

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 823 — VOL. XVI [Registered as] SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1896. [a Newspaper] PRICE TWOPENCE.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

'The New York Herald' (Paris) continues its very sensible little Sunday sermons. One of its latest, on 'A Reasonable Religion,' we very much like the taste of. It distinguishes between Theology and Religion, and reverses the usual order,—putting Religion first and Theology second. Its illustration as to their respective merits is a quaint one. Religion, it says, is the apple on the tree. Theology is only an inquiry as to the various and subtle natural forces which have combined to produce the fruit. The analogy is hardly exact, but it is near enough for practical purposes.

The conclusion, however, is perfect. Theology is for the inquisitive and scholarly few. Religion is for all, inasmuch as it is simply accepting the apple and eating it. 'Take the apple from the tree,' says this sensible 'lay' preacher, 'and eat it':—

If it quenches your thirst and satisfies your appetite, it makes no difference who planted the tree or how the fruit came from the blossom.

A reasonable faith in religion does not depend on your knowledge of all the secrets of the universe, but on your knowledge of what that religion will do for you. In other words, the only true test of religious faith is to be found in personal experience. Mere argument amounts to nothing; a fair trial settles the matter beyond cavil. Those who have tested it most severely prize it most highly.

That is precisely what we often want to say to our own friends. Our dissensions, when we have any, usually proceed from our worrying about 'the secrets of the universe,' the *why* and the *how*. Would it not be wise to very much confine ourselves to the great fact of spirit-communion, and leave all explanations and particulars as perfectly open matters? There is the apple. Eat it, and be thankful!

'The Harbinger of Light' reports several interesting séances with Mrs. Mellon, in Melbourne. In an editorial note, 'The Harbinger' says of one of these meetings:—

A cabinet had been improvised consisting of plain thin boards built out about twenty inches from the solid wall, a little over six feet high, with two curtains suspended from the front. It was undoubtedly an honest cabinet. Mrs. Mellon sat outside the curtains, facing the centre, where the two met: a gas jet covered with a globe and red paper in a corner of the room afforded the light, but by direction of the control it was turned low; it, however, afforded sufficient light for the sitters, who formed two rows opposite, and at one end of the room, to see each other and the objects in the room. Under these conditions a small white mass like a child form appeared at the left hand corner of the curtain at least two feet from Mrs. Mellon, then a taller form at the centre opening, rising about twelve inches above Mrs. Mellon's head, the face partly covered by drapery. There was not light sufficient to distinguish features. After an interval without further manifestations it was suggested that Mrs. Mellon should sit inside the curtains; this being approved by the company, who numbered over twenty, Mrs. Mellon complied; there was only just room for the chair between the curtain and wall, and the medium therefore sat sideways. Seven other forms of various sizes and shapes appeared at intervals, the most prominent of whom was 'Cissy,' a little black girl,

who spoke, reached and rang vigorously a small bell placed on a table near the outside corner of the cabinet; she also danced in a childish manner, the thud as of feet being distinctly heard.

Two correspondents, in a temperate tone, describe other séances of a more successful character. One letter says:—

I attended a materialisation séance held by Mrs. Mellon at Mr. B.'s, and left that evening thoroughly convinced that the manifestations were genuine. They were of such a nature that as far as my judgment goes fraud was impossible. There were about seventeen sitters, and evidently the circle was a thoroughly congenial one, for it soon became evident that the results would be better than usual; in fact, it is the best séance I have yet attended of Mrs. Mellon's. The light was good; there was an unusual degree of life and vivacity about the forms, and during the early portion of the séance the medium sat in full view of the circle, and the forms, it could be seen, had no connection with her. One sitter, a good clairvoyant, described the forms as they were being built up, and his vision was verified a few seconds later, when the form was visible to the normal vision. Out of fourteen forms thirteen were recognised as friends or relatives of the sitters.

We are glad to note these favourable reports; strongly holding as we do that 'exposures' and suspicions should be followed by renewed and more resolute inquiry. The treatment of Eusapia Paladino, in Cambridge, for instance, was an excellent illustration of how *not* to do it.

Is 'The Agnostic Journal' in receipt of messages from the unseen? In one of its last 'To Correspondents,' it says:—

M.A. Oxon. writes: 'The "At Randoms" are daringly erratic; but they show omnivorous reading, keen observation, tender pathos, and a strangely lurid and acrid humour. They are *sui generis*.'

'The Avenue, a monthly magazine, devoted to Association, Education and Social Progress,' has this month started on its career. The general object and spirit of it may, perhaps, be inferred when we say that the place of honour is reserved for Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, with a long and careful Article on Robert Owen. The Article is adorned with two full-page portraits of this fine old pioneer.

Very keenly does Mr. Holyoake appreciate the unselfish, courageous and patient spirit of the man, as teacher and experimenter; and one touch in this well-told story illustrates with equal pathos and beauty the genuine heroism of the man. Says Mr. Holyoake:—

When in his eighty-seventh year he retired from the world, and was stretched upon his solitary bed in Newtown, and all his toils and visions were over, and the sands of life were ebbing fast, and a few short hours would close his long account with the unheeding world, the clergyman who called upon him asked him whether he did not regret the waste of his life upon fruitless efforts and unaccepted schemes. The old philosopher's eye brightened, and he answered: 'No, sir; my life has not been spent uselessly. I have proclaimed important truths to the world, and if they were not regarded by the world, it was because the world did not understand them. Why should I blame the world or myself? I am in advance of my time.' The clergyman admitted that he never saw more consistent philosophy than was manifested by the brave old philanthropist.

An inspiring lesson for us all!

We are particularly glad to see that the long-promised 'Portrait Album of Spiritual Mediums, Workers and Celebrities' is ready. It hails from Manchester, and is said to be 'one of the finest and cheapest volumes ever issued from the Spiritual Press.' It contains upwards of one hundred portraits and short biographical sketches. It may be somewhat fanciful, or even conceited, but we are nevertheless very strongly disposed to think that one hundred good heads of convinced Spiritualists will furnish a rather telling argument. We may have more to say about the book when we see it, but may as well state that if ordered before October 21st it will be sent *post free* for half-a-crown. After that day it will be three shillings by post. Orders may be sent to Mr. E. W. Wallis, 18, Corporation-street, Manchester.

'The Banner of Light' is strongly at one with us in recognising the appropriateness of the word 'Spiritualism.' It is *not* only 'Spiritism' we are aiming at, but something much more comprehensive. Spiritualism is Spiritism and something more. It includes inspiration, philosophy and life. 'The Banner' wisely emphasises this view of our testimony, and points out how, in emancipating us from traditional and merely creedal religion, it carries us on to vital religion which is simply the result of personal communion with spiritual realities. The following is decidedly to the point:—

Spiritualism, in overthrowing the slavery to the historic faith, thereby widening the view and introducing facts and truths in place of merely superstitious belief, should substitute a larger spirituality, and thus advance upon the past and break down its limitations. In other words, it should be a truer and better representative of the spiritual than any alleged revelation of the past. That is but an imagination, a theory, a formulated guess. It rests faith on knowledge. It buttresses truth with facts. But Spiritualism should not be willing to stop there: it should be its peculiar office or duty to help the universal life of spirit to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Its believers should not take up with the phenomena to idolatrise them, but should make use of them to teach, not simply the fact of intercommunion but the higher and deeper one of the presence of the Spirit and its sovereign possession of their lives.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.

A Social Meeting of Members and Associates for 'Tea and Coffee, Music and Talk,' will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 p.m. for 7.30, on *Friday next, October 23rd*. The special object of the meeting will be to afford to the Members and Associates residing in London and the neighbourhood an opportunity for friendly intercourse and the interchange of thoughts on topics of mutual interest. Admission will be by ticket, and each ticket will entitle the holder to bring one friend with him.

In accordance with No. 15 of the Articles of Association, the subscriptions of Members and Associates elected after this date will be taken as for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1897.

THE Treasurer of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, thankfully acknowledges the receipt of £1 from Mrs. Sainsbury and £1 from Mr. J. H. Sankey, towards the cost of Incorporation.

SEERS OR PROPHETS.—We note with satisfaction that Mr. J. Page Hopps has issued a new edition of his valuable little pamphlet on 'The Seers or Prophets of the Old Testament.' Many good, simple souls have been sadly perplexed by the anomalous aspects under which seers or prophets are depicted—often outraging every sense of justice and right and truth, and yet all claiming to speak with a 'Thus saith the Lord.' Mr. Hopps clears the way for a correct apprehension of the facts, and solves the difficulty in a way which must commend itself to all Spiritualists, and should be acceptable to every honest student of Biblical history. The pamphlet is published at twopence, for which price it may be obtained *post free* from the office of 'LIGHT,' 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.

'SPIRITISM AND ANARCHY.'*

Spiritualism and anarchy have not much to say to each other, but M. Bouvéry does not allude to the anarchy of the dynamitards, but to the temporary state of social confusion that arises when the Old is demolished in order that the New may be erected in its stead—a diseased condition of society in the midst of which we are, in fact, at present living, without being exactly aware of it.

The early part of M. Bouvéry's volume of 464 pages is devoted to a clear statement of the facts of Modern Spiritualism (or 'Spiritisme'), as now generally recognised by well-informed Spiritualists; the second and larger part of the book is given up to inferences from those facts; to general reflections, that is to say, on morality and sociology, and forecasts of the better social condition that, thanks to Spiritualism, will follow the present confusion.

Hitherto, Spiritualists have been occupied almost solely with the defence and establishment of the doctrine of the survival of the spirit or Ego, and its ability to communicate with earth; but M. Bouvéry, in a way, takes it for granted that this is only a first step in the path of a Spiritualist, and applies himself resolutely to the solution of the great problems of life, by fearlessly drawing logical conclusions from the data supplied by Spiritualism. In the field of Spiritualism thus extended he is almost a pioneer, and he has, therefore, somewhat the appearance of a trespasser on the domain of Theosophy, indeed of religion and philosophy in general, if we give to the name 'Spiritualism' only the restricted meaning it has hitherto popularly had.

He accepts Re-incarnation after a searching examination, and thereupon bases one of the pillars of his edifice; for the obvious result of a belief in Re-incarnation is the recognition of our duty to posterity, a branch of morality that religion completely ignores. He says the most powerful human motive to action, self-interest, would be enlisted on the side of good if men were convinced that by failing in social duty they were drawing down upon themselves in a future incarnation endless misfortunes and tribulations, since, when they come back to earth, they will find themselves the victims of evil customs and institutions that they themselves have helped to originate or perpetuate. Our misfortunes are only the ripened fruit of the wicked and senseless actions of our ancestors; and unborn millions are *already* the slaves of our errors and follies.

The keynote of M. Bouvéry's book is its startling sincerity; not the narrow and grating sincerity of the stiff-minded person who strains us mentally and sprains us morally by 'always telling the truth,' but the sincerity of the man who has the courage to draw logical conclusions from data which almost everyone accepts, but puts away in some cupboard of his mind, without taking the trouble to examine them. Here, for example, is a thought put into plain words, which most people have timidly blinked at, without exactly perceiving: 'Society smiles at the poets who sing about love, and humiliates, drives out, prostitutes, and assassinates the beautiful girls that act as the poets suggest.'

Applying this method to the problem of man's origin, M. Bouvéry shows that so far from a 'missing link' having been discovered, the anthropoid apes disappear as we go back geologically; and that the oldest remains of man present a cranial capacity equal, if not superior, to that of the men of our own times. Now, these big-brained men were undoubtedly savages, and they lived in the midst of constant danger of extermination by the antediluvian monsters, since they had no adequate weapons, nor natural means of defence, and were, like all savages, mere children in reasoning power. This is the point in the argument at which the materialist would probably say, 'Who knows!—Don't let us talk any more about it!' but the Spiritualist has no need to burke the difficulty, for he believes in an intelligent Power behind external Nature, and he has actual experience of materialisations. Moreover, he strongly suspects that intelligences higher in the scale of being than man, can and do even now manifest on earth. Adding these data to the former, how can we possibly avoid the conclusion, asks our author, that infant man was originally a 'materialisation,' which took its substance from psychic emanations furnished by the animals, and got its form from some higher source, which also supplied our human intelligence

* *Le Spiritisme et l'Anarchie devant la Science et la Philosophie.* Par J. BOUVÉRY. Paris, 1897. Price three francs.

wherewith to animate that form? M. Bouvéry, moreover, puts forward a theory of semi-divine incarnations in early days to guide and protect baby man, and of revelations from higher spheres, that shows a likeness both to the dicta of Religion and to the 'secrets' of Occultism; but his theory differs from these in that it is not 'given out' on authority, but is supported by fact and logical inference. M. Bouvéry does not impose his opinions on us hypnotically, by force of assertion, but puts them forward as the most probable solution of the mystery; and that is the only true scientific form of 'belief' as distinguished from knowledge. He thinks that we shall be forced to believe as he does by the 'logic of facts,' as soon as we realise in our minds the true import of what we already know.

We venture to suggest that if the book be translated into English, a better title than 'Spiritism and Anarchy' would be 'Spiritualism, Experimental and Applied.' In the meantime, those of our readers to whom the French language is familiar, will find in M. Bouvéry's volume many new and fertilising ideas admirably expressed.

SPIRITUALISM AND OCCULTISM.

BY QUÆSTOR VITÆ.

(Continued from page 476.)

As no negative polemic is really of any good unless it raises the position controverted by showing the truth underlying, I venture to present the following as an effort to raise the controversy above the plane of collision.

We can no more be said to have independent existence than can the cells in our organism be said to have independent existence apart from the Ego which constitutes the organism, and in which and towards which they stand in the relation of subordinate fractions or factors. Also is our will no more independent than is the vitality which constitutes such cells, and which is shown in Karyokinesis to be that of the commanding vital Ego which flows through them.

Man, as a unit of the Universal, contains an epitome of the whole, and represents the universal process. Consequently, the above microcosmic process is a representation of the universal process. The life current, or 'River of Life,' which flows to man, and on which mediation he is dependent, flows to him from solar beings whom he represents, and who stand to him in the same relation as man's vital Ego stands to the cells of his organism, as illustrated in Karyokinesis. (See Schaefer's 'Histology.')

It is manifestly impossible for any unitary cells included in man's organism to set up as possessing independent wills of their own, apart from that of the relatively supreme Ego constituting them. If such were possible, disorder, disaster, disease, *i.e.*, chaos, would ensue. Equally is man's will but a communicated reflection of the will of the supreme Solar Self, constituting and including him, in the explication of whose will man consciously shares, but viewing his position from a fallacious anthropocentric standpoint, he claims for himself what pertains to the Universal process.

Further; man no more exists independently and apart from his fellow men, than can any one cell in man's organism exist apart from, and abstracted from, the other cells in that relative unity. Similarly man constitutes an integral unit in a larger racial and planetary unity or synthetic individual, from which he cannot be abstracted. Again, our planetary life is an integral part of the life of the other planets, from which ours cannot be dissociated, and these combined are included in the individual life of our solar universe, in which the planets stand but as the mere skeleton of the material organism, sustaining the living units pertaining thereto and behind all of which is the Solar Conscious Self, who receives and communicates the vitality constituting and including its conscious thinking units or selves; the True Self within, yet transcending, all its included selves. The component persons (incarnate and discarnate) in this integral unity are fractions and not independent units. They have no reality except in their relations to each other, in the total relation which is their unity. The true individual therein is the whole, united in oneness, in which each factor perceives its relation to the whole, and of the whole to itself. But behind that integral identifying consciousness in which each may share, is the True Self of the Unity; constituting the central life power in all the selves who manifest its presence, and which, while it may be apprehended by the identifying consciousness of the units, can

no more be comprehended, or grasped, or encompassed by its included finite selves than could our own central Ego be comprised, or cognised, or controlled by its included cells, supposing that these were self-conscious. But this Solar Universe with its Solar Self within it, is but an integral unit among myriads of others, within which flows the processus of the Infinite Self-conscious Life, constituting, relating, uniting, and unifying them in that relatively universal unity, yet transcending them, even as in microcosmic and subordinate representation, our nervous conscious sensor-motor vitality flows through and unites all our cells which it constitutes, in one relative unity, while yet as our conscious and vital self it transcends them.

The fractions are thus progressively related in higher grades of integration, *i.e.*, integrational experience. The restricted self-consciousness and perceptual relations of the personal selves, with their fallacious claims of independent existence and will, expand in higher states till their factorship in the integral consciousness of this solar system is awfully realised and shared in. But there is an immense difference between the personal self-consciousness known to us and the identifying self-consciousness and perceptual relations here referred to. *Persons*, whether incarnate or discarnate, can no more trace their relation and interdependence and special function in our planetary synthetic self than can the cells in our organism recognise their relation in, and dependence on, the self constituting them. Whereas, when the identifying self-consciousness above referred to has evolved within them, in the dual state pertaining thereto, they *do* recognise the special function (hierarchy: organ) they represent and have manifested, in that Solar Self, and realise their dependence in that whole and the consequent relation of the whole to themselves, while they share consciously in the experience of each other, which becomes the common property of all (showing the futility of the re-incarnation fallacy). The psychological modus or vital process of this mode of perceptual relation is referred to further on.

Yet the Divine must not be taken as an integration of men; but man as a disintegration (but *not* separation) of the Divine, communicated into *apparent* differentiation from the infinite, living, self-conscious processus which flows through the solar universes, even as man's vitality flows through his nervous system in his organism, and is differentiated into thought-units and into substantial living germs at the two poles of his being, and radiating forth from his centre, constituting his aura or magnetic field, with attractive and repulsive energy, and thus representing the triunity of thought, life, and radiant energy in each of its units. These units differentiated into finited selves, from the eternal self-conscious processus which flows through the Solar Self, 'become' through darkness into light; through the heresy of independence into identification and thus as fulfilment made in the image of their dual makers, or Elohim, by which process 'units of consciousness become self-conscious units, including awfully that in which they were included.' ('C.C.M.')

The differentiation of these units does *not* entail separation or independence, appearances notwithstanding. Each unit remains a fraction and is connected by the eternal flux of the universal processus with its relative *prius* or spiritual parents, who stand to it as transmitting relay in the mediation of that processus. It is in the ignoring of this antecedent mediation that occultism falls into the 'heresy of separateness' or fallacy of independent being, and postulates differentiation as being real instead of only apparent, as being noumenal instead of only phenomenal. And this inflowing processus is dual in its constitution, *i.e.*, conscious and vital, consequently determines both thinking and being, the ideal and real, in its recipients.

But the flux of this mediated vitality through divided beings, *i.e.*, persons, entails its apparent division into thought-units, and into substantiated germs or atomised life; thus constituting the not-self, *i.e.*, the sphere of thoughts or spiritual sphere, and the substantial aspect of our externalised or subordinated universe. When in higher states than these, the temporarily divided aspects of these dual selves are re-united into complete individ(u)als, the inflowing self-conscious life ceases to be divided in its efflux into thoughts and into substance, but is differentiated as vitalised thoughts, *i.e.*, substantialised thoughts; substantive units of consciousness; in which the dual significations of the universal are co-equally and unitedly present, and no longer apparently divided as they are in the subordinate planes of personal (*i.e.*, divided) being.

Philosophy recognises that time and space are constituted by self-consciousness *for* self-consciousness, and that relative

thoughts, or thinking, are the universal thought in relativity. I contend also that the not-self is constituted by the Universal Self, which communicates and gives itself away (radiates) through its finited selves. As the Universal Self-conscious Life is dual in its constitution, spiritual and vital (substantial), or masculine and feminine, it constitutes not only the differentiated thought units in our thought-sphere, but also differentiated vitality or substance, which becomes densified into matter (and subsequently re-transmuted through selves). Thus the Universal Self constitutes the not-self, spiritual and substantial (which 'becomes' again into selves), by flowing in eternal process and radiating through its finited selves. Hence the whole infinite Universe, both spiritual and material (or thought and substance), is constituted of one common, *i.e.*, universal element, carrying masculine and feminine or positive and negative modes; and it is the interaction or reaction of these which constitutes its triune signification, or characteristic of radiant energy, power, will-force. That common element or Universal can no more be said to be thought *per se*, or consciousness *per se*, or spirit *per se*, than substance *per se*. It is neither masculine nor feminine *per se*, because these dual characteristics are inseparably inherent in its dual-unity, and by the interaction constitute its process or triunity.

This law explains how and why the outer externalised nature planes re-present the qualities of their self-conscious inhabitants and evolve correlatively. The same law necessarily applies with priority in inner spheres (this world being a subordinate representation constituted by the one universal process), and constitutes their nature aspect, in mode correlative to the transcendent degree of the spiritual beings occupying them.

The densification and externalisation of substantial vitality into physical matter is also microcosmically illustrated in Karyokinesis in our organisms, presenting us, thereby, with a living reconciliation of Spiritualism and Materialism. But this is again but a subordinate illustration of the transcendent and *a priori* process by which vitality is transmitted and transferred from our macrocosmic centre or *pius* through intermediary relays, to the external organisms in question, through which it is again externalised and densified, or condensed.

It is the division, above referred to, occurring in the dual constitution of the process of the Infinite Life, in its efflux when radiated through divided (in appearance) personal selves, that has given rise to the Manichean fallacy that substance is antagonistic to spirit, instead of being its complement. And it is interesting to notice that the condemnation of the feminine, substantial principle (or aspect of the Universal) in its condensed form of matter, as pertaining to darkness and evil, was accompanied by the ecclesiastical degradation of woman and abasement of maternity, implied in the exaltation of celibacy. This associated expression, based on the same conception, suggests a hidden connection as possibly existing between esoteric ecclesiasticism and Kabbalistic occultism.

The whole of this conception is, however, lifted up on to a higher level when it is realised that substance is co-equal with spirit; that when differentiated they are respectively the feminine and masculine modes of the not-self and are constituted by the Universal Self through selves in order to afford conditions for the 'becoming' of other finited selves; that they are both equally necessary to render experience possible for the latter; that differentiated spirit, mediated through man as thoughts, constitutes his thinking, while the mediation of differentiated substance constitutes his soul, or being and organism.

Psychology has not yet recognised the distinction between the mediation of thoughts from the thought-sphere external to us, and which constitutes the ordinary thinking of average man, of thoughts previously known to us as a race, and the flux of thought presentation from within, constituting intuition, illumination, genius, inventions, &c., or the thinking of thoughts which are new to our sphere or race. In both cases the reaction of thought, *i.e.*, spirit (masculine), with man's soul, *i.e.*, substance (feminine), entails conception; reflection, formulation (gestation), and expression (birth) showing the identity of mode between the thinking process and the process of the ultimatum of life. These processes are distinct in the planes of divided, *i.e.*, personal being, but are unified in the planes of identified, re-united, undivided dual-being; the realm of true Unity in which opposition and all the 'pairs of opposites' are transcended and replaced by consociated participation.

(To be continued.)

THE GROWTH OF THE SOUL.*

(Continued from page 472.)

The years of study which Mr. Sinnett has devoted to Theosophy have not only given him a better understanding of its doctrines, but have enabled him to state those doctrines comprehensibly; and it is in its clear exposition and apt illustration of 'the secret doctrine' that the merit of 'The Growth of the Soul' really lies—not in any supposed corroboration of that doctrine by vision-getting 'students' that the book may contain. It is pleasant to meet with a Theosophical writer who is not bitterly prejudiced against Spiritualism, or else morbidly sentimental, or perhaps strangely ignorant of all other systems and theories but his own. We, therefore, shall not apologise to our readers for endeavouring to give them a short abstract of Mr. Sinnett's new book; for next to the advantage of having a clear idea of our own opinions, comes that of understanding the doctrines of those who do not agree with us.

In the 'Introductory' chapter, we learn that Theosophy teaches that human evolution is:—

The product of two lines of force the one proceeding, so to speak, from Nature at large, and representing the normal impulse of evolution, the other generated by the spontaneous volition of the individual, and representing the previously dormant principle of Divinity within him.

Man is not merely a product of Nature adrift on the stream of evolution, but is carried, so to speak, by that stream out into a vast ocean that he can only cross by virtue of conscious efforts put forward on his own account.

The great automatic forces of evolution have driven each individual forward. . . . For the rest of the way we must push on ourselves—seeing our way; understanding what is expected of us; resolute to fulfil the Divine purpose.

From the humbler spheres of consciousness in the lower kingdoms of Nature the soul, in dim ages of the past, has risen upward. Through processes of ethereal existence antedating the humanity of the type now attained, the individuality has moved onwards towards its higher destinies as a human being qualified to say, with a full comprehension of what it is about—'Now I will blend this consciousness and volition which is myself with the superior Divine consciousness of which I am the material mirror, and thus illuminated and inspired I will move forward again ever onward and upward. . . . So far we have been led and supported. For the rest of the way we must push on ourselves—seeing our way; understanding what is expected of us; resolute to fulfil the Divine purpose.'

If we do not exert ourselves in this way, so much the worse for ourselves, for we then go down instead of up—'it should be obvious to any rational understanding that such a descent is the inevitable alternative to the self-directed ascent.' We were irresponsible until now, for until the Secret Doctrine was given out we conscientiously imagined that we might trust to God, or to Nature, if we led a useful and virtuous life.

We see, therefore, that Theosophy starts with the theological postulate of opposing Powers in the universe. It does not call those powers God and Devil, like the Churches, but 'Nature' and 'Divinity,' using neither of these terms in an all-comprehensive sense, as Goethe spoke of 'Nature' in his Aphorisms.

In Chapter II, on 'Occult Science and Religion,' Mr. Sinnett shows that while Religion bans all independent inquiry into man's destiny as displeasing to God, and Science declares it useless as dealing with things beyond our comprehension, Theosophy declares that between us and those limits to inquiry, supposing them to exist, there is, within our reach, a great body of real and precise knowledge, 'in reference to superphysical conditions of human consciousness, the natural laws which govern the transition of human consciousness from one sphere or plane of Nature to another, and the conditions of existence which belong to other beings, some higher than, some lower than the humanity of which we have cognisance upon earth.'

This body of knowledge is, in fact, what is called 'the Secret Doctrine,' and it is contained, clothed in allegory, in all religions. The founders of world religions made the allegories, but Churches and sects present us only with 'some unintelligent materialisation of an allegory,' or with 'a grovelling, anthropomorphic conception of the principles on which the world is governed.' Theosophy not only 'breaks through these incrustations of error,' but explains the allegories; and it stands, therefore, to religion as Mathematics stands to astronomy

* 'The Growth of the Soul'; a sequel to 'Esoteric Buddhism.' By A. P. SINNETT, Vice-President of the Theosophical Society. London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1896. Price 6s. net.

—as the abstract to the concrete. When this explanation is made, it is found that Theosophy not only shows itself 'in fundamental harmony with great religious ideas, but going far beyond this, reconciles itself, so to speak, with religion.'

Chapter III treats of Re-incarnation. Until the mind is saturated with the idea of Re-incarnation there is no use studying the Esoteric doctrine. It is impossible, however, rigorously to prove Re-incarnation. 'All we can do is to show that it would be profoundly unphilosophical to believe anything else,' and soon the world will have to accept it, Mr. Sinnett thinks, and to cease to argue about it, as it does now in the case of sundry theories of Science which, like Re-incarnation, are unprovable save by inference, and are based on a balance of probability. The next thing the student must do is to understand that re-incarnations are always progressive, which is also, of course, an inference from theory.

Heredity gets ready the bodies, and Karma prepares the Re-incarnating Ego, and the latter takes a body which is a fit instrument for the manifestation of its qualities, and for the 'working out' of its karma. Family likeness, it therefore seems, does not imply real relationship (if, indeed, there be such a thing), any more than the wearing of the same sized boot or hat. During the period between incarnations the Ego lives on other planes, from one, at least, of which it may momentarily return to earth. Here the phenomena of Spiritualism come to the aid of Theosophy:—

Nothing but wilful ignorance of these experiences can blind the world at large to the proof it (Spiritualism) affords of one all-important fact, viz., that intelligences, formerly those of living persons on earth, do in some cases show themselves still actively functioning on another plane of Nature.

Chapter IV. is about the Higher Self, and in it the author says that it is a fundamental error to regard the soul as an independent something confined temporarily in a body, like a Djinn in a bottle; nor must we regard the process of Re-incarnation as implying an alternate residence of the soul in physical and spiritual planes. Only an 'efflux' from the soul enters the body, the spiritual realm being all the while the proper *habitat* of the soul, which never entirely quits it; and 'the non-materialisable portion of the soul which abides permanently on the spiritual plane may fitly be spoken of as the Higher Self.' This Higher Self is almost dormant during the full activities of the waking state, but during the sleep of the body it recovers 'a more vivid sense of existence.' This spiritual part of ourselves is apt to be mistaken by a psychic for an independent intelligence (a Mahatma?), or we may take its admonitions for 'the voice of conscience.' We all know Allan Kardec's theory of Re-incarnation; this is how Mr. Sinnett puts his:—

You will eventually wear out, get tired of and be done with, your present personality, as you have got rid of many others in the past, but you will not be violently torn from it. When you pass after death into the astral and then into the spiritual planes of existence you will still be your present self, remembering all that is essential in your present life, and finding, if all goes well, on the spiritual levels of Nature a much freer scope for the development of all that you can possibly hope for in the body. It is only when these phases of consciousness have vibrated to the last possible echo of the forces you have engendered during life, and when the spiritual soul is once more colourless as regards definite recollections, that it will return through the Lethe of a fresh incarnation to the experiences of an altogether fresh personality.

'The Higher Self,' says Mr. Sinnett, 'must have existed at one time in a very imperfectly developed state. . . . It is clearly by means of the experiences gathered by its successive manifestations of activity on the physical plane that each Higher Self grows and advances to loftier perfection.' As the Higher Self is the true self, it looks on an earth life much as we would look upon a well-spent or ill-spent day; or, as Mr. Sinnett put it, since it grows by earth experiences, it thinks no more about its last earth life than a healthy man at night thinks about the day's dinner—it has played its part in his nourishment, he has digested it, and that is enough. The Higher Self is wholly indifferent to sensual things, and is in touch with the ocean of real knowledge. Its aspirations are always towards good, but its mentality is not greatly superior to that of the lower self, in fact the lower self is its teacher—the Higher Self learns through the experiences furnished to it by the lower. The Theosophist, in fact, first postulates, and learns to identify himself with, his soul or Higher Self, and then sets about to nourish it, and teach it,

and develop it in every way. Now, what is his motive or object in devoting his energies to the development of his Self? Mr. Sinnett of course gives the usual altruistic reason. He says that our 'gradual elevation into Higher Selves of the guardian angel type may be looked upon as the purpose and justification of physical existence'; but he also states a less unselfish and, we fancy, much truer motive:—

Consciousness on the superior planes or spiritual realms of Nature is accompanied by a vivid sense of enjoyment. In proportion as the Higher Self is expanded and developed is that sense of enjoyment broadened and deepened. In such expansion, in such development, the reward of the efforts made by the lower self is realised.

Chapter V. is an attempt to reconcile Freewill with Karma. This Mr. Sinnett tries to do by, as it were, making a hole in Karma and paring away Freewill to fit into it. If there is one thing about which Theosophists used to be unanimous, it was the 'inexorable' nature of Karma, which is the law of cause and effect extended to all the spheres; but our author thinks that 'In truth, though the broad law is that our acts are dictated by Karma, there is room in the design of Nature for some lateral play of the forces concerned as regards action.' And as to Freewill, although a person may be forced by circumstances to act in a certain way, he is free to think as he likes. Thoughts lead to acts, and 'our thoughts are by no means beyond our control, and for them, in a very high degree, we shall be held responsible':—

The great point to emphasise is that the recognition of this interior freedom, which is in scientific and complete harmony with the whole view of Nature prescribed by the Esoteric Teaching, has the effect, among others, of accomplishing what has hitherto been regarded as a problem no less insoluble than the squaring of the circle—the reconciliation of Freewill and necessity.

We fear that Mr. Sinnett deceives himself, like other 'squarers of the circle'; for he has certainly not shown that we are free to choose our own motives, and that is the *crux* of the Freewill controversy. There is no doubt that the thinking of a thing leads to the doing of it, and we have the power (within limits) of 'expelling' thoughts from the mind, or of welcoming them; but what is it that determines us either to expel a thought or to harbour it? Surely we do not create our own motives as we go along, they are supplied to us by our environment, our education, our character, or by what we call 'accident.' Those, for instance, who read 'The Growth of the Soul,' and take up the cultivation of their Higher Selves, will doubtless cast out of their minds many thoughts that would be joyfully harboured by anyone who, instead, had stumbled upon a book on 'How to Get Rich.' Each has then been furnished with a motive which governs his thoughts by stimulating and directing his desires; the one elects to think of certain things because he has acquired the ambition to become a 'Great Soul'; the other elects to think of perfectly different things, because he has begun to wish to be a millionaire. Metaphysicians, we opine, may breathe freely again—they may rejoice that Mr. Sinnett has *not*, as he imagines, killed their favourite hare!

(To be continued.)

A FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath unto the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, the sum of £ _____, to be applied to the purposes of that Society; and I direct that the said sum shall be paid free from Legacy Duty, out of such part of my personal estate as may legally be devoted by will to charitable purposes, and in preference to other legacies and bequests thereout.

DEVELOPING CIRCLE.—A few ladies and gentlemen are wanted to join a private developing circle. For particulars apply to J. J. Vango, 43, Cambridge-gardens, North Kensington, W.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—The executive of this association are arranging private developing circles for members only. Each sitter must agree to attend the circle which he or she may join once a week for at least three months. Full particulars will be forwarded on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope by the Hon. Sec., Mr. Leigh Hunt, 82, East-street, Marylebone-road, W.

As long as love prevails in the house, space of the breadth of a sword is satisfactory; as soon as it disappears sixty hand-breadths are not sufficient.—TALMUD.

OFFICE OF LIGHT, 2, DUKE STREET, ADELPHI,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17th, 1896.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed '— & Co.'

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

SPIRIT LIFE EVERY DAY.

Millions who in various ways believe in spirit life, and thousands who ardently seek for spirit phenomena, are apt to forget that what they pursue is always at the door, nay, is always within. That mighty thinker, Paul, in his trenchant way, once hit the mark when he bade his disciples to *live* by the spirit, and when he sharply contrasted flesh and spirit, to the utter routing and subjugation of flesh. He ran this sharp antagonism between the two, almost to extremes: but his extremes were infinitely better and truer than other people's lackadaisical indifference. He saw two persons where others saw only one—the fleshly man and the spiritual man—or the dragging-down body and the aspiring soul. He was keenly alive to their two great spheres of delight, and saw and felt the sometimes awful conflict between them. He saw the two lines of motive, the one leading from appetite, the other from duty and honour and aspiration. He beheld the two pictures—the one ending in death, the other ending in ever-advancing life: and all this he described with words of fire, ending as with a thunderbolt of warning: 'Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.'

Now all this is of boundless interest to us. In fact, nothing can have greater interest, for it relates to the real life, and upon it turns the great question, rightly understood: Are we going to save or lose the soul? For that question does not at all belong to the selfish scheme of escaping from hell and getting to heaven. In truth, it may be the very reverse: it may actually mean so saving one's soul as to make it a fit instrument for going to hell (whatever that may mean) that one may seek and save the lost. Rightly understood, the saving of the soul is the saving of the life, the rescue of the real life from the unreal life, the rescue of the immortal from the mortal, the rescue of the spirit from the flesh. And that can all be accomplished here.

We need not go far afield in order to find the truth of this. Spirit-life every day is a very homely fact. One need not go farther than the humblest home to find it true. In vain are all the house-father's commands: and in vain all merely external compliances. Everything turns upon the spirit. Even in relation to so simple a matter as shutting the door at the parent's request, the spirit in which it is done is everything: a willing and gentle compliance puts all things in tune; a bad temper and a banging of the door spoil all. The simplest home upon earth can be so conducted that it shall be a little heaven upon earth. But money will not make the difference, nor cleverness, nor means of outward enjoyment. Only one thing can do it—the out-living of spirit-life every day.

The same thing is true of the world's *work*. Work can be a blessing or a curse. As Ruskin has taught us, there is base work and noble work, and the baseness or the

nobleness turns, not so much upon that which is done as upon why it is done and in what spirit it is done. Many a so-called 'degrading' piece of work can be made honourable, and, in certain circumstances, might even be made glorious, ay, divine! simply because of the use of it and the spirit in which it is done. Need we give instances? Why, human life glows, thank God, with instances.

Every employer of labour knows the value of spirit-life day by day. Good-will is a precious asset. Paul saw that when he counselled his disciples to do their work 'not with eye-service, as men-pleasers.' What a difference it makes to a master to know that his man's heart is in his work, that his conscience is engaged as well as his hands, that he has secured the good-will of that man's business! As a mere money value, what has even the Stock Exchange to say to that? The Labour conflicts of our day do not turn as much upon wages as people imagine. They turn a very great deal upon antagonism—upon what, in the common talk of every-day life we call 'a bad spirit'—on one side or the other, or on both. If Capital and Labour both manipulated and pushed in the same sphere of the spirit (in Paul's sense), the manipulation and the pushing would all 'work together for good.' And we may be sure that is the only way by which we can ever realise the idea of 'Human Brotherhood.'

Even in art and music and poetry this is true. All really fine art and noble music and genuine poetry have their roots in the spirit—in the spheres of feeling, emotion, idealisation, insight, love. Without these, art is but mimicry, music is merely noise, poetry is only more or less ingenious jingle. Here we shall find the true meaning of 'genius.' The real genius is a sensitive, he has a soul that is very much in evidence: and that is why, again in our every-day speech, we praise art and music and poetry in proportion as they have 'soul' in them. Nor is that mere affected phrasing: it is a literal fact that these great joys of life depend, for their depth and height and beauty, upon the soul.

How this applies to our actions! And yet how horribly we are held down and almost beaten to pieces by merely external considerations! What victims we are to 'How will it look?' and 'What will people say?' What slaves we are to that damaged word 'degraded'! Herbert Spencer once set up this startling standard: 'Consider how difficult it would be to get a lady to wheel a costermonger's barrow down Regent-street, and how easily she may be led to say a malicious thing about some lady she is jealous of; contrast the intense repugnance to the one act, which is not in itself reprehensible, and then infer how great is the evolution of the moral sentiments yet required to bring human nature into complete fitness for the social state.' A jest! Not at all. It is a genuine standard, and it truly serves to show how far, how unspeakably far, we are from living by the spirit every day.

Or, if we go right out to grand old Mother-Nature, do we not see the same truth in her most minute and most extended realm? Everywhere we find Nature's flesh and spirit: and everywhere flesh is but spirit's manifestation. Indeed, 'things are not what they seem.' Think of the difference between a hog and a poet in relation to the same apple under the orchard tree. The poet will correlate it with a hundred kindred things, will see its relation to the tree and to its brother-apples there, will connect it with the green and russet grass, will blend it with o'erarching sky, will then mark its ripeness, its rare colours, its lovely shape. The hog will grunt along, and simply scrunch and eat it. The charm of a rose is its shape, and next to that its colour. What determines shape? and what is the weight of the blush of a rose? Even its market value depends upon the spirit of the purchaser responding to the spirit of the rose.

Go behind all, into the Holy of Holies. Here how overwhelming the truth! 'God is a spirit,' said the great teacher; 'and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.' The others do not worship Him at all. And yet how few perceive it! 'Musical services' are all the rage. People must be amused and excited even in church. If what is called a 'service' is only 'a feast of reason and a flow of soul,' it is pronounced cold and bald; and the meaning of that is: There is no spectacle, no ritual, no decorated altar, no mystery-man, no ceremonial. A late writer reports of certain nuns: 'They had seven hours of obligatory prayer a day, and on Fridays prayed with their arms stretched out like a cross. Many were ailing, and to cure themselves they put very small photographs of the heart of Jesus into the soup, and swallowed them.' Is that ridiculous? But how much better and wiser and really devout are they who are restless and discontented in worship if they are left alone with thoughts, and aspirations, and desires?

In a future Article we shall show how all this bears upon and blends with the vision of an ideal human life.

REUNIONS FOR PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT.

OCTOBER TO DECEMBER, 1896.

A new series of these Meetings will be held at Hertford Lodge, Albert Bridge, S.W., every Monday and Thursday afternoon.

To suit the convenience of some Members, those on Mondays will be from 3 for 3.30 to 5 p.m.; to suit that of others, those on Thursdays from 4.30 for 5 to 6.30 p.m. Those on Mondays will be held from October 26th to December 14th inclusive; those on Thursdays from October 29th to December 10th.

Both on Mondays and on Thursdays the methods of procedure will be varied on alternate weeks, as follows:—

A.

(For Special Development of Clairvoyance and Clairaudience.)

PRACTICE 1.—To acquire powers of mentally visualising objects and projecting the same into other minds.

PRACTICE 2.—To acquire powers of absorbed attention to inner impressions, and of the hallucinatory projection of such into the outer sensorium, and of receiving impressions from the intelligence of others.

PRACTICE 3.—To gaze into the psychic surroundings of others, and to receive correct impressions therefrom.

B.

(For the Special Development of Psychometry and Automatism.)

PRACTICE 1.—To psychometrize letters, relics, magnetised paper, and to revert to former conditions of time and space.

PRACTICE 2.—To write automatically (optional instead of 1, as the two practices will go on simultaneously).

PRACTICE 3.—To project and receive ideas telepathically, each in turn trying to impress the company with some idea.

The Monday Meetings will commence with procedure A, the Thursday ones with B. The next week the Mondays will have B, and the Thursdays A. In this way each power can be practised every week by those able to attend both Meetings, and on alternate weeks by those unable to do so.

Regular attendance is not insisted on, but is recommended—these Meetings being regarded as a sort of gymnasium for powers of attention and inner sight.

Any person sincerely desirous of practice and development is welcome, but Members wishing to introduce a stranger are requested to ask previous permission from the Director, as persons coming merely from curiosity or desire for seeing phenomena are exceedingly objectionable to others desiring, as all in these Meetings do, to practise and not to exhibit.

Members are invited to help the Director by bringing letters, relics, and good pictorial subjects, for the practices.

The Meetings for the development of mysterious psychic forces and manifestations are being continued with a selected company for the special benefit of one or two Members greatly gifted in this direction. When results justify the step, other Members, if congenial, will be invited to participate.

F. W. THURSTAN, M.A.

'THE TESTIMONY OF THE AGES TO MODERN SPIRITUALISM.'

At a meeting of the Members, Associates, and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall, on Friday evening in last week, MR. G. HORATIO BIBBINGE (of Plymouth) delivered an address under the above title, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, the President, occupying the chair.

This being the first meeting of the Alliance for the present season, the PRESIDENT, in the course of his opening remarks, welcomed the members in the name of the executive. Briefly reviewing the progress that had been made since the Alliance was last in session, it gratified him to be able to express the opinion that the progress made, although not rapid, had nevertheless been a steady and encouraging one. (Applause.) Some friends would, no doubt, be glad to see a great rush into their ranks. But for his part he doubted if that was a desirable thing. He much preferred that their policy should be to do their work quietly, and gradually prepare the movement for the time when it would become fashionable. They had to frankly admit that it was not fashionable yet. Nevertheless, some of them knew that Spiritualism had a very firm hold on some of the people in the very highest classes of society. With many of these people some of the members of the Alliance came into contact; but at present these persons did not consider it wise to openly avow their belief in the doctrines of Spiritualism. He could quite sympathise with them, understanding the difficulties of their position, and respecting their desire to remain unknown.

Dealing briefly with the problems that had lately been discussed amongst Spiritualists, the President referred to the question whether Spiritualism was a religion or not, a point which had been warmly debated of late. Was the question really worth discussing—was it worth troubling about? To a scientist who was also a Spiritualist, the subject would never be likely to present the aspect of a religion. His mind being continually absorbed in scientific experiment and research, he would probably place his conclusions regarding Spiritualism in the category of his general knowledge. On the other hand, they might take an average individual, mourning and disconsolate over the loss of some dearly-loved friend. Such an one might gain comfort by obtaining a knowledge of a life after death, and the continued existence of his friend; and it might well be that to a mind of this type Spiritualism would be as a religion, full of sacred associations. Spiritualism, then, might be a religion to some and not to others.

The President then dealt briefly with the 'mind-reading' explanation of clairvoyance and the theory of telepathy, alluding to the inadequacy of these explanations. They were examples of the various attempts that had been made from time to time to explain away awkward facts. In concluding his remarks on these points, he felt they might adhere to their creed of Spiritualism and the doctrine of spirit communion, without being perturbed by the various theories set up. Their opponents might as well attempt to blow down a sturdy oak with a pair of bellows, or to level a stone wall with a pea-gun, as to upset with such theories as they had put forward the facts of Spiritualism. (Applause.)

The President then introduced Mr. Bibbings, bespeaking for him the consideration of the friends, this being his first appearance on a London platform; and, after a pianoforte solo by Miss Withall, MR. BIBBINGS delivered the address of the evening.

Modern Spiritualism, he said, during the nineteenth century, with its mighty developments, had come as a shock to many. Yet it had come to answer the question of the ages, 'If a man die shall he live again?' Every friend gone out from a family circle on earth had been looked for and longed for. All the accumulations of wealth that might come to any of the children of men could in no wise be compared with the gaining of a certain knowledge of the persistence of life beyond the material sphere. To Materialism and Orthodoxy alike had Spiritualism come as a great shock. The materialist had appealed to geology against the teachings of the Bible; he had placed the testimony of science in opposition to metaphysics and the belief in the unseen; but in spite of all his denials, men remained instinctively religious; and a voice from the soul within gave the lie to Materialism and pleaded with authority for a belief in God and a future life. Orthodoxy, on the other hand, hugging with grim tenacity the revelations of bygone times, had found that

which it deemed impregnable and unassailable threatened with destruction. The spiritual needs of the men of the nineteenth century could not be met by referring to the feasts provided for the spiritual natures of the men of the first century. When men were hungry, a fitting repast only would properly satisfy them; merely to dream of yesterday's feast served only to tantalise, and did nothing to appease hunger.

So both had been found wanting, and still there remained unsolved the question, 'If a man die shall he live again?' There had been much speculation; men had proclaimed this and proclaimed that. But now the veil had been lifted, and the far-away homes of the land of arison humanity had been revealed in all their glory and grandeur. One of the great errors which had been made regarding Modern Spiritualism was the disposition to regard it as catastrophic—as a new creation rather than an outgrowth of evolution. It was well sometimes to make a retrospect—to endeavour to find one's true position in relation to the past. Such a retrospect in the present case showed that Modern Spiritualism was evolutionary. The testimony of the ages to its truth was very full and very striking in its character. If this testimony could not be accepted; if wild theories were to be allowed to supplant real experiences, then there was nothing worth having in life, the very foundations were removed. A great philosopher—Sir Isaac Newton, the speaker believed it was—once said that 'ancient mythology was historical truth in poetical dress.' Ancient mythologies studied by themselves, separated, so to speak, from their context, seemed crude, incoherent, incongruous, almost effete, having no real influence upon men; but when they began to be understood in their relationship to the inner life of the human family; when they were studied comparatively, in the light of analogy, and with due regard to their points of likeness and agreement, their true value and significance began to appear. Any single event might be accidental, or the record of it fallacious; but when it found continual repetition in all parts of the globe, the evidence for its authenticity became correspondingly strong. The history of Spiritualism was practically the history of the world.

Here the speaker developed the main fabric of his argument by passing in review the evidence for spiritual forces and influences in connection with the historical leaders of religious thought, and also in relation to the great world-religions. The great leaders and founders of religious systems in nearly all cases seemed to be conscious of a mystic power which separated them from their fellows. Their lives were marked by signs and marvels, and abounded in testimony to their possession of what nowadays was called mediumship. Even down to comparatively modern times was this the case. Among the devotees of Eastern religions, the Dervishes of Arabia were noticeable as furnishing evidence of spiritual powers; and attention was called to the long training and discipline which they were required to undergo, a training which answered in many respects to the development of mediumship. In some instances this training extended over twenty years. In many cases no Dervish was even allowed to speak for the benefit of his brethren until after a preparation extending over fifteen years, during which time strict silence was enjoined. India, the birth-place of religions, gave marvellous corroboration of the doctrine of spirit influence. Its later racial developments gave the world rich treasures of science and philosophy, and brought a recognition of two great central truths—the oneness of God and the immortality of the soul. In India the reality of the spiritual universe was early recognised. The circle in Hindu religious symbology appears to have represented the ever-recurring sequence of things, as appointed by the Divine law. It was, so to speak, the first human appreciation of the Godhead and eternal power. Hence the representation of Buddha with the wheel, typifying spiritual progress. All through Oriental literature there were evidences of the recognition of every form of mediumship.

Turning to Egypt, it might be said that there Spiritualism was practically the universal religion. The records left by the early Egyptians in the form of hieroglyphics and cuneiform inscriptions, which had been brought to light of late years, had furnished abundant evidence of this. They showed that mesmerism, massage, and magnetic healing were known even to that ancient people; Egypt, in short, abounded with Spiritualism. If this were doubted, let the sceptic take his Biblical records, which would demonstrate that amongst the Egyptians prevailed certain forms of mediumship with which every Spiritualist was

familiar. Comparing the quality of spirituality, as expressed by the two races, the lecturer said that while the Spiritualism of India was rounded and developed, and therefore well typified by its religious symbol, the wheel or circle, that of Egypt was of a harder and cruder character—there was a certain angularity about it which brought it into affinity with the Egyptian symbol, the pyramid.

The lecturer then successively dealt with the evidence for Spiritualism as expressed in the religious faiths and practices of the Mahommedans, the Zoroastrians, the Buddhists, the Druids, the Hebrews, making special allusion, of course, to the early history of the Christian system. Its Founder, he said, brought a richer, fuller, and purer message from the unseen than any that had hitherto been vouchsafed to man. The world had never been greater—had never made more progress—than when the nations of the world had recognised spirit powers and agencies, and the highest and purest forms of mediumship. Just in proportion as mediumship had been discouraged, and the manifestation of spirit power suppressed, had there been national unrest, and final disintegration and decay.

Dealing generally, in conclusion, with the scope, purpose, and possibilities of Spiritualism to-day, the speaker laid stress upon its power as an elevating moral and social influence. Those persons who would be most benefited by it were those who took hold of the spiritual side of the question. These would best see its uplifting and quickening power in the things of every-day life, bringing to business rectitude to home fidelity, to love truthfulness, and to truth beauty. These things would make people Spiritualists in the highest and best sense of the term. In its appeal to the individual it might be said that Spiritualism first invited his researches and then justified his attention.

The usual vote of thanks to the lecturer was accorded at the close of the proceedings.

AN APPARITION.

The Rev. Arthur Clay Lywood, of Elton, sends the following story to the 'Daily Telegraph':—'With regard to the Brighton ghost and the scepticism aroused by Mr. T. L. Smith's narrative, I, for one, do not doubt the truth of his experience, and I give you an authentic, though somewhat weird, account of a similar experience. Some time ago, in the company of a gentleman, now a clergyman in one of our large Midland towns, I was staying in St. Malo. On the invitation of an English lady, widow of a London clergyman, we proceeded on a visit to Dinan, a pretty and quaint place some twenty miles from the coast. This lady's house, a modern French villa surrounded by an open pretty garden, was about a mile from the town. Having heard that the residence was haunted, we stipulated, being thoroughly sceptical, that we should be allowed to occupy the ghost's room. We did so. After a refreshing and dreamless sleep I awoke about twenty minutes to four. The sun was just rising, and I saw standing beside my companion's bed the apparition of a white nun. Her hands were clasped tightly across her breast, and she wore a white cowl over her head. Her face was exquisitely beautiful, but extremely mournful. My companion was sound asleep. I woke him, and at that moment I fancied the vision began to slightly fade away, but not before my friend, who had crept from his bed to mine, had seen the apparition as plainly as myself. We did not see it a second time. Within a few months that apparition had been seen by others as well as ourselves. An English lady of title, a little boy, two young ladies walking in the garden in broad daylight, have each seen it, and even heard it talk. Not far from the house are the ruins, presumably, of an old nunnery, or monastery, and the legend is that, somewhere in the last century, a monk murdered a nun, and in revenge another nun poisoned the monk.'

THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.—Copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association may be obtained from the office of the Alliance, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, London, W.C., price 1s. The Memorandum sets forth in detail the purposes and objects of the society, with the names of the signatories; and the Articles prescribe the necessary rules and regulations for its conduct, including the election of members and associates, council, and officers.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Mr. W. H. Terry, Austral Building, Collins-street East.

AUTOMATIC WRITING.

There are many and important references to automatism in the various volumes of the 'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.' I have spent some time in reading various chapters, especially on automatic writing, with great interest and equally great perplexity. While reading, one cannot help interpreting what is read in the light of personal experience, sometimes agreeing with, at other times dissenting from, the conclusions of the writer; most frequently calling in question the use of certain words which seem to be, at least, very ambiguous, and, as I take it, question-begging terms. My own experience of what is called 'automatic writing' disposes me to reject the name and to seek some other expedient of expression.

The Greek word *αὐτόματος* is given by Liddell and Scott as meaning—1st, acting of one's own will, of oneself; 2nd, self-moving, self-acting; 3rd, of plants, growing of themselves, not sown; 4th, of events, happening of themselves, without external agency. I have examined various glossaries and dictionaries, but think it best to take the definition given. The meaning given to 'automatos' seems to admit of voluntary action being called automatic, although seldom used in that sense. My impression is that 'automatic' ought to be, and generally is, used to imply that the action in question is done as if by an automaton. In this sense I think both Mr. Spencer and Mr. Fiske speak of unconscious or automatic reasoning. Thus used, the word expresses an important phase of our daily life. It is a serviceable symbol and ought to be retained, but limited to those sub-conscious or unconscious processes of thought or action which seem automaton-like.

My experience leads me to reject the use of *automatic* as applied to writing. My hand has been used for writing when, as I believe, it was not directed by my will. In a few cases the writing was unlike my own and strongly resembled that of persons long since departed. Generally, however, my own style is retained, and I am impelled to write, and the words come, one at a time, and I have not the remotest idea at the outset what the sentence will be. It is a conscious act, but not intentional. This is called 'automatic script,' and Mr. Myers would ascribe it 'to the action of submerged or subliminal elements in the man's being.' I feel constrained to reject both the name and the theory.

We have in use the words autograph, allograph, and allopath, and it seems a very natural thing to have *allomatic* in the sense of action due to another, as well as automatic to express self-initiated action.

For more than two years I have got this kind of writing, which I will venture to call *allomatic*, since it is not truly my writing, but, as far as I can make out by long and careful watching, the work of another mind; the writing is done by my hand, but the *thinker* is outside me. This conclusion is forced upon me by oft-recurring experiences, not only of writing, but various other movements. As an example: On Monday, July 30th, 1894, I sailed up the Caledonian Canal, and we had on our boat one who played a harp and another a concertina. At one stage of our journey I was sitting near the players with my hand resting on the case of my field-glass, with the fingers quite free. A fresh tune was started, and my fingers were used to beat the *tune*, not merely the time, with a rapidity and a precision which astounded me. *The tune was not known to me.* When it ceased I heard, 'I am — — —; I learnt that march at Chatham when I was in the military band.' The name given was in harmony with this: a Royal Sapper and Miner, who was passionately fond of music and played the clarionette; he died in 1855. I could multiply instances which leave me no room for doubt that I have frequently, almost constantly, with me some person or persons, other than myself, whom I cannot see, but who can make me hear and feel; can turn me round and shake my arm to awake me. It is not always the same person, but always one who claims either to have been known to me in earth-life or otherwise interested in me.

The use of my fingers to beat a tune is very common. One of the earliest was in June, 1894. I was on a tramcar passing the Britannia Tavern, and I heard the chorus of 'Rule Britannia,' while my fingers gave each note with marked energy. This was closed by a very solemn and prolonged choral Amen. Then followed 'Hallelujah,' repeated several times, closing with *hear! hear!* instead of Amen. What all this means is not

at present very clear. Some aspects of these communications seem to hint that we ought to anticipate a future life and state much more commonplace than what is expected by the orthodox for themselves, though very desirable in comparison with the orthodox estimate of the destiny of heretics. SCRIBA.

CLAIRVOYANCE—OR MIND-READING?

SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

'Vir' says: 'It is because I know more than he ("Bidston") and some others do that I dispute the conclusion that what is seen is anything else than the reflection of images in the minds of the relatives of deceased persons.'

Did it never occur to 'Vir' that others may know and see things he never dreamed of? Are all the laws that pertain to spirit intercourse known to 'Vir'? Or will he admit that there may be some things he may not know, some realm he has not explored?

Fortunately the evidence for clairvoyance is not to be so summarily dismissed as our friend seems to think, and I wish to narrate a few of my own experiences which mind-reading does not cover.

In November, 1891, I attended a Spiritualists' meeting in Hanley. Mr. Victor Wyldes was the speaker. As is usual after the address, clairvoyant descriptions were given. Mr. Wyldes, pointing to a lady, said: 'Four months on (bringing the time to a certain day in the following March), I see that a serious accident is likely to happen to a child of your family, and to result in its death. My advice is, do not take the child out on that day.' The advice was forgotten, and on the day predicted the child fell out of a railway carriage between Mow Cop and Congleton stations and was killed.

At the same meeting Mr. Wyldes said to another lady, 'On such a day, unless very careful, you will meet with an accident near this hall; the best thing is to keep indoors at this time; you will thus avoid the fulfilment of the prediction.' Mr. Bill, of Broad-street, Hanley, a shorthand writer, used to take down the principal part of what was said at these meetings, and on the evening of the day predicted he informed me that the lady had been run over in the street, within sixty yards of the hall above mentioned, and brought into the house of his parents in an insensible condition.

In 1892 I had an instrument made with the alphabet and a pointer attached, for spirit communications. The foreman of my works, who superintended its manufacture, was anxious to see it in use. He and a friend obtained a very sensible and satisfactory communication, when a Mr. Jabez Perkins, of Tunstall, walked into the premises, and I, standing a distance away, inquired of the controlling intelligence whether he knew Mr. Perkins, as he had stated a few minutes previously that when in the body he lived in Tunstall. The pointer turned towards Mr. Perkins as if in the act of looking into his face, and answered in the negative, at the same time spelling out that he would see if any spirit had come in with the said Mr. Perkins. In a few seconds the pointer moved, saying, 'I am a poor spirit, by the name of Richard Wootton, who in earth life was known to our friend. I was a tailor by trade, and fell down and died immediately, outside Jos. Pendleton's public-house, at Tunstall, nine years ago.' Mr. Perkins stated that he knew everything to be correct but the number of years—this he did not know. But on visiting the cemetery for the purpose, he found it as the spirit had stated.

Part of my house was built in the sixteenth century, consequently has old associations. Were it not that we understand psychic phenomena somewhat, the house would have the reputation of being haunted. Materialised spirit forms have presented themselves to fulfil promises. The sounds of walking between the ceilings and roof from one end of the building to the other were of nightly occurrence during 1894; skipping and walking through occupied and unoccupied rooms, just as real as by persons still in the body; handling of soap tray, and sliding it along the marble wash-stand slab, bringing it into forcible contact with the wash-bowl; carrying brass candlesticks to a metal timepiece, and rattling them together continuously; bells ringing most violently, and, in some instances, the latter taking place at request; callings in full voice, by the hundred; subdued conversations lasting fifteen and twenty minutes at a time, nearly always followed by a falling of what, to us, sounded like heavy skittle balls. The spirits seemed to experiment in

one room for a time and then go on to the next, doing them all the same night. I may say here that in five minutes we could get the names of the operating spirits and their object for creating the disturbances, which, in the majority of cases, were expressly made that they might be allowed to talk to us, either with the pointer or through some member of the family.

In this house there has been seen and described clairvoyantly by J. C. Macdonald, of Manchester (a clairvoyant wholly unknown to me at this time), a male spirit, who declared that he had been the owner of said house for a number of years—and further, that he was still its owner and occupier. A daughter of this spirit put in an appearance, and was described fully; both descriptions fully agreed with those given by Victor Wyldes, of Birmingham, a week or so afterwards. (This clairvoyant was unknown to me then, as I had but just begun to interest myself in these things.) Mr. Wyldes gave the name of the spirit as John Ford, and said that he passed away dead drunk fifty-nine years and seven months previously, hence (as he—John Ford—alleged) the reason for his being bound to the scene of his weaknesses. The daughter, who, speaking through William Griffiths, of this town, gave the name of Margaret, declared that her father had brought ruin on the home and killed her mother through his insatiable desire for drink, and that his violent temper and drunken habits had driven her brother over the sea, from which he never returned, &c. A friend and I sought out the oldest inhabitant of the district, Mr. Joseph Lowe, of Upper Hanley, who was in his eighty-first year at the time of which I am writing. This John Ford he well remembered, and that he killed himself with drink, also that he had a daughter named Margaret, and a son who went to America, &c.

The principal clairvoyants, Messrs. Macdonald and Wyldes, lived fifty miles from Hanley, and in opposite directions, and knew nothing of my house or the district, being invited to stay with me in both cases at a minute's notice.

'Vir' says: 'All clairvoyants see the forms in exactly the same way, whether they are those of persons deceased or living persons, and in many cases the forms of living persons speak, smile, sing,' &c. Well! is there anything very wonderful about this? Every advanced Spiritualist knows it. I had left the pointer and alphabet, above mentioned, at my business premises one evening, and returning shortly afterwards found that two of my men, Mr. Hitchings, junr., and Mr. Manley, had it at work, when Mr. Hitchings, junr., said to me: 'The communicating intelligence spells out that he is your brother George Arthur, that he lives at Swan-street, Richmond, Melbourne, Australia.' 'What!' I said, 'is Arthur dead?' 'No,' said Hitchings, junr.; 'he spells that his body is asleep in Melbourne, and further, that Spiritualism is true; but when returning to his body he will deny it emphatically.' Various questions as to his wife, names and number of children were put and correctly answered. Then the communication finished with a request that the hands be taken from the pointer so as to liberate him, as his immediate return was necessary, it being time to rise for business. The time with us was 8.30 p.m. This would be near 7.30 a.m. the following day in Melbourne, and about his time of rising.

Now all this took place in my absence, and with two persons who knew nothing beyond the fact that I had a brother in Australia, but as to his whereabouts, name, family, &c., they were entirely ignorant.

Some four months after the above, two members of my family, experimenting by the same means as before, obtained the following: 'I am your brother George Arthur. My body is asleep in Melbourne; distance to me now seems annihilated,' &c. Questions were then put as to the names and number of his children, when, apparently, he overstepped the mark, and increased the number and names by one, giving Muriel as the name of the addition to his family. Thinking I had got hold of a playful spirit, I dismissed him and thought no more of the matter. Nevertheless, within a month a letter reached me from Australia, mentioning the increase in my brother's family, and stating that they had named the child 'Muriel.'

One Sunday in 1894 about forty persons had assembled in a room to listen to a speaker, who failed to put in an appearance. Someone suggested that for the purpose of interesting the audience two of the company should sit with the pointer. This was done, when the controlling intelligence spelled out 'Jim! if I die I will be a friend to you.' The room was immediately convulsed for a 'Jim.' One person only answered to the name of James, when it was suggested that the intelli-

gence should be requested to state whom the message was for. The question was put, the reply being that the spirit's name was John Hitchings, brother to James Hitchings, senr.; that he was not dead, but very ill at Buenos Ayres, &c. Five weeks afterwards the above Mr. Hitchings received a letter from his brother John, of Buenos Ayres, with an account of his severe illness in the English hospital there, also a Buenos Ayres newspaper corroborating the same.

Mr. Richard Judd, of 36, Jervis-street, Hanley, frequently leaves the body whilst perfectly awake. He states: 'Some few months ago, on retiring to rest, I lay thinking when all at once I found myself out of the body. Believing this to be possible, I determined to test it. I walked downstairs to the sitting-room, and saw everything in a perfect flood of light, although it was approaching midnight. So real and perfect did I appear to myself that I stealthily made my way back to bed, steering clear of the door, for fear I might wake and startle my wife, who was asleep, forgetting for the moment that she would be unable to see me or that I could not create sound. On reaching my body I became puzzled, and wondered how and whether I should get back, when I felt irresistibly drawn to, and fell full length upon, my body, and resumed the customary control. From first to last of this and other similar experiences I have been fully conscious and awake.'

The writer, too, has had many like experiences, travelling long distances and visiting sick persons and those in trouble, and often returning full of consolations.

Now, if spirits still attached to the body can and do communicate, as in the cases above, then it is not unreasonable to believe that they show themselves to clairvoyants for the purpose of being described and recognised. 'Vir' says: 'Actual mind images have not only been conveyed to other minds, but have been photographed.' There is nothing new about this. The writer has been talking to a sensitive about a fellow townsman, when the sensitive has said, 'Hold, and I will describe the person you are speaking of. He is of short stature, with a round face, short dark side whiskers, wears a soft felt hat, quick walker, very fussy, and about fifty years of age,' which was perfect in every detail. The explanation was that immediately I commenced to speak of the individual, I pictured him in my mind's eye, and the sensitive being in a receptive condition received the mental picture. But this cannot be used as an argument against the genuineness of clairvoyant descriptions of deceased or living persons.

I have known a medium to recite, word for word, an account of a murder he had read in the evening paper, before the control could give utterance to a single word of the intended address. Of course 'Vir' would contend that he was controlled by the newspaper. I say that the spirits had to clear the mind of this extraneous matter ere they could proceed satisfactorily with the address.

With regard to 'Vir's' remarks as to persons of a powerful imagination, such as novelists, dramatists, mechanical inventors, and their persistent images, I would suggest that when 'Vir' and others of average mental calibre will give as much time day after day, month after month, and year after year to the study and investigation of spiritual science (offering the conditions required by the spirits) as they are so ready to give to any material science, then, and not till then, will they be able to answer the ever-recurring questions which the varied phenomena of Spiritualism are continually suggesting.

If spirits can transfer scenes that are occurring thousands of miles away to the sensitive minds of their mediums, as is quite common, why not transfer the likeness of the person, even if the said person never had an existence, other than in their minds? And, again, spirit people are ever at work helping humanity when and where they find an opening; knowing well, in many instances, the laws that govern material combinations, they can and do build up objects and clothe spirits for 'authors, dramatists, and mechanical inventors.' At the time of the Mahatma craze, a medium friend of mine had scarcely any sleep for a month, owing to mischievous spirits imitating the descriptions given of the alleged Mahatmas, positively asserting themselves to be genuine Mahatmas, and promising the medium that if he would let them use him he should be the most eloquent preacher in the kingdom. With the assistance of his guides, and by the persistence of his will through a terrible ordeal, they were compelled to leave him.

Moving the table by will is an old experiment. In 1891 I sat in front of a mahogany two-leaf table, near upon three-

quarters of a hundredweight, with my will concentrated thereon, and the determination that it should rise before I left it. Thus for about fifteen minutes my whole strength of will was so centred, the perspiration running off at my chin and my clothing being wet through, until I fell back exhausted; but not until the table had risen six inches from the floor. So great was the loss of vitality expended on this experiment that I was unwell for a month following. Still this is no evidence against spirit return.

I wonder how our friend 'Vir' would explain the above facts by his theory.

Bank House, Hanley.

J. H. SANKEY.

RECOGNISED PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHS.

I should like to place on record the facts in regard to the photographs herewith inclosed, showing spirit forms. I may state that all were taken by the photographer known as 'Z.'

Number I. was taken in November, 1895, and prior to this date, I had neither seen nor had any communication with 'Z.' The sitting was decided upon on the spur of the moment. The spirit form was minutely described by 'Z.' before the exposure, and his description was confirmed by the photograph. But I must tell you that the spirit form was first described as appearing in spirit robes, but that as I did not recognise 'Z.'s' description she changed the dress, at my request, to one she usually wore. I was asked whether the form should be taken in spirit robes or in ordinary dress. I chose the latter, as you see. While this discussion was going on as to dress the plate was awaiting exposure in the camera!

Upon examination, though the form appeared familiar to me, I could not clearly identify it, as I wrote to my wife when I sent the photograph to her at San Antonio, Texas. She wrote back, saying, 'It is no wonder you saw a strong likeness to some one you knew, seeing it is undoubtedly my grandmother. What puzzled you was the strong likeness to mama.' My wife and her sister recognised it instantly, as the representation of their grandmother, not only as to features and appearance generally, but also as to dress, which was the same as she used to wear in the morning—the shawl and neckerchief being particular features.

Number II. was taken in July, 1896, and as before, 'Z.' described the form before the exposure and stated that the flowers were held up in the hand. I asked my wife, who was with me, to hold out her hand and perhaps our friend would hold the flowers towards her. 'Z.' at once said, 'Yes, she holds the flowers down now.' As before, the plate at this time was awaiting exposure in the camera. My wife thought she recognised the form as soon as she saw the negative; but when the print was sent home, her partial recognition was confirmed, as being the portrait of a *cousin of her mother*.

At the same sitting when No. II. was taken two others were also taken, but the forms were not recognised. One was subsequently broken and 'Z.' asked us to call again, which we did, taking our son and daughter with us. When my daughter took the chair 'Z.' said, 'That old lady is here again who was taken when you were here before.' My wife at once said, 'If she would come front face she would be more easily recognised.' In a few moments 'Z.' said, 'Yes, she now turns front face,' and described her as before, holding the flowers up. I made the request that the flowers should be held down. The result is clearly shown in the photograph Number III. 'Z.' asked whether she—the spirit form—was not fond of knitting? This was admitted by my wife. 'Because,' said 'Z.,' 'she has knitting needles stuck in her waist-band.'

As to recognition, to us there is no room for doubt, and, therefore, the impossibility of their being other than genuine spirit photographs. And even had they not been recognised, the fact of such tests as changing the pose, on the spur of the moment, after the plates had been placed in the camera, is, to our thinking, such as to exclude all possibility of imposture.

Honor Oak Park.

T. C. E.

[The photographs which accompanied this letter correspond exactly to 'T.C.E.'s' description. Numbers II. and III. are certainly the same form, but one is taken almost in profile and the other full face.—Ed. 'LIGHT.']

If the Deity expects the genuine love and respect of independent, thinking creatures, He must, in the long run, treat them as a good father would treat them.—O. W. HOLMES.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Proposed Record of Prophecies.

SIR,—Now the question of prophecy is in the air I should like to propose that some system of recording the results of prophecies be inaugurated. Cannot the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, do some good work in this way? The details of the plan are open to discussion, but it seems to me the following should be some of its features:—

1. The establishment of a Central Recording Bureau with secretary and letter-files—say at 2, Duke-street.
2. A permanent announcement of the same in Spiritualistic journals.
3. Invitation to all who receive any distinct prophecies as to their future, or that of the political world, to enclose the same in closed or sealed envelope stating the exact details, the name of the prophet, the mode of communication, the date of the same, with attestations, if possible. Outside the envelope to write the date when it may be opened to prove the truth of the facts prophesied, and to address it to the care of the secretary of the Bureau, giving also sender's address. Forms to be filled up may be provided, if desired.
4. The secretary should register in a book the receipt of such letters, and file them, and await further directions as to whether he is to open the letter or not. No letter to be opened without permission of the sender, who can reclaim it at any time by sending the postage.

F. W. THURSTAN, M.A.

[We believe that the Council of the Alliance contemplate the appointment of special Committees for investigating, as thoroughly as possible, some of the more important problems in which all Spiritualists cannot but be interested.—Ed. 'LIGHT.']

Electro-Hypnotism.

SIR,—I read somewhere the other day that some hypnotic experimenter (Colonel de Rochas, I think) has discovered that the hypnotic state can be brought on by electrification. This is another instance of re-discovery by our hypnotists of things that were known to the mesmerisers. The merit of the hypnotisers is so great, and their additions to our knowledge of psychic matters so numerous, that it would add to their reputation rather than take from it to gracefully acknowledge the good work done by the old mesmerists. I take the following from the 'Zoist.' In Vol. VII., p. 183, Mr. W. Hazard (nearly half a century ago) wrote:—

The Magnet.—A rather powerful magnet is suspended from a brass rod, and a small iron chain is attached to the bar; the chain being held in the patient's hand produces rigidity and coma. The demesmerising passes dispel these effects.

Electricity.—I place a chair upon an insulating platform, and a chain from the positive conductor of my powerful electrical machine being held in the hand of many of my patients and of others not under mesmeric treatment, coma is produced. When the chain is held, I set the machine in motion; then with a curved pointed brass instrument I extract the fluid from the head, forehead, and eyes, holding the point about four inches from the person; the effect is a delightful, cool, soothing sensation. I have tried this effect so often that in seven cases out of ten I have induced coma, and in many in less than three minutes.

Have we not here a simple and easy method of producing the insensibility required for painless surgical operations?

LETUS TRYIT.

Mr. Duguid and Psychic Photograph y.

SIR,—I think it is desirable, owing to the appearance of 'Edina's' two articles in your columns, to remind your readers that I contributed to 'LIGHT,' on July 13th, 1895, an article adverse to Mr. Duguid, and to say that I still adhere to the substantial accuracy of what I then stated. Anything which may be written in favour of Mr. Duguid loses weight when it is remembered that he has not refuted my statements, and evidently shrinks from doing so. Mr. Glendinning, in replying to Mr. Forbes' letter in 'LIGHT,' remarked that Mr. Duguid had said 'he would live it down.' This attitude of 'living it down' may apply to a case of rumour where a man cannot lay hold of his accusers, and has no other alternative, but does

not apply in the case of a distinct and direct challenge. I would also remind your readers that the picture 'Night,' mentioned by Madame de Steiger, contained, besides the undraped siren, the figures of several Cupids, which Cupids appeared, along with the alleged Cyprian Priestess, on the plates obtained by Mr. Duguid at Kirkcaldy in 1890.

Kirkcaldy.

DAVID ROBERTSON.

Higher and Lower Spiritual Spheres.

SIR,—Permit me to tender my sincere thanks to 'J.S.G.' for his courteous response to my request.

I do myself firmly believe in the existence of God, and I had hoped that 'J.S.G.' might have been able to give us a certain assurance, obtained from friends on the other side, that such a Being did really exist, and am greatly disappointed to find that inhabitants of the spirit world, from whom information on the point might reasonably have been looked for, have no knowledge of Him.

Chichester.

E. H.

The Seybert Commission, &c.

SIR,—From the recent correspondence in the 'Echo' on Spiritualism, I gather that Slade was one of the mediums who failed to convince the investigators of the reality of spiritual phenomena. This alone is sufficient to stamp the investigation in my mind as a bogus affair. The manifestations with this medium, taking place in full light and being of the most unequivocal character, afforded conclusive evidence of the action of extraneous force guided by intelligence, which ought to satisfy any reasonable observer of the fact. This will be readily realised by reading Professor Zollner's account of them in 'Transcendental Physics,' which my own experiences, recorded in 'LIGHT' some time ago, fully confirm. Can anyone state what became of the 70,000dol. left by Mr. Seybert to promote the investigation, also what has become of Slade? He was reported to be ill some time ago, but I never heard of his demise.

I have just heard of a very remarkable phenomenon taking place which I think worthy of making a note of. A lady, who is one of us, has a son who is organist in a parish church in Buckinghamshire. This gentleman was invited to spend the evening in the house of a clergyman. One of the guests present being a medium, it was proposed to hold a séance, which the host, although he did not encourage it, acquiesced in. I was not informed of all that took place, but in the course of the proceedings a glass of wine standing on the table was raised up, and, as it were, placed to the mouth of an invisible being, and the wine disappeared. Mr. Home was known to hold a glass of water under the table and bring up the glass empty, and no trace of the liquid could be found on the floor.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

SOCIETY WORK.

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

32, REGENT-SQUARE, W.C.—Public clairvoyant séances, Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday evenings, at 7.30 p.m. prompt. Mediums, Madame Lewsey Perry and W. G. Coote.—W.G.C.

DAWN OF DAY SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, 85, FORTRESS-ROAD, KENTISH TOWN, N.W.—Mrs. Spring gave the invocation and satisfactory clairvoyance. Mrs. Bingham gave an address on 'The Necessity of Re-incarnation.' On Sunday next, address on 'Affinities.' Mrs. Spring, clairvoyance.—M. ROBEK, Hon. Sec.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, ISLINGTON.—On Sunday last Mr. Jones, in the chair, gave the subject of 'Ruts,' which was dealt with by various speakers. Miss Harris, under control, spoke well. A letter of sympathy and regret was read from Mr. T. Everitt, and stating that the inclement weather prevented his being with us last Sunday.—T. B.

EDMONTON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, BEECH HALL, HYDE-LANE.—We had a pleasant evening on Sunday with Mr. Dalley, who, after answering a number of questions from the audience, gave an interesting address upon 'How to Live,' to the satisfaction of a large audience. We are making grand progress here, increasing week by week. Next Sunday, Mr. Thomson and Mr. Walker.—A. WALKER.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Allen gave an address on 'Spiritualism: Its Use to Humanity,' to a crowded hall. There were many old friends glad to hear Mr. Allen on

this occasion. Mr. Ronald Brailey, next Sunday and Thursday, Lyceum and public circle at 13, Fowler-road, Forest Gate, E., every Sunday and Tuesday.—THOS. MCCALLUM.

CARDIFF PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ST. JOHN'S HALL.—On Sunday last we were favoured with a visit from Brother G. E. Aldridge, of Weston-super-Mare, who gave an able and comprehensive address upon 'Action versus Faith.' Claiming from Biblical records that Jesus based the true test of spiritual life upon works, not faith alone, the speaker lucidly showed how truant the many churches of Christendom are to-day to the simple teachings of their Founder. Speaker next Sunday evening, Mr. E. Adams, 'Angels' Whispers.'—E. A.

BATTERSEA PARK OPEN-AIR WORK.—In spite of the cold weather on Sunday last a faithful few managed to gather a fair audience. A little warmth was created by some 'faith healers' defending themselves from the charge of failing to obey the Apostolic injunction to 'Heal the sick, preach the Gospel, and cast out devils.' We, however, tried to show that 'faith' was a non-essential, healing being the result of laws obeyed, whether consciously or unconsciously. The speakers were Messrs. Emma, Adams and Boddington, and Mrs. Boddington. Next Sunday, at 3.15 p.m., as usual.—H. B.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—The guides of Mr. W. E. Long, taking as their text Rev. ii. 11, 'And he that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches' &c., gave us a grand discourse on the 'Church of the Spirit.' The fluency of utterance and the wealth of apt illustration were well calculated to amaze as well as instruct the strangers present. Said one, 'I can go home now, and read my old Bible with a new understanding!' Next Sunday, at 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Brenchley will give clairvoyance. Every Thursday, at 35, Station-road, at 8.15 p.m., a class of instruction. Questions answered, discussion allowed. Strangers and inquirers heartily invited.—R. B.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last an exceptionally fine discourse was delivered at these rooms by the inspirers of Mr. Geo. Horatio Bibbings. Under the title of 'Was, Is, and Shall Be,' past and present religious thought was analysed, with scathing denunciations of the many degrading teachings that are so intermixed with the religions of the day. The speaker, however, did not merely pursue a destructive policy, but was equally successful in that part of the discourse which was of a constructive nature, showing in a masterly manner how man was beginning to recognise and understand the blessings of spiritual as well as material freedom, and depicting the curse of that arrogance and selfishness which have contributed so much to the thralldom of thought and enslavement of the intellect. Mr. Bibbings received a warm welcome from the crowded audience, and, general conditions being harmonious, the talented inspirers of this excellent trance medium were able to do full justice to the matters on which they discoursed. Great regret was expressed that such memorable utterances were not taken down verbatim, but, most unfortunately, this could not be done. This was the first occasion upon which Mr. Bibbings has occupied the Cavendish Rooms platform, and he came as a comparative stranger to the Marylebone Association. Leaving London to fulfil his many other engagements, he carries with him the most hearty good wishes of all with whom he has come in contact. The 'M. A. S.' join with their provincial brethren in the satisfaction expressed that Spiritualism has, in Mr. Bibbings, another splendid co-worker and an educated medium. It is hoped that Mr. Bibbings' arrangements will permit of his visiting the Marylebone Association again ere long. Miss Florence Morse contributed much to the harmonious surroundings by her excellent singing of the two solos, 'All ye that are weary' and 'The Lost Chord,' which gave great pleasure to all present. Next Sunday evening, at 7 p.m., Miss Rowan Vincent will address the meeting on 'The Probabilities of a Future Life.' Clairvoyance at the close of the address; soloist, Miss Morris; doors open at 6.30 p.m., commence at 7 p.m.—L. H.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

- 'The Arena,' for October. Copley-square, Boston, Mass, U.S.A. Price 1s. 6d.
- 'The Hypnotic Magazine,' for October. London agents: Gay & Bird, 22, Bedford-street, Strand, W.C. Price 1s. 6d.
- 'The Priceless Gem.' By BALMOKAND, Clothseller, of Rawalpindi, India: 'The Mitra Vilasa' Press, Lahore. 1 Re.
- 'The Metaphysical Magazine,' for October. London agents: Gay & Bird, 22, Bedford-street, Strand, W.C. Price 1s. 6d.

In the intercourse of social life it is by little acts of watchful kindness recurring daily and hourly—and opportunities of doing kindnesses, if sought for, are ever starting up—it is by words, by tones, by gestures, by looks, that affection is won and preserved. He who neglects these trifles, yet boasts that whenever a great sacrifice is called for he shall be ready to make it, will rarely be loved. The likelihood is he will not make it; and if he does it will be much rather for his own sake than for his neighbour's.—G. A. SALA.