

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

"The Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research" are full of interest. I observe that Mr. Myers, in an article on "Alleged movements of objects, without contact, occurring not in the presence of a paid medium"—and I do not see how they are better or worse thereby—speaks of Mr. Eglinton and Mr. Davey and of the phenomena occurring in their presence. Mr. Davey is dead, and I would not disturb him. But the truth is alive and I must do what little I can to maintain it. I therefore state that I repeatedly challenged Mr. Davey to show me what he could do and allow me to judge of his performance. He refused, and I draw my own conclusions. And beside that Mr. Davey was distinctly insincere in his first dealings with me. His letters are in my possession. Mr. Myers says, and I am sure says with belief, that people who looked at Mr. Davey's performances, which he alleged, *without any proof*, to be conjuring, were convinced that all he did was the exposure of a mere trick. I say, on the contrary, that he never ventured to submit himself to the criticism of a man who has at least a claim to some knowledge on these matters, after repeated challenge. That speaks for itself. If he could have done these things—and I defied him to do them—he would have done them, and I would have published any reasonable account of them. But he did not; he refused and he could not. "The incapacity of ordinary educated persons" enters, perhaps, into the methods of the Society for Psychical Research as much as it does into mine. They assume far more than I do, and they go about picking holes in evidence with less result than other means would produce.

I do not voluntarily allude to Mr. Davey, for he is dead and cannot answer me. But he never answered me when he could, had he so desired, or had anything to say for himself. Also I read some time since that Mr. Davey's methods of conjuring were to be set forth for our instruction as investigators of Spiritualism. That has not been done: it may be that it is only a pleasure deferred. Always willing (I hope) to be instructed, I will carefully consider the evidence for Mr. Davey as exposé of the medium. Meantime the fact remains that he shirked investigation, and I have seen in the presence of Eglinton phenomena that I am wholly sure he could not reproduce, unless he, too, was a medium. He told me that he was. If he was, his conjuring tricks are easily explicable. If he made a false pretence, I do not think I am much concerned with any other of his pretences. The only reason for concerning myself about him is that the publication of such stories is apt to be taken for material for history. We

are making it now, and we must be accurate and at once denounce a lie or try to expose a mistake. I am sure that what the Society for Psychical Research issues under its sanction can be nothing worse than an error, if I may go so far as to allege so much. But I think that they make mistakes. I am sure if the Davey evidence came from our side it would have been mercilessly dissected and contemptuously dismissed.

I excuse myself for writing in this way of a man now dead because his position is maintained by a society of importance and because I do not believe in his pretensions. I believe that there are two ways of investigation into truth. One is to poke into holes and disregard the solid substance: another is to take a view of the fabric and disregard the holes. It may be that I am wrong, and I am open to conviction, but it will require an argument more precise than I have yet heard to convince me that I am wrong in saying that hole-picking is the best form of investigation. I know these things. I have lived amongst them for a large part of my life. They are a portion of my life. No Daveys would disturb my knowledge. He is infinitely unimportant and he is dead. But the society that puffs him should think that they may be doing a great wrong. For it is a wrong to set up a conjurer, who refuses to submit to investigation, and who commences his career as he did, as an explanation of one of the most profound problems of life. Mr. Davey was discredited by the fact that he first of all said that which subsequently he recanted, and next by the fact that he refused to submit himself to investigation by any but a selected coterie. I wonder what the Society for Psychical Research would say to any medium who did that. Yet they advertise him. I do not wish to be captious: but I feel very sure of the treatment that a medium would get whose baseless pretensions were on the level of Mr. Davey's. And, as it is a part of my business to advocate and defend what I know to be the truth, and at the same time to assail what I believe to be false, I say so much as that.

There is so much of importance in this number of "Proceedings," that I must defer further notice till I am more able to do justice to what I think the best number this valuable Society has given us. I can only mention now Mr. Richard Hodgson's report on a case of double consciousness: Dr. Alfred Backman (of Kalmar, Sweden) on some experiments in clairvoyance: and Mrs. Henry Sidgwick's reply to Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace on the question of Spirit Photography, to which I hope to recur. I observe that my own evidence is largely cited. I also observe that Buguet is questioned. I have no doubt that Buguet was not above suspicion. I also believe that it was made worth his while to confess too much. But when I purchase a plate and work it through myself I want to know exactly where the cheating comes in. Obviously I do not set out to cheat myself, unless I am a lunatic. But I shall be told that there are obscure forms of mental delusion in men. There are: and the most obscure and the least intelligent is that which the late Dr. W. B.

Carpenter fathered. We are told that Spiritualists are incapable of forming an accurate judgment. I have been twenty years associated with this subject, using such powers of mind as God has given me, and I express my deliberate conviction that, though there may be impulsive persons who rush to a preconceived conclusion, a level-headed Spiritualist is more able to give a reason for the faith that is in him than any outside person is to impugn it. For why? The Spiritualist knows what he is talking about, and the other people do not. "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," but no knowledge is worse when people assume to instruct the public of that of which they know nothing. For that is the truth. Almost all people who write articles on this subject are quite unqualified to pronounce any opinion upon it. The proceedings of some pseudo-séance, the proceedings, perhaps, in a police-court against some poor creature who has cheated, or who has been thought to cheat, furnish forth their whole stock of knowledge, if I may so describe it.

It is needless to say that such criticism as is contained in the "Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research" is of a very different order. There we have an intelligent attempt to sift evidence, to make some appraisal of its value. But that appraisal must not be taken as final. The business of the Society for Psychical Research has hitherto been almost exclusively confined to the very necessary work of raking over the large rubbish heap that has accumulated round Spiritualism in this past half century. They have got out some facts, but they have lamentably failed in the appreciation of others equally true. And that is the real difficulty of this research. It is no use to degrade Spiritualism by using materialistic methods for its investigation. Nor is it wise to limit the word to gyrations of tables and chairs. Nor, if I may say so, is Spiritism a better term than Spiritualism, as Mr. Myers suggests. It is one of those problems that I cannot explain why a certain geographical area should be Spiritist and another Spiritualist. I must contend that the two terms are not identical, and must not be confused. This, however, is a digression. What I am concerned to say is that, if there are some Spiritualists who are ready to swallow anything, there are other people who are ready to swallow nothing, and that between the North and South Poles there is, perhaps, an Equator.

This comes to me, and I have no means of verifying the accuracy of the remarks, but the general tone of the comment seems to me worth recording:—

Four years ago a committee was formed in connection with the Society for Psychical Research, to investigate especially those peculiar doings, especially the eccentric movements of tables, &c., which Spiritualists claim to be produced by former human beings. The committee has now published a preliminary report, in the hope that additional interest will be created and additional experiments made. As it is, the experiments reported on are those of comparatively few observers; but in some cases, at any rate, such care appears to have been taken to prevent fraud that the results deserve serious consideration. The most extraordinary experiments here set down are those conducted by a gentleman who was put in communication with the society by Rev. Edward White. This gentleman, after a few experimental sittings with some friends, with the usual results of table-turning, lifting, rapping, &c., determined to thoroughly investigate the matter. With his wife, an old professional friend, and a young lady—all of whom were entirely sceptical about the whole thing—he held sittings at which books and other articles were brought from other places and deposited on the table before them. The gentleman friend was terribly mauled, his chair being dragged from under him, his coat taken off, his boots found on a sofa several yards away, and his handkerchief tied in a knot in another place. His nervous system was so shattered by these and similar occurrences, including the sudden production of a certain photograph which he had left under lock and key at home, that they cannot now be mentioned to him with safety. Such serious results are said to be extremely rare, or their publication would probably prevent that large increase

in the number of investigators for which the society appeals. All the experiments described, we ought to say, were performed in the absence of any professional "medium."

I have from Mr. Page Hopps a little volume of his poems written during forty years, a very dainty little book of less than a hundred pages. No one who has listened to Mr. Hopps as he speaks can have failed to see that he can write poetry when he pleases. The book is full of interest, the more so that the author has allowed us to see the gradual development of his methods. This, as he happily says, "helps the perspective." Yes. "Many things have happened during a pilgrimage of forty years." One has only to look at Mr. Page Hopps as he is seen in his first portrait in the book, and then to look at the other, to realise that the storms of life have gone over him and to feel that, if they have left their impress on the face, they have certainly done good to the soul.

From his "Pilgrim Songs; with other poems,"* I make only one quotation:—

Hope, for the day is dawning,
Dawning to fade no more;
Bright shines the peaceful haven
When earth's shades are o'er.
Hope, when the way is lonely:
Hope, when the heart is sad:
Hope for the light that maketh
Earth's night watchers glad.

Hope, for a mighty army,
Conquering, have gone before:
Hope, for they wait to greet us
On the victor's shore.
Hope, with a brave endeavour
All things to do or bear:
Hope for the Heavenly country:—
No more crosses there.

Hope, for the Father leads us
Onward through good or ill:
Hope, with a trustful spirit,
Waiting for His will.
Hope, till the morning shineth,
Hope, till the night is o'er,
When, with the perfect seeing,
Hope shall be no more.

WHAT IS THE EXPLANATION?

I am not a superstitious man, nor a profound believer in ghost stories or apparitions—I want very strong confirmation before my scepticism gives way—but I heard an extraordinary story the other day. A week or two ago, while some friends of mine were out for a walk near Margate, about midnight, they were caught in a heavy thunderstorm, with vivid lightning. Suddenly a very bright flash blazed across the sky, and one of the young men instantly exclaimed that he saw his mother's face before him in the glare of the lightning. Naturally the others laughed at what they termed a freak of imagination, but in the morning came a telegram from his friends in London stating that his mother, who had been in good health, had died suddenly the previous night from a stroke of apoplexy, at about the time when he declared he saw her. This is a simple recital of facts—the explanation I leave to others to supply if they can.—"Hinckley Times," August 15th, 1891.

THE Prophet Harris has been enticed into an interview, and while he declines to justify his treatment of Laurence Oliphant, he broadly asserts that Mrs. Oliphant's account was inaccurate in every particular. Had she applied to him, he says, he would have furnished her with documentary evidence of his own innocence and good faith. No doubt he would, but pride is not sufficient to deter him from printing a justification of his performances, and Mrs. Oliphant's statements remain unshaken.—"Daily Graphic."

"THERE is no need for foolish amateurs to fetch me to admire a garden of flowers, or a sun-gilt cloud, or a waterfall, when I cannot look without seeing splendour and grace. How idle to choose a random sparkle here or there, when the indwelling necessity plants the rose of beauty on the brow of chaos, and discloses the central intention of nature to be harmony and joy."—EMERSON. (Conduct of Life: Fate.)

* Williams & Norgate, or from the author. Price 3s.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

A more remarkable man than Blake never lived. Spiritualist first of all, he was genius too. We are indebted to "Great Thoughts" for a very sympathetic notice of his life, which is worth recording in "LIGHT." They said he was mad. He was not. He was a genius, and where is the line of demarcation?

To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a Heaven in a wild flower;
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.

The angel that presideth o'er my birth
Said, "Little creature formed for joy and mirth
Go, live without the help of anything on earth."

Thus sang William Blake, poet and artist, and withal one of the most extraordinary men England has ever produced. The German painter Götzenberger, visiting London, said on his return to his native land, "I saw in England many men of talent, but only three men of genius—Coleridge, Flaxman, and Blake; and of them Blake was the greatest."

Again, in a lecture on this wonderful man delivered a few months ago, Mr. Stopford Brooke, tracing the character of the poet's writings and their place in the history of English literature, said, "The 'Songs of Innocence,' published in 1789, were unique in their interest to the scholar of poetry, as being not only in touch with the Elizabethan past and the immediate future, but also with the present day. Eleven years after, Wordsworth carried forward what Blake had begun—the poetry of human passion, of present interest, cares, and sorrows. Contemporary critics said of them that Blake was a madman, and Wordsworth a fool, yet it is now recognised that Blake struck the rock out of which gushed the new flood of English song; and if we would read in its entirety the revival of the time, we must go back further than Wordsworth and his 'Lyrical Ballads' until we reach Blake and his 'Songs of Innocence.' But beyond this, Blake was stirred by the same spirit that brought to pass the French Revolution, and was even more markedly a prophet in dealing with social questions than with schools of literature. Ecclesiastical and social despotism, the impositions of priestcraft, and the tyranny of aristocracy, were met by him with unswerving antagonism. He was a born Republican, and Shelley never spoke more fiercely than he, in wrath and menace, of kings and priests who abused their power. In 1832," said the lecturer, "when Tennyson first wrote, poetry took up social questions and the trials of the poor. Such subjects had existed in germ in the writings of Crabbe and Cowper, and had been partially touched upon by Wordsworth and Coleridge, but Blake in his 'Songs of Experience' (1794) dealt with them directly and in full: to him, as to Hood, the sins and miseries of our national existence were a theme for his pen; and the hopeless troubles of chimney-sweep and pauper were by him powerfully portrayed."

William Blake was born on November 28th, 1757, at No. 28, Broad-street, Carnaby Market, near Golden-square, in dusky London. His father kept a little hosier's shop, and William was trained for the counter. "But," says one of his biographers, "he soon overleaped this, and broke his way into the Eden of art—an Eden not guarded by flaming angels, it is true, but by the more horrid and deterring forms of hunger, consumption, scorn, despair, poverty, and death. The father wondered how the boy could throw aside stockings to waste his time over cheap prints of Raphael and Reynolds; but his mother knowing (so wise is love) that the angels had whispered to her child, secretly encouraged him in the straight and narrow way." At ten he became an artist; at twelve a poet. Simultaneously with that love of poetry expressed in his volume of "Poetical Sketches," commenced in his twelfth year, was his love of art. Blake, afraid of being chained beyond escape, prayed his father to bind him to an engraver, and at fourteen years old he was bound to an engraver in Green-street, Lincoln's Inn-fields. Here he worked hard for his master, studied at odd times and evenings under Flaxman and Fuseli, and when he could run to his room, locked himself in, and made drawings, illustrated with verses, to hang up in his mother's room. He was always at work—called amusement idleness, and money-making folly. All his productions, whether of the pen or pencil, suggest the work of an inspired madman. They are characterised by a strange, incomprehensible beauty. It seemed, indeed, as if he were a spirit from the regions of the dead, bringing with him recollections too glorious and too awful to be embodied by human genius. He lived in a visionary world, and according to his own account visions were ever around him. One evening when a friend called upon him, he whispered, "Disturb me not, I have one sitting to me." "I see no one," exclaimed his friend. "But I see him, sir," answered Blake; "there he is. His name is Lot; you may read of him in the Scriptures. He is sitting for his portrait." Innumerable were the spiritual visitants whom he portrayed on canvas. He had a very rich and peculiar mode of engraving and tinting his

plates, which he said was revealed to him by his deceased brother—he kept the secret to himself, and other artists have been unable to discover it. His poetic mind threw its own glowing colouring over the most ordinary occurrences of life. "Did you ever see a fairy funeral, madam?" he once asked a lady who happened to sit by him in company. "Never, sir," was the answer. "I have," said Blake; "but not before last night. I was walking alone in my garden; there was a great stillness among the branches and flowers, and more than common sweetness in the air. I heard a low and pleasant sound, and I knew not whence it came. At last I saw a broad leaf of a flower move, and underneath I saw a procession of creatures of the size and colour of grasshoppers bearing a body laid upon a rose-leaf, which they buried with songs, and then disappeared. It was a fairy funeral." His high aspirations and brilliant fancies must have come from a world within him, for he had few opportunities to observe those beautiful and magnificent productions in which genius has given shadowy revelations of what it has dreamed of in Heaven.

His earlier and later life was poverty. He was industrious; but he would work in his own wild freedom, and patrons did not understand him. Besides, he considered a love of gain as the destroying angel of all that is God-like in human nature. "Were I to love money," he said, "I should lose all power of thought; the desire of gain deadens the genius of man. I might roll in wealth and ride in a golden chariot were I to listen to the voice of parsimony. My business is not to gather gold, but to make glorious shapes expressing God-like sentiments." A letter is preserved, written to Flaxman, the sculptor, which gives a better idea of Blake and his dreams than can be provided in any other way. It begins:—

DEAR SCULPTOR OF ETERNITY,—We are safe arrived at our cottage, which is more beautiful than I thought it, and more convenient. It is a perfect model for cottages, and, I think, for palaces of magnificence—only enlarging, not altering, its proportions and adding ornaments and not principles. Nothing can be more grand than its simplicity and usefulness. Simple without intricacy, it seems to be the spontaneous expression of humanity, congenial to the wants of man. No other-formed house can ever please me so well; nor shall I ever be persuaded, I believe, that it can be improved either in beauty or use.

Mr. Hayley received us with his usual brotherly affection. I have begun to work. Felpham is a sweet place for study, because it is more spiritual than London. Heaven opens here on all sides her golden gates; her windows are not obstructed by vapours; voices of celestial inhabitants are more distinctly heard, and their forms more distinctly seen; and my cottage is also a shadow of their houses. My wife and sister are both well, courting Neptune for an embrace.

And now begins a new life, because another covering of earth is shaken off. I am more famed in Heaven for my works than I could well conceive. In my brain are studies and chambers filled with books and pictures of old, which I wrote and painted in pages of eternity before my mortal life; and these works are the delight and study of archangels. Why, then, should I be anxious about the riches or fame of mortality? The Lord our Father will do for us and with us according to His Divine will, for our good.

You, dear Flaxman, are a sublime archangel—my friend and companion from eternity. In the Divine bosom is our dwelling-place. I look back into the regions of reminiscence, and behold our ancient days before this earth appeared in its vegetated mortality to my mortal vegetated eyes. I see our houses of eternity, which can never be separated, though our mortal vehicles should stand at the remotest corners of Heaven from each other.

Farewell, my best friend. Remember me and wife in love and friendship to our dear Mrs. Flaxman, whom we ardently desire to entertain beneath our thatched roof of rusted gold. And believe me for ever to remain your grateful and affectionate

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Felpham, September 1st, 1800, Sunday morning.

The year 1780 was that in which Blake first exhibited a picture in the Royal Academy. The subject was the "Death of Earl Godwin," executed in water-colours. He continued exhibiting from time to time—only five times in all—up to the year 1808, when he sent "Christ in the Sepulchre Guarded by Angels" and "Jacob's Dream." These were his final contributions.

Concerning Blake's art, that sympathetic critic, W. M. Rossetti, says in his beautiful memoir of the weird painter and poet:—Blake's splendid, terrible, and daring imagination was embodied with equal force in the art of design, and that of poetry. "Execution," he has said, "is the chariot of genius"; and never did that charioteer reveal himself in more unmistakable guise than in the handiwork of Blake. To see one of his finer tempera or water-colour pictures, or of his partly colour-printed, partly hand-coloured engraved designs, or of his designs engraved by himself on the ordinary system, is a new experience—one that you cannot prepare for, nor forestall. The mysterious meaning of the work, its austere intensity of presentiment, the rush (as it were) of spiritual and vital force into all its forms, animat-

ing them with strange fires of life, and frenzies of endeavour, the rapture of effort and repose, the stress and the hush, give these works a different character from aught else. In fact, they have not so much the semblance of inventions (highly inventive though they manifestly are, in the ordinary æsthetic sense of the word) as of visions—or, to recur to terms that we have already employed, of revelations or intuitions. There is severity, and there is beauty, each in a high degree; but what impresses the spectator most (consciously, or in many cases unconsciously) is the strength of receptivity, or response in the designer—energy with which he has clutched at the vision, the closeness of rendering with which he has succeeded in imparting it to others. It is like Iris in Homer, who receives a message from the god, and then recites it at length in the same identical words. Blake, too, has received the message, and he repeats it to us; and there is a tone in it which, although we never heard the original words, we perceive of a surety to be caught from the commissioning god, supernal or tartarean. For Blake by no means confines himself to the crests of Olympus, but is versed in the murk of Hades, and the recesses of the innermost and nethermost pit. Blake left behind him, ready for the press, more than seventy volumes of verse. A selection has been made from this mass of poetry which bids fair to become classical, so burning are his words and so tender is sometimes their harmony. A critic has said, concerning Blake's poems, and especially his "Songs of Innocence":—"They have the grandeur of lofty simplicity, not of laboured pomp; a grandeur like that which invests our imaginations of the patriarchs. By a well, beneath a palm-tree, stands one who wears but a linen turban and a simple flowing robe, and who but watches browsing sheep, and camels drinking; yet no modern monarch, however gorgeously arrayed and brilliantly surrounded, can compare with him in majesty. And again:—"Every man living in seclusion, and developing an intense interior life, comes to give quite a peculiar significance to certain words and phrases and emblems.

Sometimes, in his poetical works, says Mr. Rossetti, we find Blake expressing, with the most limpid and final perfection, the innocent and simple impulses of human nature; the laughter and prattle of a baby, the vivid transforming freshness of youthful love, the depth and self-devotion of parental affection, and the trust in the great Father Whom eye hath not seen. At other times, they are dark and chaotic to the extremest degree; ponderous and turbid; battling and baffling, like the arms of a windmill when the winds blow shiftingly from all quarters. It is often asked, "Was not Blake mad?" If you read only his prophetic books, with their wild and meaningless imagery, you will say "Yes." But if on the other hand you turn to his "Songs of Experience," you will say "No." The truth is that madness and sanity were in strange conflict within him, and sometimes the one was uppermost and sometimes the other. Some, among whom may be numbered Algernon Swinburne, have defended his sanity against all comers, but most readers of his works must conclude that there was a rift in the lute of his genius, through which issued sounds which were neither of earth nor Heaven. Considering his poetical works in detail, the play of "Edward V." reminds us of Kit Marlowe, with here and there a touch of Shakespeare, while others of his poems recall the wild splendour of Ossian. They bear us into a land of "faery seas forlorn," and of mists which coil about the mountain, and trail solemnly through the glen.

William Blake was one of the most extraordinary men England ever produced. His character and art are well described by Mr. Rossetti, where he says:—"Visionary and ideal aspiration of the intensest kind; the imaginative life wholly predominating over the corporeal and mundane life, and almost swallowing it up; and a child-like simplicity of personal character, free from self-interest, and ignorant or careless of any policy of self-control, though habitually guided and regulated by noble emotions, and a resolute loyalty to duty—these are the main lines which we trace throughout the entire career of Blake, in his life and death, in his writings and his art. This it is which makes him so peculiarly lovable and admirable as a man, and invests his works, especially his poems, with so delightful a charm. We feel that he is truly of "the Kingdom of Heaven"; above the firmament, his soul holds converse with archangels; on the earth, he is as the little child who Jesus "set in the midst of them."

"After life's fitful fever he sleeps well," and as we stand in fancy in the poor chamber where death found him, we look on his worn face with thankfulness rather than with sorrow, for did he not say concerning Flaxman's decease:—"I cannot think of death as more than the going out of one room into another"; and has he not sung, for the strengthening and consolation of all who have to die:—

The door of Death is made of gold,
That mortal eyes cannot behold;
But when the mortal eyes do close,
And cold and pale the limbs repose,
The soul awakes, and, wondering, sees
In her mild hand the golden keys.

THE ETHER BETWEEN THE WORLDS.

We extract the following article, which our readers will find interesting, from the "Echo":—

Most of us imbibed as boys the notion that our earth and all the planets and stars roll their seemingly endless round through empty space, through absolute vacancy. This was confirmed by our lessons on gravitation, for we were taught that matter attracts matter at any distance, with a force proportional to the masses and inversely proportional to the square of the distance. Unless we were very precocious philosophers we were contented with this, and did not greatly wish to inquire further. We thought it very wonderful, especially as we were told that it accounted for all the motions of the heavenly bodies. So again, as regards light, the inconceivable rapidity with which it is transmitted was marvellous, and when we realised that light existed in the interval between the source of light and the receiving body or person it served to settle us in the belief that actions can take place at a distance, through nothing. And, no doubt, this view was highly capable of exciting our wonder at the power of the Creator who could so order His universe.

But for about a century most natural philosophers have been certain that this view of universal space occupied by nothing could not be true. This was first proved by certain phenomena of light. A crucial experiment (that is, one which decides a question one way or another) settled that light must be propagated through a medium of some kind, which was called the *Æther* or *Ether*, as representing the thinnest aëry conception for which we have a word. So for scores of years the best energies of the most competent mathematicians and natural philosophers have been devoted to attacking the problem, "What is this Ether? What are its properties and conditions?" The two questions, this of the Ether, and the other one of the intimate constitution of ordinary matter in all its forms, are the most important subjects, perhaps, for our mastery of the secrets of the universe, and, doubtless, have within them untold revelations of order, beauty, and power, as fruitful in their practical applications as steam and electricity. It is these things that many of our greatest geniuses are pondering and fighting with in their studies, and not unfrequently as they lie awake at night. Many such men, with their other-worldly gaze and their want of practicality in human affairs, we are apt to pity; but they may rather pity us sometimes in our petty squabbles and races for small worldly advantages. They already see in a mirror darkly visions of the whole universe ordered by a simple, constant law, of the most exquisite simplicity, yet working out by interactions the untold variety of forces and life on the earth as well as in all the stars and planets.

How shall we get hold of the Ether? We cannot see it; we cannot get outside the earth and capture it. But mathematicians have potent resources for determining what a thing can *not* be—what properties it cannot have; and gradually some questions have been answered with certainty. For instance, it is clear that the Ether is a material medium, possessing a certain density; but what this density is, or whether the Ether is a liquid, or a gas, or a solid is not so easily settled. From the phenomena of the polarisation of light, it was inferred that the motion of light must be through a medium having a certain amount of rigidity—such, for instance, as that by which a metal rod resists being twisted. Although we cannot conceive an infinitely thin medium being to some extent rigid, mathematicians are familiar with the idea, and have made abundant investigations about it. Sir William Thomson has attained some notion even as to the limits of the rarity or thinness of the Ether, for he has concluded that one pound weight of it would occupy a sphere of thirty miles radius.

The great difficulties to be overcome in arriving at sound conclusions as to the necessary properties and constitution of the Ether cannot be adequately represented to the non-mathematical reader. But since unity and continuity are the laws of nature, which no scientific man will imagine to be broken, it is at least necessary to frame ideas which will explain all we know about gravitation, about light and heat, and about electricity. The struggle in each region of inquiry has been going on incessantly, and accounts for some of the time spent by professors who are supposed to have nothing to do but teach algebra and the calculus. Many a man who

does not succeed makes the attempt; and as the path of successful mechanical invention is strewn with the failures or partial successes of a vast crowd of men, so with that of mathematical discovery.

Successive sets of investigators applied themselves to small portions of the various problems. From the phenomena of light it was gradually inferred that the Ether may be compared to a very thin kind of jelly, incompressible, and having a certain slight rigidity. Then the electricians came in with their modern theories of electricity. Instead of imagining, as formerly, that electrical actions were due to two kinds of imponderable fluids, which exerted action at a distance, they have found that electrical actions are always going on in some medium *between* electrified bodies. Faraday practically proved the existence of an electric Ether, and Clerk Maxwell showed that it has certain elastic properties, and that the phenomena of electricity can be explained by certain strains and stresses in it. Next Clerk Maxwell set himself to reconcile the light-bearing Ether with the electric Ether, and produced his wonderful electromagnetic theory of light. All the phenomena of light are explicable by this wave-theory, and at the same time alternating magnetic and electric effects are produced. Not only so, but radiant heat is brought within this electromagnetic theory.

The harmonisation of this Ether with that required for universal gravitation is the problem which now engages the most intense thought of those qualified to deal with it. The only mode of existence of the ultimate particles of matter that seems to them capable of producing the phenomena of gravitation is one of infinitely small atoms, pulsating many thousands of times in a second, all in the same period and mode. Sir William Thomson, now president of the Royal Society, has invented a brilliant theory, that of vortex atoms (seen in a simplified form in smoke-rings). If such a motion as he describes once came to exist in a fluid without friction it could not be destroyed, nor could such motion be created in it by any human means. Many points in this theory have been used by his brilliant young compeer, Professor J. J. Thomson, of Cambridge, to explain the pressure of gases, the combination of molecules, and other "hard nuts." Professor W. M. Hicks, F.R.S., Principal of Firth College, Sheffield, has shown that such vortex atoms would perform stable and continuous pulsations. The Ether formed of these vortex atoms must, however, be a liquid, and the previous suggestions tended to regard the Ether as a solid. But Professor Hicks has proved that though a frictionless fluid at rest could not have the rigidity required by the other theory, yet a fluid which is throughout in intense vortical motion in its intimate structure could have sufficient rigidity and would be capable of transmitting vibrations similar to those of light. Both Sir W. Thomson and Professor Hicks have recently done important work which tends to reconcile the whole of the phenomena to be explained; and, though it is too early for Science to be boastful, it may be said that we are within sight of a generalisation more far-reaching and illuminative than the discovery of universal gravitation.

THE mediæval saint of the poem and the romance, of the painted glass window and the National Gallery, was a picturesque person with clasped hands and uplifted eyes, and his successor is he who separates this and that now from the common earth, and calls it holy thing or holy ground. Am I a barbarian or a better Christian because I really prefer the homely labourer with his plough, or the collier with his pick, his safety-lamp, and his tin can—who works for his little home, earns his living and pays his way, endures hardship like a man, stands up like a hero to his everlasting round of toil, sticks to his comrades, suffers for his union, and votes straight? There stands a man who never suspects it, but is known, by the angels, as the nineteenth century saint. Doubtless, in the days of the conventional saint of the Church, the world also had its unreckoned saints of the streets, whose homely fidelities and brave endurances built up defences against the brute side of man, and led on to the higher civilisations—yea! because of whose patience and simple goodness we are as far on the road as we are to-day.—J. PAGE HOPPS.

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THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

NOTES BY EDINA. I

As both my daughter and myself have written to Mr. Myers regarding the report of his delegate and pointed out certain defects and errors in the mode of dealing with the details submitted by me, I do not desire to enter into controversy here. But I may say that, apart from the extraordinary diversity of handwriting and the verification of signatures, there were to be found details and statements in the sixty-two messages sent him, which were unknown to the medium or any of my family. Some of those, perhaps, I knew to a certain extent, and many I didn't, but was able to verify later, and my contention is this, that in any written messages of the kind, if you can point even to one fact or statement unknown to the medium and afterwards found to be correct, this goes a long way to prove the authenticity of the whole message. As a sample of the delegate's mode of dealing with those messages take the case of the Southampton tombstone inscription. None of us knew anything of this inscription, or of the town of Southampton itself, and I said so, and yet the mean suggestion comes up in the report that my daughter may have read the inscription in "Good Words," or "Sunday Magazine," although the delegate cannot specify the volume in which such an inscription can be found. In like manner the Digbye (Sherborne) inscription is dealt with by the suggestion that my daughter may have read it in Pope's Works, notwithstanding my solemn assertion that Pope's Works were never in our house or had been read by my daughter. As to Professor Wilson's case I read his biography seven years before my daughter was born, and said so, and to this hour she neither knows nor cares about his life or his lineage. It seems impossible to drive home to the understanding of some people how much apart are the lives of deaf persons from their fellow creatures, and how different their tastes in the matter of reading and observation are from those around them who do not labour under any physical defect.

With regard to "Professor Sandringham," I have written Mr. Myers to say that he has recently stated in a written communication addressed to a professional gentleman here, that this is not his real name, and that he doesn't wish it to be known. All the same, he is a very real person to us, as a notebook filled with his messages and written in his peculiar handwriting can testify. He cured my wife's throat affection after all specialists here had failed, and has done us much good in many ways, besides being the means of opening up communication between me and some of my deceased friends, and as he has his own reasons for taking another name, I cannot explain these, but gladly take his beneficent help as it comes.

I might say a great deal more, but as I have before observed, controversy in this matter is distasteful to me. The delegate selected by Mr. Myers was a young man of about twenty-four years of age. I am not aware of any special qualifications he had for the task; and as I consider my experience of the laws of evidence and of the "seamy side" of human nature, acquired in a pretty "hard school" for a long series of years, is much greater than his, I decline to accept his report as of the least value.

I have only to add that my daughter is not a good lip-reader. She may have understood thirty-seven words spoken by her mother, but she could not understand half-a-dozen spoken to her by Mr. Withers. It is only among ourselves we can converse satisfactorily with her in this way. In short, Mr. Withers during the two brief visits he paid to us, was quite unable to form a fair or accurate idea of her character and intelligence, as is fully borne out by the nature of his report.

P.S.—With regard to Dr. Livingstone's case, Mr. Myers will bear me out in saying it was sent *valeat quantum*, as I had my doubts. But the message should not have been given in the report without my introducing and explanatory statement of the whole case, which I think is extremely interesting, and its non-publication makes me feel that the bias has been in the mind of the reporter from the beginning. The point I make here is that if the narrative had accompanied the letter, it would have shown how careful and judicial I have been in this and similar selected cases. It is true my daughter saw Dr. Livingstone's grave in Westminster Abbey in 1876, but she was then only eight years of age, and I fail to see how that fact bears on the authenticity of the message.

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Light:

EDITED BY "M. A. (OXON.)"

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29th, 1891.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. and not to the Editor.

DR. HUGGINS ON ASTRONOMY.

The British Association for the Advancement of Science vindicates its existence by affording to eminent specialists an opportunity for expressing their views to an appreciative audience. No man has availed himself of his chance as President in a more marked manner than Dr. Huggins. There is no more fascinating topic than the history of the starry universe, and Dr. Huggins told his audience much that is surprising and true:—

Speaking of the advance of astronomy, he said that in no science perhaps did the sober statement of the results which had been achieved appeal so strongly to the imagination, and make so evident the almost boundless powers of the mind of man—by means of its light alone to analyse the chemical nature of a far-distant body; to be able to reason about its present state in relation to the past and future; to measure within an English mile or less per second the otherwise invisible motion which it might have towards or from us; to make even that which was darkness to our eyes light; and, from vibrations which our organs of sight are powerless to perceive, to evolve a revelation in which we saw mirrored some of the stages through which the stars might pass in their slow evolutionary progress. Surely the record of such achievements, however poor the form of words in which they might be described, was worthy to be regarded as the scientific epic of the present century.

He went on to tell what the spectroscope had done for the advancement of our knowledge:—

It was now some thirty years since the spectroscope gave us for the first time certain knowledge of the nature of the heavenly bodies, and revealed the fundamental fact that terrestrial matter was not peculiar to the solar system, but was common to all the stars which were now visible to us. In the case of a star such as Capella, which had a spectrum almost identical with that of the sun, they felt justified in concluding that the matter of which it was built up was similar, and that its temperature was also high and not very different from the solar temperature. The task of analysing the stars and nebulae became, however, one of very great difficulty where one had to do with spectra differing from the solar type. We were at present in a time of transition. Many of the early conclusions, based on observation as good as it was possible to make at the time with the less powerful spectroscopes then in use, might not be found to be maintained under the much greater resolving power of modern instruments.

Sirius, the most magnificent object in the sky, is thus described:—

Photometric observations, combined with its ascertained parallax, showed that the star Sirius emitted from forty to sixty times the light of our sun; while we learned from the

motion of its companion that its mass was not much more than double that of our sun. It followed that unless this star was of an improbably great emissive power it must be of immense size, and in a much more diffuse and therefore an earlier condition than our sun, though probably at a later stage than those white stars in which the hydrogen lines were bright.

And what could be of more interest to the Spiritualist than these reflections of a man who is not unacquainted with our subject? Suggestive they are in an extreme degree. No nobler study than astronomy. We are indebted to the "St. James's Gazette" for the summary which we quote. Few things inspire nobler thoughts, and that in itself should be an excuse for asking the attention of our readers to what we append:—

All the heavenly bodies were seen by us through the tinted medium of our atmosphere. According to Langley, the solar stage of stars was not really yellow; but, even as gauged by our imperfect eyes, would appear bluish-white if we could free ourselves from the deceptive influences of our surroundings. We had before us in the sun and planets obviously, not a haphazard aggregation of bodies, but a system resting upon a multitude of relations pointing to a common physical cause. From these considerations Kant and Laplace formulated the nebular hypothesis, resting it on gravitation alone, for at that time the science of the conservation of energy was practically unknown. These philosophers showed how, on the supposition that the space now occupied by the solar system was once filled by a vaporous mass, the formation of the sun and planets could be reasonably accounted for. By a totally different method of reasoning, modern science traced the solar system backward, step by step, to a similar state of things at the beginning. According to Helmholtz, the sun's heat was maintained by the contraction of his mass, at the rate of about 220ft. a year. Whether at the present time the sun was getting hotter or colder we did not certainly know. We could reason back to the time when the sun was sufficiently expanded to fill the whole space occupied by the solar system, and was reduced to a great glowing nebula. Though man's life, the life of the race, perhaps, was too short to give us direct evidence of any distinct stages of so august a process, still the probability was great that the nebular hypothesis represented broadly, notwithstanding some difficulties, the succession of events through which the sun and planets had passed.

A REJUVENESCENCE OF THE HEAVENS.

How had it come about that by the side of aging worlds we had nebulae in a relatively younger stage? Had any of them received their birth from dark suns which had collided into new life, and so belonged to a second or later generation of heavenly bodies? During the short historic period, indeed, there was no record of such an event. Still it would seem to be only through the collision of dark suns, of which the number must be increasing, that a temporary rejuvenescence of the heavens was possible, and by such ebbings and flowings of stellar life that the inevitable end to which evolution in its apparently uncompensated progress was carrying us could even for a little be delayed. We could not refuse to admit as possible such an origin for nebulae. In considering, however, the formation of the existing nebulae, we must bear in mind that in the part of the heavens within our ken the stars still in the early and middle stages of evolution exceeded greatly in number those which appeared to be in an advanced stage of condensation. Indeed, we found some stars which might be regarded as not far advanced beyond the nebular condition. The spectroscope had not simply added to the list of the known binary stars, but had given us for the first time a knowledge of a new class of stellar systems, in which the components were in some cases of nearly equal magnitude and in close proximity, and were revolving with velocities greatly exceeding the planetary velocities of our system.

THE VALUE OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN ASTRONOMICAL RESEARCH.

Dr. Huggins proceeded to enlarge upon the new power which modern photography had put into the hands of the astronomer. The remarkable successes of astronomical photography, which depended upon the plate's power of accumulation of a very feeble light acting continuously through an exposure of several hours, were worthy to be regarded as a new revelation. Two principal directions might be pointed out in which photography was of great service to the astronomer. It enabled him within the comparatively short time of a single exposure to secure permanently with great exactness the relative positions of hundreds or even of thousands of stars, or the minute features of nebulae or other objects, or the phenomena of a passing eclipse, a task which by means of the eye and hand could only be accomplished, if done at all, after a very great expenditure of time and labour. Photography put it in the power of the astronomer to accomplish in the short span of

his own life, and so enter into their fruition, great works which otherwise must have been passed on by him as a heritage of labour to succeeding generations. The second great service which photography rendered was not simply an aid to the powers the astronomer already possessed. On the contrary, the plate, by recording light-waves which were both too small and too large to excite vision in the eye, brought him into a new region of knowledge, such as the infra-red and the ultra-violet parts of the spectrum, which must have remained for ever unknown but for artificial help.

A SYSTEM OF SYSTEMS.

Some recent photographs by Mr. Russell showed that the great rift in the Milky Way in Argus, which to the eye was void of stars, was in reality uniformly covered with them. The heavens were richly but very irregularly inwrought with stars. The brighter stars clustered into well-known groups upon a background formed of an enlacement of streams and convoluted windings and intertwined spirals of fainter stars, which became richer and more intricate in the irregularly rifted zone of the Milky Way. We who formed part of the emblazonry could only see the design distorted and confused—here crowded, there scattered, at another place superposed. The groupings due to our position were mixed up with those which were real. Could we suppose that each luminous point had no more relation to the others near it than the accidental neighbourhood of grains of sand upon the shore, or of particles of the wind-blown dust of the desert? Surely every star, from Sirius and Vega down to each grain of the light dust of the Milky Way, had its present place in the heavenly pattern from the slow evolving of its past? We saw a system of systems, for the broad clusters and streams and spiral windings which marked the general design were reproduced in every part. The whole was in motion, each point shifting its position by miles every second, though from the august magnitude of their distances from us and from each other it was only by the accumulated movements of years or of generations that some small changes of relative position revealed themselves.

THE WORK OF THE FUTURE.

The deciphering of this wonderfully intricate constitution of the heavens would be undoubtedly one of the chief astronomical works of the coming century. Astronomy—the oldest of the sciences—had more than renewed her youth. At no time in the past had she been so bright with unbounded aspirations and hopes. Never were her temples so numerous, nor the crowds of her votaries so great. Happy was the lot of those who were still on the eastern side of life's meridian! Since the time of Newton our knowledge of the phenomena of nature had wonderfully increased; but man asked, perhaps, more earnestly than in his day, what was the ultimate reality behind the reality of the perceptions? Were they only the pebbles of the beach with which they had been playing? Did not the ocean of ultimate reality and truth lie beyond?

It has been arranged that next year's meeting of the association shall be in Edinburgh, under the presidency of Sir Archibald Geikie, the eminent geologist, while an invitation has been received from Nottingham for the meeting of 1893.

VALOUR AND FREEDOM.

Great men have been among us; hands that penn'd
And tongues that uttered wisdom, better none;
The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
Young Vane and others who call'd Milton friend,
These moralists could act and comprehend:
They knew how genuine glory was put on;
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
In splendour; what strength was that would not bend
But in magnanimous meekness. . . .

It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
Hath flow'd, "with pomp of waters unwithstood"—
Road by which all might come and go that would,
And bear out freights of worth to foreign lands;
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
Should perish, and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
Armoury of the invincible knights of old;
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakspeare spake—the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held. In everything we're sprung
Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

—WORDSWORTH ("Sonnets to Liberty").

Mrs. CHARLES SPRING wishes us to state that she has returned to London from her provincial engagements. All letters received during her absence will be attended to shortly, and all communications respecting engagements should be addressed 8, Wilkin-street, Grafton-road, Kentish Town, London, N.W.

THOUGHTS ON SPIRITUALISM.

The movement which has received the name of Modern Spiritualism is undoubtedly one of the most important of our age. It is important, not only *per se* on account of the great proportions it has assumed and of the tremendous problems it has raised, but also on account of the contrast in which it stands with the tendencies generally prevailing in our day. It is a fact that since the end of the last century—and perhaps still earlier—human thought has begun to follow a new channel which must needs bring it to what I will call mental and moral annihilation—to the conviction that nothing but what can be seen, heard, or felt does really exist; and that as soon as a man's heart has ceased to beat there is no other difference than a purely external one between him, all that remains of him, and a dead branch fallen off a tree.

That such—were it not for the sudden "push" which Spiritualism has given to human thought—would have been the ultimate expression of human knowledge and "wisdom," but few people will deny. Many years, possibly centuries, would have passed before such an opinion had become generally accepted—as, for instance, the theory of the rotation of the earth now is—but this would have been the case sooner or later, and then what? Imagine all mankind having lost the consoling idea of human survival of death, and those who still may have a lingering hope called idiots and fools.

Well, Spiritualism tells us that such a day of despair will not come; Spiritualism shows us the way which leads to hope and belief—which may bring us to conviction and knowledge.

And this way is the only one; we have no other issue out of the abyss of despair and annihilation to which we are coming nearer and nearer. For what else can save us? Religion? It is true there was a time when religion could satisfy the spiritual wants of mankind. Perhaps even this time has not yet entirely passed. But it will pass; do we not see how religion is losing its grasp on human minds every day? And unless some utterly unexpected and improbable mental and moral cataclysm occurs and turns back human thought into the channel it has deserted since the Middle Ages there is no hope in religion for mankind as a whole. We shall say no more then, "*Hors de l'église point de salut*"; we must accustom ourselves to the conviction that "*Dans l'église point de salut*" is a far truer saying.

But is there no hope in philosophy? For many centuries philosophy has amused itself with struggling against problems it had mostly invented itself; and these problems it has either not solved at all or solved many times, and each time in a different way. Philosophy has awakened in mankind a thirst it is unable to quench. There is still less hope in philosophy than in religion.

If, therefore, it is true that neither religion nor philosophy can save us, can break the spell which is steadily pushing us into the deadly embrace of materialism, we find ourselves before the following dilemma. Either we must abandon all hope and let the current of human thought follow the same channel it is following now—with what result we know—or we must choose an entirely new way to tread upon; and, there being no other, this way is the one to which Spiritualism points.

I suppose that many of us will needs prefer the latter alternative; let us then pause for a moment and examine what is to be done next. In the first place, let it be remembered that on our new way Faith and Belief will be out of place. Hope must necessarily remain; but Research and Experiment must prevail over all the rest. Research and experiment must be our guides and not a step must we move without them. Human minds are but too much inclined to take all for granted and to fall asleep in consequence; on our new way this will be impossible, for research and experiment will keep us awake.

"But," it may be objected, "it is all very well to talk about experiment and research, but this is not enough." To this let the answer be: "It is true that with research and experiment only our way would have been too dark to follow, too hard to tread upon; but shall we not have a bright star to guide us, the star of Hope? And what hope can be more bright, more sublime, than the hope of proving that the promises of Spiritualism are real and true?"

"But," it may again be said, "what do you mean by Spiritualism?" There are many forms of it, what is yours?

Do you believe in your beloved ones coming back upon earth to write upon a slate held by a medium, who, you know, on several occasions was a cheat? or to wind up a musical box in the presence of another more or less suspicious medium—and, *par dessus le marche*, in the dark?"

To this I answer: "I do not think this is true Spiritualism. It is possible that our beloved ones come back to wind up musical boxes and write upon slates—for what do we know of what can be and of what cannot be?—but at the same time have we any serious ground for such a belief? have we much and good evidence pointing this way? Therefore I think the best answer will be, we do not know; we do not deny the possibility of the facts you quote—but we do not feel inclined to believe in them. The alleged intercourse between the 'living' and the 'dead' may be—very probably is—a great truth; but it does not yet follow that it must necessarily take all the forms which the most sanguine assert it does. Still, I do not deny that in this matter the word 'ignoramus' will be the safest way of expressing a cautious inquirer's opinion."

My Spiritualism—I mean, the one I understand and sympathise with—has at the same time a wider and a narrower meaning than the word "Spiritualism" is generally supposed to imply. It attaches but little importance to most of the marvels exhibited by professional mediums and hence has little or nothing to fear from so-called "exposures." In the second place, it constantly has in view that its object is to prove the great fact of future existence, but fully understands that of the conditions of such an existence we cannot in our present state have any certain knowledge. Therefore it does but little concern itself with so-called "revelations" about things which are necessarily beyond our power of comprehension. At the same time it aims at proving the independent existence of the human spirit during life as well as after death; hence facts picked up upon the wide field which "psychical researchers" have made the object of peculiarly careful study are among its best arguments.

This is, perhaps, too ideal a picture; but this is what I should like Spiritualism to be. Meanwhile, I hear someone asking me, "You tell us we must follow the new way to which Spiritualism points; but what reason have you to think that our attempt may be fruitful?"

"Everyone who has seriously and impartially examined the claims of Spiritualism," I answer, "has found them serious enough to deserve attention. He has found that the arguments it brings forward to prove the fact of future life are the most serious that have ever been brought; or, rather, they are the only ones that are worthy of the name of arguments. Leaving aside all evidence concerning the existence and operation of a new physical force—which, after all, taken in itself, can only widen our knowledge of the physical laws of the universe—enough evidence is brought forward by Spiritualism, I shall not say to prove, but to make very probable, firstly, that mind does exist apart from matter, the human soul apart from the body; secondly, that there is something in us—never mind the name—which survives physical death; and, thirdly, that this something can occasionally communicate with survivors even after the complete destruction of the body it once animated."

These are the three points Spiritualism tries to prove, and in my opinion almost does. Shall I drop the "almost?" No, it is better as it stands. For my Spiritualism—if I may call it by this name—is not yet a Spiritualism of belief; it is, so to say, a Spiritualism of hope.

And now I shall ask, is this not enough to compel us to follow the only way that leads out of the whirlpool of despair which fatally awaits us? We know that hope is nowhere else; is hesitation possible?

Let us hope, then, that the day will come when after many struggles and failures the end of the way has been reached; when the hope that had guided the steps of but a few has become the conviction of everyone. Mankind will remember, then, that it owes this blessing to so long-despised, so long-ridiculed Spiritualism. Many may have been its errors; but still its essence was true, and it rendered mankind the invaluable service of rousing it out of its slumber and of giving it a clue which at last could solve the mystery of its being.

Saint Petersburg.
August, 1891.

M. S.

DR. ANNA KINGSFORD.

Mr. Maitland addresses the following letter to a paper which had misrepresented a lady whom we all respected:—

To "The Evening News and Post."

SIR,—The pen-name of your correspondent, "Veritas Superabit," contains an indubitable truth, but it does not therefore follow that his letter does the same. It is incumbent on me to show that the contrary is the case; and if, in showing it, I prove that he has elected to be one of those of whom it is said that they rush in where angels are wont to tread with respect he will have only himself to thank for it.

The positive and explicit denials published at the time of Mrs. Kingsford's death, by her husband, the Rev. A. G. Kingsford, and myself, ought for ever to have disposed of the allegations your correspondent has seen fit to reproduce. But as they have not done so, and as, moreover, in view of the issues involved, the matter is of high and universal moment, I am not disposed to be unthankful for the opportunity afforded me of re-stating the facts, especially in a journal so widely read and highly esteemed as is yours. They are as follows:—

(1) So far from Mrs. Kingsford having, as alleged, joined the R.C. Communion after the writing of "The Perfect Way," she did so before it, her collaboration with me in the work represented by it having commenced in 1874, while her reception into the R.C.C. took place in 1870. And when first we met in that interval she was already practically detached from it, not indeed by formally quitting it, but by holding aloof from its ministrations and discipline, and observing perfect freedom in thought, speech, and action. And during the fourteen years of our association her visits to R.C. places of worship did not average one in a year. This is not to say that she was irreligious, but that her religion was of so pure and lofty a kind as to render her dissatisfied with any of the existing varieties of the Church visible.

(2) So far from her reception of the sacraments on the eve of her death being of her own free will, she had shortly before, when urged thereto by a relative, firmly declined, and written for his behoof a statement of her reasons. And it was only under compulsion of the "sister"—her nurse—and for the sake of being rid of that person's importunities that she finally consented.

The "sister" in question was an Irish nun who had been sent by a neighbour in response to an application made in a moment of emergency for an ordinary trained nurse, and who no sooner found herself alone with the invalid for the night than—ignoring the duty for which she had been engaged in favour of her prior obligations to her ecclesiastical superiors—she brought to bear upon her patient, who, as a sensitive of sensitives, was in her enfeebled condition peculiarly liable to hypnotic suggestion, the whole force of a will naturally strong and enhanced by sedulous training; and with such effect that long before daylight on the second night of her vigil she had wrung from her victim an assent mechanical rather than conscious, summoned the priest—going out while it was yet dark for the purpose, and the first intimation that anyone else in the house had of the conspiracy in progress was the arrival of the priest with the appliances of his function! Before admitting him to the sick room I inquired of Mrs. Kingsford whether he had been sent for by her wish—for I was in charge at the time, Mr. Kingsford being unavoidably absent on parish duty; and as during the whole period of our association she had never taken a step of importance without consulting me, so entire was the confidence between us, it was incredible that she should have ignored me in such a matter, knowing as she did that my only desire was to gratify her wishes, and that I had more than once offered to fetch a priest for her in the event of her being so inclined. Her reply was to the effect that she did not wish for him, but had consented for the sake of peace, the "sister" having worried her into it, and promised that if she would only consent that once she would worry her no more. So, as she had consented, and the priest had come, it would be rude to send him away, and, as she was unable to bear another change of nurses just then, she would see him. "It can't hurt me, you know," she added, with a smile, "and I have never had it, so it will be a new experience."

The promise in question was utterly disregarded, and the effects showed themselves palpably in her accelerated decline.

(3) The circumstance upon which the story of her recantation was based was in this wise. From her conversations with the "sister" and books brought by her, Mrs. Kingsford recognised some passages in "The Perfect Way" as capable of improvement, not in the sense of reconciling them with the accepted views, but in the very opposite direction, so as to exhibit yet more fully the contrast between the spiritual and the literal acceptance of Scripture. For, as it is necessary to explain, the book in no way claims to be a new gospel, but a new gospel of interpretation only, and this not really new, but so old as to have become forgotten and lost, being the purely spiritual sense, as discerned

from the purely spiritual standpoint originally intended, and insisted on, by Scripture itself, as its true sense and standpoint, and those which alone render Scripture intelligible.

Some of Mrs. Kingsford's suggestions to me on the behalf described were made to me in the presence of the "sister," and it was these suggestions which, either ignorantly or wilfully, were misconstrued into a recantation by Mrs. Kingsford of her share in "The Perfect Way." It was subsequently borne in upon my mind with strong conviction that she had divined the sense in which the "sister" took them, and purposely left her uncorrected in order to escape further molestation, not thinking of the possible after-consequences to the work on which to the last her whole heart was set. For to the last her wondrous illuminations to the same purport continued, though as she told me with tears, even while rejoicing in them with joy unspeakable, she was too weak either to write or recite them. Her chief regret in going, she assured me, was that she had not finished her work, and there was no other person living possessed of the requisite faculty and knowledge. This and her keen desire, kindled by her recent experiences, to expose and abolish what—speaking in accents of horror—she termed the "mind-crushing, soul-stifling system" of which the "sister" was a product.

(4) So far from "renouncing her errors," Mrs. Kingsford had no errors to renounce; unless, indeed, they be errors to accept the Bible's own account of itself, and interpret it according to its own rules; to believe that it means what it says when it declares that the letter kills and the spirit alone has life; that "these things are an allegory," to understand which the veil must be taken away from the heart, and replaced by a "seeing eye and hearing ear," or special "spirit of understanding," and, in short, to side with the prophets who, as the ministers of the intuition, are alone competent for the revelation of Divine truth against the priests who, as the ministers of sense, have ever materialised and perverted that truth, and crucified alike the prophet and his message. If these be errors, then indeed Mrs. Kingsford had much to recant; but as it was she recanted nothing, being content to know that whatever may be the truth for the Church visible in its present state of obscurity—the result of a control exclusively sacerdotal, wherein it knows neither the source nor the meaning of its doctrines—she shared them in common with the Church invisible, with which she was in open and full communion; and which in many a prophecy, Biblical and extra-Biblical, has declared "that precisely at this epoch, and by the mouth of a woman, they should be revealed to the world. *Talis veritas quæ superabit.*—I am, &c.,

Oxford and Cambridge Club.

EDWARD MAITLAND.

COLONEL OLCOTT ON SPIRIT MEDIUMS.

From the "Harbinger of Light" we extract words that are worth pondering:—

Colonel Olcott lectured twice in Adelaide. At his first lecture delivered in the Adelaide Spiritualistic Society's rooms, on Sunday, May 24th, he is reported by the "South Australian Register" to have said:—Spiritualism had survived since 1848 despite the exposure of fraud by mediums. There was an inclination towards mysticism in the human heart. People who had seen anything of the phenomena were certain that there was something beyond a mere physical self. If they had spent time to get to the intelligence behind the phenomena they had felt there was an intelligence there that could not be easily explained by the action of the mind of the medium. There had been exposures of fraud, and he was sorry to say that they were due to the Spiritualists themselves. They were heedless of the interests of the medium from whom they expected to get a proof of the survival of man after death. Religious ministers were not allowed to go without support for their families, but mediums were left to live by what they could earn from chance visitors. The mediumistic faculty was a most delicate thing. It was as delicate as a chronometer. The true medium was a person of an abnormal type. They could only produce genuine phenomena when all atmospheric, electrical, physiological, and physical conditions were favourable, and not even then if any strong opposing influence were present. Perhaps in a month they were only fit to give genuine phenomena on ten days, yet people went to them and laying money down begged them to give phenomena. It was hard to resist temptation, and he doubted whether a merchant or banker similarly tempted would resist. The ancients entirely supported the mediums, who were carefully guarded in temples, and they were never allowed to give phenomena unless they were in the right condition. He had known persons of the most undoubted mediumistic ability and able to give the best phenomena to have been caught in the most childish fraud. Such a man in America had palmed off a doll for a spirit bride until a newspaper man exposed the fraud. He did not blame the medium, who had lost his mediumistic ability for the time. What he found most reprehensible amongst Spiritualists was that there were a class of people so credulous that they wanted

to clothe the medium with a halo of sanctity, and they actually went as far as defending mediums who were caught in fraud. They did immense harm by making trickery profitable.

PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

A Committee from the American Psychical Society has had three Séances with Miss Josephine Lord, and one of them, seated in a chair, has been lifted to the top of the table. I see p 115

LOWELL, July 29th.—The Committee of Investigation of the American Psychical Society, formed to test modern Spiritualism and prominent on whose roll of membership are the Rev. Dr. Heber Newton, of New York, and the Rev. Minot Savage, of Boston, has just finished a series of three séances with Miss Josephine Lord, of this city. She is young, lives with her father and mother, has never known anything of Spiritualism, and until recently has been a member and a constant attendant of the First Baptist Church. About two years ago her favourite brother was taken very ill. A woman friend who was calling foretold his immediate death, which, proving correct, impressed Miss Lord and her family very much. Heartbroken, they sought, like many others, consolation in Spiritualism, and thus began the mediumistic career of Miss Lord.

The phenomena produced by Miss Lord are of a peculiar character, occurring for the most part in the light. She apparently has command of the occult powers, the unseen force obeying her directions. At the first séance, held under the direction of the Rev. T. Ernest Allen, of Providence, R. I., secretary of the American Psychical Society, with six others present, three rods—one of wood, another of glass, and another of steel—were made to stand upon the floor for five minutes in a vertical position. At a command from Miss Lord the rods moved in any direction indicated, but they would not respond to a request made by any other person in the room. She then took one of the rods in her hand, and, although apparently holding it lightly between her fingers, no person present was able to take it from her. This phenomenon is something after the Lulu Hurst order.

The second séance was attended by B. O. Flower, of Boston, editor of the "Arena," Mrs. Flower, and Mr. Garland, all being members of the Society. On this occasion the manifestations were far more varied and striking in character. Sitting in the dim light around the table, shadowy forms were seen plainly, moving here and there, bending over and breathing some word of comfort in a whisper, then seeming to rise in the air, to be lost in the deepening shadows. There stood at a little distance from the table a large rocking chair, which all at once began to rock. Gradually it slid nearer to the table and pushed itself in between two of the persons sitting there. Then it stopped for a moment and slowly rose a few inches from the floor, falling back again with a loud thud almost instantly. It rose somewhat higher a second time, returning quickly to the floor again. Making a third attempt, as though moved by some superhuman force, it lifted itself squarely on the top of the table and began rocking violently.

A murmur of surprise went through the room. After a little delay Mr. Flower declared himself wonder-struck, and suggested that the chair be returned to the floor, saying as he did so, "Could anyone sit in the chair, I wonder, and if so, could both be lifted?"

Instantly three loud raps were heard, which is the signal for "Yes." Having thus gained the consent of the unseen agents, Mrs. Flower, with much trepidation, seated herself in the chair, the company meantime all joining in singing a familiar hymn. This had continued for a few moments only when the chair, despite all of Mrs. Flower's efforts to prevent it, began slowly to rock backward and forward. In vain did the occupant place her feet upon the floor and protest that the chair should not, could not, dare not move. It continued just the same, gaining gradually in force and velocity.

Every eye was fixed upon the chair and its occupant, which were both plainly visible in the semi-twilight, and an exclamation of fear arose as the chair was lifted with its occupant fully ten inches from the floor and then sank back again, just as it had done in the first instance.

"Are you afraid?" asked several persons of Mrs. Flower. They saw she looked somewhat pale.

"N-n-o, not v-ery," was the answer hesitatingly given.

The last word had not left her lips when, as though with one mighty effort, the chair and its occupant were both placed on the centre of the table in the presence of the astonished company.

At the third séance in the presence of the same company about the same phenomena occurred with an additional mystery. Near the ceiling was a large picture hook. One of the men present asked permission to place something on it, and was told, by loud raps, that he might do so. A stool was placed on the table and he folded a bank note lengthwise, and tied it about the hook. After he took his seat all joined hands, and soon all were softly singing. The light was very dim. Not more than five minutes had passed

before the medium uttered a cry more like the war whoop of an Indian than anything else. Throwing her hands upward she caught the bank note from the air just above her own head. With this manifestation the meeting broke up, not, however, until the members of the Society had expressed their complete satisfaction with what had occurred, and suggested a continuance of these remarkable experiments in the autumn.—“New York Sun.”

THE GHOSTS MR. BESANT HAS SEEN.

In his weekly letter Mr. Walter Besant has the following:—

A very good ghost story—one of a churchyard and a phantom funeral—has been printed in the “Liverpool Post,” and copied in the “Pall Mall Gazette,” where I saw it. My personal experience of spooks is not much, but it is, perhaps, more than falls to the lot of most.

The first “figure” I ever saw was about six o’clock on an evening in September. I had been writing up to the last moment of daylight; it became too dark for me to see any longer and I knocked off; as I turned from the window I became aware that a female figure was in the room; it made no sign, but it moved about noiselessly. As I looked it disappeared. I was then living as a bachelor in chambers, and my outer door was closed, so that nobody could be in the room except myself. Another experience, and a far more singular one, was this. I was travelling in Northumberland. The day I had spent in driving over a wild and lonely moor to a village situated in the midst of it—a village built round the quadrangle of what had been a monastery. There was the old gate left; part of the buildings; part of the wall; the quiet village enclosed by the old wall; the convent chapel, now the parish church; there were only two or three hundred people living here; outside ran and babbled the trout stream with its high bank covered with bushes and brambles and wild flowers. All round stretched the moor. At the inn, where I took some tea or something, they talked to me about the past; the place was filled with echoes of the past; whispers and voices were heard at night; things had been seen in the bedrooms. A wonderful place; nowhere else in England is there a more wonderful place. I drove back and spent the evening alone in my inn, reading certain books of the Queen Anne time, and at eleven o’clock went off to bed. My room was a very old room, and the inn itself was at least 300 years old. All this is introduction, in order to show you why the thing that I saw took the shape that it did. For in the middle of the night I woke suddenly and sat up startled. I found the room perfectly light; the door, which I had locked, flew open, and there walked in three ladies, dressed in the Queen Anne costume, with the pretty old stiff cardboard ornament of the head and everything. Never before had I understood how beautiful was the Queen Anne dress. The ladies, sitting down on chairs round the fire (which was now burning merrily), began to talk, but I know not what they said. Suddenly—it shames me to confess the thing—I was seized with a horrid terror. I leaped from the bed, pulled back the curtains and pulled up the blind. It was about three in the morning, and twilight. Then I turned to my visitors; they slowly faded away. The light slowly went out of the room; the fire slowly burned low; the figures slowly became faint; they slowly vanished. Who were they? Well, you see that I have seen things. But I have heard nothing. No communication has ever been made to me from the other world at all, except by the spirit Katie, and she only talked rubbish through a medium, and I had to pay a pound for it.

ON AN INFANT.

She came—like music in the night
Floating as Heaven in the brain,
A moment oped, and shut again,
And all is dark where all was light.
And thou hast stolen a jewel, Death!
Shall light thy dark up like a star,
A beacon kindling from afar
Our light of love, and fainting faith.
Strange glory streams thro’ Life’s wild rents,
And thro’ the open door of Death
We see the Heaven that beckoneth
To the beloved going hence.
God’s ichor fills the hearts that bleed;
The best fruit loads the broken bough;
And in the wounds our sufferings plough,
Immortal Love sows sovereign seed.

GERALD MASSEY.
“Ballad of Babe Christabel.”

HAPPINESS.

The more we fight and struggle to make ourselves happy in this world, the less likely we are to succeed in doing so. Day by day, the thinking mind must see more and more clearly that its only chance of happiness lies in the extinguishing of self; and yet so strong are the animal instincts—so persistent is the inherent selfishness in human nature—that we most of us find it absolutely impossible to quell the fiend. The spirit may be willing, but the flesh is unquestionably weak; and, fight against it as one may, this same abominable self will keep cropping up at every turn.

It is scarcely possible to realise the amount of quiet power, of calm security, that would result if we could completely vanquish the enemy; for he who, by Divine assistance, has succeeded in so doing (and Heaven help the man who goes about the matter in the confidence of his own strength) has, to a great extent, rendered himself invulnerable to the world, with all its petty spite and tyranny. A moment’s reflection will convince the most casual observer that this is so, for it is mainly through our love of self that the world has power to wound us, and if we have ceased to worship that idol of clay, if we have, ourselves, trodden it down and destroyed it, we shall certainly care very little for the clumsy attempts of those around us to still further mutilate and disfigure the inanimate carcase.

There can be no doubt that self is, and always has been, the great enemy to human happiness and peace; and those of us who have any desire to enjoy either the one or the other, must start, in the first place, with a sincere desire to overcome the evil. They only can be perfectly and truly happy, who seek not their own happiness, and perhaps it may help us to remember that “Even Christ pleased not Himself.”

The matter is by no means an easy one. The victory is not to be accomplished in a day, or even in a month or a year. No doubt the struggle will be a life-long one, but we must not on that account give it up in despair. It is only by keeping constant watch and ward from day to day (and then only with the assistance of a power far higher than our own) that we can hope to overcome the inherent selfishness of our nature; but if we are truly sincere in the effort to do so, we shall surely triumph in the end. And the end is—
W. B. F.

AN EXTRAORDINARY HYPNOTIC SUBJECT.

We read frequently of judges falling asleep during the hearing of a case, but, says the Paris correspondent of the “Telegraph,” for a prisoner to be slumbering peacefully during the whole of his trial is probably an unprecedented occurrence. This curious spectacle was witnessed on Monday in the Tenth Police-court, where a man named Emile David was charged with illegally personating a barrister and common swindling. After giving his name in answer to the magistrate, the defendant ceased to reply to the questions put to him, and his counsel explained to the court that David was fast asleep, although his eyes were wide open. The magistrate was, of course, rather suspicious of such an explanation; and, in order to prove that his client was not shamming, Maître Raynaud placed his hands before the prisoner’s eyes, and, drawing them slowly back, caused him to get up and leap over the barrier which separates the dock from the court. He was led back to his seat, but it was found quite impossible to awaken him. The trial, however, was proceeded with, and Maître Raynaud, in David’s defence, explained that he was a highly hysterical, hypnotic subject, and that at times he would remain for long periods in what is known as the “automatic ambulatory” stage of the disease. This means that the patient, although in a state of complete somnolence, acts like an ordinary individual, and can travel, carry on a conversation, or play cards without anyone suspecting that he is asleep. On awaking, however, he is entirely unconscious of what he has done while in that condition. This David on one occasion travelled from Paris to Troyes without being conscious of doing so, and, on recovering his senses, discovered that he had lost his overcoat, with a sum of money in one of the pockets. He had no recollection as to where he had left the garment, but some months later, on telling his story to a surgeon at the Hôtel Dieu, the latter artificially threw David into a state of hypnotic sleep, during which he explained the position and number of the room in an hotel at Troyes.

where he had left the coat. The landlord was communicated with, and the story found to be perfectly correct. The hearing of the case was terminated some time before David could be awakened, and the passing of the sentence was delayed for two hours, as the court did not wish to condemn a sleeping man. Finally, when he recovered his senses, the prisoner was informed that, on account of his extraordinary temperament, his offence would be visited only with a penalty of one month's imprisonment.

INTERESTING EXPERIENCE OF LADY CAITHNESS.

Fashionable gossip in Paris is just now taken up, says a "Globe" correspondent, with the latest sayings and doings of a celebrated member of the English colony. It may be remembered that Lady Caithness, or, as she is better known in French society, the Duchesse de Pomar, ordered from the sculptor Ringhel a marble statue of Mary Stuart, and offered it to the city of Paris on the condition that it should be placed in one of the public squares. After a long and animated discussion the Municipal Committee consented to accept the statue provided it was relegated to a museum. "Very well," replied the Duchesse, "I withdraw my offer, and I shall give my Queen in marble to the town of Edinburgh, which will know how to do honour to it." Thereupon a writer in the "Gaulois," who has interviewed Lady Caithness, gives an account of her inner life in Paris. It appears she was born on the Ganges, or somewhere near it, and when Lord Caithness, captivated by her beauty, made her one of the peeresses of Scotland, he made her at the same time, historically and figuratively, a subject of Mary Stuart. Hence her constant allusion to "my Queen." But there was another reason why she adopted this style of speaking. A few days after her marriage she repaired to an old castle, which formerly belonged to the Queen of Scots, but which is now her property. While there she saw the phantom of her Majesty pass over the tombs of the Caithness family in the chapel. At first she could not believe her eyes, but a subsequent event convinced her of the presence of the Queen's spirit. "One night," she says, "on returning from a party and getting into bed, I heard a soft voice whispering in my ear, 'Mary, Mary, get up, I pray you; there is something wrong.' I thought I was dreaming, but suddenly I saw the ghost of Mary Stuart standing at the foot of my bed and pointing to the door of my husband's bedroom. I arose to satisfy my curiosity. Judge of my surprise on opening the door to find the bed-curtains of my husband in a blaze. He had forgotten to put out his candle, and in a few minutes he would have been burned to death." Such, we are told, was the origin of the piety—some may call it superstition—which Lady Caithness conceived for the unhappy Queen. But the spirit of Mary Stuart did not confine itself to the above apparitions. It returned several times more, and the conversations which took place between the two are faithfully reported in a review called "Aurora," written by the Duchesse, and supposed to prepare the way for a social and religious renovation of the world. The review so far has preached only in the desert, and the new Messiah is still clouded in impenetrable mystery. According to the spectre of Mary Stuart, the Messiah will be a woman—perhaps Lady Caithness herself.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Automatic Writing.

SIR,—The value of "Edina's" interesting experiences, as evidence for spirit identity, appears to be diminished by the report of the Society for Psychical Research. Perhaps the puerile communication purporting to be from Livingstone is not a fair sample of the whole; and, indeed, I think the accounts supplied from time to time by "Edina" contained material more remarkable than that selected by Mr. Myers. But it will seem plain to most people that in a large number of these cases the writing was not from those persons whose names were given. When a medium promptly obtains messages purporting to be from all the near friends of the company, or from any deceased person who happens to be inquired for, there is, *prima facie*, grave reason to doubt that those deceased persons are actually present. This, however, does not impugn the genuine character of the phenomena.

The hypothesis of a sub-conscious self is not only unsupported by evidence, but even if admissible, is insufficient to account for all the facts. If the writing were obtained while the medium was in a state of trance, the theory would be more plausible, but as a rule writing mediums are in their normal condition—wide awake, and they frequently converse on other topics whilst the pencil is moving.

Similar writing and messages of equal value are occasionally obtained directly, i.e., without the use of a medium's hand; and in such cases unconscious action on the part of the medium is obviously out of the question.

Messages by automatic writing are also pretty much on a par with those given by raps or table-tilting, and it would surely be superfluous to seek in the first instance two or more distinct explanations of these phenomena.

It would be absurd, however, to suppose the sub-conscious self to be the actor in the case of physical manifestations; for these frequently occur at some distance from the medium or the sitters; often also spontaneously, and against the will of the percipient.

For instance, knockings will sometimes occur in a house greatly to the annoyance of the family, and when communication is opened by means of the alphabet, the information given will usually be found as unreliable as the majority of automatically written messages.

I question, however, the strict propriety of the term "automatic."

To all appearance the hand is controlled by some foreign influence. Sometimes it is moved slowly, and sometimes driven suddenly with great rapidity over the paper, and quite independently of the owner's will.

It is, no doubt, true that the substance of the communications is generally within the knowledge of the company, and I have noticed that it often touches on whatever may have been a recent subject of conversation; but this goes a very little way towards indicating a sub-conscious self as the prime mover.

I have seen cases where simple words, and even the medium's own name, were wrongly spelt, and this, I think, is strong ground for assuming an external intelligence as the author.

If there is no *a priori* reason for excluding the hypothesis of disembodied spirits, this explanation seems by far the most rational, while at the same time it covers all the ground. It is, of course, to be regretted that the unknown beings with whom inquirers come into relationship (especially at first) are as a rule so deceitful.

The mistake made by superficial investigators, however, is to conclude from that fact that the phenomena are caused—consciously or unconsciously—by the medium.

Moreover, when all the common-place cases are eliminated, there remain some which can be accounted for only on the supposition that the communicating intelligence is what it claims to be.

G. A. K.

Animals who see Spirits.

SIR,—I am much interested in the letters of your correspondents which appear in your issue of May 9th, which has just reached me by English mail, concerning dogs seeing ghosts, &c., and as your note at close of the correspondence asks for help from readers by giving their personal experience in such matters, I send the following:—At a séance at Bunyong, a beautiful suburb seven miles from Ballarat, there were assembled a party of ten, all well known to each other. We were nearly all sensitives, but two were clairvoyant to a high degree. After a while some pleasant intercommunication took place, and then a whining of a dog was distinctly heard; the hostess said that is like the whine of Presto, a favourite dog, who had died some few months past, and presently he was seen by the two clairvoyants to enter the room and pass round the table and among the legs of the sitters. Presently both of them said at the same instant, "Presto has jumped into your lap" (addressing me), and the words had scarcely been uttered when I felt a touch at my lips, something like an endearing nibble that a loving dog exhibits when taking him on your lap to pet him. I did not myself see him, but the feeling inspired by the recognition I shall never forget. I am convinced that the dear little Presto, with whom I had romped for many years, had manifested himself to me in this mysterious manner. Then one large black snake entered the room, whereupon the dog left me to pursue it, and snake and dog retired from the room in haste as seen by the two clairvoyants. One or two beautiful spirits (female) were seen before the séance closed, but what I have said of the dog, its appearance, and its recognition of myself, and my exclamations of wonder at the licking and nibble at my lips, is strictly true and authentic.

Ballarat, Victoria.

July 5th, 1891.

W. A.

SOCIETY WORK.

Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—Our rooms were crowded on Sunday last, to welcome Mrs. Spring and her guides, who are much loved by the Forest Hill friends. Many tests were given, all being recognised. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Treadwell. Thursday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Bliss.—H. W. BRUNKER, Sec.

24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday last Mr. T. Everitt delivered an interesting lecture illustrated by specimens of the direct writings obtained through Mrs. Everitt's mediumship. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. T. Pursey; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Spring, clairvoyance. Saturday, at 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Treadwell.—R. MILLIGAN and C. WHITE, Hon. Secs.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E. (NEAR THE GREEN).—The quarterly tea party and social gathering will be held on Tuesday, September 8th. Tickets for tea and social meeting, 6d.; for social meeting, 3d. Tea at 7 p.m., after which songs, games, and dances will form part of our "happy evening," to which we heartily invite our friends.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Assistance given by its members to inquirers free. List of members, and sample copies of "LIGHT," &c., sent on receipt of stamp. Also for the mutual interchange of thought between Spiritualists at home and abroad.—Address W. C. Robson, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne; or J. Allen, 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex.

CARDIFF.—On Sunday last, at the Psychological Hall, an able address was delivered by Mr. R. C. Daly upon "The Progress of the God Idea." The proceedings of the British Association are now monopolising public interest at Cardiff. Some notable addresses have been delivered—that by Professor Oliver Lodge to section A, dealing largely with psychological phenomena, being an able and eloquent plea for the honest and fearless investigation of the facts by scientific men.—E. A.

311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last, a good audience attentively followed Mr. Long's exposition of the "Philosophy of Prayer," after which several friends were influenced to speak, and Mr. Long gave some spirit descriptions. Sunday, August 30th, Prayer, 11.15 am.; Lyceum, 3 p.m., "Our Children in the Other Life," 7 p.m. Tuesday, Committee Meeting. Thursday, Healing, at 8 p.m. Address on Clairvoyance, 8.30 p.m.—A. L. WARD, 59, Trinity square, Borough, S.E., Sec.

PECKHAM RYE.—Last Sunday Mr. Lees gave an exposition of the Atonement from the orthodox point of view. His position was that if this central doctrine of popular Christianity was true then the modern conception of the devil is preferable to that of the Jehovah whom the Church fancies it is worshipping. Many members of churches were present, but did not attempt to vindicate their creed. Next Sunday Mr. Lees will take for his subject the other side of the subject, "The Atonement from the View of Spiritualism," at 3.15 p.m.—J. HAWES.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Last Sunday our platform was occupied by Mr. Richards in the morning, who gave us a few incidents culled from outside literature, explainable only by Spiritualism, and pointed for us the lessons they taught. In the evening, Mrs. Stanley gave us an address upon Spiritualism as the new gospel, which would teach amongst other things the right of woman to stand on an equality with man in social and religious matters. Friday, 8.15, healing. Sunday, 30th, Mr. Lees, 11.15, "The Occupations and Education of Children in the Spirit World"; 7.0, "Some Friends I have met in the Vestibule of Heaven."—J. HAWES, 36, Tyrrell-road, Esat Dulwich, Sec.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETIES' OUTING TO EPPING FOREST.—On Sunday last, in spite of threatening skies, a goodly number found their way to the Forest, and the day turning out fine an enjoyable time was spent. At four o'clock we all assembled at Rigg's Retreat, where tea was served. Amongst those present we observed friends from King's Cross, Islington, Notting Hill, Forest Hill, Canning Town, Stratford, Peckham, and other centres. In the evening an open-air meeting was held under the chairmanship of Mr. Percy Smyth (London Spiritualist Federation), and short speeches upon "Spiritualism, its Uses and the best Methods of advancing it," were delivered by Messrs. Veitch, Rodger, Walker, Darby, Wallace, Jones, Drake, and Brunker. At the close of the meeting the friends separated and took their homeward ways through the beautiful country in the fine summer evening.—S. T. RODGER.

WHAT the greatest thinkers think to-day the mass of thinkers will think to-morrow, and the great army of non-thinkers will assume to be self-evident the day after.—SAMUEL LAING.

NEW TEACHING FOR THE NEW AGE.

[ADVERTISEMENT NO. III.]

So it has pleased the Editor of "LIGHT" to head the advertisements I sent. A New Age undoubtedly it is, and the teaching is new to the new. But is it new in itself? Were it my teaching, I might try to adapt it to what I thought the requirements of the New Age. Mine it is not, and how to adapt it I know not. What I would tell is rejected by Christians, and by Freethinkers, by Professors of Science, and by Statesmen: and private friends tell me, "You must not talk of such things, do not think of them, you will go mad: travel, take change of air."

Truly, if one come and tell you his own things, you will listen, for he can modify his teaching to suit your ideas. But if the teaching is not his, he cannot modify it, for then he is not honest to his own teacher, whose teaching he repeats.

What I would teach is old, as I think—older than the most ancient you have. For it is the teaching men rejected when they started the Babel of doctrines, and contradictory teachings they have developed, and are still developing.

For I eat not of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil of which you all eat. Mine is not one of the systems of right and wrong which you teach. You forced me to eat when a child, but that was not my choice, that was force. Now I eat not of it. Therefore can I study the system you rejected for your right and wrong systems.

Granted many care not for right and wrong. But that is professing wickedness, you are told to keep to your own system whilst you deem it true, and it will be counted to you. But this counting will cease when the original error is pointed out.

Think! Am I or you under a delusion? Is the veil over my mind or over yours?

"Thy Kingdom come." You do not pray for what you possess, you may pray for its continuance, but not that it should come. Then you are not in it. If you want it you are told what to do.

When in the symbolic language you rejected it and were turned out of it, you were told, "You shall eat your bread in the sweat of your face."

You are told that "Bread" is the symbol for doctrine or teaching, and knowing one symbol gives a clue to others, and to the symbolic language. You will obtain your teaching, your education by the labour of your head.

But is not this perfectly natural? Really a law of nature? If children refuse the guiding of their elders, must they not educate themselves? Do they not increase their brain labour?

Intercourse with Higher Intellects, alleged to have existed, was gradually withdrawn. We were left to work alone, at our own systems of right and wrong. Certain oracles, they are called so, were given us, but without a parable was nothing taught, at least to the race. Always something to be puzzled out from what was told. Or the decree would have been violated "By the labour of your own head."

If such is really the penalty, submit to the task imposed and perform the brain labour.

On these required tasks in our next.

REJECTED.