

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

"Borderland" for the current quarter is an attractive number. Mr. Stead certainly contrives to get together a good deal of interesting gossip, as varied as it is readable. In truth, "readable" is the word. The experienced old "Pall Mall Gazette" hand never runs the risk of giving us anything deep, or dull, or dry. But, for all that, there are nuggets of gold here and there in "Borderland."

Mr. Stead's American experiences with mediums are continued, but, as he made no effort to put choice or system into his inquiries, he seems to have little more than oddments at his disposal, though some of these are curious. It is rather disappointing to read his first two or three lines: "My experiences in Chicago were like my experiences elsewhere; they were not systematic, but happened to me in my stride." So we only get a few chance séances, though some of these were noteworthy,—some experiences with a Mrs. Warne, healer and clairvoyant, especially so.

An article on "Some Experiments in Clairvoyance" is worthy of careful consideration, especially that part of it which deals with the disclosure of events happening on a ranche in Texas; the clairvoyant being a servant-girl in England. These disclosures were all tested nine months after, when one of the persons concerned came from Texas to this country. If Mr. Stead is sure of his facts, and he vouches for them from personal knowledge, it is certain that a servant-girl in England clairvoyantly saw, or was mediumistically used to describe, what was happening five thousand miles away. The particulars are given in detail, and are set forth with admirable lucidity. Mr. Stead concludes by intimating that he is promised the development of clairvoyancy in his normal state, and by expressing the hope that the promise will be fulfilled. We hope so too; and, in the meantime, venture to advise him to work on in this direction with "Jane."

Mr. Stead seems to expect much from spirit-photography. He says: "The camera promises to be to the psychical world what the telescope was to the starry firmament on high." This being so, we are sorry he has so little to give us that is fresh. His partial failure with Mr. Duguid, however, may be important, though, to the scoffer, it may afford much food for congratulation and mirth. Mr. Stead's son, working with a Frena kodak, got nothing, although he used seventeen plates. Mr. Duguid used two of his own plates and got results on both, though the Frena shots at the same instant got nothing. It ought to be said, however, that Mr. Duguid, who holds that there is as much virtue in his camera as in himself, offered to use marked plates in his own camera. Of course all that looks

"shady," but it is a part of the subject, and Mr. Stead wisely counsels his readers to suspend their judgments.

Mr. Stead tells us of a clergyman whose experiences tally, in effect, with Mr. Duguid's:—

A reverend gentleman in the West of England who has been experimenting in spirit-photography for some time, and who has achieved some considerable measure of success, found that it was necessary to cause the plates used in the experiment to be carried on the person of the medium some time before the séance. The medium is a boy in his parish whose faculties in this direction were discovered by accident. He is quite destitute of any knowledge of photography, and his share in the performance consists of carrying a sealed packet of plates for some hours before the séance in his breast-pocket, and being present while the reverend gentleman manipulates the camera. The clergyman, who stated to me the results of his experiments, said that although he could not explain it, he found that the boy always suffered from extreme exhaustion after he had had plates in his possession for some hours. In fact, he suffered so much that the clergyman on one occasion found it necessary to remove them from the lad's pocket for fear that the exhaustion might be too much for him. When the plates were taken away the lad experienced immediate relief. All this sounds very incredible and even absurd, but it is not for us to reject any statement made by credible witnesses as to what they have seen at first hand.

The scoffer is perfectly entitled to chaff the clergyman about this, but there are very many kindred facts connected with occult subjects, and we shall look to the patient investigator, working on scientific principles, and not to the scoffer, to find the truth.

We may return again to this number of "Borderland."

Mrs. Helen Wilmans, editor and publisher of "Freedom" (Boston, U.S.), prints, in her own paper, the following (after describing a séance with a Mrs. Bliss):—

A few friends with myself afterwards induced Mrs. Bliss to come to my house and hold a séance. She did so, using a small dressing-room that opens off a large bedroom for her cabinet. On this occasion there were fewer persons manifested. She claimed that the place being new, it was not sufficiently magnetised, and proposed coming again. She did so, and surely nothing could surpass the wonderful demonstrations that followed. Thirty-three different forms came out; many of them coming several times over. And when the séance had closed and the lights were turned on full, Mrs. Bliss asked me to go back with her into the cabinet. She parted the curtains and went in just ahead of me, the curtains closing behind her. I put out my hands to part the curtains, when they were parted from the inside, and the form of a tall, beautiful woman, perfectly formed, held them apart and stood with her body almost touching mine, while I looked straight into her face and eyes. She bore no resemblance at all to Mrs. Bliss; furthermore, I saw Mrs. Bliss right behind her, standing with her back to the form that had just appeared. The curtains closed; but before they had time to more than fall together I had jerked them open, and there was Mrs. Bliss alone with her back to me just as I had seen her under the arm of the materialised form a second before. Remember that this took place in a room fully lighted with gas.

At one time during the séance a number of forms came out who claimed to be Egyptians, and whose jewelled robes

[August 4, 1894.]

DEMATERIALIZATION OF MRS. D'ESPERANCE.

The following substance of a letter addressed by Mrs. d'Espérance to the Hon. Alexander Aksakof will be read with much interest. After giving some remarkable séances in Helsingfors in November, 1893, with which the readers of "LIGHT" are already acquainted, she visited the Hon. Alexander Aksakof, at St. Petersburg, and gave two sittings at his residence, and these proved to be of the greatest significance. On her return to Sweden she stayed two days at Helsingfors, giving a séance there on December 11th, and, regarding this meeting, she wrote to Mr. Aksakof on the 12th a letter, from which we make the following extracts :—

"The séance was held in the house of Herr Seiling, and I believe there were fourteen of us present. The manifestations were so peculiar that I think it will interest you to hear about them, and I have begged Herr Seiling and General Poppelius to send you a description of them, if even only a brief one, which they have promised to do. The peculiarity of this séance consisted in the circumstance that one half of my body entirely disappeared, and I only discovered this by chance. My head—or, rather, the back of my neck—ached, and I held my hands clasped together behind my head. This seemed to relieve the pain slightly, but my arms became tired, and I placed my hands, as I thought, on my knees, when I found that I had no knees, and that my hands were resting, instead, upon the chair. This alarmed me somewhat, and I wished to ascertain if it were really so, or if I was merely dreaming. The light was good, and I called the attention of my immediate neighbour to the circumstance, and he, along with other four persons, felt the chair, and confirmed the fact that the upper portion of my body was present. The chair was empty of all but my clothes. The arms, shoulders, and chest were there, but above the chair seat. I could speak, move my head and arms, and drink water, and I could also feel my feet and knees, although they were not there. All this time there came and went shapes that merely *showed themselves, and hands of various forms and sizes touched those nearest the cabinet.* I think about an hour must have passed before I first discovered my singular condition, which endured long enough for all purposes, and quite long enough for me to wonder if I would ever get my legs back again to carry me home, and this made me very nervous. That is, briefly, what happened, and I hope some one from here will send you a detailed account."

Mr. Aksakof, commenting on this letter, says :—

"As I knew the writer to be an altogether truthful person, I had no reason to distrust her statement, and I at once saw the great importance of the communication from a theoretical as well as a phenomenal point of view. . . . It will easily be realised with what impatience I awaited the arrival of the promised details, and with what satisfaction I received the three testimonies which General Poppelius was good enough to send me."

The first of these witnesses is Miss Vera Hjelt, who gives a very full description of the conditions before and during the séance, together with a detailed account of the various phenomena. With regard to the peculiar occurrence above noted, she says :—

"I observed that while waiting for a new phenomenon, which was slowly developing, the medium clasped her hands behind her head, as she had already done before the séance. While she remained in this position, I had time to fear that Mrs. d'Espérance might overstrain herself so soon after her journey, and thought that some of those seated at a distance from her might suspect this movement, and that of stretching herself, to have something to do with the manifestations. Those seated apart *might* have thought so. Those near her—never ! A few moments later her hands fell on her knees, and then I saw her feeling them, while I noticed that she grew more and more excited. I was surprised, and leaned more forward, trying as best I could to comprehend what was going on. The medium again emitted that deep sigh which indicates that something unpleasant has happened. In a few seconds more she said to Herr Seiling, 'Give me your hand.' He arose, and did so. She then said, 'Touch here.' Herr Seiling replied, 'That is singular. I see Mrs. d'Espérance, and I hear her speak, but

when I touch the chair I find it empty. She is not there; only her clothes are there !'"

The touching of the chair appeared to cause the medium acute pain ; nevertheless, she requested several persons to approach and feel for themselves—in all about five, and among them General Poppelius. The rest of this witness's testimony is a complete confirmation of Mrs. d'Espérance's statement, and readers of "LIGHT" are already acquainted with the explanation given of this extraordinary phenomenon to Mr. Aksakof by Mrs. d'Espérance's control.

"THE NEW BASIS FOR THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY."

Such a caption as the above is so suggestive of the subject with which "LIGHT" is associated, that I was attracted last Sunday to the chapel in South-place, Finsbury, where, under the auspices of the South-place Ethical Society, it was announced that a lecture would be delivered bearing the title quoted. It was somewhat of a disappointment to find that the address was based on quite different lines to those I had anticipated; in fact the word "Spiritualism" was only used once, and that merely in its academic sense. In one respect, however, the lecture had a very significant bearing upon our particular philosophy, and this must be my excuse for commenting upon it.

"The new basis for the belief in Immortality" (from the lecturer's standpoint) was the emotional and poetic philosophy into which the old dogmatic beliefs are gradually being transfused, and of which Tennyson's "In Memoriam" is the most powerful expression. To the speaker this was one of the strongest evidences of the decay of the old theologies ; but he did not in any way welcome the change from a belief in an unnatural heaven, to the hope that the real hereafter is one more in consonance with the needs and aspirations of advancing humanity. From his stand-point the persistent faith in "a better world beyond" was an evidence of the ingrained superstition of the human intellect, which continued to cling to an expiring tradition, and endeavoured to maintain the myth by clothing it in new forms. In its old presentation, the doctrine of a life beyond the grave had been a convenient means of reconciling humanity to tyranny and oppression, and of enforcing the claims of a crafty priesthood. It had diverted men's attention from the evils of this life, which they might otherwise have swept away, and enabled the wily exponents of the doctrine to enjoy the good things of the world at the expense of the credulous ones who could be lulled into quiescence by a promised happiness in another state. In its modern form, the doctrine, albeit it had assumed a more nebulous aspect, was still to be deprecated ; first, because it was a superstition that should have been outworn ; secondly, because it was an outgrowth of morbid selfishness ; and, thirdly, because it still tended to hamper the efforts of those who desired to improve the conditions of *this* life. It is needless to indicate the points upon which we are at issue with the lecturer ; they are sufficiently manifest. But none can endorse more strongly than we do, his contention that a belief in a conscious and personal immortality must rest on something very much more tangible than feeling and emotion. He is quick to observe this, as being one of the weak points in "the new basis of belief" to which he alluded. Demonstration, he contended, to be conclusive, must come through some other medium than the affections. Quite so ; Spiritualism is at one with him upon that.

The address was almost wholly destructive in its criticism, but it was far from displeasing in its impression upon me. It was another evidence of the way in which science is gradually clearing the ground. So far, we have had to deal with a hybrid mixture of materialistic dogma and distorted spirituality in the form of the conventional faith, which has hampered our efforts by presenting no definite point of attack, and obscuring the issues between pure Spiritualism and Materialism *per se*.

I was somewhat amused at the lecturer's re-statement of the subjective immortality which we may gain by living hereafter in our work and our influence upon those who come after us. This as an "immortality" is, I cannot but think, of an even more shadowy character than the old theological conception, and it is hardly more satisfactory. Perhaps it is an evidence of the fact that even the materialist yearns for an immortality of some sort !

The whole gist and tenor of the discourse under notice was this : If you once bring the idea of a life after the death of the

body into the domain of pure reason and cold logic, it is seen to be a myth, a survival of one of the many dead and gone delusions that humanity has cherished in the past. Spiritualists, having tangible demonstration of the fact of continued existence in another state of being, will regard this with a smile, but not of contempt, for many of them have passed through the same phases of thought, and have been as positive and complacent in their view as ever the author of the discourse could be. And they believe in the life beyond, not because of any dread of extinction, not because of any selfish desire for continued existence, but because they have received the same logical and objective demonstration of the fact which the lecturer demanded.

I have spoken of materialistic science as "clearing the ground" and rendering more apparent the issues between the Materialistic and the Spiritualistic schools. But I hardly anticipate any violent and long-continued conflict between the two forces. Rather I look for a gradual and harmonious growth into unity. The two phases of human thought must ultimately coalesce, for they are but the two halves of a great philosophy. When the materialist recognises that material nature is but a form, or conditioning, of the one underlying substance of the universe, and that the laws and forces he has cognised so far do not represent *all* the powers at work, much of the difficulty will be cleared away. Already he has begun to find that matter is a much greater thing than he at first supposed, that it possesses attributes, potencies, resources, with which he was not wont to associate it. He is apt to contend that he cannot accept the idea of two universals, or two eternals in nature. We, as Spiritualists, do not ask him to do so. Let him study matter long enough and he will find himself unconsciously working towards us. He will find what he calls matter merging imperceptibly into what we call spirit, and he will learn that the two, properly apprehended, are identical. It is only a question of the broadening of conceptions and the extending of ideas to their logical conclusion. And then we shall be able to join hands with him.

D. G.

EUSAPIA PALADINO.

The following account of a séance which this wonderful medium gave in Naples on Sunday, May 6th, 1894, may perhaps interest the readers of "LIGHT."

The circle consisted of Eusapia, my father, my mother, and myself, a Polish gentleman who introduced us to the medium, and the Neapolitan gentleman in whose house we met. The room was simply furnished and looked into a narrow street; a plain deal table—with an open space from which a drawer had been removed—stood in the centre. After a few minutes' conversation we began sitting. The only light in the room was a candle standing on a table in the corner near the window, which was partially closed. The wife of our host sat beside it, with matches, ready to extinguish or relight the candle. I and my father sat on either side of Eusapia, each grasping one of her hands with one of ours, the other one touching, by the little finger, the little finger of the person next to us. Almost immediately the table began to creak and then tilt backwards and forwards; it was raised considerably over a foot and remained so for several seconds, then falling heavily to the ground. A long conversation then followed in Italian with Eusapia's control, a very noisy and rather frivolous spirit called "John," who, she afterwards told me, serves as an introducer to other spirits. On the light being extinguished my father and mother and myself immediately felt ourselves touched and grasped in turn by warm hands. We also saw small lights, like fire-flies, which flashed in different parts of the room, near us, and then far away. I asked if my Uncle Walter was present, and the answer was given "Yes" in three distinct raps. The light was then lit, and on a pencil and paper being produced, I wrote automatically, "W. P. S., my dear brother, lights out, Walter."

This request was complied with, and I said, "If you are Uncle Walter, will you fetch papa's hat and put it on his head?" In a few seconds my father exclaimed, "Here it is," and we heard the sound of the hat being placed on his head. I may here mention that the hat was on a sofa in the room, not near the lady by the window, and that all the doors were locked on the inside. I then begged my uncle to kiss me, which he did three times, the medium saying in Italian, "I hear the sound of kissing." The spirit went to my father, gently stroked his moustache and head, and slapped him resoundingly on the back. He also took a sprig of heliotrope from his button-hole and

drew it across his face repeatedly, and kissed him softly. The flower was drawn over the faces of all present, and once when I caught it, it was snatched away with such force that it broke, part remaining in my hand.

The spirit of Bellini (who had been previously invited) struck several notes on the piano, and opened the top of it. The table was pushed violently against it, and when the candle was re-lit a chair stood on two legs and rocked up and down many times. The medium's skirt bulged on one side as if blown outwards.

The candle was then put out and my father's hat was taken from his head and placed on that of the Polish gentleman, who, with my mother and myself, was the only person who saw a thin but distinct hand waving in the air. Neither my father nor I ever let go of Eusapia's hands.

She then said she was tired, and we lit the light to finish the séance. After a little conversation she suddenly took my hand and held my forefinger between her finger and thumb and then drew it slowly along the white deal table; where my nail touched there was a distinct pencil mark. This was repeated several times, in full light, and with all the members of the circle looking on. It was the most remarkable phenomenon I have heard of.

I must not forget to mention that several times during the séance my mother and I experienced a feeling which I can only describe as "a horror of great darkness." It was as though a black mass passed over us, and the sensation was truly awful, causing one to cower down instinctively towards the table. I must confess we were both very much frightened.

At eleven p.m. we broke up the séance, having sat from 8.30. Eusapia, who had groaned a little and sighed very heavily now and again, seemed tired and dazed and anxious to leave, which she did shortly afterwards. We thanked her most heartily for the privileges which through her we had enjoyed, and she would take no remuneration for the séance. There are several points which materially enhance the interest of this sitting:—

(1) None of the party except ourselves knew any English, nor did the medium, who knows no language but Italian.

(2) No one but ourselves knew anything about Uncle Walter.

(3) We were a most mixed circle, three nationalities being represented, and we being unknown to the Neapolitan gentleman and his wife—as they to us.

I trust that the account of this séance may be interesting to English Spiritualists, it being, I believe, the first one given by Eusapia at which English people were present. If so, I should be glad, at a future date, to give an account of another, held in our rooms at Naples, at which only the members of our own family were present.

"WINIFRED."

Obituary.

The friends of Mrs. Charles Spring, so well known among a large circle of Spiritualists as a test medium and clairvoyante of long standing, will learn with much regret of the sad loss she has recently sustained in the passing to the higher life of her husband, Mr. Charles James Spring, in the forty-sixth year of his age, son of William Spring, of Liverpool. The cause of death was spinal paralysis, and his illness has been of a long and exceptionally trying nature. The funeral, which took place from 8, Wilkin-street, N., was conducted very quietly and in a simple unaffected way, the mourners consisting only of the widow and her young son, the aged mother, and a few sympathetic friends who had gathered round. The white flowers which so prettily adorned the coffin, were very kindly sent by a lady. Mrs. Spring has passed through a very trying time during her late husband's prolonged illness, and has now only her own exertions to depend upon to provide a livelihood for herself and her child. She is always open to accept engagements both for private and other sittings, and is at home at 8, Wilkin-street, Grafton-road, Kentish Town, every Monday to receive any friends who may care to call. It is hoped that her wonderful gifts as a medium may at this time at least ensure her the true sympathy and support which she now so urgently needs, and for which she would be more than thankful, not so much for herself as for the young child, whose entire charge has now devolved solely upon herself.—A. P.

The time is speeding on
When each shall find his own in all men's good,
And all shall work in noble brotherhood.

MOMERIE.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
ADELPHI, LONDON, W.C.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post-free to any address, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed "A.C." All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be addressed to "The Manager" and not to the Editor.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria Lane, London, and all Booksellers.

Light:

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4th, 1894.

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

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

LIFE A CAMPAIGN.

The world is often very beautiful even to the dwellers in the crowded camps of it, where so much is done to take the beauty out of it. And life is often very delightful even in those camps, which we call towns, where, again, so much is done to make life a misery. How the spirit of beauty works in Nature and in us, to counteract our ugly and soiling ways—to cover over our abominations, and to touch, as with unseen fingers of creative loveliness, the horrors of our sordid haunts and ways! What splendid skies sometimes bend over London, turning even its gloom to gold, and winning a deeper glory from its dusty haze! And what a multitude of joys, great and small, Nature extracts from even the squalid struggles of its teeming crowds!

But, with all Nature's efforts, and with all man's cleverness and suppleness in extracting pleasure from pain, nothing can shut out the fact that life, for multitudes, and by no means only for the poor, is tinged with misery: and the problem of "the origin of evil" is always resolving itself into the problem of the origin of pain.

And yet we are over-apt to magnify the miseries of life. The near is the urgent. The mood of the hour decides too much. The evil bulks largely because it hurts. Two little tears will blot out the smiling sky.

If we could calmly see and comprehend the whole, perhaps all the misery would disappear. Strike off so much for education; so much for endurance; so much for sympathy; so much for that which is inevitable and, in a way, desirable in the great struggle; so much that is working out "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory": then where were the rest?

We see the dainty moon with crescent clearly cut, or the perfect orb, with its edge without a speck: or the sun, through dimmed glass, and there is nothing to mar the perfect round. And yet we know that huge mountains in the one case, and tremendous fiery outbursts in the other, do break the tender lovely curve. Why should not this be so with life?

There are good grounds for believing that the happiness of life far outvalues its misery,—and that much of its seeming misery is either a curious element in the vast mixed cup of joy, or good in the course of evolution out of evil. Is it so vain a fancy that there are beings in God's Universe who see this and understand it? We often think with sadness of the speculation or deep belief, that our departed ones follow, with perfect knowledge, our career: and we say, "How can that be without the marring of their joy?" But what if they see the perfect

whole? What if we are to them what children are to us now? To the heart of a child the sorrows of childhood are as acute and as tragic as the griefs of later years will be,—perhaps more so. And yet we can look on almost with a smile, and kiss away the tears with as much amusement as pity; and still there is no lack of love. But we can see what the child cannot see—a little deeper, a little farther; and often know that the distress arises from an imaginary evil, or that it will lead to good. And may we not cherish the hope, or admit it as a delightful suggestion, that the mother, the father, the sister, the dear friend, in the heavenly sphere, may be able to look upon our misery and tears with even serenest souls?

But, admitting the misery—real enough both to the child and the man—why should we shrink from the really heroic thought, that life is anyhow a campaign? We have, perhaps, arrived too hastily at the opinion that God is all-powerful; or the opinion that He is all-powerful has been stretched too far. How do we know that God could have produced or that He could order a different world? Great generals have wept to see their soldiers lie on the battlefield—the ghastly price that had to be paid for the victory. Are we quite sure there is nothing corresponding to this in that mysterious Being we call God? Is He only a tremendous Force—a passionless Power? From Him, whatever He is, has come human pity, and from that hidden fountain have flowed our human tears. Must there not, then, be something answering to these in that "secret of the Lord" where He seems to be "hidden from the strife of tongues"? The tenderest little verse in the Gospels is the simple record that "Jesus wept:" and we can never cease to believe that he somehow revealed the Father—in this as in other ways. Is it not almost essential, then, to infer that God has to pay a price as well as man? and that we must rise up to the heroic thought, that we are out on the field with God on a great campaign?

When the patient but wretched Job was challenged to "curse God and die," the heroic soul flung back the cowardly temptation, and cried—"It is a foolish and impious challenge. Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and never evil?" As the good soldier would say—"Is it to be all pay and blare of trumpets and the singing of camp songs, and never a wound or a chance to die?"

Yes, and life is a campaign. We know not what the end will be; nor do we know what price will have to be paid; and sometimes we find it hard to comprehend why the General pays the price at all. But we see we are pressing on: we perceive that every defeat leads on to victory,—that Time tries all. And shall we not accept life as it is,—and the terms? Here, a soldier may have to dig in the muddy trenches; and here, one may be shot on some lonely outpost duty, with nothing over him but night and the stars: here, one may be maimed for life, and doomed to go sorrowfully, lingering, to his grave; and here, one may be so crushed with fear or heart-hunger that he may desert. But, on the whole, the campaign goes on, the enemy is pushed back, jungles and deserts are turned into fruitful fields, and The Kingdom comes. Shall we grumble at the price? shall we think it might all have been done at a lower cost? shall we fret and rebel, before we see the end? Ah no! be patient, be strong, beat down selfishness, give up that longing for a merely happy life, consent to be a soldier, enlist for the war and not for a year, be willing to pay the price, be sure you do not know all yet, but that you shall know hereafter; and then perchance the very ills of life will bring their own "exceeding great reward."

CAVENDISH ROOMS FUND.—The committee desire that all collecting cards and subscriptions be sent in at once, so that they may decide about the Cavendish Rooms as soon as possible. A list will be published in "LIGHT."—ALFRED J. SUTTON, Hon. Treasurer, 12, Upper Woburn-place, W.C.

THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

BY OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.

MR. J. J. MORSE.

(Continued from page 356.)

A TALK WITH TIEN AND THE STROLLING PLAYER.

Mr. Morse is not long in getting under control. A closing of eyes, a facial twitch or two, a futile and not well-directed attempt to put his feet in his pocket; and the thing is done. It is all so rapid and apparently easy that the gruff "Well?" of the Strolling Player, following close upon the medium's own last words, comes as a surprise.

"Ah, so you are the Strolling Player. Well, I am glad to meet you, though I confess I was rather expecting Tien first."

"You see the sweeper usually comes first, and that is why I am here. I am, as it were, the pilot engine before the Royal train."

"They tell me you are, too, the humorist of the establishment."

"Well, I am the philosopher's other end. That may be susceptible of an interesting explanation. They say it takes a wise man to make a fool. I am the fool. You may judge of the wise man when I have done."

"Your coming reminds me that I read in a recent book the other day, a serious claim that the sense of humour is an essentially religious faculty, without which a true understanding of life and a right relationship to our fellows would be impossible."

"The monkey and the parrot vindicate the paragraph. My definition of humour would be, that it is the grease on the axles of existence that prevents friction and keeps the wheels in running order."

"No doubt there is a free exercise of humour on your side as well as here. There are many, you know, who would throw up their hands in holy horror at the idea of a jest or a hearty laugh on your side."

"If I could not enjoy a laugh here, friend, I would rather spend my time elsewhere. As Nature smiles in the spring, broadens to laughter in the summer, and holds her fat sides with joy in autumn, I do not see that what is good enough for one world should not be good enough for the other."

"What is your particular mission here and wherein does it differ from that of your fellow worker, Tien?"

"Well, perhaps I might put it this way. Two men are painters, one possesses the delicacy of organisation, touch, and conception, that makes a Rubens; another paints houses. I am the house painter; practical, homely, but necessary, and possessing a certain amount of artistic perception that is requisite even in a house painter. Therefore, the difference in the mission may lie rather in the men than in their mission, each having the same aim, to do good when and wherever possible."

"Am I right in understanding from what he has told me that you take a more personal interest in your medium, his family and affairs, than Tien, whose interest is more in the work carried on through Mr. Morse's agency?"

"We both take interest, but I execute. Tien occupies the supreme position, and I, being able to come closer to the medium's physical condition, occupy the position, so to speak, of demonstrator. So far as the practical concerns of material life go I have a free hand so long as what I do does not in any way imperil or interfere with the work that the others are doing."

"How long have you been on your side?"

"Nearly sixty years; and it was about twenty-two years ago that I was brought in contact with the medium through Tien, to whom I owe an unbounded debt of gratitude. My condition in the spiritual world was anything but pleasant when I first entered it. Family troubles,

bereavements, misunderstandings, leading to a very unfortunate and uncomfortable exit from the stage of this life, stranded me here in a helpless and hopeless, disgusted and utterly wearied, state. In the bitterness of my humiliation and grief Tien came upon the scene, and, as you would say in this world, put a new heart into me, helped me to rise above myself, and finding, as he said, that I had some good stuff in me, suggested that I should co-operate in the work that he and some others were engaged in. I acted upon that suggestion, and have every reason to be thankful for it, for through it, I became so unfolded or developed that all that I thought had been lost for ever ultimately came back. Not wearing my heart upon my sleeve for daws to peck at, there is no need to give the special details. . . . By the way," continued the Strolling Player, in more cheerful tone, "you must not omit to ask me the stock question, am I married?"

"Candidly, it never occurred to me to put that."

"Why not? Well, I am. I found in the world beyond what circumstances in the mortal life deprived me of, and she who I thought was gone out of my existence for ever is now my wedded companion here. There is a hint for hopeless lovers. But I doubt if I should have found her anything like so soon if it had not been for the effects of Tien's good influence upon me."

"You are married, I take it, in the spiritual sense, not in the sense that we understand marriage here?"

"That is so. Marriage expresses itself with us in the affections, sympathies, and affinities."

"Your remarks bring to mind your medium's marriage, which is understood to have been brought about by spirit influence. Did you have any hand in that?"

"No, but I have been the victim of the family ever since the family existed. I do not deal in matches. You know the old saying about their being made up above and dipped in brimstone down below. Beautiful boxes often, but vile matches that sputter and stink when they are struck. The only advantage about it is that brimstone is a fumigator and does have the effect of purifying the matrimonial atmosphere."

"You happily mated, and talking like this? For shame!"

"It is true nevertheless. Well, to revert to the medium. The sequence of our operations led to the marriage, and that marriage produced and combined the necessary elements for the work that was in hand. I have, as I say, been superintendent, so to speak, of the family as long as it has been one, and advised them in affairs both of health and of business. When they have acted on my advice they have had no reason to regret it; and several times they have acted without asking my advice and have been sorry for it."

"By the way, in the appearances of your medium at the meetings of the Alliance I notice that you are conspicuous by your absence. Tien makes all the running. How is that?"

"I don't think they would appreciate me at Duke-street, but, as a matter of fact, I am always there, and usually contrive to work in a little bit on the quiet. I look up the illustrations for Tien to use, and the jests and humorous bits are nearly all put in by me."

"Do you mean that you supply Tien with humorous ideas to put into the medium's mouth as his own?"

"No, I mean that I actually give them myself. The change is effected so rapidly and quietly that the difference is not noticed, and you think it is Tien speaking when it is actually I. Let me add that this is not done merely for the sake of being funny, or of amusing the audience, or of relieving the strain of a philosophical discourse, but to bring into operation other portions of the medium's brain, and so allow certain portions which might be overwrought to get a rest."

[August 4, 1891.]

"Oh, that's it?"

"Yes; you see, in the matter of humour I play the part somewhat of the servant with the poker, who stirs up the fire now and then, oxygenates it, gives it new power. It requires a good deal of preliminary work sometimes to get things into proper order. The delivery of a lecture or the answering of a series of questions does not begin and end when we have put the medium to sleep and woke him up. He has to be looked after for ten or twelve hours at least, various influences brought to bear upon him, irritations, mental and bodily, soothed down and subjugated. One peculiar effect appears to be the very opposite of the intention. He will very frequently be frightfully irritable and nervous, so that he can scarcely speak civilly to anybody, and he always knows when that feeling comes over him that he is going to have a good meeting. When we have been filling him up, blowing out the balloon, as it were, it is sometimes necessary, after the meeting is over and the work done, to maintain for several hours the exhilaration that has been set up, because, if it was allowed to suddenly cease, the reaction would be so great that he would be prostrated. Often I am on duty long after he is asleep, until the nervous equilibrium is restored and the physical forces have got back into the accustomed channels. Oh, you may believe me, it is no sinecure to be bellows-blower to a medium. It requires a great deal of attention, and, if I may use the word, affectional thoughtfulness, because all these things work so much upon the laws of the affections, and sympathies, and affinities."

"Are the whole of the band occupied at the same time on such occasions?"

"No; Tien and I are usually alone engaged at the time of delivery of the addresses. The arrangements are generally made by various members of the band, either individually or collectively; but the addresses are all delivered by Tien. He possesses a pretty capacious intellect, and is equal to most emergencies; and when questions are asked the lot of us are ready to help. As a rule we can see what is coming on, and it is very seldom we get stumped."

"But you do sometimes?"

"We do, but if at any time we get floored, we say so. It may happen that a question is sprung on us that we can't at the moment tackle; and in such a case it is no good dodging about and darkening counsel with words, because that is a waste of power. Well, now I must make way for the philosopher. You may mention that I was literally a strolling player in this world, so that the assumption of the title is no mere fancy, and as to my occupation now, I would not have it depreciated. Fun is to fact what glue is to wood; an atom of fun will stick a gem of fact in the brain of a man when two hours' philosophical disquisition would drive every idea out of his head. People remember the joke, and the association of ideas brings the fact up. Good night."

TIEN.

The change to Tien is very marked. The Strolling Player has a gruff and at times almost surly note, though two or three minutes' conversation quickly shows that the rather rough exterior covers a really kindly disposition. Tien is soft, suave, perfectly courteous, and grave to austerity. It is probable that he never uttered a joke in his life, either here or there; doubtful if he ever conceived one.

"I am here, my friend. What would you have?"

"Well, Tien, I want a good deal if I can get it. Lest you tell me too much to begin with and, in consequence, not enough to finish up with, let me say that my questions cover a rather wide field, and will range from the circumstances connected with your taking up your work on this plane, the constitution and methods of the band of which you are leader, your selection of this medium, and the means you employ of demonstrating through him, to the

circumstances connected with the general display of spirit activity in the physical work, the present manifestation, and the expected developments of the future. To begin, then, when was it that your attention was first directed to work on this plane?"

"I have been a little over three hundred years in the spirit world, and it is rather more than sixty years ago that I became interested in the opening up of communication with this world. The possibility of such communication had been for some time agitating the minds of certain advanced spirits, mostly Americans, and including Benjamin Franklin."

"But surely spirit communication with this world has been a continuous fact for all time and on all sides? How then should the possibility of it need to be discussed among you?"

"It has not been by any means continuous. It has been intermittent and periodic. There was, indeed, never any doubt of the matter in my own mind from my experiences in my own country. Of course, somewhere and in places, there has been continuous manifestation of a sort, but not to the marked extent that has characterised the revival, if one may so put it, known to you as modern Spiritualism."

"What, then, was it that led to your taking active interest in the matter?"

"The circumstance that I have alluded to was largely concerned with my coming into contact with European spirits more intimately at the time, and just previous to the time mentioned, than had been the case hitherto. One does not out-grow the boundaries of national prejudices and proclivities, so to speak, immediately on entering the spirit world. Gathering from my acquaintances that there was a growing tide of materialism and dissatisfaction with accepted teachings in this world, and that disbelief in the immortality of the soul was rapidly spreading among the people who considered themselves the most religious and most civilised on this planet, I naturally felt a desire for further information, and, coming in contact thereby with the active spirits referred to, I was led to undertake my present mission. You may say, in fact, that the circumstance was accidental."

"Your working then, I take it, is more a voluntary act than in the ordinary sense an appointed duty?"

"Purely voluntary. Everything in our world, as in yours, moves in obedience to divine law, and every upward step is a divine manifestation; but there is no direct command."

"Do you derive personal benefit, direct or indirect, from your work?"

"Certainly; in both directions. The accomplishment of any purpose necessarily affects the individual who accomplishes it, and if that purpose is beneficent and for the good and welfare of his fellow creatures, the reaction of love and sympathy that flows to the labourer must necessarily benefit him. The one thing essential is to avoid labouring for that reward. In such a case the effort would defeat itself and become Dead Sea fruit turning to ashes in the mouth."

"Did you select your medium from others, and for what principal qualities did you find him suited to your purpose?"

"When I had thoroughly entered into the plan that was unfolded at the congress of spirits assembled to discuss the question, I determined to select an instrument that would serve the purpose in view; but certain serious difficulties at once obtruded themselves. The principal was the difference of my nationality from that of the people I wished to work for, and if you are at all familiar with the nation to which I belonged, you would readily perceive that those differences are most marked alike in habit, in thought, and conception. It was necessary that I should

mentally enter into the spirit of what appertained to the English people—their language, history, customs, thought, idiosyncrasies, religious, moral, and social; and while, of course, the grasping of such things was much easier to me than it would be in the case of a foreigner coming for the first time to your shores, yet it entailed a certain amount of labour. While, if one may express it so, an English spirit would have found little or no difficulty in obtaining an English psychic or medium for his purpose, it was by no means an easy matter with myself, because, in spite of my long existence in the spiritual world, many of my national characteristics still appertained to me. These were positive psychical facts that clung to the personality and that were not to be eliminated except by slow degrees. I came to the conclusion, having, as I have said, some previous knowledge of these matters from my own people, that the best way for me to go to work would be, instead of selecting a medium, to actually build one up, so to speak, for my own use. Arriving at this decision I instituted a search for a woman who would bring a child into the world, whose conditions were such that I could psychically manipulate. She was found in the mother of our medium; and for some months prior to his birth my attention, and that of those associated with me in the matter, were directed to bringing his psychical nature into harmonious relationship with the conditions that we brought.

"So that your medium was both born and made?"

"That is precisely the case."

(To be continued.)

NOTES FROM A PRIVATE DIARY.

COMMUNICATED BY DR. H. M. HUMPHREY.

(MESSAGES WRITTEN AUTOMATICALLY THROUGH THE HANDS OF A LADY, AND EXPRESSING SENTIMENTS STRIKINGLY AT VARIANCE WITH THOSE ENTERTAINED BY THE LADY HERSELF, SHE BEING, AS ALREADY STATED, AN AGNOSTIC.)

(Continued from page 341.)

July 15th, 1893.—"Tranquillise yourself before we can write through you. Tranquillity is the gift of God, which most of you lose in the height and complexity of the civilisation of to-day. Tranquillity can never come again in this rivalry of brain and hand, but you can strive to" (the above was in a delicate hand and the words run together; the sentence was finished in the bold hand of "Custodian") "acquire a new tranquillity out of the existing order of things, and, by adapting brain and handwork to your physical capacities, derive a certain amount of calm; and by an absolute faith in God and His works also acquire a superiority over the worries and the nervous cares, which wear you out, and which remove you from the state of grace and nature."

It was asked if it were possible that such messages as we had been receiving could be given through an unlettered medium, whereupon "Worker" wrote:—

"I do assure you that it is in many ways vastly more easy for us to produce startling phenomena through a slow and heavy brain. It is in such case impossible for the medium's own brain to suggest any idea before our own ideas have taken the upper hand. The best medium we could wish for tests would be a simple, healthy, trusting peasant, whose interest would be sufficient to allow us to produce, through him, instruction and lessons far above his capacity of production, and even understanding."

Something was said about spirits writing in a language unknown to the medium, and a poem in Arabic was spoken of:—

"As for a poem in Arabic, it would not be the simplest thing in the world for any of you to attract an Arab spirit sufficiently for him to control you. Would it not be rather unnatural for you to expect a person, about whose country, and about whose life, and about whose work you were ignorant, to come at your simple call, and give time and patience and energy enough to control one of a company of strangers sufficiently to reproduce a poem, even if he still knew a poem, by heart? And your medium!! What is there about her to attract an

Arab, and to find her any satisfaction or content or benefit in his strange words and in his uncouth ideas?"

July 21st.—I had long wished for some message from my daughter, and at last a spirit, giving the name "Armida," and coming in her place, controlled the medium. The handwriting was small and delicate, and entirely different in its character from the others:—

"I am one who sought pleasure, and found indifference; who, out of indifference, was brought to despair; who, in despair, saw burning dimly the light of love, of universal love, and thus from despair was brought to content. I am one who, in content, lost selfishness, and in the thought of others, found happiness; who in others' joy found the pleasure so long and passionately sought for, and acquired at last without the seeking."

Your name?

"Armida of the sun-lit prairies. I have lain on the earth, in that thick grass, and watched every work of nature, from the springing into life of the germ, to the marvellous birth and life of the insect and the worm, and in all this I perceived, later, the hand of a personal Creator; and in this strengthened perception, become clear and fixed, I now live. Oh! watch and study and perceive all the traces of His intervention and direction.—'Armida.'"

We asked to be told something of her earth-life:—

"I did not know you. I lived in the west of your homeland. I am not a well-educated person, but I think. You who think that you know and love the beautiful, inanimate works of Him, have you ever spent days and nights alone, in the solitude, and, alone, watched, night after night, the vaulted arch of heaven? Have you learned to watch in the rustling leaves, in the shadows of approaching night, in the foam of mountain cataracts, for a trace, and for a voice and message from Him, in the coming of one of His spirit messengers? Until you have learned in all His works, to be ready, on the moment, to perceive the voice of His messengers, you have not known the true beauty of nature.—'Armida,' who talked with the spirits of the woods and the foot-hills. I was by one parent an Indian; I was a Choctaw Indian, but I was brought east in my girlhood."

The question was asked whether God intervened in the affairs of men, when came the following from "Worker":—

"I would say that this young woman used, before a critical audience, the word 'intervention' in the works of nature rather unguardedly. I do not consider that, in the works of nature, God does interfere with the eternal movement and design and the stupendous regularity of their organisation and working; but, in the works of man, where the soul of man, his free will, and his designs come into question, I do consider that God intervenes often, and with more or less directness. Take, as example, the innumerable cases of direct answer to prayer, to which, perhaps, each of you can bear witness, where the hearts of men have been turned and changed, without apparent reason or cause. Take the many miraculous cures, the thousand escapes from danger and disaster, the warnings, the advice, the sight; in all these comes the intervention of God.—'Worker.'"

Why are certain people saved from, and others allowed to succumb to, disaster?

"Old-fashioned faith, enough to remove mountains, has a good deal still to do with the question; but, then, God only intervenes when, in His great wisdom, He sees fit, and it is always intervention, not the rule. Do not fancy that I believe the Almighty, the abstract of all good and mercy, does personally interfere often with the law of events which follow causes, but through the immense aid of His myriads of helpers, to all of whom is entrusted more or less power, comes constant help and intervention. I am not saying what I believe and think, because I know in how far I can help and guide and intervene in your affairs.—'Worker.'"

In what way can one make himself most useful in this life?

"It seems to me that the question is so simple that you are yourself very well able to answer it. He who best learns to serve his fellow-men, whether in the professions, or in any capacity; he who succeeds the best in bringing himself into a useful and worthy touch with the greatest numbers during life, certainly will be far on the way towards filling his place in this sphere, where the prospects and the numbers and the possibilities are so infinitely multiplied. One most important thing is spiritual development. This is a grand help to a speedy usefulness here; to crush out the lower instincts, and perfect all the higher and nobler thoughts. In this I was grievously

retarded and am still. On earth I was involuntarily kept in contact with many trifling and many unprofitable things, and it has been a hard fight to withdraw from them.—'Worker.' "

August 4th.—"I would be pleased to give you all messages from loved ones, but I cannot; first, because, in certain cases your medium prevents; and second, because in others the connection is so indirect that to attempt a distinct message would be fatal. Never mind, friends! Be assured that life and love rest beyond the grave; that life and love are eternal, and never die; that those who loved you, love you still, and more; that those who, on earth, had not enough of the love of those dear ones, will find here continued love, and many, many others to give their love. Be assured that over all watches Eternal Goodness; be assured that the destiny of man is to live eternally, and to pass all hindrances, and to be happy at last. In the name of Him, peace be with you.—'Custodian.' "

(To be continued.)

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 promoting views that may elicit discussion.]

Spirit Photographs.

SIR,—In the last number of "Borderland," Mr. Stead reproduces a spirit photograph taken from Mr. Glendinning's work, "The Veil Uplifted." Yesterday I was dining with some friends here, and a photograph on the wall caught my eye. I inquired from my host, and he told me the photo was from a picture by a German artist. I may mention that the head is exactly the same as Mr. Daguid's Cyrian Priestess.

A few months ago a friend of mine gave me a lovely little pencil drawing of the same, from "The Veil Uplifted." Therefore the design was at once recognised by me. Nevertheless, I was puzzled by a certain "want of drawing," both in the pencil sketch, though it was very lovely, and in Mr. Stead's reproduction; a peculiarity which invariably shows the difference between original and copied work. The photo in my friend's house is from the real picture, and the drawing is correct. I do not say that the alleged spirit photograph was not one, but I do say this, that, like all such "spiritual" (i) productions, falsehood is at the bottom of them.

If, however, beginners in the sacred sciences will ignore all past experience, and imagine that their individual faculties will reveal the mysteries for the first time, and on "modern and true lines," they will be very much mistaken, and they will find themselves, like others before them in similar circumstances, the *spoils*, not the masters, of the astral world they invoke. Photography itself is by no means a science to be investigated only on the outer, and it does contain arcana; but "the veil uplifted" only shows another one not uplifted.

Edinburgh.

ISABEL DE STEIGER, F.T.S.

Stainton Moses' Guides.

SIR,—I deeply regret that any "friend of Stainton Moses" should have been wounded in his feelings by any expression employed by me in "Old Diary Leaves." My affection for our departed friend is so sincere that I feel bound by a common tie of sympathy for every one whom he may have regarded as a friend. Your correspondent protests in last week's "LIGHT" against my applying the word "lies" to explanations given to the Speer circle of the scientific rationale of "fairy bells." I might, undoubtedly, have employed a more euphemistic expression in denying the validity of the explanation given by an intelligence calling itself Franklin, but I used the first one which came to my mind, without the least malice or thought of offering an insult to the Speer circle, or Spiritualists in general. The explanation of the "fairy bells" I thought insufficient and absurd, and instead of ascribing it to Franklin, I thought of it as proceeding from one of those evil spirits, or "adversaries," with which Stainton Moses was too often pestered, and which in various private letters to myself he described as putting him into a "veritable hell." In fact, there are passages in his correspondence with myself which are pathetic and tragical in their tone, when treating of this subject. I have always meant, in writing out the early story of the Theosophical Society, to use the language of courtesy and strict impartiality, and since I find I have, inadvertently, hurt the feelings of a friend of my dear friend of many years' standing, I can only offer my apologies, and state that the word complained of will be expunged from my book when it appears.

H. S. OLCOCK.

Theosophical Criticism.

[August 4, 1894.]

SIR,—"A Friend of Stainton Moses" is justified in drawing attention to the offensive remarks of Colonel Olcott, as published in a previous issue. This kind of criticism is far too prevalent among Theosophists. Spiritualism has been held up to scorn and ridicule; Spiritualists are treated with a good deal of contempt; and lastly, reports of high-toned and well-evidenced phenomena are subjected to adverse and most unneccessary disparagement.

This is hardly to be expected to happen so frequently among the advocates of "Brotherhood." The links which bind us together rather than foster any approach between Spiritualists and Theosophists. Let us, as advanced societies in this sublime investigation, at least be tolerant. The "debatable land" is still debatable, and will for ever continue so to earthly senses; it would be our greatest sign of weakness to dogmatise and supply the place of the incomprehensible with theories. So of spirit communications; we are urged to supply pure conditions and gauge the truth and quality of what we receive according to the height and depth of our aspirations.

The "fairy bells" of the Speer circle were explained by spirits active in their production, and if the information given does not commend itself to Colonel Olcott and others, a more courteous reference would have been better than that of "him." Canterbury.

A. F. COLBORNE.

Letters from "the Masters."

SIR,—There is one point in Mrs. Besant's statement on the *fiasco* brought about by her and Colonel Olcott which should not be allowed to pass without comment. She speaks of certain letters as given to her by Mr. Judge, apparently without being aware that she is saying anything new or startling. And yet I venture to say that to those who remember the sensational announcement at the Hall of Science, and the subsequent correspondence in the "Daily Chronicle," her statement put the matter in a totally new light. All those with whom I discussed the subject at the time understood equally with myself that Mrs. Besant claimed to have received communications from "Mahatmas" in some supra-normal way. It was this, and this alone, which aroused our interest. If Mrs. Besant had said that she had received letters from Mr. Judge which appeared to her to be in the handwriting she had learned to recognise as that of "the Masters," we should have felt no interest in such a statement. Having come to the conclusion (which I believe to be the only possible one when the evidence is calmly weighed) that the charge of forgery had been fully made out against Madame Blavatsky, the fact of another person (already under strong suspicion) having apparently taken up the same business would not have presented itself to me as matter for very serious consideration. But the position was this: Mrs. Besant had stated (or I supposed she had stated) that letters had been received by her in some unspecified supra-normal manner. If Mrs. Besant were speaking the truth, which her past life would incline one to believe, either there were beings in existence who could transmit letters in the way alleged, or Mrs. Besant had been tricked. I am perfectly certain that if the editor of the "Daily Chronicle" and his readers had not taken this view, the yards of correspondence which appeared in that journal would never have been printed.

I am not prepared to say that Mrs. Besant actually claimed to have received the letters by other than ordinary means, but she certainly never said anything to remove the belief that she was making this claim, though she must have seen how widespread it was. One statement she did make was distinctly of a kind to foster the erroneous notion. On being asked how she received the letters, she replied (I quote from memory): "Letters can be received in various ways." If Mrs. Besant had intended to convey the impression that they were received in some occult way which she did not care to reveal, she could have chosen no better words for the purpose. Some of us wondered at the time why the Theosophists did not imitate the Spiritualists, and submit their facts to the committee of investigation which was so loudly and so reasonably demanded. With every desire to be charitable, it is difficult, in the light of what is now revealed, to resist the conclusion that the Theosophic leaders were conscious that the public had been put on the wrong scent (very likely unintentionally), and that they had not the moral courage to face the ridicule which would have been poured on them had these much-vaunted letters been traced to Mr. Judge. The subject being no longer matter of

general discussion, the truth can be told without fear of anything worse than some comments by those few who do not forget to-day what they read yesterday.

We may all learn a very valuable lesson from this case, and that is, to attach no value to reports of the marvellous unless those who report are prepared to disclose *all* the facts.

F. W. READ.

Advice Wanted.

SIR,—A friend of mine has recently begun the study of Spiritualism and finds that she has writing and drawing powers, but is troubled by the rough way in which her arm is used. It becomes convulsed, the muscles hard and stiff, and such force runs down the arm that it hurts her for a long while after she has stopped sitting; while the point of the pencil is constantly broken by the force used; once it was broken in half.

Can your readers give any advice how to prevent the occurrence of these things and tell her how often and how long she should sit?

She is quite young and very strong and healthy in mind and body, but has not anyone to whom she can apply for advice.

M.

"In Perplexity."

SIR,—I beg to tender my sincere thanks to Mr. Bevan Harris for the valuable assistance rendered to the "Perplexed One" at Brighton. Acting on his advice I called upon one of the ladies he mentioned, who not only gave me an interview, answering my numerous questions, and giving me much useful advice, but also gave me the much-desired permission to attend a séance. By such an experienced Spiritualist as Mr. Bevan Harris it is needless to say that my perplexities were at once cleared away, and I cannot thank him sufficiently for the kindness shown for thus opening the way of the one in perplexity.

Brighton.

FRANK DUNSTON.

"An Ancient Egyptian Heretical Pharaoh."

SIR,—Mr. William Oxley's interesting article on "An Ancient Egyptian Heretical Pharaoh," which appeared in "LIGHT," July 21st, contains a few inaccuracies which I should be glad if you would permit me to point out.

The question of names is doubtless a comparatively trifling one, yet even in trifles it is better to be accurate if possible. Mr. Oxley, unfortunately, has misspelt nearly every Egyptian proper name he has introduced in the article. Thus "Tell-el-Amarna" should properly be "Tel el-Amarna" [Sayce, "The Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments," note, p. 47]. Instead of "Amenoph" it would be preferable to write Amenhotep or Amenhetpu. The fourth king of that name called himself not "Akenhaten," but Akhenaten, or Khuenaten, that is to say, Splendour of Aten: Akenhaten is nonsense. The usual name of the city which Khuenaten founded was Khutaten or Khutenaten, not "Khuenaten." [Brugsch, "Geogr. In." I Taf. L., Nos. 1,344, 1,345.] The astonishing form "Hor Rhuto" is presumably a misprint for Hor [or Heru] Khuti.

A more serious error is the mistranslation of the title *ankh em maat*, which Khuenaten assumed. Mr. Oxley quotes a long passage from Professor Petrie, in which it is rendered by "Living in the Truth," and a somewhat too enthusiastic view is taken of the king's character on the strength of this phrase. *Maat*, however, really signifies "law," and *ankh em maat* should be translated, "Whose essence is law," that is to say, "who is unchangeable." It is properly an epithet of the immortal gods. [Renouf, "Hibbert Lectures," pp. 119-121].

It is taking altogether too favourable a view of Khuenaten's character to say that the monuments of his reign are replete with the usual Egyptian fulsomeness and flattery, "which would only be tolerated by the king in accommodation to the usages of the country." It is generally agreed that sculptures in the tombs of this period exhibit an even greater spirit of servility towards the king than was usual among the Egyptians, and we cannot imagine that this was done in opposition to the will of Khuenaten himself. [See Wilkinson, "Murray's Egypt," 1858, p. 293].

Finally, Mr. Oxley can hardly be said to give a satisfactory account of the Egyptian religion or of Khuenaten's attitude towards it. To say that "Ammon Raism was the State religion," is extremely misleading. The State religion was a polytheism, which included Amen, Ptehu, Tmu, and many other gods, all of whom enjoyed a local worship in some district or other, and the most important of whom enjoyed, in

addition, a general or national worship. The "heresy," of which Khuenaten was guilty, appears to have consisted in the undue importance which he attached to the worship of Aten, who, before the time of his father, Amenhetpu III., had been a deity of very little note; and in the gross intolerance which he displayed towards the worship of many of the other gods. The question has been discussed by Mr. F. W. Read and myself, in an article on "An Inscription of Khuenaten," which appeared in the "Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology" for February, 1893.

ALFRED C. BRYANT, B.A.

238, Northumberland Park, Tottenham.

"Intercourse with the Universal."

SIR,—The ultimate proof of the question raised by "Rejected" must consist either in individual experience or perception. Neither of these can be presented by us to each other.

But I can refer him to an illustration as to the correctness of my theories, *i.e.*, the experiences recounted by "Noelle" (p. 299), with whom I have not the pleasure of being acquainted.

Unless modes of relation (perception) with these inner aspects of the Universe were present in man, it is evident that such experiences could not occur. But here we have a living person in relation with the state into which human beings have passed, through the portal of death; showing the identity of the principle relating them, and that it exists in human persons on the one hand, and in disembodied persons on the other. Many of these disembodied persons have been known previously as embodied persons, and are now found to have their existence in an inner state of the Universe, with which an inner degree of human perception is in relation.

The query raised is thus answered by illustration.

PARSEH-FAL.

Spiritualism at the Pioneer Club.

SIR,—I was present at the recent debate on Spiritualism kindly opened by Mr. J. Page Hopps at the Pioneer Club, on the question, "Is Spiritualism worth investigating?" I had thought beforehand that it was, perhaps, just a little late in the day to raise this question, because a matter which is commanding the attention of eminent men all over the world can hardly be beneath the notice of any community of English ladies. The point rather is, I should have said, "How many among us are ready and fit for it?" Well, the discussion which followed Mr. Hopps's excellent address was chiefly remarkable for the reluctance displayed by these self-constituted "Pioneers" to break fresh ground. One of the number boldly proclaimed her fear of the possible dangers; and, to judge by the approbation bestowed upon her remarks, she expressed the feeling of the majority. If fear of possible danger had always influenced men's actions, there would never have been such a thing as a "Pioneer" in existence. A little experience of momentous interest which Mr. Hopps related to us, and which took place in his own study and under strictest test conditions, evoked only titters from many! With scarcely an exception, the keynote sounded was one of doubt and misgiving. A gratifying exception was that of a lady, not a member of the club, who spoke from her heart of the blessedness of communion as known to her.

The question is no longer, "Do these phenomena occur?" but simply, "How are they produced?" The theory of "subliminal consciousness" is the only rival in the field, and that is acknowledged by its projectors to cover only *some* of the facts. The idea that we practise deception *upon* ourselves by ourselves, in a way no one can explain or understand, does not very easily recommend itself to any but those who seek to escape at any cost from accepting the hypothesis of the Spiritualist. Nevertheless, the suggestion has been very fruitful. It has made room for the thin end of the wedge, and denotes a "change of front" among men of science.

It was urged by one speaker that she had never heard of any communication being received that was worth having! At the close of the meeting I inquired of this lady whether she had ever read any of the works of the late Mr. Stainton Moses. "No, I have not," she replied. "Who is he?" Comment is superfluous. The same incompetence was exhibited by a gentleman who, thinking to give Mr. Hopps a veritable "poser," inquired if "to the lecturer's knowledge a phenomenon had ever been witnessed by more than one person at a time?" Happily Mr. Hopps's patience and good humour rose to the occasion.

I could have said with Mrs. Crowe: "I confess it makes me sorrowful when I hear men laughing, scorning, and denying

their birthright, and I cannot but grieve to think how closely and heavily their clay must be wrapped about them, and how the external and sensuous life must have prevailed over the internal, when no gleam from within breaks through to show them that these things are true." The words of "Imperator," again, would not have been amiss: "Be not too eager. If anything seems new and strange to you, do not therefore reject it. Estimate it according to your light, and, if need be, put it aside to wait for further enlightenment. To the honest and true heart all else will come in God's time. In the end you will arrive at a plane of knowledge when much that now seems so new and strange will be revealed and explained. Only keep before you the fact that there is much that is new and true of which you know nothing; many fresh truths to be learned, many old errors to be dissipated. Watch and pray."

West Dulwich.

"BIDSTON."

The Divining Rod.

SIR,—*"LIGHT"* of May 5th, page 211, calls attention to the successful use of the hazel twig in Essex. It is a subject which has much interested me in connection with psychical reflection and study. I know it has proved very useful in Australia, and of course we all know that its use is no new science in Western countries; but why a hazel or willow twig? and how does it act? If everybody went about with hazel or willow twigs, how many would get the same result? Very few, I venture to think, for probably very few are water mediums, or water witches or wizards (?). I look upon the hazel twig as simply a means to an end, just as planchette, and table rapping, and automatic handwriting, &c., &c., are a necessary means of communication between spirits, disembodied and embodied. The spirit knows where the water is and causes the twig to bend. It has nothing to do with the action of water or the component parts of the twig, in my opinion. If a far greater number of persons would try it, we might find that there are more water mediums in existence than we imagine at present, just as there are far more persons capable of automatic handwriting in existence than we have the least idea of. Mr. Stead's attendant spirit "Julia," contends this, and no doubt it is so. By the way, perhaps Mr. Stead will ask her about the action of the hazel twig, and let us know how she explains it.

Touching automatic writing, it is well known in China, but is chiefly effected by means of a stick on sand.

Shanghai, China.

A. D.

June 18th, 1894.

"Colonel Olcott's Judgment."

SIR,—Nobody can blame *"LIGHT"* for want of fairness. Judging from some of the best of its writings, I feel that the publicity it accords to matters, inseparable from the teachings of Theosophy, is in accordance with the true interests of Spiritualism, certainly as it has been treated by such inquirers as Stainton Moses, "Questor Vitæ," and men whose intellect emancipates them from all sort of partisanship. To my mind the best teachers are those who, seeking to learn, gain pure authority, potent, persuasive, free from outrage of cane, cap, and gown.

For years past I have been an attentive observer of Theosophy, but I have never felt myself more moved towards its study than I am after reading Colonel Olcott's judgment, summarised at page 357 of last week's *"LIGHT."* It is a declaration of rights that must come home to the heart of all of us who care for freedom more than anything else; and in placing his foot on the neck of dogma Colonel Olcott's sound sense has done more to secure a fair hearing for a great cause than the oceans of talk and libraries of literature which have hitherto dallied with divine simplicity.

Mrs. Besant's utterance, too, carries its lesson to her and to all of us. "I in turn misled the public" is a confession of great value. There has been too much misleading about the Mahatmas and their writings. So far back as September, 1891, in a letter which I wrote to *"LIGHT,"* headed "Mrs. Besant's Letters," and in other communications, I have pointed out that the mere receipt of letters purporting to come from Mahatmas, even though they may be received by what is, or is thought to be, occult agency, is not proof that they were written by Mahatmas. There are people in India, and elsewhere too, who can send letters occultly. I have seen "the well known script" Mrs. Besant speaks of. The first time I saw it I became aware that it was a sort of writing I have seen times innumerable in India, written in a sort of flimsy that petition writers in the South of India greatly use. I thought then, and I think now, that the missives I have seen were much better understood by me than I fear Mahatmas ever will be. I do not mean to say that I deny the existence of the Masters. I am rather inclined to believe in the Brotherhood. I cannot reject Colonel Olcott's plain statement of the fact that he knows of the exist-

ence of the Masters. Nor do I cast doubt upon Mrs. Besant's assurances. I daresay that she has now proof that the Masters have communicated with her. Her conduct inspires confidence. Where are there anywhere two souls whose lives command trust more than the doings of Olcott and Besant? And yet I feel of them have been taught so much, at least, of distrustfulness that they are most likely to be wrong when they are cocksure. Colonel Olcott in the last, and I think the best, of his utterances contradicts Mrs. Besant's teaching, for she once wrote: "There be no Masters, the Theosophical Society is an absurdity and there is no use in keeping it up. But if there are Masters and H. P. B. is their messenger, and the Theosophical Society their foundation, the Theosophical Society and H. P. B. cannot be separated before the world." Still Colonel Olcott assures us: "Nobody, for example, knows better than myself the fact of the existence of the Masters, yet I would resign my office hesitatingly if the constitution were amended so as to erect such a belief into a dogma."

So at last it comes to this, as indeed it has been from the beginning for those who are not cocksure, that self-questioning and conduct are theosophically of much more importance than beliefs resting on self-importance, and the error of believing without proof.

July 29th, 1894.

GILBERT ELLIOT, F.T.S.

SOCIETY WORK.

YORK.—Miss Florence Marryat will give two lectures in York in October next.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday evening Messrs Long, Davey, and Beel occupied the time at our disposal, and Miss May Mackay recited "The Monk's Vision" with good effect. Sunday next, a spirit circle at 6.30 p.m.—CHARLES M. PAYNE, Hon. Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Spring's controls gave us an address upon "Peace and Love," followed by successful psychometrical readings. Mr. Portman gave an impressive invocation. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., circle, Mrs. Mason; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Mason, séance; August 12th, Mr. J. H. Evans. On Sunday last a crowded meeting was held at 245, Kentish Town-road, N.W., to welcome Mrs. Mason, whose guides gave remarkable proofs of spirit return.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE, W.—"The Embodied Soul: During Life," the subject of last Sunday's discourse by the inspirers of Mr. J. J. Morse, added another to the long list of able addresses which impress all who hear them with the great ability and learning, combined with powerful oratory, of the lecturer. It was something to be remembered to hear this most abstruse subject so eloquently, yet withal so completely and clearly, handled. Next Sunday at 7 p.m., Mr. J. J. Morse, trance address "The Embodied Soul: After Death."—L. H. R.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings free, every Sunday, at 7 o'clock.—On Sunday last Mr. A. Glendinning gave some of his experiences with the late Mr. Nisbet, of Glasgow—the pioneer of Spiritualism in that city; also some further developments of spirit photography, which were received by the audience with much interest. Mr. R. Wortley's relation of his investigations was very instructive to members and strangers; and Dr. Reynolds' comments and earnest appeal for further investigations were fully appreciated. Next Sunday, Mr. A. J. Sutton; Mr. and Mrs. Everitt will be with us; solos by Miss Everitt.—J. RAINBOW.

CARDIFF.—Miss C. W. McCreadie, of London, again gave clairvoyant and psychometric descriptions on Sunday last, to good audiences, about 350 persons being present in the evening. Eighteen descriptions were given in the morning, and nineteen in the evening, some of which were very striking, and most of them were recognised at the time. The president, Mr. E. Adams, took the chair and read appropriate lessons. Miss Drake sang the solo "Alone on the Raft," in a style which was much appreciated. This visit of Miss McCreadie's has been a most enjoyable and successful one, giving the "proof palpable" to very many hitherto unacquainted with the tangible nature of our facts. On Sunday next, August 5th, Mr. E. W. Wallis, of Manchester, will give trance discourses at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.—E. A.

CHEPSTOW HALL, PECKHAM.—The members and friends of the Societies of Forest Hill and Peckham had a successful excursion to Brighton, on Sunday last. The day unfortunately turned out wet, but thanks to the commodious room engaged for our tea, and which was entirely at our disposal, we were in no way depressed by our surroundings. Having returned from sailing and other amusements, all assembled at four o'clock for tea. And afterwards, what with music, clairvoyance, trance addresses, recitations, and singing, it is a moot point whether we were not better off for the rain than if it had been fine. Nearly all the well-known Spiritualists of South London were present, and heartily enjoyed themselves, so that we hope to repeat the experiment. On Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m., Mr. Butcher, trance address. On Tuesday, at 8.30 p.m., open circle, medium, Miss L. Gambrill; and magnetic healing by Mr. Edwards.—W. H. E.