

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by the Editor.

The "Contemporary" for June contains a striking article by Mr. J. M. Soames, which is oddly entitled "Trace." It is a personal record of hypnotic and psychometric experiences. The writer was living in a country place, having amongst his friends an old German doctor whom he and his wife used to visit. On one occasion the doctor relieved a young lady of a severe neuralgic headache by putting her into the hypnotic sleep, greatly to Mr. Soames' astonishment. His wife had held the hand of the young lady whilst she was being operated upon, and had felt a tingling sensation on the side next to her. This suggested that the lady might be a suitable subject for experiment. Her husband made the trial and found it successful. This, omitting needless details, was the commencement of the experiences of which we have here the record. First, insomnia was combated by suggestion. She was told to sleep directly she went to bed, and after the week her natural sleep returned. A small society was formed of inquirers, and the developments were rapid. One of these may be detailed.

One of the members produced a crystal. It was placed in the hands of the lady after she had been put to sleep, with the effect that she was transported in thought to a beautiful garden redolent with flowers. Questioned as to where she was, she said, "Not in England. I am standing in a broad pathway. On one side is a hedge of white azaleas, and on the other, pink, about six or seven feet high." She gave further details as to flowers and trees, and she said, "At the end of the path is a little black and gold house, with such a funny little man sitting outside." Here I may add the sequel. The writer and his wife were one day, some months afterwards, going through one of the big museums in London when the lady exclaimed, "I have been here. I know the place quite well. That is where the little man was sitting, and there is the little black and gold house." She was looking at a model of a garden in a particular town, whence in another experiment a crystal had been obtained, a fact which she had directly diagnosed in the mesmeric trance.

Passing by other remarkable cases I come to the use of the word "Trace." The writer considers that every material object bears imprinted upon it a trace of those with whom the object has previously been brought in contact, which certain highly sensitive organisations can psycho-

metrically discover. What this trace may be, the writer of the article is unable to say. He proposes a series of experiments to elucidate this problem, and also to define the power by which such strange results have been obtained. No one who is familiar with Denton's "Soul of Things" will have any difficulty in accepting the remarkable stories which now find their way into the pages of the "Contemporary Review." They are not new and find ample corroboration in the work that I have mentioned, as well as in the works of Dr. Rodes Buchanan, especially in his "Manual of Psychometry." But the whole subject, as at present discussed, is, like so many other things, only a rediscovery. There seems no reasonable doubt that this strange power of reading from material objects, some facts connected with their previous possessors, was well known to the nations of antiquity, especially the Egyptians, and may have possibly been turned to account by the priesthood, then the sole repository of knowledge. So materialistic have the later races of mankind become that this secret knowledge has been lost. It is a good sign for the progress of the present race that we are beginning to recover it.

I have sometimes discussed the question as to whether there is a hereafter for animals. I have chanced, just now, on an interesting book by the late J. G. Wood, entitled "Man and Beast: Here and Hereafter." He devotes a chapter to a discussion of the future state, in which he argues, through the following propositions, to a belief that there is a future life for the lower animals, and that they will share a progressive life with us. He starts with the statement that man and beast were equally included in the divine law, and were equally liable to punishment for the same crime. Next, that the spirit of animals is developed by communion with the spirit of man. He cites in favour of his own belief Eugénie de Guérin, Mrs. Somerville, Lamartine, Southey, and other writers. Next he proceeds to discuss the different lots of man and beast, and the doctrines of apparent inequality and compensation, of pain and suffering, in connection with divine justice. He proceeds then to deal with individuality in connection with immortality, and claims for the animals who have been brought in contact with humanity rapidly developed and marked signs of individuality, which are only more noticeable because they come more closely under our observation. Then he compares the spirit of the beast and the spirit of man, contending that the very fact that man can transmit his ideas to the lower animals is a proof of the possession of a spirit by them both: and so that the two will equally live each on its proper plane after the earthly body has dropped off. Lastly he argues that spirit, though it cannot act directly upon matter, can under certain circumstances be discerned by material means. He cites the case of Elisha's servant, whose spiritual eyes were opened to see the hosts of spiritual beings by whom the place was surrounded, and others of the same kind, especially the story of Balaam, which he illustrates by an experience which came under his own notice.

The record of this experience is written out by the lady to whom it occurred who, with her mother, was living in an old country chateau in France:—

It was during the winter of 18— that one evening I happened to be sitting by the side of a cheerful fire in my bedroom, busily engaged in caressing a favourite cat—the illustrious Lady Catharine, now, alas! no more. She lay in a pensive attitude and a winking state of drowsiness on my lap.

Although my room might be without candles, it was perfectly illuminated by the light of the fire. There were two doors—one behind me, leading into an apartment which had been locked for the winter, and another on the opposite side of the room, which communicated with the passage.

Mamma had not left me many minutes, and the high-backed, old-fashioned arm-chair, which she had occupied, remained vacant at the opposite corner of the fire-place. Puss, who lay with her head on my arm, became more and more sleepy, and I pondered on the propriety of preparing for bed.

Of a sudden I became aware that something had affected my pet's equanimity. The purring ceased, and she exhibited rapidly increasing symptoms of uneasiness. I bent down, and endeavoured to coax her into quietness; but she instantly struggled to her feet in my lap, and spitting vehemently, with back arched and tail swollen, she assumed a mingled attitude of terror and defiance.

The change in her position obliged me to raise my head; and on looking up, to my inexpressible horror, I then perceived that a little, hideous, wrinkled old hag occupied mamma's chair. Her hands were rested on her knees, and her body was stooped forward so as to bring her face in close proximity with mine. Her eyes, piercingly fierce and shining with an overpowering lustre, were steadfastly fixed on me. It was as if a fiend were glaring at me through them. Her dress and general appearance denoted her to belong to the French *bourgeoisie*; but those eyes, so wonderfully large, and in their expression so intensely wicked, entirely absorbed my senses, and precluded any attention to detail. I should have screamed, but my breath was gone whilst that terrible gaze so horribly fascinated me: I could neither withdraw my eyes nor rise from my seat.

I had meanwhile been trying to keep a tight hold on the cat, but she seemed resolutely determined not to remain in such ugly neighbourhood, and after some most desperate efforts at length succeeded in escaping from my grasp. Leaping over tables, chairs, and all that came in her way, she repeatedly threw herself, with frightful violence, against the top panel of the door which communicated with the disused room. Then, returning in the same frantic manner, she furiously dashed against the door on the opposite side.

My terror was divided, and I looked by turns, now at the old woman, whose great staring eyes were constantly fixed on me, and now at the cat, who was becoming every instant more frantic. At last the dreadful idea that the animal had gone mad had the effect of restoring my breath, and I screamed loudly.

Mamma ran in immediately, and the cat, on the door opening, literally sprang over her head, and for upwards of half an hour ran up and down stairs as if pursued. I turned to point to the object of my terror: it was gone. Under such circumstances the lapse of time is difficult to appreciate, but I should think that the apparition lasted about four or five minutes.

Some time afterwards it transpired that a former proprietor of the house, a woman, had hanged herself in that very room.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE OF SPIRITUALISM.

Some idea of the extent of the periodical literature of our subject may be gathered from the following list of the foreign exchanges of the "Banner of Light":—

"Le Messenger," Liège, "L'Etoile," Avignon, "La Revue Spirite," "Le Moniteur," "La Lumière," "La Chaine Magnetique," "Le Journal du Magnetisme," Paris, France; "Le Sphinx," Berlin, "Psychische Studien," Leipzig, "Spiritualistische Blätter," do., Germany; "Annali dello Spiritismo," Turin, "Il Magnetismo," Firenze, Italy; "La Irridacion," Madrid, "La Fraternidad," do., "El Espiritismo," Barcelona, "Eco de la Luz," do., "El Obero," do., "Estudios Psicologicos," do., Spain; "La Nueva Alianza" and "La Buena Nueva," Cuba; "O Movimento, Verdade e Luz," Brazil, South America; "La Luz," Porto Rico; "La Ilustracion Espiritista," Mexico; "La Constancia," "La Revista Espiritista," "La Luz de l'Alma," "La Verité," "La Fraternidad," all of Buenos Ayres, S.A.; "La Verité," Santa Fé, S.A.

BEAUTIFUL it is to see and understand that no worth, known or unknown, can die even in this earth. The work an unknown good man has done is like a vein of water flowing hidden underground, secretly making the ground green; it flows and flows, it joins itself with other veins and veinlets; one day it will start forth as a visible perennial well.—CARLYLE.

SOME PERIODICALS.

By "M.A. (OXON)."

"NEW THOUGHT."

I have received from Moses Hull and Co., of Chicago, the first number of this well-printed magazine. Its form and shape, a large octavo, leave nothing to be desired. Mr. Hull's remarks on "The Spiritual Alps and How we Ascend Them," of which we have the first instalment, promise to be both instructive and clear, which is more than I can say of a great number of articles that pass current for high thought. Among the other contributors are Mattie E. Hull, Alice Lindsay Lynch, who contributes a study of the authoress of "Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?" as well as some thoughts of the progress of the soul and soul-kinship, an article which contains some startling statements and some very wise remarks. Whether the startling are wise, or the wise startling, I do not pretend to say. Altogether the new magazine starts well. There are other contributors whom I have not mentioned, as there are articles which I should like to notice were not my table so heavily laden that I must necessarily be brief in my criticism.

"THE LITERARY DIGEST."

This periodical, which I see for the first time, comes to me from New York, published at 18-20, Astor-place. It seems to me to be a most useful account of articles from the Reviews, such as a busy man would be glad to have. Most of those in this country we should have no other chance of hearing of. I do not find amongst the articles any which deals in brief with one familiar to me; I can therefore offer no opinion as to the way in which the work of condensation is done—other than this, that I find the abstracts readable, and less chippy than might be expected. But though it does not deal with the same subjects it almost necessitates a comparison with the periodical which lies next to it on my table, "The Review of Reviews."

"REVIEW OF REVIEWS."

But comparisons are proverbially odious, and few have the capacity of Mr. Stead, his portentous power of work, and his organising ability. His periodical shows no sign of diminished energy, in spite of the approach of the Dissolution. Amongst the things that strike me are Mr. Stead's notes on the "Progress of the World," and a character sketch of Louise Michel, whose face and head are certainly remarkably striking, as might be expected of one who commands, from some, enthusiastic admiration, from others, startled wonder, and yet again from others, profound pity. It is characteristic of Mr. Stead that he gives us a view from a hostile source, namely, the "Westminster Review," of himself and of his work. The article which he summarises is called, "Steadism in Politics: A National Danger." The extracts that Mr. Stead gives are amusing enough, and there will be some of his readers who will discern in them just so much of that half-truth which, we are told, is akin to a lie. Among the shorter articles may be mentioned "Lip-Reading," a new method of teaching the deaf and dumb, summarised from the "Revue des Deux Mondes" for May, which is quoted elsewhere; "A Visit to Count Tolstoi," from the "Cornhill"; and an amusing estimate from a German paper of the "American Woman." The American woman is no doubt a wide subject, and the German critic does not make much of her. Another startling article noticed is one by Lady Jeune, in the "North American Review," which contains a sweeping indictment on the rottenness of modern society as exemplified by the *entourage* of the Prince of Wales. A batch of clairvoyant stories is good reading. I have had occasion to refer to some that are cited from the current number of the "Contemporary," in an article called "Traco." There is the usual review of the Reviews, and notice of the books of the month. I cannot resist quoting one charming piece of poetry which was originally contributed to "Harper," by Mr. Archibald Lampman:—

Behold! I lay in prison like St. Paul,
Chained to two guards that both were grim and stout,
All day they sat by me and held me thrall;
The one was named Regret, the other Doubt,
And through the twilight of that hopeless close
There came an angel smiling, suddenly,
That took me by the hand, and as I rose

The chains grew soft and slipped away from me,
The doors gave back and swung without a sound,
Like petals of some magic flower unfurled.
I followed, treading o'er enchanted ground,
Into another and a kindlier world.
The master of that black and bolted keep
Thou knowest is Life; the angel's name is Sleep.

"LUCIFER."

"Lucifer" informs us that Colonel Olcott is to be succeeded as President of the Theosophical Society by Mr. W. Q. Judge, an old friend of Madame Blavatsky. From Madame Blavatsky's pen we have a characteristic article out of the papers that she left behind her, on "The Denials and the Mistakes of the Nineteenth Century." Mrs. Besant concludes her remarks on Re-incarnation, and Mr. Mead discourses on Simon Magus in an article not concluded, but quite worth attention. With this periodical must also be noticed "Theosophical Siftings," the principal part of which is occupied by a paper read before the Blavatsky Lodge, on "Heaven and Hell," which will, I hope, receive further notice.

"THE THEOSOPHIST" (MADRAS)

Contains No. 3 of Colonel Olcott's "Old Diary Leaves," which await the attention which I trust I may be able to give them when health permits. The anniversary of Madame Blavatsky's death, which Theosophists have elected to call "White Lotus Day," was celebrated, I read, with much striking formality at the headquarters of the society in obedience to her wish, that the anniversary of her death should be celebrated annually by the reading of passages from the "Bhagavad-Gita" and "The Light of Asia." An article on "Elemental and Elementary Pranks" is strange reading. Miss Kinsbury's paper, "Spiritualism in its Relation to Theosophy," is reproduced, and the number, thanks to Colonel Olcott and the gentleman who writes on "Elementals and Elementaries," is not so heavy as usual. It is convenient to add here that I have received a report of the Sixth Annual Convention of the American Section of the Theosophical Society, held at Chicago on April 24th and 25th last, which is largely occupied with the resignation of Colonel Olcott, and the election of his successor, the present general secretary, Mr. Judge. The proceedings were characterised by complete unanimity, Mr. Judge being elected without opposition. The Society seems to be in a flourishing condition.

"THE BOOKMAN."

From "The Bookman" I learn of the death of Mrs. Orme, a lady who in her time had known an unusual number of distinguished people. Ruskin; Samuel Wesley, Jacobs, and Nathan, musicians; Laman Blanchard, Douglas Jerrold, and Thackeray; Holman Hunt, William and Gabriel Rossetti; Emerson, the Tennysons, William Allingham, and Coventry Patmore; Herbert Spencer and the late W. K. Clifford; Karl Blind and Louis Blanc, and to conclude with, a name which many will think greater than any I have mentioned—Carlyle. Mrs. Orme, it will be seen, must have been a very unusual woman. I learn too, that Mr. Stead is making definite arrangements for bringing out, probably in the early part of next year, the new journal which he has long contemplated. "The Bookman" gives a portrait of Mrs. Humphry Ward and an estimate of her work. The journal is admirably edited, and is almost a necessity to anyone who concerns himself—as who does not now?—with periodical literature.

MISCELLANEA.

Of other journals, all of which I cannot notice, I may mention the "Phrenological Journal" (L. N. Fowler), which preserves its distinctive character, and deals with subjects such as the "Psychology of Childhood," in a very suggestive paper, and has a short article quoted from "Mind," which I append:—

LATE DREAM DATA.—The Leipzig School of Experimental Psychology report the following as result of systematic observation on sleeping and dreaming:

(1.) With increase of age, sleep becomes lighter and dreams fewer. Children, however, dream but little, if at all, the maximum of dream frequency being reached between the ages of twenty and twenty-five. The curve of sleep does not, as might be expected, run parallel to the dream-curve, but in a straight line, sleep becoming steadily lighter from childhood onwards. (2.) The intensity of dreams increases with their frequency. (3.) Frequent dreaming and light sleep vary together, but not proportionally. A deep sleep is

attended with but small decrease of dream-frequency. (4.) The more frequent the dreams and the lighter the sleep, the better is the waking memory of them. Women form a possible exception to this rule. Though their sleep is light, not much of dreams is remembered.

There is a very great difference between the sexes. Women sleep more lightly, and dream more than men. In men the frequency of dreams has no effect upon the duration of sleep. Whereas this influence is very large in the case of women, sleep with much dreaming lasting on an average an hour longer than dreamless sleep. Much dreaming brings with it, for women, the necessity of a longer period of sleeping, *e.g.*, of day-sleeping. Women who are light sleepers require half an hour less sleep than heavy sleepers. On the whole, women's sleep is more interrupted than men's. A suggested reason for this difference is that women can gratify their inclination on the matter of sleep more easily than men. The majority of men questioned represented themselves as feeling tired on awaking; the women not.

The magazine shows no diminution of interest. There are two magazines on the subject of health, *viz.*, "The Herald of Health" (Nichols and Co.) and "The Health Messenger" (Walter Scott, 24, Warwick-lane). It is hardly within my province to do more than to draw attention to the fact that they deal with the subject of health in a manner which it is now the fashion to call "progressive." There is in each of them a bottom of common-sense, mixed with a good deal which invokes criticism.—"The Lyceum Banner" (Liverpool, at the Progressive Literature Agency, 80, Needham-road) gives a good portrait of a well-known worker, Mr. H. A. Kersey, President of the "Spiritualist Lyceum Union." It seems that the Yorkshire Spiritualists have had a great gathering of the various Lyceums, which, I trust may become annual. Whatever brings people together in harmony and goodwill cannot but be right.—"The Strand" is as good as ever, most readable and excellently turned out. It is good news that Dr. Conan Doyle has contracted to carry on his clever articles on Sherlock Holmes. The illustrations to the articles, especially to that on Instantaneous Photographs, are very curious and interesting; indeed, the illustrations throughout suggest a comparison with those in the "Idler." Both are good; but I cannot say so much for the coloured pictures in the "Million." They seem to me to lack refinement, and to be on the lines of the gaudy pictures that used to adorn the story-books of my remote childhood. It is an open question in my mind whether such things are wanted, whether coloured pictures which offend the educated eye will please the masses. If there is a demand, then Mr. Newnes must improve and tone his pictures down.

A NEW METHOD OF DIAGNOSING CHARACTER.

There are many methods by which students of physiology believe that they can read character—by the face, by the hand, and so forth.

A Chicago hotel keeper is, however, so far as is generally known, the first to maintain a belief that a woman's hair is the most unfailing index of her disposition. He will not even have his ideas described as theories; they are, he maintains, facts. If he desires to know anything of his visitors, he looks not at their faces, but at their hair. His first contention is not infallible. "The finer the hair the gentler the birth," he declares; and there are, doubtless, many exceptions to this rule, if it be one. If the hair is fine and glossy, the gloss indicating constant attention, he is more than satisfied. The closer the ends of the hair cling together, when unaffected by an artificial force, the more intellectuality does the owner possess is one of this philosophical publican's beliefs.

When the ends, and particularly the body of the hair, show a tendency to curl, it is an infallible sign, he declares, that the owner has "inherent grace and poetic ease of body." The straighter and less yielding the hair the firmer and more positive is the woman's nature. Treachery and jealousy hide beneath lustreless or dead black hair in nine cases out of ten. When hair is broken or split it indicates an unbalanced character and "queer notions." The lighter coloured the hair the more sensitive and "touchy" is the owner, is another of his maxims.

Brown hair means common-sense and good judgment, and red or auburn hair is warmly commended. "I would trust an auburn or red-haired woman for more days' board without her having any baggage than I would a woman with hair of any other colour, brown locks not excepted," the inn-keeper declared. The existing notion that red hair is occasionally allied to hasty temper he does not negative. Red-haired women are at times highly impulsive and quick spoken; but they are always honest and sensible, and, "as a general rule, among the brightest and gentlest of gentlewomen."—"Evening Standard."

LOUISE MICHEL.

I have just been reading in this month's "Review of Reviews" the interesting notes on the typical life of this unhappy woman; I say typical because, in looking at her various portraits, I am struck with the fact of Louise Michel offering a type of one of the results of which I spoke in the letter which the Editor of "Light" was good enough to insert from me in the number of June 11th.

In that letter I said that a certain phrenological development, as well as certain chiromantic insignia, would most probably result in the owner having a sad and suffering or sinful life. Judging from the first only of these natural insignia, in Louise Michel's face, one can see that the astral body is near the surface and in itself imperfectly developed. By this I mean badly formed; but in this case the especial danger lies in the over-development of important organs, almost to the exclusion of others. Which organs are developed, and which organs are undeveloped, make all the difference, and the cause for this appears to me to lie in the mysterious Karma for the individual.

There are very few persons ever perfectly formed, if any; but the intuitive faculty of human nature in depicting idealised manhood invariably aims at what must be the case—perfection of form. That means perfected ideal in the innermost reaching to the outer materialised man—perfection realised by the senses. This is non-realised yet, but what is the dream of the present, we know means only not patent as yet to the senses. God manifest to man can only in one sense mean aught else than divine and perfect manhood.

But to return to Louise Michel and her sad career. It is touching to read how a beautiful psychical nature was ruined and spoiled by one deadly weapon. This weapon we read was the cynicism of her grandfather. Her naturally, what is vulgarly called, spiritual nature was early brought into violent contact with what proved the death of her soul, "the Voltairean irony of her grandparents." Now Voltairean philosophy of course contains valuable truth; but it is truth so wrapped up in false envelopes that when given to a young and ardent soul as food it can but breed death and corruption. The advanced student who has studied the ground can feel safely anywhere; but not so innocent youth, more especially those of the psychic nature of poor Louise. Her spiritual faculties withered under the terrible blast, the furnace-fire of hell; for the deadliest weapon that man can aim at man is cynicism, or the deliberate destruction of his neighbour's landmark, by a strong mind destroying the poor little ideal of the weak one and giving him nothing in exchange. A less sensitive nature would of course have suffered less.

We read how Louise was early distinguished by her intense love for the animal world, and nature marked her out for a spiritual career by giving her a natural distaste for animal food. She was forced to take it by her mother. This at once brought the sin of blood into her flesh. I mention this because I can but perceive as I go through life also that most psychics have a dislike to flesh food. They revolt against it, and such food does affect them evilly, and tends to astral disorders. It is sin to them if, when they have the knowledge and responsibility on themselves, they do eat flesh. To other people this does not apply, but it causes the warfare on the advantage or disadvantage of vegetarianism. And of course there are always people who are on the immediate line, not quite over the border either way.

We read also that Louise was illegitimate. *Pace* the "Cause of Woman," by Miss Willard, in the "Arena," we must accept the fact that a child born against the laws of the country comes into the world, so to say, in and perhaps with a lawless spirit. It is surely needless to say that, in speaking of law as it exists, we are not speaking of the law of God, but of the law of man. *Pace* Miss Willard again: in due time, doubtless, the lower law will merge into the higher and only *real* law; but we must deal with things as they are when talking of things now existing; and Louise Michel's illegitimate birth would doubtless have an enormous influence on her destiny.

Judging roughly, one is tempted to think that opportunities wasted, knowledge ill-used and degraded, and the higher life wilfully stifled, could alone engender the unhappy Karma that placed poor Louise in the sad circumstances which killed her psychic powers, and degraded and confused all her fine faculties and filled her loving heart with hate and revenge. Of course, I only mean temporary death of the psychic

faculties; for this one life her gifts are expunged, or only remain sufficiently marked as to irritate and make her miserable. It is a fact, in human nature, that when the love faculty is trampled upon, it (in these unbalanced natures most frequently so) turns speedily to its opposite, hate, and the love which Louise really felt in her heart only practically came out as hate. Whatever "advanced reformers" may think of the matter, it seems to me that the violence of their hatred, what they imagine to be the causes of evil is infinitely greater than the imagined love by which they think themselves actuated to their fellow-creatures. Such people see only a very short distance, and in only one way; they are wildly impatient and lose all sense of everything but hatred to that person or persons by whom they fancy their path is stopped. Love is thrown to the winds and hatred stalks in the empty, ungarnished house.

What has Louise Michel really done, beyond proving herself an unreasoning being? Of course such a woman cannot but have "greatness of soul" which is so much admired, and she cannot have the smaller vices that provoke contempt. It is not possible to look upon her life in any way but that of the profoundest pity and distress, to think that the evil effected by such powerful characters, who are honourably desirous in their own eyes of doing good, may be so great. It is a subject on which the thoughtful mind may well stop and ponder, and he will surely see how far, how very far, we are as a society of men and women from in the least understanding the fact of our being "fearfully and wonderfully made," and that, short of having the higher knowledge of the inner man spread amongst us, most people, from the shortcomings of their education in this matter (and it may be at a University with all honours), are as Louise Michel considered "irresponsible." "For she holds the doctrine of the moral irresponsibility of the individual."

The nonsensical language quoted as used by one of her "dévotées" proves how easily language may be perverted. This devotee says: "Louise is a sublime mystic. She does not believe, she knows: she has seen, therefore she speaks. She is of the Order of the Initiates who, forsaking all things, have entered into the secret of the universe, for ever hidden from the eyes of the well-to-do."

This poor "dévotée" has probably muddled her small ideas in reading some occult literature, which she has failed in the faintest degree to assimilate. Hence she uses terms in regard to poor Louise which do not in the faintest degree apply. But it is noteworthy that occult language does guide the common tongue, and so it says fine things with a vain mind. Much as in the good old story of the woman who loved the preacher in his talk about Mesopotamia because it gave a flavour of the unknown, so this singularly *mal-à-propos* description of poor Louise proves that, would she yet be saved, it would be by separating herself from such unwise friends.

Of course she has seen and suffered much, and her life has been one long martyrdom, but like all such martyrs, she has gratified her desires for martyrdom. She *was* irresponsible; she could not have done otherwise; there is neither merit nor demerit in it. It is ludicrous always to look at a person's life and its events and then to judge, without looking at the results on others caused by that person's life and actions. On those results only can we decide whether a person's life has been valuable or not. These men and women who whirl about the world like comets and meteors happily do not have the same result on humanity as the steady planets which quietly and patiently always do their duty—and are therefore unmarked by the mob. Louise Michel will leave no trace behind her save the possible record of her sad and erratic career, which I faintly hope will in the future be more truthfully and less emotionally read than now.

The story goes on to say: "She is dead to herself; the heart torn by innumerable miseries ceases to feel for itself." Yes, poor woman, it must be so. Violent emotion is, of course, inevitably followed by reaction. Let us hope the Karma of hate is exhausted, and, like many people as they grow older, she may learn in wisdom, even though she be, as her unwise friend says, of the "Order of the Initiates," for even Initiates may progress. But perhaps she is only a neophyte far off from the sacred Adytum, and may-be the curse of her grandfather's cynicism may have lost its power; and who knows but her spiritual hearing and her spiritual seeing may return to her, and, with still older age, the purer thoughts of her childhood may come back, and she may see how she has masqueraded all her life under the guise of love, whereas she

has been holding tight in her hand, concealed from the multitude she has been deceiving and deceived by, the dagger of hate.

By way of praise the review says: "She lies in sleepless horror at nights thinking of all the black horrors of pain and cruelty and brutality which are the nightmare of the world." Poor Initiate! people are too fond of trying to carry crosses too heavy for them to bear, but happily a kinder Hand than she thinks of lifts it gently from her weary back, so that when "she takes her pen to describe them" (these universal horrors) lo! she is not permitted—in spite of herself she "proclaims the glories of the coming day, and proves herself a veritable and inveterate herald of the dawn."

This is a sign that this dawn will yet come to her, and her ghastly past will be a page she will tread under her feet with horror; and she will weep with self-abasement when her "dévotés," and perhaps "dévotés," speak of her "heroic actions." The finite mind of man cannot bear infinite sorrow, or even conceive of it. Much of the fine language used by thoughtless people about a man or woman "thinking of all the black horrors, &c., of the world," is mere nonsense, and pernicious too. To think sincerely, and with perfect concentration, on only an infinitesimal part of it, is quite as much and more than most people are at all capable of in order to bring forth any good results thereon. To let a powerful imagination in the lust of riot wander aimlessly about, picturing what are called "the evils of the world," i.e., of the small portion it knows, is but vain and useless, but not either impossible or remarkable. The results are usually *nil*, for upon exhausted imagination follows paralysis of action.

Moreover, as Occultists may know, it is not an innocent exercise of the mind thus to let the imagination rove unchecked to this and that, and then and there, supposed source or cause of evil. It may produce other results than the dreamer may wot of. Thinking strongly of evil may, if the thinker be really an Initiate, remove it, but if the thinker be very far from that mental knowledge, as most of us are, he may unwittingly let fly a shaft the archer never meant, and fix that evil. The only evil we have any right to meditate upon, is the evil in our own natures; we can safely leave our neighbours alone. If this were done by all, there would then be no such monstrous nightmares as Louise created for herself; but evil itself would necessarily disappear. We continually recreate it by dwelling in thought on imaginary evil, and so projecting it into the earth spheres.

The more I live and the more I consider and observe, do I come to the conclusion that evil is our own perpetual creation. We are always wrangling as to its "origin," vain talk, and we continually re-create it daily and hourly. "Prophetesses of Despair" like Louise Michel are the ulcered souls that our own work produces.

ISABEL DE STEIGER.

P.S.—That most able and remarkable article, "Planetary Influence," in your issue of June 11th, by Mrs. Penny, bears strongly on my points, the importance of form, and the influence of "the starry spheres" on human beings. I should be inclined to use the words "inter-vibration of the human being into the starry spheres," rather than the "influence" which somehow seems fatalistic. Mrs. Penny's article touching Rama Prasad's Finer Forces, opens wide the door on some of the mysteries of man. The vista is tremendous; and as one looks and gazes the more one shudders at the purblind nature of most of our popular knowledge of man, and at the short-sighted, heedless, way in which so-called "philanthropists" wanted to cure the evil of the world, while their own eyes are bound and their feet tied by the fetters of their own ignorance. Look at the vast horizon of the mysterious possibilities in man as sketched out in Mrs. Penny's powerful outline, and then let us tremble at the unwise haste of those who are trying to destroy all the vast possibilities of man, by hastily erecting a little house and turning man into a puny puppet by forcing him to grow into some set ideas which dominates him. This men call "scientific philanthropy," and philanthropy now and again gets rudely treated by its little house falling to the ground and the puppets wildly calling out they are betrayed and abandoned, and there and then they perish with sighs of despair, abandoned even by their own sybils, who dream on, but who can never help them. It is indeed true that "if mathematical proportions are not accurately followed in every detail, an idol may be taken possession of by an evil spirit." The inaccurate proportions of the psychic brain may lead to far greater evil than is dreamed of. With the Editor's permission I shall venture another time more fully to enter on Mrs. Penny's subject, and shall hope to see further elucidation from others.

I. DE S.

"THE REVUE DES DEUX MONDES."

The "Revue des Deux Mondes" for May 1st opens with a singularly fresh and powerful study of life in a little-known region of France—the limestone *causses* of the Aveyron and Lozère—by M. Emile Pouillon, whose name we do not remember to have met with before. His story, "Les Antibel" (concluded in the mid-May number), is cast in a peculiar, semi-dramatic form, the speeches being headed as in a play, and the connecting narrative and local description cast into the shape of immensely lengthened stage directions. The merits of this form of art may be open to discussion; but there can be no doubt that, in the present instance, it lends itself to strangely vivid and concentrated effects. The story is a tragedy of common life, that has somehow, in the telling, caught an echo of the impressiveness of a Greek drama. An elderly farmer, not long a widower, marries again, against the wishes of his mother, who declares that the dead wife will haunt the house and curse it. But the bride, the former shepherd-lass, is good as well as young and pretty, and all goes well in spite of the mother's ill-will, till Antibel's only son returns from the wars and is bewitched—so he himself thinks—with a lawless love for Jane, his father's wife. He fights against it—he does his best to hide it under an assumed dislike—at last he betroths himself to Mette, Jane's younger sister, who loves him; but all is of no avail. At last, in one mad, miserable moment, he tells Jane everything, and throws himself over the cliff before his father's eyes. "La Gate"—the old witch whom poor heart-broken Mette has been consulting in her despair—is suddenly heard calling along the mountain paths: "That which was to happen has happened!" she says, "Jane is dead. The owl has been hooting it for the last quarter of an hour. We know who has done it—the owl and I!"

And then, raising her voice, so that the sound, beaten back from the rocky side of the mountain, comes back to them in a weird, ghostly echo, she cried, "It is Fabiane, Antibel—Fabiane is having her revenge!" Fabiane was the dead wife.—"Review of Reviews."

STUART CUMBERLAND AND ROYALTY.

The "Pall Mall Gazette" gives the following items of news, presumably communicated by or from the person most concerned:—

Mr. Stuart Cumberland has increased his circle of Imperial and Royal acquaintances. A few nights back he and Mrs. Cumberland and their relative, Miss Phyllis Bentley, had the honour of being included amongst the Golden Wedding guests of the King and Queen of Denmark at Castle Bernsdorf, when his thought-reading powers were put to various interesting tests. For instance, he correctly divined a date (1842) thought of by his Majesty the King of Denmark, and wrote out a word in Russian characters (namely, Russia) thought of by the Tzar. With the Tzarina, the Queen and Crown Princess of Denmark, and other exalted ladies, he did many curious things, while he correctly interpreted the secret thoughts of the Duke of Cumberland, which were to despatch off-hand the ever-good-natured Crown Prince of Denmark. As a final experiment he took the Crown Prince of Greece to his Royal Highness's bedroom at the top of the Castle, and fetched a portrait of H.R.H. the Duke of York, that being the object the Crown Prince had thought of.

Miss Bentley's experiments, which go to show that the phenomena for which magnetic powers have been claimed are explicable upon a scientific basis—that of a knowledge of leverage and balance—also created a very great interest. In the experiments with the cue neither the Tzar, the Crown Prince of Denmark, the King of Denmark, the Crown Prince of Greece, nor the Duke of Cumberland was in any way able to either disturb Miss Bentley's balance or to push the cue to the ground. The failure of the Tzar, who is, physically speaking, the strongest monarch in Europe, to lift Miss Bentley by her elbows, caused very great amusement and surprise.

It was a most interesting moment when the Tzar of all the Russias, who has only to raise his little finger to make millions bow themselves to the earth, utterly failed when putting forth all his strength to push the fragile young English girl against a wall. Another interesting moment was when Miss Bentley lifted four nations with the greatest ease in the persons of the Tzar, the Crown Prince of Denmark, the Crown Prince of Greece, and the Duke of Cumberland, seated on a chair.

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Light:

EDITED BY W. STANTON MOSES,

["M. A. (OXON.)"]

SATURDAY, JULY 2nd, 1892.

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.

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SPIRIT IDENTITY.

By THE EDITOR.

Some recent events have again drawn attention to the question of the identification of those spirits who communicate with us through mediums. Especially has this been the case owing to some remarkable narratives contributed to this journal by the gentleman who adopts the pseudonym of "Edina." I betray no secret when I say that he is a man of trained intellect, accustomed to weigh evidence, who has been most persevering in his attempts to arrive at truth, and who has, what most would consider, exceptional facilities for investigation. Of his earnestness, ability, and probity there can be no manner of doubt. Moreover, the medium through whom the various communications have been given, his own daughter, is exceptionally placed. She is deaf and dumb. But that which from all other points of view will be deemed a sore affliction must be estimated otherwise when we regard her as a medium. Her affliction prevents her from being charged by the most obstinate sceptic with the illicit acquisition of those facts which, mixed with much that is *not* fact, are given as communications from visitants from the world of spirit. There can be no reasonable doubt that she has automatically written messages containing verifiable statements which were beyond the reach of her conceivable knowledge, as well as beyond the scope of her mind, on which, indeed, her affliction had laid very narrow limitations.

The communications of "Edina," therefore, are such as to warrant the large space given to them in "LIGHT." They emanate from a family circle, are given through a unique medium, and are recorded by a practised hand, whose desire for truth at any cost is transparently plain to see. What, then, so far as we have gone, is the result arrived at? Perplexing it must be confessed, and that in a high degree. If the conditions under which the communications were given are, as has been said, almost uniquely good, the messages themselves are full of contradiction and are in many cases vague and puerile. If some verifiable statements—such as lists of events in a given "communicant's" career, dates, and the like—are true, others are false beyond anything that can be accounted for by accidental error in process of transmission.

As an illustration of my meaning I will refer to the case of the late John George Wood. The medium had seen and

described him, and recognised a photograph shown to her without the name being disclosed, and had received communications from him. These were colourless, and quite uncharacteristic. In the brief list of his books the chief and most important were omitted. There was, in short, nothing to identify the communicant, and much to throw doubt on his claims. He then expressed a desire to write a letter to me as an old friend. On receipt of the request from "Edina," I confined myself to the expression of a willingness to receive and consider anything so sent. In due course the letter came, dated from "Spirit Land, May 29th." It was equally colourless and unsatisfactory. It expressed the writer's delight at being able to write to me, apologising for not writing through a London medium, but his sympathy with Miss — was so great that he "would like to write thousands and thousands of things what comes off (*sic*) in the Spirit Land." "I often see you" (he continues), "and wherever you are I am with you. You remember our talk on Spiritualism," and so on.

Now, my memory, especially of late, in time of great sickness, is not infallible. I may have met J. G. Wood, but I have no recollection of having done so. I remember no talk with him on any subject whatever. Certainly, I did not know him, and he assuredly was not one of my friends. This is one of the cases which I consider to be out of the range of mere error. I can understand verbal, even serious mistakes. I should not allow them to prejudice my mind against the general truthfulness of a message. But this is, I submit, a wholesale fabrication quite inconsistent with the claim set up by the communicating intelligence.

Again, when we find Manning, Spurgeon, and others including a murderer just executed communicating immediately after leaving the body, but without saying a word worth remembering, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that there must be behind all this something that we do not yet understand, some law which we have not discovered. In the case of the present medium if I may discuss such a point respecting one so blameless in life and so incapacitated even if the will were present, for obtaining materials for such a long-continued course of fraud, the power is absent, and therefore I contend that we must seek for some explanation of our difficulty on the side of those who communicate and not on ours. The fault, it would seem, must lie with the "intelligent operator at the other end of the line." It becomes necessary to look into the question from this point of view. We have seen what throws doubt on these communications—wholesale misstatements, utter vagueness, the suspicious use of names, either current at the time and in the mouths of most men, or well-known in history, and contradiction between messages given—these must be admitted to be reasons for hesitation on our part.

But after all, what would be, to a reasonable mind, adequate proof of the identity of a spirit? What evidence would be sufficient? What class of evidence should we seek? How much should we require before acknowledging conviction? These are questions that cannot be properly discussed at the close of an article. I hope the readers of "LIGHT" will favour us with their views, with their conclusions, and, especially, with the steps of reasoning by which they arrive at them. For myself I may say that as far back as 1878 I published a work "Spirit Identity" in which I made some attempt to express a personal opinion on some of these moot questions. The book is now inaccessible. It may, perhaps, be worth while hereafter to reproduce some of the arguments then adduced.

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTON will hold a reception, by kind permission of Mrs. M. E. Wallace, at 57, Gower-street, Bedford-square, W.C., on Wednesday evening July 6th from 8 p.m. till 10.30 p.m., when she will be pleased to welcome friends.

RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.

No. XIX.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

May 11th. We met as usual. The table commenced rapping up and down immediately; raps of every description were heard all over the room. A chamois horn was brought from the hall, and several visiting cards from the drawing-room. Mr. S. M. and myself both saw a very bright spirit-light (resembling a large diamond) over the chimney piece, and Dr. S. saw the column of light he had seen at a previous seance. Mr. S. M. became entranced and clairvoyant. He spoke in a subdued voice, saying, "What beautiful spirits! Bright angels are all around." He then said, "I see, I see, I see a beautiful little angel form, a lovely child." "Is it the little Pauline?" I asked. "Yes. She comes and says she is always near you and watches over you." We then heard Imperator's voice saying, "Good evening, friends. We have not been with you for some time; we are pleased to find you are progressing in your vision, and in a better understanding of spiritual manifestations. In time I hope you will see me. To-night you saw the spirit-light surrounding me, and will see it again presently; but when you see spirit-lights keep quiet, and do not fix your eyes too long on them. The medium is becoming clairvoyant, he has seen the little Catherine, and in time will see still more; he must not sit in mixed circles, but regularly here. The Band is in a transition state, some of the spirits are going to be drafted off and their places refilled. D. will go; he is a progressive little spirit, and other changes will be made, for these reasons; the medium at present must be careful, as the adversaries are very wakeful, and if he sits with alien influences, danger may ensue. You also run risk in sitting in mixed circles, but not equal to the medium. If you do not wish for further information, we wish to use the rest of the power to give you direct information, direct spirit writing, a few of our names as a memorial of the evening. You will also see the spirit-light if you watch." After joining hands, Imperator left the medium. While waiting for the signal to strike a match, we again saw the beautiful spirit-light. To me it appeared over the chimney-piece, but to Dr. Speer it seemed shining on my forehead. On striking a light, and looking under the table we found written on a piece of paper the following names:—

IMPERATOR,
S.D.

PHILOSOPHUS,
PRUDENS,
DOCTOR,
ZACHARY GREY.

May 14th. We met as usual. Many distinct raps were heard. Two things were brought from my bedroom, and the spirit known to us as the musical spirit manifested very beautifully; playing apparently on a stringed instrument, though there was nothing of the kind in the room, sometimes the music seemed close to our ears, and then it would fade away sounding all over the room. The spirit playing answered questions by twanging on the string, and by alphabet he gave his name.

May 16th. We met for a short time this evening. Raps numerous. The musical sound was very distinct, heard first at one place and then another; it moved around the circle, and sounded as if someone were lightly touching the strings of a harp. A rose was taken out of Mr. S. M.'s hand and thrown on the table, and an article was brought from another room.

May 16th. This evening we met at eight o'clock in the dining-room, and sat in fire light. Mr. H. joined the circle. Raps came very quickly. Rector manifested strongly, walking round the room with a very heavy footstep, shaking the floor and our chairs with great vigour. The musical sounds were very distinct. At first they were heard round the medium, then close to me and Dr. S. The circle then felt cool air blowing over them, and a delicious perfume passed from one to the other. All was very harmonious, and the manifestations were quiet and beautiful. Our conversation was repeatedly answered and commented on. We remarked that we had often said, "Unless some open manifestation from God came to the earth faith would die out, and that now was the time it was so needed." By raps we were answered, "He always does right." During the time we were calling the alphabet for this message the medium became controlled, and Imperator held a long and interesting

conversation with us. He commenced by saying, "Yes, friends; He always does right, and chooses the best time for manifesting to the world." He then said he had been anxious to come to us, but had been prevented, and that though at times he had been present with the circle, he had not been able to control the medium. He had been engaged in the spheres organising plans for the progress of God's truth. They were now prepared afresh for the work, but the undeveloped spirits had banded themselves together to stop it, but in the end it must prevail. It had always been the same from the time God first spake to the world until now, evil influences tried to retard the progress of truth, and prevent man from accepting what God would give. They had done much to retard it now, but in the end it would prevail. In the meanwhile, friends, you must be prudent and hold fast to that which ye have seen, and know to be truth, that which your reason and conscience tell you is truth. Be ye steadfast to the end, fellow-workers with us in the good work, and it shall prevail. Imperator concluded by saying he had other work to do, and could not always be present with us, but that information would be given through Doctor when needed. Mr. H. then inquired the best way of managing a medium who seemed to be possessed by evil influences. "Place her under firm, loving treatment, and if possible have her magnetised by a person of strong will and good character, and surround her by those influences that will elevate her, and develop the good that is in her." "How is it she is so possessed?" "She has left her own spirit-guides by following evil and undeveloped influences, and these spirits have replaced them. It is so in many cases." "Are spirits ever finally lost?" "Not as you understand it. When the body is removed, and the spirit free to rise, most souls progress, and the cases are very few, where the spirit voluntarily chooses the reverse. Progress as a rule is the law of the spirit-world." "Can you see us now?" "No; I can if I will so to do." "Should you see our bodies or spirits?" "Your spirits." "Do you see our spirits as plainly as we see the things around us?" "Yes." Imperator answered many other questions; told us that Rector had been a noble spirit in earth-life; that he had been much engaged with him in this work, and had given up his life in the cause of truth. He said many spirits were present who did not belong to the band, the room was filled with them, as a circle was always a centre of light to the spirit-world, and spirits were attracted to it.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY'S BAZAAR.

On Saturday, July 16th, 1892, a grand bazaar will be held in aid of the Working Women's Club, 193, Bow-road, E. (founded by the Theosophical Society). The stalls will be taken by members of their own committee, consisting of working girls. The club, we are informed, consists of about three hundred members from the mackintosh, starch, jam, and other factories. Meals are provided at lowest possible prices; large and well-furnished rooms are at the disposal of members during their short respite from the unceasing toil of the factories, where they can find music, dancing, singing, games, and a library of over six hundred volumes. Funds are urgently needed; all contributions in money or in articles of any kind for the bazaar will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mrs. Lloyd, F.F.S., the matron, at the club.

The Bazaar will be opened at four o'clock on the day mentioned, by the Countess Wachtmeister. Admission 1d.

PLANCHETTE AS A SPORTING PROPHET.—A new sporting prophet has recently come upon the scene. At an artistic supper party given a few evenings since by Mr. Wyndham, at the Criterion Theatre, Planchette was introduced for the entertainment of the company assembled, and it was suggested that this instrument of revelation should be asked to furnish the name of the winner of the Royal Hunt Cup. Planchette slowly but intelligibly wrote the name of "Suspender." Subsequently it was proposed that the winner of the Northumberland Plate should be revealed, and Planchette duly inscribed "Newcourt," which gained the coveted prize. Several gentlemen well known in dramatic circles were present, and can vouch for the correctness of this statement.

ECONOMY should not be mistaken for selfishness; generosity is not shown so much in the giving as in the disposition.

A LOOK ROUND SOME EXCHANGES.

By "M. A. (OXON.)."

"BANNER OF LIGHT."

I have so long been away from this work, unable to read or write, that it is a little difficult to gather up the threads. But I begin to make a brief attempt.

The "Banner," which maintains its usual standard, gives a touching story, which I quote, in its essential particulars:—

The late famous surgeon, Dr. Edward Dixon, of New York, for many years the editor and publisher of "The Scalpel," was exceedingly fond of music and flowers.

He was a member of one of the aristocratic Fifth Avenue churches. My old friend, the late Hon. Dexter A. Hawkins, gave myself and daughter a pressing invitation to perform at a musical entertainment given in the church, of which he was also a member. It was here I first met Dr. Dixon. During the evening the Doctor was profuse in his compliments to myself and daughter in relation to our music. Mr. J. R. Thomas, the well-known song-composer, also took part in the entertainment, and sang his much-admired song, "Tis but a little faded flower." I noticed that Dr. Dixon was much affected by the sweet song. At the close of the entertainment the Doctor invited me to call upon him, remarking that he had some very interesting objects of virtue at his home which he would like me to see.

Shortly afterwards I dropped in upon the Doctor. He received me with great courtesy, and immediately began showing me many articles, each of which was connected with some interesting history. Among the relics, and carefully preserved in a glass case, was a bunch of faded flowers. The Doctor gave me a history of the little souvenir, which was very touching. A young lady whom he had very much admired gave him the bunch of flowers as she was about departing for South America, never to return, having passed to the "brighter land" shortly after reaching that country. "You will recollect, Mr. Watson," said the Doctor, "that I was much affected when Mr. Thomas sang that sweet little song at the concert a few evenings ago, and it was this bunch of flowers, and an incident connected with them, that drew the tears so copiously from my eyes that evening." After spending an hour most delightfully with the dear old physician, I took my departure, but we occasionally met each other afterward socially. Shortly after the death of Dr. Dixon, I happened one day in the Astor House, and the image of the good Doctor and the anecdote of the bunch of faded flowers came vividly to my mind. At the moment when the impression was strongest upon me, a coloured man who stood near by brushing the coat of a gentleman, began to sing most sweetly the song, "'Tis but a little faded flower." For a moment I was utterly nonplussed, but regaining my equilibrium, I mustered up enough courage to say to the coloured man, "That is a sweet little song." "Yes, sah," he replied, "dat song is a great favourite of mine."

"THE BETTER WAY."

Mr. W. Emmette Coleman, who is best known as a destructive critic, bears testimony to the mediumship of Mr. W. T. Church. I reproduce what he says with the desire to show that, like so many others, his knowledge of the real thing qualifies him to express his opinion, for what it is worth, upon that which he considers to be false. Obviously an exposure of fraud by one who knows what he is talking about is worth ten thousand prejudiced opinions emanating from one who has had no experience. He thus writes of Mr. Church:—

The most marvellous spiritualistic phenomena that I have ever witnessed took place through the mediumship of Mr. W. T. Church. I use the word marvellous advisedly and without exaggeration. They were of an astonishing character, and they require to be experienced to be fully appreciated. A description of them by another party gives an inadequate idea of their extraordinary character. That they were genuine, free from fraud on the medium's part, there could be no doubt. Trickery and confederacy was positively precluded. I have heard of cases where, in the absence of genuine phenomena, owing to unfavourable conditions, this medium attempted to imitate the phenomena and was detected, but, during my experience with him, nothing of this nature took place. Whenever the seance was a failure, it was a failure, and so declared by Mr. Church; and the money was refunded to the sitters, or tickets given for another seance. The peculiar character of the feeble phenomena occurring on such occasions was one of the most convincing proofs of their genuineness. Mr. Church attempted no fraud while I was with him. If the phenomena did not take place, they did not, and that was the end of it.

For several months I attended his seances in Buffalo, N.Y., in 1874-75, and I had also a number of private sittings with him. I observed in a careful and searching manner all that was said and done, noted every circumstance attendant upon each seance. I became personally acquainted with him, and many times visited him as an aid in my investigation of the true nature of the phenomena manifested in his presence. My protracted researches and testing served to more strongly emphasise the genuineness of the phenomena.

I desire to state that the only genuine "materialisations" that I have ever seen were those through Mr. Church. I have witnessed many purported materialisations through a number of other so-called mediums, but in every case they were frauds of the most transparent character; such evident frauds that it is a matter of wonder that anyone with ordinary common-sense could be deceived thereby. But great is the credulity of human nature!

To the same paper is contributed an account of Spirit Photography by J. H. Nixon. I do not cite these cases for any other purpose than to give my readers in England an idea of what is going on in America. I cannot vouch for anything; I merely quote. We have no public means here of carrying on investigations on this interesting subject. The mediums on this occasion are known as the Abers of Spring Hill, Kansas:—

A few weeks ago one, Mr. Evarts, of the National Soldiers' Home of Leavenworth, Kansas, procured a box of sensitised photo-plates, and took them to the above-named mediums. Himself placing one of the plates in the plate-holder he closed the slide, and placing the whole on a table—it being daylight—requested Mrs. Aber to take a seat at the table and place one hand on the holder. Then he placed in her other hand a photograph of his mother in spirit. In a few minutes three raps were heard on the plate-holder. He then took the apparatus to the ruby-light, took the plate from the holder himself, developed it in the ordinary way, and, behold, on the same was the picture of his mother.

Taking another one of the sensitised plates, he passed it through the same regulation as in the first instance, only that Mrs. Aber simply placed her hand on the table. He then placed his living daughter's photograph on the holder, and in less than one minute the work was done. On development the clothing was identical with that of the living daughter, but the face that of a daughter in spirit life.

Another case. About four months ago a gentleman versed in practical photography called on Mrs. Aber and brought his own apparatus, having also a photograph of his father concealed in his pocket. This experimenter made his own conditions. He placed a four by five inches plate in the holder, had the camera focussed on himself, the room darkened after a light exposure, and then asked that the negative of his spirit father be given in connection with his own. After the plate was developed, both the sitter and his spirit father were on it, the latter in full form standing behind his son, and not at all in the plane of the sitter.

"RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL."

The "Journal" contains a great deal, naturally, about the Psychological Science Congress, and is able to announce the adherence of a great number of well-known names to the advisory council, of which, it will be remembered, Mr. Bundy is president and Professor Elliot Coues vice-president.

There is every reason to believe that there will be a gathering of persons interested in Psychic science at the World's Fair, such as has never been seen before. Miss Frances E. Willard and Lady Henry Somerset have lately given in their warm adhesion, and there is a long list of names published in the "Journal," which, of course, are better known in the States than they are here.

Alexander Wilder contributes to the "Journal" an account of his experiences with the medium Foster:—

In the last number of "The Journal," you refer to Charles Foster. I never quite explained to my own satisfaction some experiences that I had with him, though I guessed. The first time I saw him he gave me six names to write, two of which must be those of my father and mother. I did it, folding them, mixing them, and placing them before him. He took them up and laid three of them on his forehead—then took a piece of thin paper and held it under the table. In a moment he placed it under the chandelier. There was a scrawl written in pencil on the under side, which when read through the paper was my father's name, "Abel." Mr. Foster then repeated my mother's name, "Asenath." In a moment he added that they were beside me, and also my uncle Smith—"William Smith." I was not thinking of him at all, nor had been, and he had then been dead nearly twenty years. Mr. Foster let me ask him several questions in the same way and answered them accurately. I noticed that he used my terms, followed my ideas, but revealed nothing that I did not already know or suppose.

Some years after, I visited him at Salem. This time I had prepared some twenty or more questions about twenty hours before seeing him, and by the time he gave me the seance I had forgotten many of them. I had used terms and phrases so that no one but myself could know to what I was referring. Several related to what I ought to do in a matter where I stood in doubt; one in regard to a loss, &c. As I forgot them, I was compelled after he had answered them, to open and see whether he was right.

Mr. Foster answered every question in terms and phrases almost exactly like those which I had written. Where I had definite opinions or convictions, he agreed with me precisely; where I was in doubt and desired such light as his clear vision might give, his replies were also equivocal, unreliable, and no more correct than a man might guess.

I guessed that Mr. Foster's clear vision was the sequence of a rapport with my own mind. I do not say "consciousness," for much that he stated I was not thinking of, and had not been expecting. But the human mind does hundreds of things intellectually where there is not conscious thought, or cerebration. The hidden man in the cerebellum does most of our mind work, leaving nothing neglected, but often keeping it concealed till the mind processes are finished up. Probably Mr. Foster's mind permeated this department of my being, and brought out to me the results of the work as far as they had gone.

Plainly enough there was no fraud or deception on his part. Yet there was no such acumen, intellective power or prophetic gift, as would enable him to tell absolute fact, regarding the future, or imparting to me superior counsel. I judge, therefore, that he simply came into mental contact, immersing his mind in mine as we can mingle two gases, not increasing the volume, and thereby getting hold of my thoughts, and occult cerebellar processes which he revealed in uttered words, telling me what I was not aware of though perhaps already arrived at in my own mental operations.

LIP-READING.

For the following interesting account of a new method of conveying ideas to the deaf and dumb, and introducing them to the thought of this world, we are indebted to a summary of an article in the "Revue des Deux Mondes" which we find in the "Review of Reviews." Our readers will peruse with interest some account of a most important venture:—

M. F. Deltour contributes to the "Revue des Deux Mondes" for May 1st an exceedingly interesting article on the National Institution for Deaf Mutes at Paris. Originally founded by the Abbé de l'Épée, it has gradually abandoned his method of signs (which was found to labour under many disadvantages) for that of lip-reading. That the Abbé himself looked forward to this result is shown by his own words. "The deaf-mute will never be truly restored to human society till the day when they have learnt to express themselves in words and read from the lips of others." It is also true that the oral method was known to his contemporary, Rodrigues Pereire, who was entirely successful in applying it. He refused, however, to communicate the secret unless well paid for it. Moreover, the method requires a large amount of individual attention, and the Abbé de l'Épée's limited resources would not have allowed him to engage a sufficiently large staff of masters for the seventy-five boys with whom he began. In 1880 oral teaching was introduced in the Paris institution and gradually extended, and when, in 1887, the last of the pupils trained on the old system had left, the manual signs were entirely abandoned. It goes without saying that progress has been more satisfactory ever since.

At present boys are admitted between the ages of nine and twelve, and no student can remain after twenty-one. Recent authorities have seen reason to think that children of six or seven might with advantage begin the exercises for producing the voice and learning how to form sounds. After the age of twelve, or at most thirteen, it is useless for pupils to begin—the vocal and respiratory organs being no longer flexible enough to execute new movements. Children, whose general health is not good, or whose sight is defective, or who are mentally deficient, are not admitted. The sight is especially important, as so much of the teaching depends on it. Moreover, the pupil is only finally accepted after a trial course of instruction has tested his ability to profit by the instruction he receives. The least capable pupils—in practice, about a fourth of the whole number—are placed in classes of their own, and receive special attention.

The course is divided into two periods. In the first—extending over four years—the pupils learn *how* to speak and understand. The second embraces the ordinary branches of instruction in elementary schools. Besides the latter, five hours per day are devoted to learning one of the following trades: Wood-carving, printing, lithography, carpentering, shoemaking, gardening. The elementary pupils, who can spare less time from their headwork, are prepared for this branch by what are called manual exercises for about an hour every day—Froebel's games during the first year, followed by modelling and Sloyd, which teach them to handle tools.

We have not space to summarise M. Deltour's excellent account of the way in which the conception of speech is awakened in the pupils, and they are gradually enabled to articulate the most elementary sounds. The whole system has been improved by successive steps till it is probably

nearer perfection than anything of the kind now in existence. Arithmetic, elementary geometry, geography, and the history of France are taught after a skilfully graduated plan. The last-named occupies the two closing years of the course, and serves to introduce a few notions of what is known in France as *droit mond*. They receive information—which comes to most people naturally, in the course of practical life, but without which they would be helpless—on such subjects as money, contracts, wages, crime and its penalties, the law of master and servant, &c., &c.

Religious instruction has, of course, always been a most difficult point. The teacher could begin by pronouncing the word *Dieu*, and then trying to connect it, in the mind of the pupil, with the Unseen—with the ideas of Omnipotence, of creation, of Divine goodness and justice, as revealed in the beauty and terror of Nature. "At the sight of Nature—of a flower—of the clear or starry sky, or when the pupil is attentive and obedient, he says to him, for example, 'God—good; God—well pleased; God blesses.' During a thunderstorm, or having committed some fault, he repeats to him, 'God—powerful; God—great; God sees—God punishes.' By these words he succeeds in awakening in the child's mind that sense of Divinity which underlies the conscience. As he proceeds all opportunities are seized for developing this rudimentary instruction. It is usually about their third or fourth year, when they have begun to master the idea of objects and the artificers who have made them, that religious ideas make most progress in their hearts and minds. The effort is then made to arouse their curiosity and induce them to ask, 'Who made plants and animals?—the sky and the earth—the first man?'"

The whole course extends over eight years, but those who have completed it at eighteen or nineteen may, if desired, remain at the school till they are twenty-one, but in no case beyond that age. Most of those who have left it have been found fully capable of earning an honourable livelihood; some have even become craftsmen of marked ability. Some of the deaf-mute printers are employed by the great Paris firms, and even in the Imprimerie Nationale, where situations can only be obtained by means of a competitive examination. It is an interesting fact that the printing establishment of MM. Firmin-Didot at Mesnil-sur-l'Estéu (Enre) employs none but women, all of whom are former pupils of the Deaf-Mute (Girls') School at Bordeaux. The excellence of MM. Firmin and Didot's typography is well known.

Among the lithographers trained at the institution, there have been some genuine artists, and some of the wood-carvers, on leaving, have continued their studies, and joined classes for decorative art.

The terms are 1,400fr. a year. Daily boarders, who go home at night, but take their mid-day meal at school, pay 800fr.; and day pupils, who go home for meals (but take part in the recreations, the walks, baths, and swimming lessons, as well as the classes), 600fr. There are numerous scholarships, and even in default of these, eligible cases are never rejected for want of funds. There is an annual subsidy from the State, which may reach the sum of 264,300fr.; the Institution has an annual income (from legacies, subscriptions, endowments, &c.) of 50,000fr., other pupils' payments amount to 80,000fr.

An instance of the successful training of the Institution is given in the case of a young man, a former pupil, who in 1887 claimed exemption from the conscription on the ground of a defect which no one had noticed, till he himself informed the president of the Revision Committee that he was deaf and dumb.—"Review of Reviews."

THE Annual Conference of the Spiritualists' National Federation will be held in the Mechanics' Hall, Manchester-road, Burnley, on Sunday, President, S. S. Chiswell, Esq., Liverpool. Sessions at 10.30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Business: Opening address by the president, secretary's and treasurer's reports, the presentation and consideration of amendments to the Constitution, and resolution upon matters of general importance to the movement. Brief speeches on the above by delegates and associate members of the Federation will be in order. At 6 p.m. a grand public meeting. Chairman, S. S. Chiswell, Esq. Brief addresses will be delivered by a number of well-known speakers and mediums. Admission: Tickets for reserved seats for the entire day, 1s., to be had from Mr. James B. Tetlow, 140, Fitzwarren-street, Pendleton; Mr. Nutter, 64, Helena-street, Burnley; or the secretaries of societies in Burnley and other places, and at the doors on the conference day. Admission to unreserved seats, 2d.—J. B. Tetlow.

GENIUS MEDIUMISTIC.

If I had had the pleasure of Madame de Steiger's presence when reading her letter on "Health and Mediumship," in "LIGHT" for June 11th, I should have said, on coming to this sentence, "it all depends on circumstances whether a person is a medium or a genius," but why that "or"? Is not a genius mediumistic in a very high degree? Rather a carping question, perhaps, since I well see what she means by contrasting them. Yet I am sure she will forgive me for submitting to consideration my own belief, that in the case of genius the prompter is a spirit congenial in taste or turn of thought to those of the mind which it stimulates; whereas the less determinate nature of a medium—so-called—admits of it being instrumentally used by differing and not always kindred spirits. Though that is a rule, that would not always hold good. One very notable exception occurs to me in Shelley, a most brilliant sample of genius, of whom it was said, "There was mingled with all the beauty of his mind a vein of unearthly and ghastly delight in violating natural instincts." "It seemed as if he had combined in his own person the spirit of a loving child and a tricky fiend."*

To justify my belief that genius, as distinguished from talent, is a result of mediumship, I shall bring forward the unconscious testimony of Mr. James Hinton—for such it seems to me—which I found the other day among hoarded papers of long ago. In an obscure little periodical called the "Christian Spectator" he wrote an article on Genius for December, 1863. (It only bears the signature of "J.H."; but he sent it to me as his own at the time.) In this he asks, "Why is genius so often linked with peculiar weakness? What is that indescribable power, different from any result of toil, which compels our homage? Whence comes that strange insight, which goes right to the heart of its subject, making all other men appear mere outside labourers? . . . What is that strange capacity which its possessors are not conscious of possessing, and become aware of only by comparison with others?" After carrying on his argument with his usual subtlety of thought—an argument quite foreign to any recognition of what we mean by mediumship, though the words I quote appear to indicate that condition so unmistakably—and saying of talent and genius, "In the one case we want power, in the other a channel; for the work of talent is a doing, of genius a suffering to be done"—Mr. Hinton says on the next page, "The affinities of genius are with weakness; his faculty is that he opposes no obstacles, that his strength is taken out of the way, and nature operates through him. . . . Genius is a channel through which the concentrated energies of mankind are poured, an emptiness which nature's self condescends to fill; a weakness which enlists on its behalf the power on which the world reposes. Well is its work called inspiration; and humanity speaks in its voice, humanity and therefore Deity. It is the voice of man that genius utters, the strength of man it wields; the power which is embodied in its achievements is the accumulated power of long generations; it may be of centuries of workers. . . . And we marvel the more because so often we can find in the man himself nothing to account for, or even proportionate to, the amazing power. It is as if we ascribed the force which elevates a fountain to the immediate pipe from which it issues. We do not look behind and note the pressing flood."

This is just what we can do, and do at the present day—what thirty years ago Mr. Hinton did not, nor was it likely that he should. At that date Spiritualism held in the public mind a very different position from what it now holds, and the emphatic testimony given to its facts by Mr. W. Howitt, Mrs. de Morgan, and a few other brave lovers of truth was exceptional in the then prevailing ignorance; clothing itself, as ignorance generally does, in contempt.

The quotations I have made will not be thought too many, if they help readers justly to estimate the great advance made since these words were written in clear conceptions of *cause*, previously muffled up in abstract terms, such as "Nature's self," "voice of humanity," "concentrated energies of mankind," and the like. Surely the mind can be as much obfuscated as the conscience can be stupified by the sounding emptiness of generalisations? If one had driven this acute reasoner into a corner, and tried to extort from him what he did exactly mean: by the voice of humanity, must he

* "Review of Dowden's Life of Shelley"—"Spectator," December 11th, 1836.

not have seen that such an abstraction could have no meaning apart from that of a number of human beings finding voice? Now this is just what we attribute to the varied and often incoherent utterances of a medium; and the Spiritualist believes that the "concentrated energies of mankind" act by individual agents on both this and the other side of dissolution, *not* like a condensed chemical substance suffusing adjacent matter with its quality. Spiritualists do look behind the veil and note the pressing flood of spirits, still, unhappily, so little detached from our world that they rush to utilise every means of access to those remaining in it with whom they are in sympathy.

It is presumably, when higher powers among them wish to help the toiling race, that they still remember; or when, as messengers of mercy they are commissioned so to do that genius appears in natures controlled with such beneficent mastery, that, to quote Mr. Hinton once more, "the work of genius seems often to be of super-human power; to bear no relation to the capacities of the individual worker, or to any capacities, indeed, that can be conceived as dwelling in a man."

A. J. PENNY.

RESPONSIBILITY.

We draw attention to the following short article which we clip from the "Literary Digest." It involves questions which recent events make of more than passing interest:—

INFLUENCE OF HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT.

By J. H. KELLOGG.

The question as to which has the greater influence in the formation of character, heredity or environment, is a very interesting one. If you plant a thistle seed and an orange seed in the same plot of ground, and let them grow together in the same earth, the same air, the same sunlight, and the same care, is there any question as to what the result would be? Although the analogy between plant heredity and environment does not hold strictly with regard to human heredity and environment, it is certainly true that an individual receives a very strong bias from his heredity. Strong inclinations and congenital deformities of character thus conferred remain, to a certain extent, through life, just as do inherited physical infirmities. Nevertheless, we must recognise the fact that many individuals, inheriting badly deformed brains, do, under favourable conditions, develop very different characteristics from what they would under unfavourable conditions; but a person with good heredity and one with bad heredity cannot possibly develop equally under the same environment and conditions.

The question of heredity also involves that of individual responsibility. Look over the inmates of any State prison and you will come to the conclusion that they are a race by themselves. Most of them have small heads and deformed skulls, the sides of the skull unequal, and but few of them are in sound physical health. The great majority of convicts show in their faces evidences of degeneracy and a low type of character. In fact, the type is so distinctly marked that we have what is known as the "criminal class."

We cannot determine how far human beings are responsible for what they do. If a man steals, it may be because he has acquisitiveness largely developed, while his conscientiousness is small; for a man whose moral organs are small and who has large acquisitiveness is almost certain to be a thief. Is he, then, any more responsible for not walking along in the straight line of honesty than another man who has inherited some deformity of his limbs is responsible for not walking as symmetrically as a man with equal legs? We must admit that such persons are responsible to a certain degree for their acts, but just the degree no one but God really knows. Our civil laws, however, make no difference in their judgment of such, and of those who, with good moral development, allow themselves to descend in the scale until they lose all sense of propriety and the rights of property, and become thieves. The subject of heredity and its principles and influences should be rightly understood by every parent. Children have a divine right to be well-born.—"Student," Chicago, U.S.A.

ARMED with love and gifted with patience, I will conquer the most vicious of men.

In our dealings with our fellow-beings, if they come to us they are ours; if we go to them we are theirs.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.]

Miss Caroline Corner's Farewell.

SIR,—May I be permitted to thank those friends who have written me such kind letters of congratulations on my forthcoming marriage, and of regret at parting—too numerous to reply to singly—through the columns of our journal, "LIGHT"? I am deeply touched by and grateful for them all. When this appears in print I shall have left England for my future home "on the hills" of Ceylon. There is an incident connected with this turn in my destiny which will interest all students of psychology. One day last autumn, when on my way to lunch with a lady friend in Kensington Park-road, it occurred to me that the clairvoyant, Mr. Towns, lived somewhere in the neighbourhood. I made inquiries, and in passing was fortunate to behold the very man standing in his shop. To my surprise he recognised me; it was about fourteen years since I had seen him, except once or twice, I believe, at a distance and insisted on my stepping into the back parlour. He then began to diagnose me psychometrically, in his normal state, and without any questions informed me that "arms" were "stretched out" to me "from over the sea," that a letter would come in "about two months" from that same individual which would "affect" my "destiny," that, in short, I should receive an offer of marriage quite unexpected, and "in six months across the sea" in acceptance. Now, other minor things he said were so correct I could not but be a little impressed, though I could form no idea of this. However, I took heed, and, arrived at my friend's, informed her and awoke her interest. Truth to tell, all my life I have had an extensive correspondence, Platonic for the greater part, so the difficulty was to decide who was the unhappy man. A month or two later I went with a friend to another clairvoyante, and was told the same, only that now the letter came "direct." And sure enough it did, in eight days; and, perhaps, not uninfluenced by the advice of the two wonderful "seers," as well as by natural inclination, my fate was speedily fixed. I only hope the sequel may prove as true, for both agree that my happiness rests with myself, and gifted Mr. Towns concluded with a little homily which I do not mean to forget. To you, Mr. Editor, and all my friends, for a time at least, Adieu!

CAROLINE CORNER.

Theosophy.

SIR,—I have read Dr. Sharpe's letter with much interest, but I think he is ignoring one very important fact. As applied to the perfected man, Theosophy will, I think, be at one with him, but man has yet to reach the stage of perfection; the "human soul made in the image of Deity" is soiled and discoloured with animality and passion, and though the perfected soul may "bring with it its mundane experiences of light and love, of beauty and harmony," for the great majority of us these experiences of "light and love" are small, and the consciousness of "beauty and harmony" has yet to be awakened, the clouded senses have yet to be taught to thrill in response. And though Theosophy also teaches of progress, beyond any that we can yet conceive of "in objective worlds of active waking existence," it pre-supposes that before any higher states are reached the fruition of those lower must be gained.

Is it not rather a figure of speech to refer to "man" as "the realised likeness of ideal perfection both in mind and form?" What man?—a Cardinal Manning, or a lustful drunkard with hardly the first glimmer of mind displayed, and that little dulled and blunted with drink and vice?

Dr. Sharpe has not quite clearly understood Madame Blavatsky's teaching as to the Divine Ego and the Personality, I think. She does not say that the "personal" consciousness is "incorporated with the ethereal form" of the Ego. It is only the spiritual state of consciousness which can gain fruition in devachan, not the whole personal consciousness, nine-tenths of which in most men is composed of animality and sensuality. The devachanic state is objective to the devachanic entity as most, if not all, dream-states are objective to the dreamer, but none the less subjective really. Whatever exists for that entity exists only in its own consciousness.

It is against analogy, Dr. Sharpe says, against the "many mansions of the Gospel, and against the Spiritualistic lives of progress." There is a day of progress after this, but there is a night of rest, first. What are the "many mansions"? Are they the worlds with which each surrounds himself, which he is laying the foundations of now, or does it apply to the "planes" of devachan?

As far as analogy goes—in this life we have the day of objectivity, the night, the rest of subjectivity. So also in the complete life. The day or life, in an objective world, the night or life of rest in a subjective world.

DEVACHANEE.

Mr. S. J. Davey.

SIR,—I observe with regret that my letter *re* Mr. Davey in your issue of June 11th has not been sufficiently explicit in its statement of facts to prevent you from misapprehending those facts, and consequently repeating serious charges against Mr. Davey, which I still hope that you will recognise as unfounded.

You say, in your issue of June 18th, that Mr. Davey "tried to bamboozle you"; that he was "a shuffler"; and that "he was clever, but he was not true."

I am obliged to repeat the facts. Mr. Davey was deluded by certain friends into supposing that he had produced by mediumistic power certain words which they had in fact themselves written. Under the belief thus induced that he was a medium he consulted you as to mediumship. Was this an attempt to "bamboozle" you?

He then discovered that his friends had played him a trick, and that there was no real ground for supposing himself to be a medium. Consequently he ceased to suppose himself to be one. Was this to be a "shuffler"? He then told his intimates first, and published in our "Proceedings" later, the fact that he had been completely taken in by a practical joke. Was this to be "clever, but not true"?

He then took great trouble to save further inquirers from being similarly deceived, by practising conjuring tricks, on which ordinary observers, receiving no guarantee as to the nature of the phenomena which they were to witness, should be invited to form their own opinion. This was done, of course, in order to see how far average powers of observation could be trusted; nor have I seen any other method suggested by which that important inquiry could be made. Mr. Davey explained from the first to Mr. Hodgson that these were conjuring tricks; and so soon as the series of experiments was concluded, he stated the nature of the phenomena in a published paper. Since some readers (on what grounds it is hard to say) seemed to doubt his statement, Mr. Hodgson is publishing (in Society for Psychical Research "Proceedings," Part xxii., to appear shortly) a full account of the methods employed.

I will add that I never met Mr. Davey, so had no personal friendship for him; and that the result of his experiments was to me very unwelcome, and tells against my own published opinions. But if I were on that account to refrain from doing justice either to his personal character, or to the great importance of the results to which his patient and disinterested labours led him, I should feel that I had forfeited any claim which I may possess to confidence as a dispassionate inquirer.

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

Leckhampton House, Cambridge.

June 21st, 1892.

[We await Mr. Hodgson's article before saying more.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

Doubtful Mediums and Mediums in Doubt.

SIR,—Fraud of all kinds is generally to be blamed under all circumstances beyond most other offences; and is most rightly condemned as a crime when practised by weak mediums, or by beings on the other side lacking in the moral sense, who are allowed, by a mysterious providence, to make some men their tools and, when under trance, their irresponsible tools—men and women, too, who are often, in the first place, made mediums in spite of themselves, as in the case of the late D. D. Home, when a pious youth, as well as many others. Fraud has, however, sometimes been coolly utilised, condoned, and even commended as meritorious by strong men, assuming high principles apparently, with a view of persuading another that he was not a medium when he himself was under the impression that he was one, which he may not have been, or may have been notwithstanding.

Well for him, in many respects, if he had not been a medium; in other words, "a go between," so far as regards happiness here; for if a medium ever existed he was the man who perhaps first said: "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable"; yet who certainly helped, in a marked degree, to mitigate the miseries of others; but, in many respects, was himself miserable, though he had been "caught up in Paradise and heard unspeakable words," and though he it was who emphatically said: "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised," and will not rise. He spoke of the present as we Spiritualists speak. We know they "rise." So, because mediumship has assuredly its sorrows, we do not desire to make any man a medium *malgré lui*, but if he be one by nature, as St. Paul was, he cannot help himself. He, too, is called, and "given power." It may be said that fraud is justifiable, if handled in a conservative sense, in order to preserve the truth and the old paths; and I would not deny that it was exercised in Mr. Davey's case, from thoughtful if mistaken motives. There is something very shocking in the upsetting of good, supposing good is upset; but believing that true Spiritualism's mission is not only to preserve the good and the ancient and the true, but to turn faith into knowledge, it seems to me that the mission of Spiritualism is not to upset Christianity, but to confirm it.

These are, however, apparently, not the opinions of some others; they would put down Spiritualism at all hazards if they could, because they may honestly believe it militates against Christianity. With this view, we believe, a prominent member of the Society for Psychological Research formerly wrote an article in the old "Spiritualist" newspaper against Spiritualism, and headed it by the following touching lines:—

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
Her early Heaven, her happy views;
Nor thou with shadowed hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.

I do not think that he would acknowledge, even now, that as time goes on, Spiritualism is tending more and more to make happy views more happy, and to heap melody on melody in rhythmic current fugue, though we think that such is the case. Just the very reverse were the tactics of the late Lord Amberley, who had the misfortune to hate the religion of his country and to set Spiritualism against it, without seeing, or determining not to see, the analogy of the two; not that he cared for Spiritualism, but he loved Christianity less. These were his modes of comparison. He said: "To believe that spirits return to us is a sign of folly; to believe that after actual death human beings were restored to life is rational religion. Angels might descend to converse with prophets; spirits cannot descend to converse with their dearest friends. That a table should be moved in some inexplicable way is not to be believed; that a sea or a river should be cleft in twain is not to be doubted. It might almost be maintained that the readiness with which the public accepts the marvellous and the inexplicable varies directly as it is ill-attested." Still, the marvellous, ancient, and modern exists and existed, and it is having a very respectable innings in the present day, which renders us more prone to believe the marvels of other days. I am far from considering that mediums *malgré eux* may not be in existence, however it was with Mr. Davey, and I think I know cases of it. We have heard of a doctor spite of himself; why not a medium? Molière wrote a comedy that he called "Le Médecin malgré lui." He also wrote another comedy called "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme," and this Bourgeois, cunning into money, took to studying literature and the graces, and in the course of his searchings into the precise meaning of words, he found, to his surprise, that he had been talking prose all his life without knowing it. I am inclined to believe that a man whom we all respect may be talking mediumistic lore and Spiritualistic science day after day without being aware of it; or, if aware of it, feeling himself led on by the force of events, which no one, perhaps, knows better than he does, are leading us onward towards the rightful interpretation of the arcana of spiritual science, though he may not have yet attained the higher pedestal of Spiritualism which proves our future life.

MIROR.

"EVERYBODY'S POCKET CYCLOPEDIA."—SAXON and Co. (Bouverie-street, Fleet-street) send us a little sixpenny cyclopædia which seems to contain nearly every bit of information that anyone can be reasonably supposed to require, and a good deal of out-of-the-way knowledge of which most of us are ignorant. It is quite impossible to give any idea of the variety of topics treated. Phrenology and Palmistry are classed under the head of scientific subjects. We shall expect to see Spiritualism added next, for the Editor boasts that he is thoroughly up to date. Certainly a remarkable sixpennyworth.

SOCIETY WORK.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—Rev. F. R. Young next Sunday at 7 p.m.; Thursday at 8 p.m.—Z. B. FERRIS.
WANDSWORTH SPIRITUAL HALL, 132, ST. JOHN'S HALL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.—Services every Sunday, at 8 p.m., and every Wednesday, at 7 p.m.—E. A. B.

STRAFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—Service every Sunday, at 7 p.m. Speaker for Sunday next, Mr. J. Burns.—J. BALDWIN, Hon. Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—At last Sunday's service there was a good attendance, several strangers being present. Mr. Portman's controls gave an excellent address. Mrs. Mason's guides answered numerous questions of an interesting character at the close. Sunday next at 7 p.m., Mr. J. M. Dale; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., seance, Mr. Mason; July 10th, Mr. Cable, on "Psychometry"; 17th, Mr. Whitaker; 24th, Messrs. Darby and Brooks.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

PERHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WINCHESTER HALL, 21, HIGH-STREET.—On Sunday morning last the subject opened by Dr. Bass was "The Darwinian Theory." In the evening Mr. Veitch delivered a pithy lecture on "Spiritualism: its Progress and Ultimate Aim," which was appreciated by the small but attentive audience. Sunday next, Mr. Dale; Thursday, healing; July 10th, Rev. Rowland Young; July 17th, Rev. G. W. Allen.—J. T. AUDY.

SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—The annual summer outing to Kenton will be held on Monday, July 11th, at 9 a.m. Fare (for train journey and tea) 3s. 6d. Applications should be made to the secretary before Sunday, July 10th. Next Sunday public seance, at 11.30 a.m.; Lyceum, at 3 p.m.; Mr. Swaridge, at 7 p.m.; general meeting, at 8.30 p.m. On Wednesday, public seance at 8.30 p.m.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday last Mr. Wallace, from America, lectured to a full audience on "Redemption by Wisdom," and has kindly promised to speak again on the 10th on "Thoughts for Freethinkers." Sunday, July 3rd, at 11 a.m., meeting; at 7 p.m., annual meeting. All members and friends cordially invited. Thursday, seance, Mrs. Spring; Saturday, seance, Mrs. Whitaker. Portman Rooms, 3rd, Mrs. E. H. Britten, at 8.—C. I. H.

CARDIFF.—On Sunday last the service was conducted by Mr. R. C. Daly, whose efforts were much appreciated. The beautiful solo, "Ora pro nobis," was well sung by Mr. E. G. Sadler. The members' seance after the service was conducted by Mrs. E. Adams, whose guides spoke with great fluency and effect during a short address upon "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil," after which a few striking clairvoyant descriptions were given. We trust that the great interest evinced at these seances will encourage our local mediums to continue their valuable aid in this good work.—E. A.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION: OPEN AIR WORK, HYDE PARK.—The "Field Day" was held on Sunday last, when a good number assembled. The meeting was unfortunately held in the wrong place and many of our friends were not present through not seeing us at the usual stand. Mr. James Burns spoke upon "Spiritual Science"; Mr. A. M. Rodger on "Liberty, Justice, and Progress"; Mr. T. Emms on "Spiritualism," and Mr. King on "Clairvoyance." In the evening Mr. King opened the meeting, and Mr. F. Dever-Summers spoke upon "Spiritual Philosophy"; Mr. Percy Smyth on "Spiritualism in Daily Life"; and Mr. Burns on "Spiritual Religion." We thank the speakers and also friends for their support. Next "Field Day" at Finsbury Park on July 17th, at 3.30 p.m. Hyde Park (near the Marble Arch) on Sunday next, at 3.30 p.m., Messrs. T. Emms and Percy Smyth; Regent's Park at 6.30 p.m., Messrs. T. Emms and A. M. Rodger.—PERCY SMYTH, Organiser of Open Air Work to London Spiritualist Federation.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. Palmer, 3101 North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. Webster, 5 Peckville-street, North Melbourne; Canada, Mr. Woodcock, "Waterliche," Brookville; Holland, Van Stratten, Middel-laan, 682; India, Mr. Thomas Hatton, Ahmedabad; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, B. Fortenson, Ad., Christiania; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, French Correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace: the last Sunday in each month at 7.15 p.m., reception for inquirers; Friday, at 8.15 p.m., for Spiritualists only, the study of mediumship; and at 1, Winifred-road, the first Sunday in each month at 7.15 p.m., reception for inquirers; Tuesday, at 8.15 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J. A.

PATIENCE is the fruit of trials and tribulations, hence they are not an unmixed evil.