

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' describes its sensational Article 'A Modern Demoniac' as 'An object-lesson on the dangers of Spiritualism.' We do not entirely see it. It might much more appropriately have been entitled *An object-lesson on the dangers of seducing an innocent girl*, or, perhaps a little closer home, *An object-lesson on the dangers of meeting devils if you have been a devil yourself*. But, to tell the plain truth, we are not quite certain about the real character of this horrible story. London contains an interesting assortment of practical jesters, and Mr. Stead is very fair game indeed.

But, even if we dismiss that suggestion, there is the alternative of insanity. If this be dismissed, and if we are bound to face the fact that a young villain can be possessed by an old one, whether for incitement or revenge, we are by no means disturbed. We have long believed in the possibility of this. All we stipulate for is that we shall proceed upon these four assumptions—that a good and just God is uppermost, not a malignant Satan; that in the very make of the world good can always go (and will) where evil can; that the torments which follow sin are for discipline; and that the desire for emancipation will never be in vain.

We hope Mr. Stead will again hear from his 'demoniac.'

'The Agnostic Journal' for the 15th is all alive with debatable matter. It may be profitable to refer to one instance. One of its regular contributors says:—

Emerson, born in 1803, evidently did not believe in a soul or in individual immortality. Did he not write thus?

"O, what are heroes, prophets, men,
But pipes, through which the breath of Pan doth blow
A momentary music! . . .
. Ebbs the tide, they lie
White, hollow shells upon the desert shore.
But not the less the eternal wave rolls on
To animate new millions; and exhale
Races and planets—its enchanted foam."

The conclusion drawn is too peremptory. The little exclamation is an exclamation, not a formulated opinion. Besides, Emerson lived during eighty years, and, doubtless, had varying opinions and many moods. Last of all, what do the following quotations from him look like? Speaking of the emancipated man, he makes him say:—

I am somehow receptive of the great soul, and thereby I do overlook the sun and stars, and feel them to be but fair accidents and effects which change and pass. More and more the surges of everlasting nature enter into me. . . . So come I to live in thoughts, and act with energies that are immortal.

What matters how, or from what ground,
The freed soul its Creator found?

Our own opinion is that Emerson, in the very truest sense of the words, believed in progressive everlasting life.

Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons (New York and London) have sent us 'The Secret of Mankind,' a curious work, published anonymously. After reading the first sixteen

pages, we felt as interested and as happy as, we suppose, some men feel who light upon a rare and delicate wine of exquisite aroma but doubtful vintage. How delicious the style! what fine turns of phrasing; how subtle the acute suggestions of thought and feeling! These sixteen pages include the first two Chapters which record the writer's passing away and awaking in the Unseen and his meeting with his mother and sister and brother. Then, for nearly four hundred pages, we have only long conversations with Milton, Pythagoras, Napoleon, and a Mercurian. The conversations are on great subjects, but they could all have been invented by the lively fancy and the well-stored brain of—such a person as the writer of this book. Indeed, we are in doubt about its veracity: and, though we enjoy its style, we do not like its mechanism, which all depends upon an astonishing improbability—the instant appearance of anyone you wish to see—Milton, Pythagoras, Napoleon—anyone appearing the instant you say 'I wish he were here.' Then, when he appears, he seems in no hurry, but stays for a good thirty hours' talk. But what would happen if some other one of the million million inhabitants of the spirit world, or some other one of the ceaseless stream of new-comers, took a fancy to see Milton, or Pythagoras, or Napoleon? Not one of them goes, it seems, until the person who desired his presence wants someone else. It is awkward. But, for all that, the book is most interesting. Some of the opening paragraphs will be welcome for their own sake, and as an indication of the style:—

A momentary tremor; a gasp which ended in a sigh; and the intermittent and refulgent flashes, which for several minutes had been increasing with excessive rapidity, fused into a more prolonged glow. This faded; forms reappeared. The flashes were the last attrition of material particles which make the 'life' of material organisms. The transition was gradual and the end was soothing. There was no pang or laceration. Weariness before these flashes came had merged into languor and a soft sense of lingering. They were the sputtering of the lamp, which obscures even the stars.

Sensibility, which had become dimmer and more slumberous, now ceased, or was converted into consciousness. It was as a gentle awakening from semi-somnolence. The ministrant of this alteration wears velvet shoes, and its breath is incense.

There was now a knowledge of persons and things about me, but a glowing and indifferent one. The scene within the room; the still form I had quitted; the bustling around it; some lamentations and tears; the undertone and whispering;—all this I knew as if by anticipation; that is, so far as I cared to have cognisance of it. It was narrow and commonplace. If it had not occurred, since I was no very obscure person, my attention would doubtless have been more drawn to the absence of it. As it was, the scene was the ordinary social incidents about a material phenomenon which was occurring at the rate of some two thousand an hour on our little globe. It is the dead who can say of this change to the living Pactus that it does not pain. Let the dying bury their dead, is the saying of Mund when most abstract.

I do not mean to say that I thought all this. I mean that such was my attitude or relation to it. My own identity was, however, now more clear-cut and critical and disdainful than before; more freighted with what it had done and said.

And I was yet a mental being. If I stayed where I was it seemed to me that I was little else than what I was before, save

that I had nought more to do with further surroundings. If I could get away from it all, and go out into the elsewhere, there might be interludes of forgetfulness. So, I went out, and away.

Dr. Theodore Dillen in 'The Medical News' (New York) has written a fruitful Paper on 'Must, as a mental disease.' In health, we can and we can't, we will and we won't; but in disease we must. It appears that there is no escape from the formula—The more must the more malady. And that is not a mere fancy. On the contrary, it, perhaps, points to the most prolific source of moral absurdity and positive crime.

Everyone has probably had some experience of the temptation to do something injurious or odd—to so walk as not to tread on a crack or joint in the pavement, to touch every post, or even every other one, to jump or fall from a height, to crush a noticeably fragile thing. Most people easily glide from the besetting suggestion, though its persistence often amounts to a worry. Says 'The Medical News':—

These simpler forms of imperative conceptions cannot, of course, be considered abnormal in view of the fact that they probably occur in some shape to all persons. In normal individuals they never result in action contrary to volition. In their exaggerated form, whether seen alone or in conjunction with some neurosis or psychosis, they constitute a serious symptom, and may be the dominant feature of a grave form of insanity. Between the extremes there are all gradations; and to say when an imperative conception ceases to be physiological or within the bounds of health would be as difficult as to say where sanity ends and insanity begins.

There can now be little doubt that certain crimes are due to sudden impulses which arise in the minds of persons who are not ordinarily regarded as insane, and which the subjects are wholly unable to resist.

Impulses to suicide, or to make assaults, or do deeds of violence, or commit crimes, arise in many persons, and yet do not result in action—are not obeyed because they are put in subjection, so to speak, by the inhibitory forces of the mind. When an impulse to commit crime arises and the inhibition to check it is insufficient, the crime is committed. This is the philosophy of the suicidal and homicidal impulse.

We are strongly inclined to think that some knowledge of this subject and wholesome reflection upon it would greatly tend to forearm anyone for this distressing malady. It is precisely ignorance of and shrinking from these subjects that make possible a morbid state of mind, and leave the will without defences.

'H. St. M.-W.' writes as follows:—

In your paper 'LIGHT,' of this date, you state 'that in spirit-life people can differ as widely as they do here.' Would you be good enough to tell us your grounds for asserting such to be the case, as it would appear you know all about spirit-life?

We are very sorry to have conveyed the impression that we 'know all about spirit-life': and we do not see how our correspondent arrives at such a conclusion. It is about the last thing we shall profess.

But, as to our grounds for asserting that in spirit-life people can differ as widely as they do here, we cherished (and still meekly cherish) the hope that we had indicated those grounds. Our answer to the question is what some call 'a woman's answer':—*Because they do.* That is notoriously so. From spirit-messages could be gathered 'views' as conflicting as the various creeds of earth.

Do you ever consider whether, when your brief sojourn upon earth is ended, you will be satisfied with its achievements?

We beg to remind those Subscribers to 'Light' and the London Spiritualist Alliance who have not already renewed their Subscriptions for 1896, that they are now due, and should be forwarded at once to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.

'THE THEOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS.'

This anonymous treatise professes to explain the Theosophy of the Upanishads, which is the essence of Eastern religion. It begins by quoting Tolstoi, who says:—

A man's religion is the relation which he believes himself to bear to the endless universe around him, and to the source of that endless universe.

Science busies itself with the relation which man *does actually* bear to the rest of the universe, and philosophy seems to say that with our present faculties and experiences we can never know what that relation really is; so the Tolstoian definition of religion—that it is the relation man *believes* himself to bear to the universe—is not very satisfactory! Tolstoi is also quoted as saying that:—

Every man must believe either that the universe exists for his enjoyment and profit, or for the profit of the race to which he belongs, or, lastly, for the purpose of the Divine Will that sent him into the world.

This is now seen by thinking people to be a view of the Cosmos which drives 'God' out of the material universe, and makes out the only portion of the great whole of which we have any actual knowledge to be in opposition to the Divine Will, an idea which at present appears to many religious minds to be little short of blasphemous. It would seem, on the contrary, that the divine wisdom is shown by the fact, now becoming so apparent, that by acting according to its own appointed nature everything unintentionally and unconsciously ministers to the well-being of other things; and that man by developing himself—in great part by means of his very appetites and desires—is raising and profiting 'the race to which he belongs'; wherefrom it may be inferred that the perfecting of the human race serves some still larger and higher purpose, which we cannot at present distinguish. This being the case, it is evident that divine wisdom is justified of her children, and no such antagonism as Tolstoi postulates exists between Creator and creature.

Our author, however, does not strictly follow Tolstoi; he divides life into three stages of development: the savage or pictorial, when man lives in the concrete external world, seeking his personal advantage; the self-conscious or civilised, when man lives an inner, ideal life, seeking for beauty, morality, justice, &c.; and the divine or theosophical, when he turns away from all thought of sensation, whether actual or ideal, and lives only a sensationless, emotionless life 'in the Eternal.' These states or degrees of development are superimposed upon each other, thus converting savage appetite into self-conscious desire, and self-conscious desire into theosophical spirituality. Religion apparently belongs to the second stage, for it is largely 'a matter of tradition and imitation.' 'We would follow righteousness willingly were we not so totally in the dark . . . Our needs are rather for the understanding than the will; for wisdom than for righteousness; for a Theosophy than for a religion.' The 'great Indian Upanishads' give us the Theosophy we require.

Now, the Upanishads are one thing, and 'The Philosophy of the Upanishads,' as presented by this anonymous author, seems to us quite another. He is evidently deeply infected with *fin-de-siècle* pessimism, and he reads this pessimism into the Upanishads, and calls the result 'Theosophy.' Appetites recur, he says, and desires renew themselves, and satiety, *enanti*, and disgust follow from the endeavour to satisfy them. Life is a process of disillusion; we hide from ourselves and each other 'the sad secret that hope is dead,' and 'to keep our eyes off despair, we set ourselves endless tasks.' But it is precisely 'this hopelessness and weariness that are to lead us to the beginning of the path':—

For only when we have worn out all hope and belief in the joy of our habitual lives and our habitual selves are we ready to turn away from our habitual selves, and seek our well-being where well-being is really to be found—in a new life and a new self above and behind our habitual selves.

When we have 'worn out all hope and belief,' we become penetrated by the keen sense of futility and wrongness of our pursuit of desire, the keen sense of the futility and wrongness of our self assertion; and we discover that the personal self is but a 'web of desires, and lusts, and hates,' 'the body itself being but an image of our lusts crystallised into form.' The 'enemy

* 'The Theosophy of the Upanishads,' Part I. Self and not Self. (London: The Theosophical Publishing Company, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.) Price 3s.

above all enemies is the instinct of preservation of our personal selves; and the destruction of the individual man and of the human race should be our aim:—

If we would be done with the animal self, then let us be done with it, and especially with its two great and dominant instincts—the preservation of self through lust of possession, the preservation of the race through lust of flesh.

This morbid and suicidal pessimism the author attributes to the Upanishads. He says:—

It would be hardly an exaggeration to say . . . that they hold this to be the purpose of habitual life—the thorough demonstration of its purposelessness; that they esteem the unhappiest life the happiest, as it the sooner cures us of the conceit of false life.

Those who, by dint of complete disgust with everything and everybody, and by making themselves utterly miserable, qualify for the higher life, will enjoy an eternity of stagnant happiness:—

For him the sun rises not nor sets; for him who knows this hidden wisdom well there is perfect day for ever.—(*Chandogya Upanishad*.)

There the father is father no more; nor the mother, mother; nor the worlds, worlds; nor the gods, gods; there the Vedas are no Vedas; nor the thief a thief; nor the murderer a murderer; nor the outcast an outcast; nor the saint a saint; this is the highest aim, the highest home, the highest wealth, the highest bliss.—(*Bhavadaranyaka Upanishad*.)

What are we to say of this utterly selfish and pernicious teaching? For assuredly it is none the less selfish and pernicious because it is accompanied by the declaration that everyone actually is everyone else, and everyone else is he, since the Self is one and indivisible—a proposition which has no meaning for anyone in his normal human consciousness, whatever it may have for a Theosophist who has extinguished himself in an ocean of disgust or of Deity. We say that if this be the Theosophy of Avenue Road, it certainly is not that of the Upanishads; and we are pretty certain that if the anonymous author of 'The Philosophy of the Upanishads' could transport himself back on some 'Time machine' to the days when the Upanishads were written, he would get short shrift from the Sages who wrote them; if they did not put him into a hospital or asylum, they would teach him to appreciate this mortal life by making himself healthily useful to himself, to his neighbours, and to his race. That the Upanishads are full of expressions of disgust at this life and dissatisfaction at its pleasures is true enough, but the conditions under which those sentiments were uttered were absolutely different from those under which our morbidly pessimistic young theosophical friends give vent to them.

In the days when the Upanishads were written life was regulated in strict accordance with what were understood to be the requirements of the material as well as of the spiritual life of man. The first twenty-five years of a man's life were spent in acquiring proficiency in the earthly calling to which he was destined; after this 'student life' came twenty-five years as a householder, during which time the man married and had children, worked for his family, and took part in the affairs of his village, of his caste, and of the State. It was only when he had done his duty, and, by actual work in the ordinary world of men, had earned a right to repose and reflection, that he became an ascetic, and retired into the 'forest' to indulge in mental preparation for that higher and better life that was to reward him for his toils and sufferings in this one. When in the evening of his days he looked back upon his early struggles and later trials or successes, these naturally seemed to him to be of little worth or consequence, just as the joys and sorrows of a child who has got a new toy, or broken an old one, seem to the grown man. But, what a different thing this is from the markish sentimentality of the author before us, who quarrels with appetite and desire because he cannot manage to indulge them fully without making himself sick and desponding, who utterly ignores the duties which every man and woman owes not only to Society, but to the Power that wills us to be here, and who wishes to jump out of his skin straight into a condition of felicity which he has done nothing to deserve, cursing the whole human race as he goes, and longing to annihilate the universe.

Were that the 'Theosophy of the Upanishads' we would have none of it; but it is not. It is the 'Theosophy,' apparently, of Avenue Road. At all events it is a sample of the 'Teaching'

which is now being largely exported to India from No. 7, Duke-street, for consumption by the mild Hindu—genuine Indian Theosophy 'made in England.'

This theosophical pessimism would, in our opinion, be impious, were it not utterly silly and grotesquely selfish. How far it is from everything manly, or even human, is self-evident, and how completely at variance with the view which Spiritualists take of the universe, and of the All-wise and benevolent Power immanent in the universe, we need not point out.

SPIRITUALISM—THE RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND REFORM OF THE AGE.

I ought, perhaps, to apologise for sending an article under the above highly comprehensive title to the Editor of 'LIGHT,' when I have nothing to justify it, except the opinions and experiences that are forced upon my attention by a large number of correspondents. Yet I trust the considerations I have to present will not be found inapplicable to so important a subject as the above-named title suggests.

In the first place, I must state that my spirit inspirers always treat the spiritual movement as Religion, Science, and Reform. To all these positions I receive, both by letter and in such personal interviews as I can accord, many compliments, and quite as often bitter remonstrances. How I can dare to call such a movement 'a Religion' is often put to me in the fiercest tones of antagonism, and I am frequently asked wherein lies the 'Science' of 'dancing tables,' and the 'Reform' which grows out of 'spirit rappings.'

As concisely as possible, noting the mode in which I am compelled, almost single-handed, to conduct my plan of defence, I may say at once that I consider religion to consist solely of the knowledge of God and His laws; the proofs of man's immortality—or, at least, his survival of the change called death; and the knowledge of how best to prepare for the life after death by the soul's action and conduct during earthly existence.

And, again condensing a vast realm of direct proof and philosophic reasoning into a few words, I affirm that the Spirit Man, the earth's Lord and Re-creator, proves the Spirit God, the Lord and Creator of the universe. The communications of millions of spirits in well-proven identity with the beings who have once lived on earth, are the direct and present-day proof that physical death has no power to touch the soul, whilst the assurance from these same millions of spirit communicants that happiness or misery is entirely determined on the soul's first entrance to the life hereafter by the good or evil deeds done in the body whilst on earth, is a revelation sufficiently powerful to promote a thorough and radical reform in every department of human existence, from the government of nations down to the humble individual who lives, dies, and goes to the heaven or hell, of his own creation, in spirit life. If this is not religion—true, living, practical, God-given religion—I know not what is, and seeing that it is brought and proved to me every day and hour of my mortal life, I no longer feel obliged to go back to the fabulous inventions, glaring contradictions, and often impious assertions of the barbarians of two, three, or more thousands of years ago to find my religion.

Of course, the elements of religion, so briefly touched upon in the few sentences referred to above, require powerful treatment and elaborate disquisitions; and now, instead of answering creed-bound objectors as to why I devote all my Sundays' work and effort to lecturing on a religion which includes so much of the sciences of sound, motion, sight, and every kind of mental impression, as well as every reform the world can demand, I ask why and wherefore every Sunday of the year is not given to the teachings of this mighty revelation by such capable, well instructed, and highly inspired spiritual lecturers as would reform the age and make Spiritualism the religion of the world?

When such queries as these are put to the committees of public spiritual meetings, they reply that they personally cannot afford to hire well-educated and capable speakers, while those that can afford to do so spend their means on supporting handsome churches, rich and popular preachers, and cannot be seen in the humble places the working Spiritualists alone can hire. Still another plea of the said working Spiritualists is—that their people will only come when there are phenomena to be exhibited, or, in other words, something to see and entertain them personally. To this again I make strong

and unqualified objection; and I do so, not because I give no phenomena myself upon the platform. For the first two years of my introduction to Spiritualism I sat as a public test medium in the city of New York, and gave thousands of test facts to my sitters; but when spirits urged—nay, insisted—upon my becoming a public speaker, they also insisted that I should give up the practice of sitting for personal tests, alleging that these organs of the brain that could be used for giving names, ages, dates, and tokens of personal identity, were totally different from the mental processes by which thoughts, teachings, and inspiration could be poured out, and that the one set of influences would mar, if they did not wholly destroy, the other.

Still other objections prophesied of by good spirits, and constantly presented by disgusted objectors, are these. Some visitors to the Sunday phenomenal meetings, who don't receive tests, say 'it is all collusion,' and the hundred who don't receive them go away disgusted, whilst the ten or twelve who do receive them are delighted.

Still a large number of others write and speak to me indignantly, denouncing the practice of making the spiritual Sunday meetings 'a mere show,' 'a fortune-telling game,' &c.; in a word, anything but scenes of high, exalting, and reformatory teachings. With all this I entirely agree. I see now, as I have done all my life, scores of spirits at my Sunday lectures, and multitudes of *seer revelations of character amongst my audiences*. But I insist that the religious meetings are not fit scenes for these personalities. A thousand times more fitting are the well organised private circles, where the beloved guardians of the home and life can, and do, return, and bring truths and convictions never possible to be given in the public gathering, and wholly out of place in the religious meeting.

I dare not attempt to occupy more space by pleading for the force of my arguments on both sides of the question, but, knowing there are good and wise thinkers in the readers of your excellent paper, I commend to such the suggestions I have already made, reserving many more and still more urgent entreaties to think out better and higher means than at present prevail of influencing the age in favour of the great spiritual revelation as a Religion, Science, and Reform, holding myself free in any further question of emergency on this subject to promote the discussion to far wider and more practical possibilities of action than the limitations of space will admit of at present.

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THE NATAL RAILWAY DISASTER—A REMARKABLE DREAM.

A correspondent (H. M. F.) writing from Pietermaritzburg, Natal, communicates the following instance of prevision in a dream:—

So far as can be gleaned from private sources, which are most trustworthy and reliable, the following particulars of a dream are well authenticated. A Maritzburg lady had made arrangements with a lady friend, also of Maritzburg, to spend Christmas and the New Year in Johannesburg. Some time beforehand, the former dreamed that she was in the train, on the return journey, and that at one of the stations three carriage loads of coffins were taken out, and that she herself was recognised by a ring which she wore. On relating this dream to her friends, some of them sought to dissuade her from taking the trip to Johannesburg. The lady who was to accompany her objected to this, saying they were not living in the North of Scotland to be guided by such superstitions.

Now, with regard to the facts of that fateful journey. Both these ladies reached Johannesburg. The events connected with the political revolution there hastened their departure, and they travelled in the train which met with the disaster near Glencoe Junction. Both ladies were frightfully injured, and though taken out alive, succumbed almost directly. It is a fact that the lady in whom the dream came, was recognised by the ring; she was so terribly mutilated in the accident as to be otherwise unidentifiable.

I enclose particulars as to names, &c., for your private information, but do not wish them to be published, for obvious reasons. The account comes accredited from no uncertain quarters, and is sent to you as being a significant instance of prevision in a dream, which sadly enough proved too true.

CLAIRVOYANT TESTS.

Passing the door of a hall in a large city, I saw a notice to the effect that Mrs. —, a well-known medium, would give tests on Sunday afternoons, at three o'clock; admission, twenty-five cents, or one shilling. I accordingly went to the hall at the time specified, and took a seat about the third row from the front. When the time arrived to open the meeting there were present over one hundred persons, all strangers to me. The medium came into the room, ascended the platform, and opened the meeting with a short discourse on the nature of mediumship, &c. Then she walked down to a person who sat just behind me, asked her for her handkerchief, and proceeded to give her a 'reading.' The medium described her relatives, and gave a description of their old home. A question arose between them in regard to certain matters, but the medium insisted that she was right, and said: 'You think again; the gentleman now sitting alongside of you is your brother.' The subject was then discussed by brother and sister, with the result that they acknowledged they were wrong, and the medium correct. I then handed the medium my watch and asked for a reading. While she held my watch in her hand she said: 'There is a lady here who says she was buried in a night-dress; she is about twenty, and says her mother is here to-day.' Then followed a description of the robe and of the person. An old lady sitting on the front seat arose and said that was a description of her daughter, and that she was buried in a night-dress. The lady was dressed in deep mourning. The medium then told her that the daughter was alive, and was with her all the time.

The medium then turned to me and asked: 'Did I ever meet you before?' My reply was that I never saw her before. She then said, 'There are three spirit friends standing here; your wife and two children—a daughter and a son. Your wife's name is Elizabeth and yours is William. She passed away about twenty years ago. She tells me that when she lived on earth she had some difficulty with your parents, but she now knows it was partly her own fault, as she did not understand them as she does now. I am taken away a very long distance from here to the East, and I come to a small city where you were born. I enter the old homestead and find your father and mother living there. There is a picture of your wife, taken before she was married, in the album on the table. You are more like your mother than your father. Your father is a Presbyterian, and your mother became a member of that Church when she was married. Her parents were members of the Church of England, but, a few years before her marriage, she became a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. She is liberal in her ideas now, but still, she would not like to know you were consulting a medium, although she would like to know what was said to you. Your family consists of seven, viz., a wife and two children on the spirit side of life, a wife and two children on this side and yourself completes the number.'

The above description was simply perfect in every detail. I was a stranger to every person present, including the medium. The reading was given in a city of nearly a million of population, and over 1,500 miles from where I was born. The medium then passed to others, and for over two hours gave readings, which were acknowledged by the persons to be correct. I may mention that the entrance fee was for the benefit of a sick medium. Many of the above facts were not in my mind at the time of the reading, and so-called mind-reading was out of the question.

On another occasion, in the same city, I visited a Spiritualist meeting. The medium, a stranger to me, said, 'You come from a long distance, from the East. I am taken over salt water, but it is not broad enough for the ocean. You do not now follow the business you were in previous to 1877. In that year, I see you made a complete change. When you were about eighteen or nineteen you had a very severe sickness, and since that time your lungs have not been very strong. The year 1893 will be a trying year for you, but after that I see you will be all right. You have seven of a family—including yourself. Three in spirit world, and a wife and two children in earth life.'

The medium saw me then for the first time, and as all the people present were strangers to me, with the exception of my sister-in-law, who had gone in with me, I consider the reading to be remarkable. In the year 1877 I gave up the business of a chemist and druggist, and became an accountant, and have followed it ever since. For the fourteen years previous I

followed the drug business. At the time the medium gave me this test I was not thinking about the matter in any way, and for a minute had to ask myself if that was the year in which I made the change. She also said that in a short time I would change my residence. This I did not contemplate at the time, but it was fulfilled to the letter. In regard to the year 1893 being a trying time for me, this also was fulfilled, as in that year I came through the most trying experience in my life, and since then have been all right, as the medium predicted.

Grand Rapids,

M. W. B.

Michigan, U.S.A.

THE INTEREST OF SPIRIT PEOPLE IN EARTHLY AFFAIRS.

The following narrative has been placed in our hands by a gentleman whom we have known intimately for many years, and we have the fullest confidence in the complete accuracy of his very interesting statement:—

I have often heard a near relative, an aunt of mine, relate two experiences which are quite at variance with a prevalent impression that spirits eschew all interference with practical life and do not meddle with issues of intrigue or business complication. She is one of the most long-headed and prosaic persons I ever met, and her habitual mental attitude towards all such manifestations, especially when experienced by other persons, is one of distaste and vigorous scepticism. But when her naturally strong affection, stirred by some fresh bereavement, has (as I suppose) given them courage, the departed have returned to afford her important and unexpected information, in spite of her shrinking.

She had nursed my father, her favourite brother, when he died of brain typhus. After his death some important paper relating to a life insurance was not to be found, and she had given up the search in despair, when he appeared to her in the night and told her where to find it. In the morning she went straight to an old ottoman, took out a little old diary, of which there were several yearly volumes, picked out a certain year, and out of that the paper. I may add that she had not lived with my father for years, and knew nothing about his habits or belongings.

The other instance is even more striking. My father's mother died, and during the sharing among the several heirs of the property she left, my aunt was persuaded to give a power of attorney to a certain lady relative. She posted the document in the evening and went to bed. In the night she woke up with a start and noticed that some flamboyant lights were moving in the room; but she reassured herself with a characteristic phrase (her mother had been a German): 'Eh! Was? Ich bin doch in meiner eigenen Stube und man kann mir keinen Hocuspocus vormachen!' She then distinctly saw her mother, in her well-known attitude and dress, standing at the foot of the bed, and heard her utter in her laconic fashion: 'Zurück! Du wirst betrogen!' In reply to the startled question, 'Wieso? Betrogen!' her mother repeated her words and vanished.

My aunt, who is an energetic person, at once made my brother, a boy of fourteen, get up and dress and accompany her to the General Post Office, in the middle of the night; and, after a long wrangle with Prussian red tape, which I can assure you is of the toughest quality, she received back her letter, although it had been stamped. Some weeks afterwards my aunt learned for the first time that, when the power of attorney was posted, circumstances had already arisen in connection with the lady for whom it was intended, which made it of the utmost importance that it should not come into her possession!

THE FUTURE LIFE.—The mind of man feels itself lessened and straightened in this low and narrow state; wishes and waits to see something greater. And if it could discern another world a-coming, on this side eternal life; a beginning glory, the best that earth can bear, it would be a kind of immortality to enjoy that prospect beforehand; to see, when this theatre is dissolved, where we shall act next, and what parts. What saints and heroes, if I may so say, will appear on that stage, and with what lustre and excellency. How easy it would be, under a view of these futurities, to despise the little pomps and honours, and the momentary pleasures of mortal life.—**LORD BACON.**

THE ART OF INVESTIGATION.

'*Psychische Studien*' has for one or two numbers been giving the story of the Hon. Alexander Aksakoff's investigations of spiritualistic phenomena, so well-known to our readers. The journal, indeed, courteously acknowledges that the biographical sketch is based on the account of our distinguished co-worker which appeared in 'LIGHT,' of March 24th, 1894. Its perusal is very interesting, and shows how, through all the uproar and fuss and fluster raised by sceptical persons here, who did not see what most other people saw, and sceptical persons there who saw what nobody else perceived, this quiet, self-possessed, well-equipped investigator calmly pursued his course—turning neither to the right nor to the left when excursions in either of these directions promised no fruit—and employed his tests with a plentitude of resource hardly surpassed in the annals of the cause.

The same journal has an article from the pen of Herr Petersen, of Flensburg, who corrects an apparently trifling error, which, however, very clearly shows how highly important it is that our most distinguished writers and researchers, and, in fact, all investigators, should, before chronicling the phenomena with which they may be dealing, use every possible means for exhaustively verifying their references. There is probably no other subject of study in the world which is more exposed than Spiritualism is to the danger of injury from misrepresentation, in consequence of inaccuracies in the registration of dates, names, and places. With almost all other subjects of human interest, errors of that kind are mere bagatelles, which simply require correcting, but in the case of Spiritualism they are selected as the minute rents which serve to let all the gas out of the balloon, and eventually bring about its collapse. There are many cultivated and ingenious people who speak after the latter fashion, and affect to consider it reasoning, who would not be of much importance individually in the discussion, were it not that their conclusions are industriously promulgated as the result of an impartial and exhaustive examination of whatever may happen to be the particular phase of the subject under review. It is a somewhat insincere method, but very telling. 'A person who can make a demonstrable error like that, is hardly to be accepted as entirely trustworthy in other respects,' and so on. This is a perfectly legitimate statement to make, no doubt, but everyone who makes it ought to be gravely suspected of having unfairly left all the 'other respects' severely alone.

From a work by a highly accomplished German student of the occult, the following passage relating to the gift of second sight is quoted in Herr Petersen's article: '*Boy Spuk*, a Scottish seer, could quite accurately foretell the death of many people, but only when, in his vision, he saw lights borne before the corpse,' &c.

Now almost any educated person in the British Isles, or almost any educated British person out of them, could have told Professor Perty, of Berne, for example, that '*Boy Spuk*,' as Christian and surname, was a remarkably unlikely one, even as a nickname, for any of her Britannic Majesty's subjects to bear. For although '*Boy*,' as a titular appellation in song, is occasionally found in the familiar vein, it is never found as a name, and the word '*Spuk*' in form and spelling should at once have driven the learned Professor to the vicinity of the Little Belt rather than to Scotland. Nevertheless, this error has been carried over from book to book for, perhaps, half a century, and now it has been discovered that the bearer of the strikingly un-British name '*Boy Spuk*' was not a Scotchman at all, but a respectable master-glazier, who died on March 14th, 1839, at Süd Niebül (in Schleswig-Holstein?), at the age of seventy, and whose name was Boy Johannsen, '*Spuk*' being a nick-name given to him because of his gift of second sight. That he was a remarkable man there seems to be but little doubt, if we take for granted that the description given of his gift is more accurate than that of his nationality; but the point to be noticed in this connection is the extraordinary length of time it has taken to 'investigate' so small a matter, probably just because of its diminutiveness; but there the error was, ready at hand for the unmasking by any casual blasphemer.

Love, when true, faithful, and well fixed, is eminently the sanctifying element of human life; without it, the soul cannot reach its fullest height or holiness.—**RUSKIN.**

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THE NEW LIGHT.

We do not quite understand 'The Inquirer.' No one can say that we have hastened to cash the cheques that have come to us with what everyone is talking about as 'The new photography' or 'The new light.' We have hardly said a word about it, though we have been fully aware that it opens up a rather rich harvest for us. But we can well afford to wait. In these circumstances, we repeat, we cannot quite understand 'The Inquirer,' which, in its usual rather dry way, raps our knuckles by starting an Article with this cup of cold water, wrongly applied, and not in the name of a disciple—'The new photography is exciting the hopes of the Spiritualists in a manner which may not, we fear, be justified by the event.' 'We fear' is 'pretty Fanny's way' of indicating pitying superiority to our superstition.

But now, as 'The Inquirer' and some other onlookers seem to invite comment on our part, we do not mind saying that what is called 'the new photography' does very specially interest us, though we are not in the least degree 'excited' about it. In fact, it is old news to us. A long time ago (as time goes now), the late Mr. Traill Taylor, the expert in photography, addressing a meeting of Spiritualists, told us pretty nearly all that is now exciting the astonishment of the men in the street, and the women at afternoon tea; and a good deal more. Incidentally mentioning that light is the agent in the production of a photograph, he said, 'Please do not ask me to explain what light is.' No wonder he shrank! All we know is that there are rays, waves or vibrations, and that our eyes can sometimes translate these into what we call 'light.' But there are rays, waves, or vibrations that the human eye cannot detect, said he, but that 'still cause photographic action': and it was in following up this clue that he got what he called 'psychic pictures,' choosing and carrying out his own perfect test conditions in their capture.

With remarkable patience, consummate care, and charming love of truth, he plodded on, and secured results in this strange field compared with which all this pottering with keys, pencils, and bones is the merest fiddling. In the Paper from which we are quoting, he says of these invisible rays that 'light so-called has nothing to do' with the production of the occult picture. He absolutely anticipated these experiments that are making the world stare, and said flatly, 'the lens and camera of the photographer are useless encumbrances.' He observed, too, that his occult pictures were of such a nature as to suggest straight and not refracted rays: and again he remarks, 'The psychic figure was not formed by the lens at all, and therefore was capable of being produced without a camera or lens.'

Pushing on, this past-master in scientific photography found that figures were obtained on sensitive plates in a wooden box, or a wooden slide covered only with the velvet focussing cloth, when held by a suitable person. In every case, he produced his own plates, and personally performed every part of the process up to the development of the picture. Then, speaking generally of these invisible rays, he says: 'If any thing or entity—call it a spirit if you like—emitted rays of this nature only, most assuredly it could be photographed . . . although such figures could not be seen.' No wonder, then, if some Spiritualists are deeply interested in this 'new light,' or 'new photography,' not because it is new to them, but because the uninformed multitude is getting a notion or two into its head.

'The Inquirer,' which does not seem to have long inquired on this subject, placidly says:—

It is proved that rays to which the eye is not sensitive may nevertheless impress a photographic plate, and give shadow negatives of bone or metal objects. It is inferred at once that disembodied spirits may emit these 'invisible rays,' and so admit of being photographed although they cannot be seen. This belief was entertained by the late Mr. Traill Taylor. But there seems here to be a want of clearness of thought.

Certainly: there is a great 'want of clearness of thought.' But first as to clearness about facts. Mr. Traill Taylor entertained a belief, says 'The Inquirer.' Not at all. He tried a long series of experiments, and found out solid facts. If it would like to know what these facts are, 'LIGHT' for June 1st, 1895, will supply the information.

Mr. Taylor did not hold that a spirit photograph was necessarily the photograph of a spirit: but he did hold that a mind or spirit picture could be photographed; and we hold that in this he went further afield than the present wonder-exciting experimenters. But now, what if a spirit can construct its mould or picture and then, by the help of its own 'invisible rays,' project it upon the sensitive plate! Our interest in 'the new photography,' however, does not turn upon any particular experiment but upon the general fact that very useful education is going on as to the reality of the unseen.

But 'The Inquirer' goes wrong just where most of the men in the street will go wrong. We shall often have to hear something like this, 'Well, after all, there's something there when a key, a cigar-case, a pencil, or a bone is there. But a spirit, don't you know!—well, there isn't anything there, is there?' And so a spirit is less real and less potent and less capable of dealing with invisible rays or subtile waves than a cigar-case or a key! 'What is a Spirit?' is the title of 'The Inquirer's' Article. And these are its concluding words, 'Are disembodied spirits material substances? Do the rays which produce "spirit photographs" emanate from a material source?' Will 'The Inquirer' tell us what 'material substances' are, and what a 'material source' is? There are millions of modes of matter, and it is only a gross trick of 'the cave' which leads us to think we have done anything sane or useful when we have tried to distinguish between matter and spirit, for practical purposes. There may be a difference: but if one must give way it will not be spirit. Herschel, Huxley, Grove, Tyndall, Spottiswoode, and many strong thinkers have accustomed us to follow Matter into the Unseen, where it is at once more subtile, more potent, and, for all we know, more vital than Matter as we know it: and we are by no means impressed with the gross question, 'Are disembodied spirits material substances?' We are told that God is a Spirit, and He is, we suppose, real enough and powerful enough, as the supreme controller of invisible things. So then, whatever a 'disembodied spirit' is, it may be able—and there is every probability that it is able—to deal with invisible rays, ay! and with forces compared with which invisible rays are mud.

If 'The Inquirer' will think this out, it may be able to answer its own question in such a way as to comprehend how a spirit may be as real, aye, more real a being than this fleshly struggler, and yet be as far removed from our limited range of vision and touch as the invisible rays, until, in certain circumstances, and with its knowledge and control of the mighty unseen forces, it chose to make it otherwise.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), on the evening of Friday next, March 6th, at 7 for 7.30, when an address will be given by Mr. E. W. Wallis, of Manchester, on 'Pressing Present-day Problems for Spiritualists'—to be followed by answers to questions.

'STUDIES IN THE THOUGHT WORLD.'

Mr. Henry Wood is an American author who, like many of his countrymen, endeavours to combine Christianity with daring speculation. In 'Studies in the Thought World' he stands on much the same ground as in his previous works, namely, that 'God revealed Himself through His Son to the Hebrews, and so to the world, but He had always been revealing Himself through Nature and the intuition.' In the work before us the author applies himself in an imaginative and transcendental fashion to the interpretation of the latter kind of revelation. Emerson, Tolstoi, Darwin, Theosophy, Christian Science, and Psychical Research have apparently been his staple intellectual diet. Instead, however, of confining his speculations to an ideal or subjective universe, he endeavours to apply transcendental methods and maxims to the material world. To imagine a thing, he thinks, is to realise it even more completely than if it were materially present. Hence:—

Auto-suggestion and concentration can be intelligently introduced into everyday life. Through their judicious employment, the ills, spectres, beliefs of evil, and disorders of mind and body, may be crowded out of the consciousness, and finally, as a natural result, vanish from outward expression.

The worst of this shutting of the eyes to evil is that it kills sympathy; and, to those who are ready to take off their coats and set to work to help their neighbours, it seems like self-indulgent loitering in a fool's paradise. This spiritual lotus-eating, indeed, seems to be Mr. Wood's aim. We do not agree with him; there is too much selfish ignoring of evil as it is. How does this, for instance, apply to the Armenian massacres, either from the point of view of the sufferer or the sympathiser?—

The scientific way to destroy evil is not to hold it up and analyse it in order to make it hateful, but rather to put it out of the consciousness. To the degree that one does not see it, to him it becomes non-existent, because there is nothing to arouse its vibrations within.

Nevertheless, the book contains many admirable and some original thoughts, but 'the defects of its qualities' are so prominent that it needs very critical reading.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—A meeting of the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance was held on Friday evening, the 21st inst., in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall, when Mrs. Bliss, the well-known medium, gave a short address, followed by some experiments in clairvoyance and psychometry. Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, the President of the Alliance, occupied the chair, and, in the course of some preliminary remarks, introduced Mrs. Bliss to the audience. A pianoforte solo by Miss Withall followed, during which the medium submitted to the process of control, and this having been completed, a short address was delivered, evidently by an American, since the peculiarities of accent were very marked. The remarks of the control were full of sound common-sense. Mrs. Bliss's regular guide afterwards assumed control and gave some fairly successful clairvoyance, after which Mrs. Bliss, in her normal state, gave some psychometrical delineations which were also satisfactory. The proceedings closed with a vote of thanks, which was heartily accorded. —D. G.

*'Studies in the Thought World,' or Practical Mind Art. By HENRY WOOD, author of 'Ideal Suggestion,' 'God's Image in Man,' &c. (Boston, U.S.A.: Lee and Shepard, 1896.)

THE USE AND ABUSE OF MEDIUMS.

BY 'GENERAL LORRISON.'

Having during many years made a careful examination of the powers and peculiarities of mediums, and having through their aid been able to interrogate spirits as regards the laws and conditions most suitable for obtaining evidences of spirit power and work, I venture to give the results of some of my inquiries, though I can state that in no two instances have I ever found the individuality of mediums exactly similar. It is therefore necessary to know the medium well, in order to obtain the best results, and, if the investigator is not very careful, he will obtain either no results, or such as, according to his ignorance of the laws, he will at once attribute to fraud.

In order that spiritual manifestations should occur, there are two agents necessary; first, the medium, secondly, the spirit. Each has an individuality, and though persons ignorant of the subject imagine that, if there be any truth in spirit communication, spirits can be ordered, or are at once anxious, to give undeniable proof of their power, yet spirits state that this is not the case.

For example, suppose some self-sufficient so-called scientist, puffed up with the belief of his own infallible knowledge, and firmly convinced that spirit communication was all trickery or delusion, attended a séance, mainly for the object of proving that his opinions were correct, the spirits present, seeing his mental condition, would not give any proof, as it would merely be casting pearls before swine. They would consider that such men were unteachable, and would probably do much harm if they became acquainted with the means of communication. This is only natural. Thus, if a man came to me, and stated that he was convinced that the earth was a flat surface, and that no amount of evidence would convince him that it was a spheroid, I should not trouble myself to give him any of those geometrical proofs which prove the true form of the earth. To do so would be useless. I should probably simply amuse myself by listening to his absurd opinions.

A spirit, whom I will term P., has told me that many times, at séances which he has attended, men have come who, under the pretence of fairly investigating, have merely been watching for some excuse to proclaim fraud. When such has been the case, P. has seen with them low spirits who were anxious to confirm them in their opinions. This statement opened an interesting inquiry, to which P. replied as follows: 'Natures, at so-called death, do not at once change. Just as those on earth are jealous of one another, so is it with the low in our sphere. A knowledge, when on earth, of spiritual laws enables a man to take a higher position on entering the spirit life. He takes a position above those who, whilst on earth, devoted the whole of their thoughts to mundane and selfish items. Hence these low spirits, if they cannot, or will not, themselves advance, adopt the next best means, viz., they try to prevent others from advancing.'

What is more common than to hear ignorant men assert that if a spirit told them what horse was going to win the Derby, then they would believe, as that would be of practical value? This remark means that if they could gain such information they would be able to rob other men. What spirit, even if it could predict the result of a race, would, if honest, supply such information? Low spirits, who are, as on earth, not only ignorant but self-sufficient, would probably guess at the name of the horse, and would give wrong information, and the inquirer would then jump to the conclusion that spirit communication was a fraud.

It is not unreasonable to conclude that fifty or a hundred years hence we shall all be wiser than we are now, and will then be able to perceive that we must be cautious as to those to whom we impart knowledge. It does not

follow that every man who attends a séance in order to 'test,' as he terms it, whether there is any truth in spirit communication, should at once be given such proof as will convince him. In some instances such conviction has led to men setting themselves up as teachers, before they knew the very elements of the laws on which they claimed to be professors. They have, then, carefully fulfilled the conditions of the blind leading the blind, and if endowed with self-sufficiency and a theoretical tendency, they have become dangerous promulgators of error.

Here, then, are some of the difficulties which the so-called inquirer into Spiritualism has to encounter; but another difficulty is the treatment of mediums. The medium is peculiarly constituted, and is greatly influenced by surroundings. Uncongenial surroundings, whether as regards locality or people, will so upset the medium that no manifestations are possible. The surrounding atmosphere of some individuals will so disturb a medium that he, or she, will feel unable to suppress a longing to play a trick on these people, and this condition is in many cases produced by those spiritual influences which the inquirer brings with him.

To force a medium to sit at a particular time, and under certain arbitrary conditions, whilst each of the sitters shows suspicion in every look and action, is the best means to secure failure.

The most convincing results, and the most remarkable phenomena have occurred when a medium has been staying as a friend in a house; has become accustomed to a particular room and chair, has not been tied or held, and when the room was well lighted. Day after day and week after week manifestations will then occur, of so powerful a character that to attribute these to trickery, or delusion, is the explanation of a mind almost imbecile in its feebleness.

Such results, however, are rarely, if ever, obtained off hand. They are arrived at only by patience, and by fulfilling certain conditions. I have been informed that those remarkable materialisations of which I have in previous numbers of 'LIGHT' given a partial account, occupied our spirit friends between two and three months, and about twenty-five meetings, to prepare the conditions and to experiment. The slightest disturbing influence would hinder any such manifestations, and the greatest care and caution were required at our séances to prevent low influences from putting a stop to satisfactory results. A howling dog, or a crying baby in a room, would prevent the finest singer from doing justice to a song, and the sensitiveness of a medium is a hundred times as great as that of a singer.

The late Mrs. Marshall was what I may term the 'toughest medium' I ever encountered, yet on one occasion I found the manifestations entirely stopped by the act of an excited lady. The séance occurred at a private house, only six persons being present. Soon after our assembling the table rose about a foot from the floor, raps were heard on the floor, on the table, and elsewhere; and a message was being spelt out, this message being for a gentleman who was present. Before the message was completed the lady said, 'Oh, dear! I wish my sister would come and give me a message, and tell me what I want to know.' Instantly the raps ceased, and no further manifestations occurred during the evening. I ascertained, on a subsequent occasion, that the spirits who were what we may term 'in charge of the table' and the manifestations, were disturbed by those who were attracted by the lady; this disturbance acted even on Mrs. Marshall, and her powers could not be used.

The longer and more searching are our investigations, the more we become convinced that the laws appertaining to mediums, and spiritual intercourse, are the most subtle that the human mind has yet had to deal with. The masses have, to a certain extent, been prepared for such investiga-

tions by studying the laws (as far as these are known) of electricity, photography, &c.; but there is as great a difference between these sciences and the laws appertaining to spiritual matters, as there is between the muscular and mental powers of individuals. The prevalent idea among the ignorant is that the correct way to test whether spiritual or abnormal power exists, is—to procure a so-called medium, to tie him or hold him, to bring sceptics, conjurers, tricksters, and bigoted scientists, without any preparation other than to be watchful for fraud, and then, when nothing occurs that cannot be easily explained by this jury, by the aid of various theories, to pronounce spiritual force a delusion, mediums merely impostors, and believers absolute idiots. We really live in strange times, when ignorance becomes our teacher.

In 'LIGHT' of the 15th inst., there was an account by Professor M. T. Falcomer of 'Further Experiments with Eusapia Paladino.' He states 'we are to-day perfectly certain of the authenticity of such phenomena; small tables, chairs, and other objects being moved without being touched by the medium.' Other phenomena also occurred.

How is this? Seven able men, whose names are given in 'LIGHT,' attend five sittings with the medium, and obtain proof of a power unknown to orthodox science. At Cambridge a so-called investigation takes place, and the conclusion of the majority who attend is that Eusapia is merely a trickster, endowed with wonderful strength! Those who have seen, thousands of times, similar phenomena occur with other mediums, and who are acquainted with the laws affecting such phenomena, know that the failure (if it occurred) at Cambridge was due to the ignorance of the investigators, and the incorrect methods they adopted in their attempts to solve the problem.

When men thus incompetent form their hasty and erroneous conclusions, and promulgate these as facts, they become the great obstructionists to progress and a knowledge of truth, and, in consequence of their limited capacity, are unconsciously greater impostors than would be a cheating medium. The latter produces (as it were) a false telegram. The former asserts that no such thing as the telegraph exists.

TESTS AT PHYSICAL SEANCES.

Mr. Brian Hodgson, of Ladywood, Birmingham, offers the following suggestion as deserving of attention:—

An excellent test has suggested itself to me for application at physical séances where materialised hands and other such partial phenomena are manifest. It has recently been shown by Dr. Galton that the finger print made by a hot hand or by a lightly inked finger is peculiar, in its marking, to the individual to whom it belongs. Could not spirit hands be induced to press their thumbs and fingers upon glass slides, lightly smeared with printer's ink, and then upon white paper, for subsequent examination and comparison with the finger prints of the sitters?

'How to THOUGHT-READ,' by Dr. James Coates (London: Hay, Nisbet, and Co.), is a decidedly useful little 'manual,' but we think the author would have been wiser had he given it a less eccentric title. It is not in accord with the genius of our language to say 'How to Thought-read' any more than it is to say 'How to Trees-plant' or 'How to Photographs-take'; and the simple announcement, 'How to read Thought,' would surely have answered every purpose equally well, at the same time that it would have avoided the appearance of an attempt to catch public attention by a whimsical device. For the book itself we have nothing but praise, and we cordially recommend its perusal to all who are beginning to take an interest in psychical science. Every phase of the subject is ably handled—including thought-transference, hypnotism, mind-reading, clairvoyance, psychometry, and phenomenal Spiritualism. In regard to all these, Dr. Coates offers many valuable suggestions, and as to some of them he gives clear expression to thoughts which are decidedly original. Even if the reader cannot always agree with the author's views and opinions, he will at least find plenty of food for interesting reflection. Unfortunately, this (the second) edition has many printers' errors which should be carefully corrected before the next edition is sent to press.

MUSICAL SPIRITS.

In 'LIGHT' of January 11th last we published a letter addressed by Mr. A. E. Snell, of Cavendish, Idaho, U.S.A., to Mr. E. Polonaski, 38, Warwick-road, Earl's Court London, proprietor and editor of the 'Violin Times,' acknowledging receipt of copies of that paper. In this letter Mr. Snell explained that when he ordered the 'Violin Times' he did so at the suggestion of a spirit who had given the name of Margaret Denning, and who stated that she had lived in England some fifty years ago, and had been, and still was, a violinist. Up to that time Mr. Snell had never so much as heard of the 'Violin Times,' but Margaret Denning gave him the name, and also the name of the street and of the number in the street, where the paper was published—information which he was gratified to find absolutely correct. In the following extract from a letter which has since been received by Madame Polonaski, in reply to one from herself, and which that lady has kindly placed at our disposal, our readers will find some further interesting particulars:—

CAVENDISH, IDAHO, *January 23th, 1896.*

Mrs. Polonaski, London, England,—

Yours of January 1st received January 23rd, and was a welcome surprise. I could write you a very long letter, but do not wish to weary you, and will condense as much as possible.

I must first tell you a little as to how it was that I began to study the Occult, as you will then see that it has probably a great deal to do with the reason of so many musical spirits coming to me. I was born in one of the New England States in 1843, lived there (and got what little education I have) till I was twenty-one years of age, since which time I have lived in California, Oregon, and Idaho. I was engaged while young (in New England States) to a very fine young lady, but owing to my coming West and other causes we were never married. We were to have been married, however, five years ago last Christmas, but she died the September previous. She was the finest pianist I ever heard, excepting the regular celebrities, and was always wedded to her music. This, I think, is why I have been blessed with so many musical spirit friends. After her death I began to think a good deal about where she could be. So I took a trip East and stopped at Chicago, and attended several séances and lectures, and was fortunate enough in my investigations to go to only genuine mediums, and the result was that I became fully convinced of the grand truths of Spiritualism.

I have played the violin since I was a boy, but owing to my business, and to my living on the frontier of America, I have never had the chance to take lessons nor the time to practise, and consequently I am not a good player.

Now I must tell you how I talk with the spirits. A young man and myself use a board with the alphabet and a pointer. We each put one hand upon the board, and the pointer moves and spells out the messages. Unless this young man and myself are together, we can neither of us get anything, and as he is away just now at school, I can obtain no further information at present. I am blessed with the presence of many good spirits, and have found them truthful at all times. I have some musical spirits coming to me regularly, and as you will know about one of them, it will give you the chance of investigating the truth of what he tells me of himself. I never heard his name till he gave it to me here, and I have seen his last name only, and then in the 'Violin Times.' He was a Russian composer and pianist, by the name, as he tells me, of Peter Ilyitch Tchaikowsky (I notice that the 'Violin Times' spells it Tchaikowski). What he says of himself is this, and perhaps you can find out whether I have got it correctly: 'I was born near the Ural Mountains. My father was a nobleman. I was sent to an Imperial Technical School, but soon found that I had more inclination for music, and studied the flute and piano, and afterwards composition. My real success dates from my studies with Nicholas Rubenstein, who gave me a practical insight into counterpoint and musical form.' On one occasion, in answer to questions, he said: 'In spirit life a composition speaks as plainly as words; we have tone pictures as plain as your colour pictures.'

In regard to Margaret Denning, I will tell you how she first came to me. I am frequently asked by spirits to play on the violin for them, and in nearly all cases they have told me that my music was quite good; but about a year ago a new spirit came (Margaret Denning) and asked me to play. As usual, I did so, and asked her if she thought my playing was good, and she said 'No.' Thereupon I said, 'You must be a violinist yourself, then?' She said she was, and gave me the information I wrote in my previous letter, only that I then neglected to say that she passed to spirit life in Birmingham, England. I asked her if it was possible for me to take violin lessons from her, and she said it was if I would do as she told me. Consequently I have learned more in the past year about notes, position, &c., than I ever knew before. She has had me get a full outfit of instruction-books, and in nearly every case I had never seen or heard of them or of the publishers until then. In many cases I have sent orders to firms of whose very existence I had no knowledge, enclosing money in payment, and I invariably found that Margaret Denning had told me correctly—in fact, just as I sent for the 'Violin Times,' although I had never heard that there was such a work, or such a street, or such a number. She said she wished I would send for it, as she thought it would interest me to know what celebrated violinists were doing throughout the world, and I can truthfully say that I am much interested in the work, and look forward with pleasure to the arrival of each number. I once asked her who was the best violinist in the world, and she said that there were various opinions in regard to that, but she thought Sarasate was the best. At that time I had never heard his name, but I have seen it frequently since. . . .

Yours truly,

A. E. SNELL.

WHAT IS CLAIRVOYANCE?

Our able contemporary, 'The Metaphysical Magazine' quotes the following from 'The Malden Evening News' (Mass., U.S.A.):—

An authority upon which we can fully rely calls to our attention a rather remarkable incident. Last Saturday, at 5.21 or 5.22 p.m., an invalid lady residing in Maplewood, the wife of one of the best-known citizens of Malden, suddenly arose from her chair, and, raising both hands excitedly, exclaimed: 'Oh, a dreadful railroad collision has just happened.' Instinctively the woman in charge of the house, to whom the exclamation was made, looked at the timepiece. When the gentleman of the house came home to tea soon after, he was told of the exclamation made by the invalid, and he inquired at what time it was made. Subsequently it was learned by the gentleman and others of the household that the railroad collision at Edgeworth occurred at the very minute the invalid exclaimed that a collision had taken place. The lady remained in a very excited state for about an hour after she made the sudden outcry, and although all in the house tried to persuade her that no such thing had occurred—they not knowing at the time of any accident—the idea could not be banished from her mind. This is something for scientific men to think about. It seems rather more than a coincidence. Some of those who have been made acquainted with the facts in this case believe that thoughts can be conveyed to minds adapted to receive them, upon the same principle that slight sounds can be heard a long distance away, by peculiarly sensitive ears, while others, being completely absorbed upon other matters at the time, would not be affected by the vibrations of air caused by the swing of a sledgehammer on an anvil across the street. There is no question as to the actual fact that this occurred. As to the explanation of the phenomenon, each must seek the solution for himself.

A MADAME ROSETTI, who resides at Rochester, New York, professes to be a musical medium. She takes her seat at the piano and passes into a trance, during which she is described as playing and singing with the greatest ease and skill the most beautiful and difficult songs. Madame sings in several different languages, none of which does she understand, and she performs with great efficiency upon various instruments without having previously learnt them.

That cutting up, and parcelling, and labelling, of the indivisible human soul into what are called 'faculties' I have from of old eschewed, and even hated. — CARLYLE.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED
DECEMBER 31ST, 1895.

In presenting our twelfth Annual Report, we have the satisfaction of being able to state that the number of members on the books of the Alliance has not only been maintained but has been materially increased, and that there has been evidence on every hand of an augmented interest in our special work.

Perhaps the most notable event of the year was the General Conference of Spiritualists held in London in the month of May, the arrangements for which were successfully carried out by the Council, assisted by several delegates representing other London Societies, the Spiritualists' International Corresponding Society, and the National Federation of Spiritualists, and who kindly gave their cordial co-operation. The Conference was preceded by a religious service in St. Andrew's Hall, Newman-street, when the Rev. J. Page Hopps gave an address on 'Spiritualism—the Key that Unlocks all Doors.' Four other meetings were held in the Portman Rooms, Baker street, the President of the Alliance occupying the chair on the occasion of the opening assembly, while the Rev. J. Page Hopps, Mr. W. T. Stead, and Mr. John Lamont presided over the subsequent gatherings. Animated discussions took place on the following subjects:—'The Public Exhibition of Spiritual Phenomena,' introduced by Mr. James Robertson (Glasgow); 'An Ideal Religious Service,' introduced by Mr. E. W. Wallis (Manchester); 'The Relation between Science and Spiritualism,' introduced by Mr. T. Shorter; 'Spirit Photography,' introduced by Mr. Traill Taylor; 'Our Duty to Young People,' introduced by Mr. A. Kitson (Hanging Heaton); 'Organisation,' introduced by Mr. S. S. Chiswell (Liverpool); and 'Our Duty with regard to Spirit Messages,' introduced by Mr. J. J. Morse. Answers to questions from the audience were also given by Mrs. Hardinge Britten. The proceedings were brought to a close by a *Conversazione*, at which, as we believe, there was the largest gathering of Spiritualists ever held in London.

The usual periodical Assemblies were held during the winter months. At these gatherings free discussion is invited, and the members have every opportunity of stating their own views or asking for further explanation on any questions which may arise. Until recently the meetings were held in the rooms of the Alliance, at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, but as it was found necessary to provide better accommodation they were transferred to the French Drawing-Room, St. James's Hall, a change which has been recognised by our friends as in every way a distinct improvement. During the season, addresses were given on 'Magicians and Mediums,' by Mrs. Hardinge Britten; on 'Professional Mediumship,' by Mr. Thomas Shorter; on 'A Spiritual View of God's Kingdom upon the Earth,' by the Rev. J. Page Hopps; on 'The Material Use of Spiritual Phenomena,' by Mr. J. J. Morse; on 'Spiritualism and Theosophy—their Likeness and Unlikeness,' by Mr. Herbert Burrows; and on 'The Proper Limits of Occult Investigation,' by Mr. Richard Harte. Experiments in clairvoyance and psychometry were also given by Mrs. A. J. Stansfield, Miss MacGreadie, and Miss Rowan Vincent. To all these friends we desire to express our cordial thanks for their kind assistance.

A *Conversazione* was held in October, in St. James's Hall, and was very numerously attended. On that occasion Miss X., of 'Borderland,' kindly occupied the platform, and delivered an interesting address on the question, 'Where shall we Draw the Line?'—i.e., between phenomena which she admitted to be consistent with the spiritualistic hypothesis, and others which she thought could be satisfactorily accounted for on other grounds.

Another meeting, which must not be left entirely unnoticed in this Report, was held in the Portman Rooms in July, when the members and friends of the Alliance had the pleasure of welcoming two distinguished mediums on their visit to this country—Mr. John Slater, of San Francisco, U.S.A., and Mr. George Springs, of Melbourne. These friends have since returned to their usual spheres of labour; but we are not without hope that we may some day have the pleasure of welcoming their presence amongst us once again. Other friends and co-workers have during the year passed on to the higher life, including the Countess of Caithness, Mrs. Newton Croeland, Mrs. E. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Honywood, Mrs. Western, Miss Thatcher, Mr. J. Traill Taylor, and Mr. James Burns. To

their surviving relatives and friends we tender our sincere sympathy on their temporary loss.

We are glad to be able to report a growing appreciation of our valuable Library. To our country members books are cheerfully forwarded on request, and so extensive have been the transmissions by train and post that the books have materially suffered in consequence, necessitating a considerable outlay for re-binding. But the demand affords a gratifying evidence of increasing interest, and must therefore be regarded with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction. The Library contains nearly all the standard works on Spiritualism and kindred subjects, and new books of sterling worth are added as they appear.

In conclusion, we confidently appeal to the work of the past year, in all its various departments, as a title to the confidence of members and to a continued and increasing support.

Signed on behalf of the Council,

February, 1896.

E. DAWSON ROGERS, *President*.

SOME SUGGESTIONS BY A DOUBTER.

The spirit of argument is upon me, and I join issue with the argument used by Spiritualists that ghosts or apparitions are proved by weight of evidence, on the ground that numbers of people have seen them, and *all* of these cannot be victims of hallucination.

I think that hallucination is a word to be treated with respect. Hallucinations are daily and familiar guests with us all, and far more common than realities, so that when I say that a person seeing a ghost is under an hallucination, I do not in the least mean to question his sanity or veracity; it is merely a conventional way of putting things. When I say I saw the moon rise two or three nights ago, I confess to being under an hallucination; the moon does not rise, nor does the sun. When I say the sea is green or the sky blue-green, I am equally under an hallucination. If you describe a flash of lightning as 'A forked line of light stretching from cloud to earth,' I reply, Not a bit of it; that is an hallucination. It is a number of minute particles so heated that they give out light—but in succession; the rapidity of the flash makes it *look* like a line. I need not multiply instances; they are familiar enough.

But what is vision? Roughly speaking, I believe light is a mode of motion analogous to, but different from, that kind of motion which produces a sense of heat, or which is heat. This motion, or vibration, acts in such a way on our brain, or irritates certain nerves in such a way, that we become conscious of the reflection of objects on the retina of the eye; this reflection being itself due to the action of light.

Now, as to the seeing of apparitions, is it not possible that telepathic influences may irritate these particular nerves in the same or a similar way to that in which rays of light influence them, and that we see mentally, as it were? The vision may be just as vivid, real, and distinct as if it were caused by some material object, which, intercepting some, and reflecting other, rays of light, was reflected on the retina of the eye, and, thus irritating the same nerves, gave a consciousness of form and colour.

I advance this merely as a theory, but I can adduce one or two somewhat similar conditions that will show it is not an impossible theory. Take, first, the case of a man suffering from biliousness. He sees spots and sparks in front of his eyes. These do not exist, yet he undoubtedly sees them; the fact being that the state of his liver produces such sympathetic action on his brain as to cause him the same consciousness as would be produced by spots or particles in the air.

The next instance is, perhaps, unfair to cite. It is, perhaps, more of a genuine delusion, due to disease of the brain. I mean the things seen by a man suffering from delirium tremens.

But the third instance is more to the point—that is, the case of people gifted with the power of thought-reading, who, being brought blind-folded into a room where some object is hidden, walk straight up to it and find it; they must have seen it with their mental eye.

Spiritualists will admit that the spiritual and immortal part of each one of us—which must be something quite different from, and independent of, the collection of nerves and cells by means of which external surroundings are manifested to us, or even of that special part of the brain in which these are received, dealt with, acted upon, and remembered—is equally or more capable of all these functions, which to a certain extent can be performed by physiological action only. A dog can

reason, draw inferences, and remember, but, as far as we know, a dog has no immortal part or essence in him.

Well, this essence, or soul, must be something higher, subtler, more powerful, than the material physical brain, and it must share its power of memory and reason. Now, I think that it is reasonable to assume that such a subtle force can, under certain conditions, act at a distance, that space to it is nothing.

Every day we see examples of forces that practically annihilate space. Light and electricity, for instance, can traverse enormous distances with very slight diminution of force, so I think it is reasonable to assume that under certain conditions the soul could have the same power.

Now the theory of the Spiritualists (shall I call it No. 1?) is that this soul of some one who has departed this life is here on earth, or can come here, and either has permanently, or can assume temporarily, an outward body or covering, which, though of necessity rarer (less dense) than air, as it can pass through walls and doors, yet has sufficient substance to intercept and reflect light so as to be visible. Another theory (No. 2, say) is that this same soul, acting from space on the brain or soul of a living man, can produce in his brain or mind the same sensation as would be caused by an apparition; that is, it causes him to see the apparition with his mental eye, differing only in degree from telepathy, by means of which two living people, though apart, become conscious of each other's thoughts and actions. And such telepathy need not be confined to the sense of sight alone; it is reasonable to suppose that the other senses may be excited in a similar way.

I incline to this second theory as being the more reasonable of the two, and that is why I do not think an apparition can be photographed, and why I do not believe in the so-called spirit photographs.

I admit that there are several very serious difficulties in the way of my theory. One is this: If, when you see an apparition, you shut your eyes and the apparition disappears, it would certainly seem as though the apparition had a real, tangible existence; but it is quite possible that the fact of shutting the eyes would so derange the nerves, &c., that they would lose their receptivity. On the other hand, has a blind person ever been conscious of an apparition?

The second difficulty is that of two or more people who had no great affinity, either with each other or with the apparition, seeing the apparition simultaneously. Still more would it weaken my case if they got different views of it; but it is possible that the spirit may have wished to be able to influence all present.

Well-authenticated cases of physical acts done by the apparition would, of course, upset my theory, but have any such acts ever been conclusively established? Water spilt, chairs overturned, footprints, and the like can so often be accounted for, if carefully investigated.

At all events, however wild my theory may be, the subject is so interesting that it can do no harm to think of it from every possible point of view.

R. B. M. F. KELLY, Major, R.A.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Order of the White Rose.

SIR,—Your correspondent, 'R. Wormwood,' may rest assured that 'the Order of the White Rose' is no secret society, and has a very real existence—its principal object being to keep alive the claims of the House of Stuart to its rightful inheritance—of which it was wrongfully deprived by a set of fanatics, murderers, and regicides.

I wish for some insight into the spirit world, and should be glad to know how to set about it, or whom to consult.

COMPANION, O.W.R.

'Murderous Millinery.'

SIR,—Having read in last week's number of 'LIGHT' the extract from the 'Daily News' about the extermination of the little egret to supply ladies with 'aigrettes,' I write to call to the notice of your readers 'The Society for the Protection of Birds,' thinking perhaps it may be unknown to some of them. The Duchess of Portland is President, and we have now many thousands of members, who all undertake to wear no feathers (except those of birds killed for purposes of food) and to

generally use all their influence to protect birds and bird-life. Anyone may join the society by sending 2d. for a card of membership to the hon. secretary, Mrs. Lemon, Hillcrest, Redhill, Surrey; or to any of the local secretaries.

ETHEL WELTCH, Local Secretary S.P.B.
The Colonial College, Hollesley Bay.

Evidential Value of Clairvoyant Delineations.

SIR,—I had the pleasure of being present at the meeting of the members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the French Drawing Room at St. James's Hall, on February 21st, when Mrs. Vincent Bliss gave clairvoyant delineations of the spirit friends of many present, and I was glad to find, upon inquiry, that so many of such descriptions were fully recognised, and can well imagine that those not recognised at the time may have been so afterwards. May I be permitted, through your columns, to suggest to the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance that a full, accurate record of such experiments would have considerable evidential value? I would recommend that the delineation given by the medium should be taken down in shorthand, and the name and address of the recipient obtained afterwards; that such account be written out in full and sent to the recipient, who should be requested, after mature deliberation, to put in writing the fact of full or partial recognition; or, if so be it, the failure to recognise. Such delineations and statements of the recipients, if published in your paper or given at subsequent meetings of the members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, could not fail, I think, to interest those who have had nothing personal given to themselves, or think all descriptions are very vague and generally applicable to all, and are not satisfied with the simple but often recorded statement that 'many or all delineations were at once recognised.' INQUIRER.

'The Passage of Matter Through Matter.'

SIR,—As a thoughtful and philosophical speculation, Dr. Wyld's letter is worthy of consideration. With matter capable of vibrating longitudinally and transversely, the presence of the iron ring on Husk's wrist could, other explanations failing, be explained. But in the first place, the 'longitudinal vibrations' that the Doctor writes about have not yet been definitely established in connection with the 'New Photography.' Their existence is thought probable, but that is all. Such vibrations should have no difficulty in passing through glass; but that is what the Röntgen rays cannot readily do. Moreover, to compare the vibrations of light as exhibited, say, by a Crookes's tube, with those of matter, seems hardly feasible, seeing that the medium—the ether—for the conveyance of the former is so subtle that it permeates all forms of matter as readily, to use a coarse illustration, as the wind passes through the tree-tops. But why seek in the 'New Photography' for a possible explanation of the 'Passage of Matter through Matter,' when science can adduce many other facts equally startling and suggestive? Take 'solutions,' for instance. It is quite possible to make one fluid pass through another, and yet if we observe the process of diffusion with our most powerful microscopes, we cannot follow the motion of any individual portion of the fluids. The process may be described as a motion of the fluids, not in mass, but by molecules. If substances having definite forms of crystallisation are dissolved and stirred vigorously together and then allowed to stand, crystallisation will presently recommence, the resulting crystals being as characteristic as before, each molecule having threaded its way through the crowd and joined its own particular set. Graham has observed that both liquids and gases pass through porous solid bodies, such as plugs of plaster of Paris, or plates of pressed plumbago. In other cases liquids or gases passed through a diaphragm which is not in the ordinary sense porous. For example, carbonic acid confined in a soap bubble rapidly escapes. Hydrogen and other gases can pass through a layer of caoutchouc. When iron is raised to a high temperature, palladium, carbonic oxide, and hydrogen will pass through it. Some substances, such as salt and sugar, will move freely through membranes like skin and bladder, while others, like gum, gelatine, starch, and albumen, will scarcely pass at all. This fact, it may be interesting to note, has been utilised by chemists in supposed cases of poisoning. The contents of the stomach are placed in a vessel with a bottom composed of a membrane, and set in another vessel filled with pure water. Most of the violent poisons, such as arsenic, &c., would diffuse into the water, and thus be separated from the other contents

of the stomach. Osmosis, as a somewhat similar process is called, plays an important part in the digestion of food by diffusion through the walls of the stomach, and the same thing goes on in growing trees and plants in regard to the diffusion of the sap. In all these cases we have matter either as a solid, liquid, or gas, passing through matter. Matter, we are taught, is eternal; its form varying with the conditions under which it manifests. For iron, as we know it, to pass through flesh and bone seems hard of belief, but change the conditions, vaporise both iron and flesh, and the thing is accomplished, the resulting gases passing easily the one through the other. This may not be the exact method of our spirit friends, but it is upon some such lines that they must work.

A. BUTCHER.

Spiritualism and the Press.

SIR.—The attitude of the Press towards Spiritualism is rather difficult to explain, but I suppose, like everything else, there is a cause for it,—perhaps many. I remember when I first started Spiritualism in this locality some thirty years ago, the papers were free enough to publish anything on the subject, both for and against. I have a copy of our local 'Gazette,' that, with two or three exceptions, is made up entirely of the subject. Correspondence was fully allowed, but when it was found that I was getting the best of the argument, there was the ominous note, 'This correspondence must now cease.' This was, of course, the editorial veto, but I remember a letter from a clergyman to a country paper saying, in an authoritative tone, 'The matter has now gone far enough, and must be put a stop to.' One editor, as an excuse for drawing in his horns, said, 'The fact is, Spiritualism doesn't pay.' There is no doubt a great deal of truth in this. Another editor refused to publish a letter I sent him, because a proprietor of a Patent Medicine had threatened to withdraw his standing advertisement if my letters were published. But, of course, considerations of this kind would not influence the London Press, which for the most part fails to act fairly with Spiritualism. The reason in this case is that it is not popular, is somewhat of a revolutionary character, and subversive of vested interests. It does not uphold the popular religious teaching, and consequently excites the prejudices of religious people, and the non-religious look upon it as humbug. The Press is a reflection of public opinion, not a leader. Some years ago I sent to the principal London editors a tract, 'Testimony of Distinguished Scientists to the Reality of the Spiritual Phenomena,' which I think had a good effect, for since then there has not been much said in disparagement of Spiritualism by the leading journals—their policy has been to leave it severely alone. I remember, when the Davenports were here, I wanted a letter of Mr. Howitt's on 'The Davenports and the Press' published, for which I offered to pay. The 'Morning Post' was the only one of the London dailies that would do it, and I had to pay £9 for its insertion. Even the 'Echo,' which deals very liberally with most subjects, and will admit almost anything against the popular orthodox theological systems, acts as illiberally and unfairly as any other paper towards Spiritualism. Its critical note on Dr. A. R. Wallace's book was ably shown up by 'Lancet.' It discounted the opinion of Professor Crookes and Dr. A. R. Wallace, by asserting that there were numerous other scientists of equal or greater renown who did not believe in Spiritualism. Those, of course, knew nothing of the subject. This logic reminds one of the Irishman accused of murder, of which he said he was innocent, and when told there was a witness who saw him do it, said, 'What of that? I can bring forward a dozen that didn't see me.' These smart pressmen, like the 'Echo' writer, claim that conjurers have explained the phenomena by duplicating them, but they forget to say, or do not know, that Mr. Fowler, of Liverpool, offered £1,000 to anyone who would produce the same results as the Davenports, under the same conditions, and that Mr. Algernon Joy offered, in the 'Times,' the same amount to Mr. Maskelyne with a like object, but in neither case was the challenge accepted. In a journal of large circulation, to-day I notice a paragraph about Spiritualism, in which the writer *anxiously* says, 'Really, we thought these "manifestations" had been exploded long ago by the clever series of conjurers and electrical entertainers who have appeared from time to time.'

A few days ago a writer in the 'Sun,' who gives what he calls 'Sunstroke,' and essays to make a point in each case, which is meant for wit, gave an account of the alleged case of haunting in Lincolnshire, and this was his point:—

In London, when 'spooks' make their appearance, we either call in the police or sign the pledge, and one of the two methods is always efficacious; but the mere mention of a ghost will provide Hodge with conversation for a century, and it is probable that nobody in the Fen district will dare to pass a churchyard at night for generations to come.

At one time it was thought that the Press was going to act fairly and in a rational manner with Spiritualism, for some twenty years ago the 'Times' sent a 'commissioner,' who was accompanied by a friend, to Mr. Williams in Lamb's Conduit-street, with a view to report in that journal what might take place. A full, fair, and favourable account in due time appeared, which, with a lot of introductory matter on the subject generally, occupied the best part of a page. I forget now what was reported to have taken place, except that a chair was placed on the table whilst they were sitting round it with their hands joined. This was a puzzler, and the writer concluded his article with the words: 'but how did the chair get on to the table?' He did not suggest that the medium lifted it up with his teeth. But, then, he was not a conjurer! A correspondence ensued, in which several distinguished writers took part, among whom was our esteemed coadjutor, Dr. A. R. Wallace. The correspondence lasted a fortnight.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

SOCIETY WORK.

WELCOME HALL, 218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END, E.—On Sunday last Mr. Dale gave an interesting address on 'The Creed of Spiritualism,' which was highly appreciated by a large audience. On Sunday next, Miss Marsh, clairvoyance, at 7 p.m.—W. M.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday last Mr. Veitch again gave an excellent address on 'Spiritualism and the Bible,' and replied to questions from inquirers. On Sunday next Mr. E. White will occupy our platform. Mr. Smith will be the medium for next Friday.—THOS. MCCALLUM.

CARDIFF PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ST. JOHN'S HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. S. Longville gave an able address upon 'Justice, not Mercy, a Divine Attribute.' Mercy, being favour shown to persons deserving of punishment, is a purely human attribute. God works alone through His fixed laws, by which an eternal and inexorable justice is meted out, thus affording the surest basis of hope for the ultimate emancipation of all humanity; a hope which could not exist were God variable in character and liable to exercise or withhold the human quality of mercy. Successful after-séance kindly led by Mrs. Dowdall's controls. Speaker next Sunday evening, Mr. E. G. Sadler, 'The Mercy in Nature.'—E. A.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL.—On Sunday last a large audience welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Brenchley, who are working hard and well to spread the Gospel of Spiritualism. Mr. Brenchley gave an address upon 'Guardian Angels,' and related interesting facts in his own experience which had proved their real existence. Mrs. Brenchley then gave normal clairvoyant delineations, satisfying many people that their friends still live to guard and guide them. This lady also gave us proof that she is rapidly developing for public speaking. Next Sunday, Miss MacCreadie. Temperance Branch Meeting at 8.30 p.m. On Easter Sunday we celebrate the forty-eighth anniversary of the dawn of modern Spiritualism. We hope to hold a truly spiritual festival at 6.30 p.m., and on Easter Monday a social evening at 7 p.m. Tickets, 1s. Full particulars shortly. Every Thursday evening at 35, Station-road, lecture and debate.—A. E. B.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mr. W. E. Long was the speaker, and taking for his subject 'The Basis of Mediumship,' he delivered an address full of all that freshness and vitality always associated with this gentleman's utterances. The meeting was well attended, and the audience were profoundly interested in the able exposition given by Mr. Long of the ways and means by and through which spirit communion is carried on. Mr. Long impressed upon his hearers the need of laying aside all worldly matters when sitting in séance, and of seeking, by raising themselves to a truly spiritual condition, to enter into a real communion with their incarnate friends. We hope that the Marylebone Association may be favoured by the presence of this most generous and able worker on future occasions. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Miss Rowan Vincent, 'The Development of Spiritual Gifts,' followed by clairvoyance.—L. H.

AN APPEAL FOR THE PIONEER MEDIUM.—A benefit séance for Mr. W. Wallace, the old pioneer medium, will be held at 51, Ladbroke-road, Notting Hill Gate, on Sunday, March 8th, at 3 p.m., when Mrs. Treadwell, Mr. W. Goddard, and several other well-known mediums will be present. The object in holding the séance in the afternoon is to enable friends to be present without interruption to their attendance at their usual evening meeting places. Friends from a distance attending the séance can be accommodated with tea at sixpence each. Mr. W. Wallace has laboured among Spiritualists for many years, and his remuneration has been but slight. I trust that all those who have had the advantage of his valuable services in the past will do all in their power to offer him some reward for his honest endeavours. Any friend desirous of sending contributions for Mr. Wallace's benefit can do so by addressing it to Mrs. Treadwell, 51, Ladbroke-road, Notting Hill, W., or to her private address, 36, Belgrave-road, St. John's Wood.—G. H. VINCENT GODDARD, 51, Ladbroke-road, Notting Hill Gate.