She did not appear at all diffident, and answered freely a volley of questions. The interest became so keen that one of the party made bold to ask if she would try for a demonstration. To the amazement of the writer, and doubtless the rest of the party, she asked for a moment alone. Going across the room to the mantel she supported her head with one hand and stood for two or three minutes as if listening. She finally smiled, and, without more ado, asked the host (Col. L.—) to send down to the office for a slate. A large old-fashioned single school slate was sent up. It was about eight by twelve inches or longer, and had a pencil attached to it by a cord. She promptly tore off the pencil and, throwing it aside, rubbed the slate clean with a moistened handkerchief.

I was not a little astonished to be called on first. Standing under the glare of the chandelier she held one end toward me, and I grasped the wooden frame, she holding the other end. We were all standing, and were closely surrounded on all sides. I was so certain nothing unusual would happen that it seemed to me like tempting Providence, and I was beginning to feel chagrined at my apparent display of credulity when I had one of the greatest surprises of my life.

I began to feel a vibration in the slate and looked at her fingers which, like mine, were simply holding one end of the wooden frame. Nobody but she and I were touching it. Then to my great amazement, although there was no pencil or hand to be seen, all could plainly hear writing being done on the under side. It seemed to be the usual sound of a slate pencil, slow but very clear. Col. L.— stooped below the level of the slate and looked upward to see, if possible, what was doing the writing, but as he was looking up towards the lighted chandelier he was unable to see what was writing or being written, although all could hear it and I was also feeling the vibration.

The writing seemed heavy, slow and laborious. After possibly half a minute or more the writing ceased, and the slate was turned over. My mother's maiden name (a most unusual one) was written plainly in the middle of the slate four to five inches away from our finger tips as we held the ends during the writing, which bore no resemblance to my mother's. In fact the sensitive said it was the handwriting of her father. An impressive thought to me was the fact that no one present had any knowledge of my antecedents.

The host, Col. L.—, was then called to hold the slate. Part of his childhood was spent in France. You can imagine his astonishment to receive a salutation in French, signed by his French nurse of many years before.

Others received communications apparently appropriate in each instance. But the most interesting was one in which a surname was written with one initial. The party receiving it replied: "That is clearly an attempt to get my name, but the initial is wrong." The invisible operator was asked to identify himself. The name and initial was repeated, with the statement that he had committed suicide in Colorado several years before and that if he had taken the advice of his friend he might have escaped the unfortunate termination of his earthly experience. This accurately identified the suicide who had hanged himself, the name and initial being then fully understood.

At this juncture the sensitive clutched her throat with both hands, and apparently overcome, fainted and sank to the floor. She was laid on a lounge, and in alarm I

(Continued on page 176.)

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# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Conducted by the Editor.

Our readers are asked to write us on all questions relating to Psychic and Spiritual Matters, Phenomena, &c., in fact, everything within the range of our subject on which they require an authoritative reply. Every week answers will appear on this page.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for manuscripts or photographs unless sent to us in registered envelope, and all communications requiring a personal answer must be accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

## IMMORTALITY AND THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

J. W. G. PALMER.—As to your questions: (1) What is the Spiritualist theory as to the meaning of existence? and (2) Is the after-life for all? we reply (1) If you mean the purpose of life on earth, it is clearly to individualise the spirit, to make the impersonal life of Nature personal and self-conscious. If you mean the purpose of Life generally it is apparently to call into existence self-conscious intelligences with an eternal progress towards perfection and a degree of happiness that shall richly justify the experiment, if "experiment" it can be called. (2) Our own attitude is that immortality is for all. There are no failures or mistakes in the Divine Plan. We believe with Tennyson "that not one life shall be destroyed, or cast as rubbish to the void." You ask a third question regarding the identity of the "Imperator group." We can only say that certain earth-names were given, but there is no possibility of absolutely verifying these. A book on the subject is in course of preparation, of which you will read in *LIGHT* when it is published.

## HUMAN SURVIVAL: WHAT IS IT THAT SURVIVES?

PHENIX.—Your question has occurred to multitudes of others, but however definitely we may answer it here there will still be differences of view. Mr. Geo. E. Wright, in his admirable little book, "The Church and Psychical Research," thus handles the question: "There are some who, so to say, dualise personality, and who hold, implicitly if not explicitly, that it is only the spiritual content of human personality that survives, while the non-spiritual portion—human ideas, interests and memories—is sloughed off, in the same manner as the physical body is abandoned at death. This view really denies the full survival of human personality, since without its terrestrially-acquired knowledge and memory, it can be but a fragment of personality." Our own view is that everything which forms part of a human personality is carried forward—everything which has been built into the life and consciousness and become a vital part of it. But a great deal of needless knowledge may not be present. Take the case of a busy merchant with the details of many important transactions recorded in his office documents. Asked, after many years, for the information, he refers to his own records or perhaps those of others embodying the same facts. It might be the price of cement at such and such a time. We think it is the same with the returning spirit. He has access to records of information concerning various matters of no intrinsic value to him, and he likewise resorts to these. If he had forgotten the date of his birth or death he would find them recorded somewhere and give the information exactly as we should do in the same circumstances.

## AUTOMATIC WRITING.

TO SEVERAL INQUIRERS.—A recent answer of ours seems to have been misunderstood. When we said we knew of no book of instructions on the subject of automatic writing, we did not mean that there are no books which deal with experiences in automatic writing—there are quite a number—but that we knew of none in the nature of a guide or handbook of the "How to Play the Piano" order. It seems sufficiently obvious that automatic writing is not a subject which could be so handled, for its purely mechanical side is but a small part of it. Ouija boards, planchettes and the like are simple and easily handled, but the essential part of the matter is in the person concerned; the differences between individuals are many and great. It is not a matter to be learned, like drawing or music, where we have the possibility of mechanical skill producing certain results in cases where there is no real faculty of art or music. If the gift is there it will make its own channel where the opportunities are provided; and practice will make perfect. But we think it is a matter to be approached very carefully and seriously with a full knowledge of the dangers of excess and misuse. Two books we may mention are "Voices from the Void," by Helen Travers Smith, and "Automatic Speaking and Writing," by Edward T. Bennett. They both contain some useful hints and good advice.

## SOURCES OF PSYCHIC MESSAGES.

E. BROWN.—No, all the "messages" do not "proceed from spirits." That would be as miraculous as the idea that all the things reported by one person as having been said by others were all actually said. We know the part played by rumour, misunderstanding, and fabrication in some cases, and spirit messages, like other messages, have, generally speaking, to pass through intermediaries. Mr. F. W. H. Myers, who was a very cautious investigator, admitted that messages "may be derived in a more or less direct manner from the agent—the departed friend—from whom the communications actually claim to come," but he held that the great majority of such communications represent the subliminal workings of the automatist's mind alone. Without going into the question of the "subliminal mind," whatever it may be, we should say that the test directed to ascertain the origin of a spirit message would be much the same as the test we should employ to determine the genuineness of messages in this world. Briefly, that would be—is it like the communicator? Is it what he would have said, and as he would have said it? Some of these tests take time. A message which is at first held in suspense as having no personal characteristics, may eventually be confirmed by later messages of a more recognisable type.

## "POWER is with those who can SPEAK"—

—the late Lord S y.

GLADSTONE, too, said: "Time and money spent in training the voice is an investment which pays a greater interest than any other." The importance of public speaking is now generally recognised, but many people who believe that this ability can only be acquired by oral instruction at a high fee will be surprised and interested in the new points of view suggested by the publication entitled:

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## SLATE-WRITTEN MESSAGES.

(Continued from page 174.)

suggested calling the house physician. But to the relief of all concerned she gradually threw it off.

Asked for an explanation of such trying experiences she stated that when spirits returned (more particularly the first time) their last experience on earth came back with such terrific vividness that it aroused distress so real that the sensitive took it on—and temporarily reflected it—and that at times it is almost unbearable, as in this instance in which she swooned.

I was so profoundly impressed by the events of the evening that I asked a favour of the sensitive. I told her it had changed my views of things and I was anxious for my people also to see the handwriting that came on the wall at Belshazzar's feast. She agreed and a few weeks later went with me to the home of one of my sisters where I had nearly a dozen relatives in waiting for a twentieth century sign. Before taking the car we stopped at a Market-street book store and bought a large slate, and in the full glare of the light an invisible hand wrote for whoever held it for over two hours. I then and there registered a vow that if I lived long enough I would find out who were at the other end of the line, where they are and something of the conditions in which they exist.

Many years have elapsed but the vigil has never ceased. My experiences have been many and varied, and as this leaves me, to quote Davis, "On the summit of an exalted faith which is certainly I rest secure. Nothing can move me more. The sensuous world has vanished from beneath my feet. I live already in the spirit land. The immortal dead are around us. It is no night's vision, though brighter than all dreams. We are the sons and heirs of universal empire."

"EWING."

San Francisco, Jan. 15th, 1921.

## SUNDAY'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

These notices are confined to announcements of meetings on the coming Sunday, with the addition only of other engagements in the same week. They are charged at the rate of 1s. for two lines (including the name of the society) and 6d. for every additional line.

*Lewisham.*—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—11.15, open circle (Mr. Cowlam); 6.30, Mr. T. Austin.

*Croydon.*—Harewood Hall, 96, High-street.—11, Mr. Percy Scholey; 6.30, Mrs. Julie Scholey.

*Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E.*—11, Dr. Sulliman; 6.30, Mrs. Worthington.

*Holloway.*—Grovedale Hall, Grovedale-road (near High-gate Tube Station).—To-day (Saturday), 7.30, whist drive in aid of Building Fund. Sunday, 11, Mr. Ernest Meads; 7, Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn; 3, Lyceum. Monday, 8, developing circle (members only). Wednesday, 8, Mrs. Redfern, address and clairvoyance. Friday, 8, free healing centre. Membership invited: subscription, 6/- per annum.

*St. John's Spiritual Mission, Woodberry Grove, North Finchley (opposite tram depot).*—7, Mr. H. W. Engholm. Thursday, at 8, Mr. Haywood.

*Shepherd's Bush.*—73, Becklow-road.—11, public circle; 7, Mrs. Bloodworth. Thursday, 8, public meeting.

*Brighton.*—Athenæum Hall.—11.15 and 7, Mrs. E. A. Cannon; 3, Lyceum. Monday, 8, healing. Wednesday, 8, Mr. Hotton.

*Peckham.*—Lausanne-road.—7, Mrs. E. Neville. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Mary Crowder.

*Bowes Park.*—Shaftesbury Hall, adjoining Bowes Park Station (Down Side).—Opening Service, Sunday, March 26th, at 7, conducted by Mr. R. Boddington, President of London District Council of S.N.U.; subject, "The Message of Spiritualism." More particulars later.

**An Exhibition of Psychic and Inspirational Drawings and Paintings** by Mary Bligh Bond, Angelias Patterson, A. Rosenkrantz and others, opens on Tuesday, March 21st, at the Thurloe Art Rooms, 123, Fulham Road (opposite Pelham Crescent), Station—S. Kensington. Short address at 5 o'clock by F. Bligh Bond and on Saturday, 25th, by Baron Rosenkrantz, on "Psychic Vision." Admission by Catalogue, 1s.

**LECTURES at "THE PORCHWAY," 13, CRAVEN RD.,** W.2 (nr. Paddington Station). Fridays, at 3.30, series on "A STUDY IN PSYCHOLOGY." Mar 24th, Dr. Worthington, "AUTO-SUGGESTION, ITS USE AND ABUSE." Admission free.

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**Spiritualism and its relation to Evolution.** Lecture by Mr. Julian MacRae at Mortimer Street, Lower Hall, on 23rd March, at 8 p.m. Tickets, 2/6, can be had at door or from Miss MacRae, 5, Catherine Street, Buckingham Gate. Phone Vic. 4099.

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SPECIAL MEETINGS. Thursday Evenings 7.30 p.m. Large Hall, 6, Queen Square.

- March 23rd. **Mr. H. W. ENGHOLM.** "An Unpublished Vale Owen Script."  
The Rev. F. Fielding-Ould has been obliged, under Doctor's orders, to give up all public speaking for the present. Mr. H. W. Engholm has therefore very kindly consented to give an explanatory reading from an unpublished portion of the famous Vale Owen Scripts. Many requests have been received for a repetition of Mr. Engholm's masterly readings.
- March 30th. **Mr. GEORGE E. WRIGHT.** "F. W. H. Myers—A Spiritual Pilgrimage."  
This address will be given in place of that previously advertised, since "A. V. E." (Mrs. Warren-Elliot) has been obliged to cancel her address owing to ill-health.
- April 6th. **Miss H. A. DALLAS.** "A Study of Hauntings."

### OTHER ARRANGEMENTS.

- CLAIRVOYANCE IN LARGE HALL.**  
TUESDAY AFTERNOONS, 3.15 p.m. MARCH 21ST and 23TH. APRIL 4TH.  
WEDNESDAY EVENINGS, 8 p.m. MARCH 22ND and 29TH. APRIL 5TH.
- CONVERSATIONAL GATHERINGS.** Trance Address, Talks with a Spirit Control. Answers to Questions.  
FRIDAY AFTERNOONS, Large Hall, 3 to 5 p.m., MARCH 17TH, 24TH and 31ST. APRIL 7TH.
- LECTURE CLASSES.**  
MONDAYS, TUESDAYS and FRIDAYS.  
The Session will close with **MRS. WALLIS'S** Final Meeting on APRIL 7TH.

### MEETINGS FOR THE WEEK.

- SPECIAL MEETING.**—THURSDAY, MARCH 23RD, 7.30 P.M., **MR. H. W. ENGHOLM.** "A Vale Owen Script."  
**LECTURE CLASSES.**—MONDAY, MARCH 20TH, at 7 P.M., **MR. G. E. WRIGHT**; TUESDAY, MARCH 21ST, at 7.30 P.M., **MR. H. ERNEST HUNT**; FRIDAY, MARCH 24TH, at 7 P.M., **MRS. F. E. LEANING.**  
**CLAIRVOYANCE.**—TUESDAY, MARCH 21ST, at 3.15 P.M., **MRS. BRITAIN**; WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22ND, at 8 P.M., **MR. J. J. VANGO.**  
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