

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 830.—VOL. XVI.

[Registered as]

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1896.

[a Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

'Evil and Evolution,' by the author of 'The Social Horizon' (London: Macmillan and Co.), is pleasantly enough written, but we do not think the writer of it has succeeded in his 'attempt to turn the light of Science on to the ancient mystery of evil.' The writer of it, indeed, does not seem to have made up his mind about the earth—whether it is bad or good, on the whole; and we say that, not because he is vague, but because he is inconsistent. He holds that it is bad enough to necessitate the inference that there is an imperial Satan who shares the rule of this world with God; and this he is driven to because of railway accidents, the brutal persistence of the law of gravitation, and, we suppose, spilt milk and slugs. But, on the other hand, he sings the praises of this beautiful world, and how all things seem to push on for good.

In his early chapters he 'piles up the agony,' and again and again insists upon driving us to the hypothesis of a Devil in order to rescue the character of God; and then, after almost persuading us, he says:—'Nature "red in tooth and claw"! It is false. Nature on the whole is nothing of the kind. Nature is all aglow with pleasure—dashed with pain just here and there. The rule everywhere is the prevalence of happiness. Evil is the comparatively trivial exception . . . is after all only what might be produced by a very slight disturbance of the perfect adjustment of things.' 'And the hereafter? Well, if there *were* no hereafter, such a life here would have been quite worthy of Divine Fatherhood, a thing for which all hearts might continually break forth in praise and thanksgiving.'

It is a pity this writer did not produce the second half of the book before the first half. It would perhaps have saved him the necessity of bringing in the Devil to account for the 'very slight disturbance of the perfect adjustment.'

By the way, Messrs. Macmillan hardly deserve any notice of this book, as the copy sent to us has the title-page mutilated. We note with pleasure that most publishers better understand what is due to a reviewer and what is good for themselves.

The President of 'The National Spiritualists' Association' (U.S.) has just sent out his Annual Report. It occupies nineteen enormous columns in the 'Progressive Thinker,' and seems to cover the whole ground, from half-fares for mediums to the ordination of ministers or platform workers. It is, of course, richly suggestive and highly instructive.

The section with the trumpet-call in it is that which refers to the Jubilee in 1898. After referring to the International Conference to be held in London in that year, the President says that as modern Spiritualism began in America, the Jubilee ought to be adequately celebrated there. He and others have suggested a ten days' celebration at Rochester, N.Y., including a one day's celebration

at Hydesville. He anticipates that 'thousands upon thousands will be in attendance,' and urges the immediate appointment of a competent man of business, with an office and suitable assistants at Rochester, for the purpose of working up and working out the matter on a grand scale.

The following extract will give an idea of the tone of the whole:—

In order to insure success in this movement, the work should be commenced at once. Standing advertisements should be placed in all of the Spiritualist papers, circular letters sent to all societies on both continents, inviting them to participate, letters of explanation sent to all workers, and the impression given out that it was to be a meeting for the masses of Spiritualists throughout the world. An interesting feature could be arranged by having all of the old Spiritualists, the survivors among the converts to Spiritualism in the years of '48, '49, '50, and '51, among the many attractions of the hour. This would be rendering honour to whom honour is due, by giving a just recognition to the noble workers of early days. An attractive programme should be made out, with a wide range of topics for discussion, and all our leading workers invited to take part. Papers upon the live topics of the day should be asked of such of our workers as cannot attend the meeting, and presented in due form to the people in attendance.

If such a meeting is planned, gigantic as the undertaking seems, it will be a success from the start. Such an undertaking as this would require a large amount of money, but if the right person was selected as a leader, necessary funds could be secured, and the Jubilee made the one great feature in the history of Spiritualism. The Spiritualists from all quarters of the globe will then visit America, become acquainted with us, and help to strengthen the bonds of fellowship amongst the nations of the earth.

This looks like business, and we wish every success to the people who lay hold.

A paragraph on Spiritualism, in 'To-day,' evidently written by Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, would make a good text for a pamphlet, so full is it of the usual familiar little 'difficulties' and demands of 'the man in the street.' Here are three specimens—and they are real specimens—the rest are no better:—

For all I know, this world may be peopled with unseen spirits. When they are prepared to prove their existence to me I am prepared to believe them. Up to the present they have not thought fit to do this.

A spirit who spends its time in answering silly questions (generally incorrectly) by means of a three-legged table, I regard as too foolish to listen to.

(Are Spiritualists' questions always 'silly'? or are they the only people who ask silly questions, Mr. Jerome?)

Why this passion of spirits for tables I have never been able to understand.

We almost need to apologise to our readers for these specimens of the well-known penny-a-liner's cheap chaff—but Mr. Jerome is Mr. Jerome, and 'To-day' is 'To-day.' The first paragraph is perhaps as good a specimen of the old, old inanity as we have ever seen. Does Mr. Jerome really think that a 'cheeky' little laugh like that proves anything, beyond the writer's altogether wrong state of mind? Does he imagine that the 'unseen spirits' are

going to run after him and convince him! He might be talking about a canvasser for advertisements in whose success or credibility he had no confidence.

The tiresome reference to tables is stale enough. We are quite prepared to hear of anything more convenient. But why object to a table for an experiment? The man of science in his experiments disdains nothing; and the more science the more simplicity. The great Faraday, we believe, was famous for his homely devices,—spent lucifer matches, bits of cork, pins,—anything that came to hand and that would do. Edison has no foolish prejudices against homely instruments. Is it not really a little vulgar as well as a little silly to despise, or to affect to despise, homely instruments?

But Mr. Jerome does not seem to perceive the A.B.C. of this matter. It is all waste of breath or ink to criticise the instrument or the message that comes. The one vital matter is—*Does anything come?* When a telegraph is laid from continent to continent, it does not matter who gets hold of the communicating instrument,—the president of the company or an imp of an office-boy. Never mind the means or the message. A million times more important is,—*Is the communication established?*

A certain nimble-witted and free-minded young minister, in a London suburb, has been preaching on the out-of-the-way subject, 'On dropping one's h's.' That was the bright way in which he introduced to his audience the old story of the book of Judges, telling how the Gileadites overthrew the Ephraimites, and then took possession of the Jordan fords: 'And it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.'

This is a shocking story, but the preacher applied it to one a thousand times more shocking—the odious and murderous persecutions of the world. 'There was a time,' he said, 'when people were wont to thrust their particular shibboleths down the throats of others—the shibboleth of the Thirty-nine Articles for instance; and to pronounce it "shibboleth" meant excommunication. Whether shibboleth or sibboleth, people had a right to their own creed or belief, but they should not force it on others; should not go about trying to measure up the universe with their own miserable three-foot rule, pressing everything into their own Thirty-nine Articles, and making their own ideas the sole test of the religion of other men.'

'The Banner of Light' has found out a clever way of getting a leader. It takes some publication, mentions the writer at the start, quotes a sentence or two, and then launches forth into what looks like original comment, paragraph after paragraph: the fact being that the whole article is one long quotation, but without acknowledgment and without quotation marks. We have before us an article of about one hundred and thirty-five lines, five of which are the writer's own; the one hundred and thirty being bodily taken from an English publication, with nothing to show that it is so taken, but the reverse. We have the greatest possible regard for 'The Banner of Light,' but its new method of leader-making is inconvenient.

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

It is sometimes very painful to do one's duty, but never so painful as not to have done it.—Dumas.

'SCIENCE AND THE LIFE BEYOND.'

By MR. HERBERT BURROWS.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

(Continued from page 569.)

The position of the material scientist, Mr. Burrows said, was founded on a negative hypothesis, a legitimate hypothesis, however, if one admitted the premises upon which it was based, and conceded that life, thought, and consciousness depended upon certain chemical, electrical, and molecular changes which took place in the brain. If this were true, it was a necessary consequence that when the brain mouldered away at death, life, thought, and consciousness ceased with it. It must be admitted that, so far as could be seen, a very large number of the facts of ordinary existence tended to support the materialistic idea. Let it be supposed that someone in the audience had died at that moment. The materialist would find a good deal of scope in such an event for enforcing some of his ideas. He would probably say: 'A moment ago this dead person was a living being, showing life, thought, consciousness; but now I can find no trace of life, no appearance of thought or consciousness. If you, as an occultist, a Spiritualist, or Theosophist, are going to contend that the life, thought, and consciousness which this body manifested a moment ago is still in existence, on you lies the onus of proof'; and that would not be an unfair position to take up. He (the lecturer) would leave out of sight for the time all idea of psychical phenomena as a method of controverting the materialist position. He wished to try and build up a positive hypothesis from the scientific standpoint, in opposition to the negative hypothesis of the materialist, which was erected on certain premises, the soundness of which might, for the purposes of the argument, be admitted. All scientists, however, did not agree with the idea that life, thought, and consciousness were the outcome of those changes in the brain-substance. He would like to read an extract from a notable book which bore upon the subject. This was 'The Excursions of an Evolutionist,' by Professor John Fiske, of Harvard University, in which appeared a very striking essay on Professor W. K. Clifford's idea of a Universe of Mind Stuff. In the course of this essay Professor Fiske said:—

By this beautiful method of presentation [*i.e.*, the Berkeleyan] so much fresh light is thrown upon some philosophical truths as to make them appear self-evident. See what havoc it makes at the outset with the crude notion of the materialist—a notion supported by loose popular language and loose popular thinking—that changes of consciousness are caused by physical actions on or within the organism. Materialists talk about ideas as originating in the brain; and people generally have become so much impressed with the notion that mental states are caused by physical actions on the nervous system, that when you begin to explain to them the wonderfully minute correlations between psychical action and brain action which modern psychology has disclosed, they immediately take fright and think you are explaining away the mind altogether. They think that, in order to refute materialism, it is necessary to deny that associations of ideas occur simultaneously with the passage of waves of molecular motion from one cell to another in the grey surface of the brain. . . . A wave of molecular motion in the brain cannot produce a feeling or a state of consciousness. It can do nothing whatever but set up other waves of molecular motion either in the grey matter of ganglia or in the white matter of nerve fibres. Whatever goes, in any way, into the organism as physical force must come out again as physical force, and every phase and every transformation that it may undergo in the meantime must be rigorously accounted for in terms of physical force, or else the law of the conservation of energy will not be satisfied. To introduce consciousness or feeling anywhere in the series as either caused by or causing actions in the brain or nerves is 'not to state what is untrue but to talk nonsense,' as Clifford would say.

In another little book, by the same author, 'The Destiny of Man Viewed in the Light of his Origin,' occurred a passage which might also be quoted as having a considerable bearing upon the question at issue:—

Nothing could be more grossly unscientific than the famous remark of Cabanis that the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile. It is not even correct to say that thought goes on in the brain. What goes on in the brain is an amazingly complex series of molecular movements with which thought and feeling are in some unknown way correlated, not as effects or as causes, but as concomitants. So much is clear; but

cerebral physiology says nothing about another life. Indeed, why should it? The last place in the world to which I should go for information about the state of things in which thought or feeling can exist in the absence of a cerebrum would be cerebral physiology. The materialistic assumption that there is no such state of things, and that the life of the soul accordingly ends with the life of the body, is, perhaps, the most colossal instance of baseless assumption that is known in the history of philosophy. No evidence for it can be alleged beyond the familiar fact that during the present life we know Soul only in its association with Body, and, therefore, cannot discover disembodied soul without dying ourselves. This fact must always prevent us from obtaining direct evidence for the belief in the soul's survival. But a negative presumption is not created by the absence of proof in cases where, in the nature of things, proof is inaccessible. With his illegitimate hypothesis of annihilation, the materialist transgresses the bounds of experience quite as widely as the poet who sings of the New Jerusalem with its river of life and its streets of gold. Scientifically speaking, there is not a particle of evidence for either view.

Of course, he did not agree with Professor Fiske regarding this lack of psychical evidence. That was the negative hypothesis of the materialist—a hypothesis upon which most of the physical science of the day is founded, and upon which it relies when it comes to deal with the facts of what he called the occult. The onus of proof, of course, lay on the Spiritualist or occultist; but, as he had said, he would humbly try to build up a positive hypothesis without the aid of psychical phenomena—to try to construct, or, at any rate, suggest, a bridge across the gulf which at present separated the Spiritualist and the materialist.

In the old pre-Reformation days the notion that men had of the forces of Nature—heat, light, motion, and electricity and magnetism, so far as they knew them—was that these forces were separate entities, acting independently of each other. One of the great achievements of modern science, however, was the substitution for this erroneous conception of the great idea of the unity of natural forces, and so of the universe at large. It had evolved, indeed, three great fundamental principles. Instead of regarding the forces of Nature as distinct from each other, it recognised that each is but a different aspect of one great underlying force, whatever that force might be called; it was what he would call the socialistic idea of the universe as opposed to the individualistic idea. The scientists went still further. They found that light, heat, electricity, magnetism, &c., as well as being manifestations of one great underlying force, were capable of being translated into each other. Thus one might translate heat into motion, or motion into heat, or one might take light, heat, and electricity, and correlate them, and so recognise that they were a unity. Then they evolved the great idea of the Conservation of Energy; that nothing could be wasted—whatever force was put forward, there was a corresponding reaction. Thus they had three great scientific principles: the Unity of the Universe, the Correlation of Force, and the Conservation of Energy.

Next, it was to be recognised that physical science was based upon a great hypothesis; he wished to lay especial stress upon that. It was based upon the hypothesis of ether. Years ago matter was only known in one or two forms; but now it was beginning to be seen that matter was a complex thing. It might be solid, liquid, gaseous, or vaporous. Nevertheless, it was not possible to know the ether in the sense that one could come into contact with other substances. No instrument had been invented, howsoever subtle, by which its presence could be detected. Yet without the ether the whole fabric of physical science would go by the board, would be absolutely undermined. When, therefore, the occultist was taunted by the material scientist as holding a faith established on nothing more substantial than hypothetical reasoning, he had the right to turn round upon his critic and say, 'You twit me with a hypothesis, but your whole philosophy is no less based upon hypothesis—the hypothesis of ether!' Now, why did the materialist accept the hypothesis? Because it was the only one that explained the phenomena with which he had to deal. Unless he posited his hypothesis concerning the existence of the ether, a large number of the problems of physical life would be to him absolutely insoluble. Similarly the occultist posited his hypothesis of an existence after death in other stages or planes of consciousness, and then the particular phenomena with which he had to deal fell one by one naturally and harmoniously into their proper places in thought. He tested his theories by his facts and his facts by his theories, in the same way that the material scientist did. Now let them

take the three principles just referred to—the Unity of the Universe, the Correlation of Force, the Conservation of Energy, which the President of the Royal Society would acknowledge to be the three basic principles of modern science. Dealing first with the Unity of the Universe, they might think of the spectrum analysis. 'Absurd,' the old scientists would have cried had they been told that the sun and stars were composed of the same elements as the earth. Yet every scientific tyro knew that you could take your spectroscopic and demonstrate, for instance, the presence of metals in the sun. You might show by analysis that certain terrestrial metals always produced certain colour bands, and by showing the existence of the same lines and bands in the solar spectrum you had the right scientifically to affirm that they were produced by the presence of those metals in the sun. There was the physical unity of the universe to begin with. He had already dealt with the Correlation of Force—the fact that you could translate the various natural forces into each other, and that they were practically the same—and the Conservation of Energy, implying that there was no waste of power anywhere—there was nowhere for energy to go outside of the universe. Therefore, if one took life, thought, and consciousness simply in their lowest forms as forces expressed in the individual, they must, after the cessation of his organic existence, continue to subsist somewhere in the universe, or the laws of unity and conservation would be broken. Professor Clifford practically acknowledged that, and so evolved his idea of a universe of mind-stuff; he did not see his way, however, to accept the conception of a continued existence for the individual, and therefore considered the subtler forces which made up the individuality as merging themselves at death into the universal ocean of this 'mind-stuff,' as he termed it.

One step farther. The tendency of the best science of the day was, as had already been said, towards the appreciation of the finer and subtler forces of Nature. Notwithstanding that men lived in what might be termed a five-sense universe, any scientist who knew his business would tell them that beneath and beyond the universe, cognisable by ordinary human perceptions, was a finer and subtler universe. He (Mr. Burrows) had there with him that evening Professor Huxley's 'Lay Sermons, Essays and Reviews,' in which was included that wonderful lecture on protoplasm as the physical basis of life, a lecture which evoked such a storm of indignant criticism from Press and pulpit at the time when it was delivered. In the course of this lecture the Professor had stated that:—

Currents [of protoplasm] similar to those in the hairs of the nettle have been observed in a great multitude of very different plants, and weighty authorities have suggested that they probably occur in more or less perfection in all young vegetable cells. If such be the case, the wonderful noonday silence of a tropical forest is after all due only to the dulness of our hearing, and could our ears catch the murmur of these tiny mæstroms as they whirl in the innumerable myriads of living cells which constitute each tree, we should be stunned as with the roar of a great city.

That meant that Huxley recognised that the human ear was an imperfect instrument, which could only take in a certain number of vibrations per second; and that, as a consequence, much that went on in the working of the finer natural forces was entirely beyond the range of the auditory nerves in man. Much the same might be said of the other senses. It was easy, for instance, to understand the remark of Helmholtz that if the eye had been sent to him as an optical instrument he would send it back to its maker as imperfect. Everyone knew that the eye could only take in a certain number of vibrations per second, and that consequently a very large portion of the universe was absolutely concealed from human vision. The increasing recognition of the limitations of human faculties for apprehending the underlying forces of Nature tended more and more to awaken the scientist to a realisation of the vast possibilities of existence, and, as had been said, to bring him into closer contact with these finer forces. The outworking of this idea was seen in the experiments by which Professor Stokes discovered the ultra-violet ray beyond the blue in the spectrum, and demonstrated to the world of science the quality of light known as fluorescence. Why was that ultra-violet ray concealed from the unaided human vision? Because the eye could only take in some 789 billions of vibrations per second. Any number of vibrations above that was lost, so far as the human eye was concerned. Such facts as these went far to show how vast a universe of force, of form, colour, beauty, and harmony existed to which the five senses gave man no access.

Here, then, was the best scientific materialist position. The universe one, under the reign of law, no miracle possible. Force also one, constant, unalterable in its totality, capable of being modified in direction only. The five-sense universe part only of the great complex whole, the finer invisible forces seemingly multiplying on every hand. Matter only known as the cause of a state of consciousness, that consciousness non-individual after death, and then the gulf which means annihilation. Was it possible to bridge it over? That was the crux, the question to which the Spiritualist and the occultist had to give a definite and decided answer.

When the late Professor Tyndall, in his celebrated Belfast address, said that in matter he discerned the promise and potency of all terrestrial life, he was very careful to avoid the term 'dead matter.' The true scientist knows that there is no such thing. To him, as to the Spiritualist, the keynote of the universe is *life*. Every atom of what was called matter, everything in the universe, exhibited the phenomena of life in different stages of manifestation. No one knew what that life was. It had been known by different names in different stages of the world's history. Some people called it God. 'I do not,' said Mr. Burrows, 'give it that title; I prefer to say that I see in the universe life as its key-note, and that although I do not know, and cannot know, what it is in its essence, I can study it in its manifestations. I can study them in myself and in the forms of Nature by which I am surrounded, and can thereby appreciate the saying of the old German metaphysician, that "God sleeps in the mineral, dreams in the vegetable, and wakes in man."'

Where, then, did their thought lead them? They could accept and rejoice in all the conclusions of physical science, which took them step by step to the invisible universe, and by a positive hypothesis based on rigid scientific experiment they could bridge over the annihilation gulf. Suppose that it were possible to throw the body of a man or woman into a state so far resembling death that it should present practically no real difference to the physiological observer, that it should be rigid, insensible, that the circulation of the blood should apparently have almost ceased, and the electrical and chemical activities of the organism be correspondingly reduced. Suppose, further, that in despite of all this, life, thought, and consciousness could not only manifest as keenly and actively as in the case of ordinary living men and women, but even more keenly and actively, as evidenced by the fact of a person in such a condition seeing and accurately describing scenes and incidents occurring hundreds of miles away. If that could be proved, then a tremendous blow would be given to the materialistic philosophy, which depended on the constant ratio of brain activity and consciousness. Such, however, were the circumstances under which what was known as the 'higher clairvoyance' was manifested, and it was to the higher clairvoyance he looked to form one of the chief buttresses of the bridge he desired to construct between spiritual and material science. He supposed the majority of those present were acquainted with the supposititious case he had quoted as being an actual fact; doubtless it had come within the experience of many of them. Indeed, he gathered from what had been told to him that such facts had been under the personal observation of some of them for many years. Now, as he had previously remarked, one experience was worth a million non-experiences, and although the phenomenon referred to was absolutely no proof whatever of immortality—it was not even, in the nature of the case, a proof of continued existence—yet if, as was shown, life, thought, and consciousness could exist and function under such conditions, it irresistibly led to the intellectual conclusion that when the brain moulders away the life, thought, and consciousness can still exist, because if they did not depend on the activity of the brain in life they need not do so after death. The material hypothesis was that the organic life was in direct ratio to the activity of the brain; but the occultist knew, on the other side, that in many cases the manifestation of consciousness and thought existed independently of cerebral activity, and he was even more justified in propounding his positive hypothesis from this set of observed facts than the materialist was in drawing his negative hypothesis on the other side. Some of them might think that this was a very lame way of putting the matter. But he wished to put his conclusions into a form that would be appreciated by the scientific thinker. He would again tell them frankly that many scientists had been driven away from inquiry into psychical facts through spiritualistic channels by the trivialities and frivolities of spirit communion. Spiritualists

had sometimes said they did not care what scientists thought; but they knew perfectly well that if they could get the Archbishop of Canterbury and the President of the Royal Society to testify that they had seen and believed these facts regarding the 'higher clairvoyance,' it would stimulate thought more than twenty years of ordinary Spiritualism. Human nature rather liked to take on the ideas put forward by scientific men. If, then, by any means they could induce scientific men to take up this idea, he believed they could be brought more into consonance with occult thought; because here there were no dark cabinets, no materialised spirits, no people sitting round in dark circles—none of the ordinary physical phenomena. Here was a thing which could be tested by the scientific experimenter in as rigid a way as that in which he would test anything in ordinary physical science. The difficulty was to induce the scientist to turn his mind in this direction. He (Mr. Burrows) had talked the matter over many times with scientific men, both here and in America; but the difficulty was to get them to step outside their ordinary groove of scientific research.

The fact was, a good many of our scientists were not philosophers, and specialisation with them had done what it always did—it had narrowed their minds, and had tended to atrophy some of the faculties which would have been the better for cultivation. While specialisation had been of great benefit in some directions, it would always be better for the specialists if sometimes they could get outside their own particular circle of study, and find time to see what was going on in the life about them. It was more than possible that the conclusions of the newer science would lead many scientific investigators in this direction and into more fruitful fields of research. If there were any materialists present, he wished to say to them that if they based their philosophy on what was termed scientific materialism they ought to accept all the conclusions of physical science. It was inconsistent to take one set of facts and ignore another set, especially those with regard to the ultimate destiny of man. Two theories were held upon this subject: one looked forward to the gradual cooling of this earth, to a time when every vestige of heat will have disappeared from it, and the last man would be frozen to death. The other theory referred to the fact that the earth was gradually approaching the sun, and some day would be drawn into it. These theories seemed somewhat inconsistent, but although undoubtedly the globe was approaching the sun, the process was so slow that there was a great likelihood that the earth would cool first, and it would be, so to speak, a race between the coming of the expected glacial epoch and the falling of the earth into the sun. The conclusions, however, were both pretty much alike in essence. Whether the earth was consumed by the sun or frozen by the coming of another glacial age, the ultimate destiny of man, from the materialist standpoint, was absolute extinction. That was a dreary gospel to preach to the world, and he believed the real reason why the materialist had appealed to only a minority of mankind was that his gospel was a pessimistic one, and only satisfied comparatively a few amongst the great mass of human beings. But that was the only logical deduction to be drawn from the philosophy of materialism. There was no escape from it, and the materialist was bound to accept both sides of his science, and admit that final extinction was the destiny which it held out to humanity. Now what Spiritualists, Theosophists and occultists generally had been told was that in their case the wish was father to the thought, that they believed in an immortality because they wished for it—and that this wish for continued existence was an evidence of weakness, almost of imbecility. He was told the other day by a member of the Ethical Society that the craving for personal existence arose from living on a low plane of mental development. He repudiated the notion altogether—the notion that because one found life a desirable thing, and therefore wished for its continuance, one was cherishing an ignoble ambition. If there were any question of weakness, he contended that it was on the side of those who were unable to appreciate the full meaning of existence, who failed to see it as a beautiful and desirable thing, with its sweet affections, its infinite resources of beauty and enjoyment, and above all, its limitless possibilities of progress and unfoldment. It was the people who missed all these things who were really living on a low plane of thought. For himself, he could conceive of nothing more ennobling than the conviction that man would go on to higher and grander heights of evolution and achievement in spheres beyond the physical life, with the continuation of all that had made life true

and noble here. It was one of the greatest evidences of a strong soul to endeavour, by right living and by the cultivation of all its higher faculties, to raise itself and others to a loftier plane of existence; and this belief that death did not end all, the belief in other forms of consciousness than the physical one, the belief in the evolution of the soul as well as the body, gave to life a higher, better, and nobler meaning. What Spiritualists and occultists were really striving for was to restore to man his lost heritage. The tendency of material science had been to eliminate the microcosm from the macrocosm; to depose man from his real position as the highest product of the creative energy of Nature. Man contained within him all the possibilities, all the activities of the universe—all its powers and processes had been focussed on his evolution. In his view men were practically the gods of the universe, and the restoration of their lost heritage meant the necessity for their taking a loftier and nobler view of their existence. If there were law in the universe, if there were unity, man was part of that law and unity. That philosophy of existence which exalted him as a physical being merely, debased him mentally, morally, and spiritually. The truest use of physical science (said Mr. Burrows, finally) is to make it a ladder in your own lives up which you may climb to the very windows of the spiritual universe, there to catch through the golden lattice sweet glimpses of that 'light which never was on land or sea.' (Applause.)

MR. RICHARD HARTE briefly alluded to the séance referred to by Mr. Burrows. With regard to the question of scientific investigation, he thought that it was not so much the methods of the scientist as the spirit in which he would approach the investigation of psychical phenomena that was the true obstacle. If the scientist gave himself the trouble, and really *wanted* to learn the truth on the subject, he would soon find the means to learn; but the fact was that he always at present found some excuse on which to shirk the inquiry. Spiritualists were not anxious to catch hold of the scientist and, so to speak, 'rub his nose' against the phenomena. Mr. Burrows made a great point about the darkness in which physical phenomena of the kind recorded in the séance alluded to occurred. He did not know whether Mr. Burrows was aware of the fact that at some séances the materialised figures were self-illuminated. That was the case with regard to some of the manifestations at the séance in question.

MR. COLLINGWOOD, in the course of some remarks appreciative of the lecture, thought that in citing the phenomenon of the higher clairvoyance, Mr. Burrows had made use of an effective and valuable aid to his argument. He thought they should not defer too much to the scientist, whose habits of specialisation often tended to hamper his ability to conduct an impartial inquiry into facts outside his especial groove.

THE CHAIRMAN, in closing the meeting, expressed, on behalf of the audience, the great pleasure and appreciation with which all present had listened to the lecturer, a sentiment which was testified to by hearty applause from the meeting, instead of the usual formal vote of thanks.

The proceedings then terminated.

SPIRITUALISM ON THE FRENCH STAGE.

The 'Daily Chronicle' gives the following from its Paris correspondent:—

More than usual interest is shown in the new piece which Victorien Sardou has just completed. Its title, 'Spiritisme,' is enhanced by the fact that the great French playwright is a fervent Spiritualist, and thoroughly versed in the teaching and practice of modern Occultism. Frequent 'séances' have taken place at his country house at Marly, with the most startling results. 'Spiritisme' will, therefore, be no satire, and during the three acts every phase of the nebulous doctrine will be covered.

The scene will be laid at St. Jean-de-Luz and at Quiberon. Madame Sarah Bernhardt will play the chief rôle of Madame Robert d'Aubenas, an impassioned woman who is enthralled by what she sees around her, and who is the victim of a worthless lover named Manoel Clavajol. The other marked feminine rôle will be that of Countess Thecla Vasilevitch (Mlle. Marguerite Caron). There will be two physicians in the piece—one a Dr. Parisot, a sceptic and materialist; the other Dr. James Douglas, a Scotch scientist, who in his daily practice takes in the impalpable as no mean factor. The piece has been read by

the author at the Renaissance, and will follow the revival of Alfred de Musset's 'Lorenzaccio.'

The Paris correspondent of the 'Daily Mail' adds the following in regard to M. Sardou's spiritualistic experiences:—

'I am a convinced Spiritualist,' says M. Sardou, 'and have been one for a long time. For forty years I have taken up the subject of Spiritualism. You have before you a man who has seen everything in these matters. I have seen flowers fall from my ceiling. I have even been a surprisingly good medium, and have done a great deal of slate-writing. To-day the greatest savants in the world—geologists, chemists, and most renowned physicists in England—are beginning to believe in these inexplicable phenomena.'

'A SPIRIT WHO PROVED HER IDENTITY.'

In our issue of November 7th we gave the translation of a narrative which had appeared in a French journal, recording some séances, in the course of which messages were given in Basque—a language totally unknown to the medium and to the members of the circle. To our quotation we appended an expression of 'regret that the investigators, while establishing the identity of the spirit, should have left their own in the dark.' This remark has brought us a communication, the following translation of which may interest our readers:—

Paris, November 20th, 1896.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'LIGHT.'

SIR,—One of my friends, M. Louis Gardy, has been so kind as to inform me that you have reproduced in 'LIGHT' of the 7th inst. an article entitled 'A Spirit Who Proved Her Identity'—an article which I had contributed to 'La Revue Scientifique et Morale du Spiritisme,' and which appeared in that journal in September last. You expressed regret that such interesting facts were not supported by the full name of the writer. In confirming the reality of the facts related in the article in question, I, therefore, esteem it both a pleasure and a duty to give you my full name, position, and address, with perfect liberty to make such use of them as you may think proper for the information of the readers of 'LIGHT.'

I may add that the person of whom I have spoken as my friend X. is a superior officer in the French army, while the subject whom I called Mlle. G. is my own wife! Accept the assurance, &c.,

A. MONGIN.

P.S.—Subjoined is a declaration by my friend, M. Louis Gardy, of which you are equally at liberty to make such use as you may think necessary.

I declare that the article from 'La Revue du Spiritisme,' signed 'Trebla,' reproduced in 'LIGHT' of November 7th, is by my friend, M. Albert Mongin, who has been honourably known in Paris and elsewhere for many years for his devoted interest in the cause of Spiritualism.

In my work, 'Cherchons' (pp. 100-103), I have mentioned an interesting experience of this same friend—whose name I there quote—which he had by means of slate-writing through the mediumship of Slade.

19, Rue de Malagnon, Geneva.

LOUIS GARDY.

M. Mongin gives us not only his name, but also his full address, and particulars as to the position which he occupies in Paris. We have not thought it necessary to publish these details, but shall be happy to furnish them to any friend who may desire further confirmation of his interesting narrative.

A GEM FROM ELIPHAS LEVI.—It was after having descended from gulf to gulf, and from horror to horror, even unto the seventh circle of Inferno, that Dante, returning, and mounting, so to speak, on the shoulders of the Devil, ascended, consoled and victorious, towards the light. We have performed the same voyage; and we return before the world with calmness upon our brows and peace in our hearts. We come tranquilly to assure mankind that Hell, the Demon, the Bottomless Pit, the Dragon with Three Heads, and all the rest of the fearsome phantasmagoria, are but the nightmare of madness—that God alone real, alone absolute, everywhere present, fills without leaving any void—fills, I say, the limitless immensity with the splendours and eternal consolations of the sovereign Reason.

OFFICE OF LIGHT, 2, DUKE STREET, ADELPHI,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6th, 1896.

EDITOR ————— E. DAWSON ROGERS.
Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—"LIGHT" may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 6d.; six months, 5s. 6d. Payment to be made in advance. To United States, 10s. 6d. Postage. ADVERTISING CHARGES.—Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 4s. Column, 25s. Page, 24s. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

Light.

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.
PRICE TWENTY PENCE 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.

IS A 'GHOST' NATURAL?

We have had to reply to a rather urgent private letter, drawing attention to the fact that Spiritualists are usually not 'orthodox,' and that, nevertheless, Spiritualism is a foremost witness-bearer in favour of the supernatural. As the subject is of general interest, we give our readers the benefit of the reflections suggested by our friend's letter.

It is true that Spiritualists are usually (not always) surrenderers of 'orthodoxy,' and mainly so because their unseen visitors report in favour of a more rational and humane creed: but it is not true that Spiritualism bears witness to 'the supernatural.' It is of the highest possible importance that this old-world notion should be wiped out. There is no 'supernatural,' just because all is natural—God, the angels and heaven as truly as man, the gnats and the drift of the smoke in the wind. We do not mind the word 'supernatural,' meaning by that the unusual, but we do most earnestly object to drawing any line between the naturalness of things seen and unseen. 'A ghost' is just as natural as the person who sees it, as we should perceive quite well if we could shift our ground and get to ghost-land. In truth, if we could do that, it might then appear to us that this much-loved land of gas and mud and fog is the less natural of the two.

'Natural' should mean that which is, or is produced, according to invariable law—that which depends upon the permanent associations of cause and effect. Anything within that sphere of steadfast and harmonious action is 'natural.' But here comes the difficulty. Man has been a long time on the road, and he picks up his knowledge very slowly, and only one by one: and the trouble is that before he gets a fact well into his basket, he is bound to regard it as 'impossible,' or 'uncanny,' or 'supernatural,' or even 'wicked'; and one could scarcely name a single treasure of modern science which escaped that stage. Even astronomy, geology, printing, the steam engine, had to pass through it: and, if the telegraph and the telephone escaped, it was only because we had got over the stages of awe and horror before they fully arrived. There are barbarians who still think of eclipses as divine or diabolical portents, but they are not a bit more ignorant than the people in London or Liverpool who think that a spirit is a supernatural something, and that 'spirit-rapping' is of the devil. It is not enough to 'reform that indifferently'; we must 'reform it altogether.'

But now, to go back to that important statement—that Spiritualists, as a rule, become rationalists; and that this is so because our unseen visitors report in favour of rational and humane ideas. We hold that this is almost inevitable. One fact alone shows that—and, strangely enough, this is a fact that is but seldom noted. The old

theology turned upon two pivots—the idea of an earth accursed on account of a primary sin, and an eternal doom on account of a final failure: and that eternal doom involved incarceration in a place of punishment. But what happens? We find that spirits, good, bad and indifferent, are at large! and we scarcely ever hear any tidings of incarceration in a place of endless doom. But it matters not what we hear: here is the fact—that all sorts of spirits are at large, and that this seems to utterly knock to pieces one of the pivots on which the old beliefs turned. As to the other pivot: here are armies of scientific investigators, and now gathering hosts of divines even, who tell us that 'The Fall,' the primary sin leading to a descent from original innocence, is all wrong—that Mankind has risen, not fallen, that he is on the march and always has been, and is not engaged in a desperate effort at recovery.

This being the state of the case, is it any wonder that the old camping ground is to a considerable extent deserted by our spiritual pioneers? We may regret it; we may look forward with foreboding to the issue of it, but we cannot deny, and we should be foolish if we tried to prevent, the inevitable. What we can do, and what we should all earnestly try to do, is to avoid any hardening process—such as would occur if we took to denouncing one thing and setting up another, as though it were the business of Spiritualism to wage a theological warfare, or to construct an orthodoxy of its own. 'That way madness lies'—and ruin, too. We want all kinds of investigators and all sorts of investigation. We should like to see, in The Spiritualist Alliance, Jews as well as Christians, Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, Agnostics as well as Theists—if possible, Hindoos as well as Englishmen. We want them all; and it does not matter a tin tack that we could never think alike. Precisely for that reason, we need one another, in order to increase the number of facets which may reflect colours and lights.

The correspondent to whom we have referred expressed his surprise that while Spiritualists are usually 'heretics,' the heretics are usually foes to the occult. It is true, but why? The rationalists are restive under the notion of 'miracle' because they have been told that 'miracle' is an interference with natural law; but, if they can once get it into their heads that so-called 'miracles' are only indications of the working-out of deeper and unfamiliar laws, they may, in the long run, be the readiest to believe; for their unbelief was based on regard for the universality and permanence of Law.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.

A meeting of Members, Associates, and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), on Friday next, December 18th, at 7 p.m. for 7.30 p.m., when Mr. Arthur Lovell, author of 'Ars Vivendi,' will give an address on 'How Spirit Creates Matter.' Mr. Lovell has never yet spoken to the Alliance, but we believe that the audiences before whom he has appeared have invariably been greatly pleased with him.

OBITUARY.

We regret to learn of the passing away, on the 28th ult., of Edith, the beloved wife of Mr. T. Herman Angerer, at the early age of twenty-four. Mrs. Angerer leaves an infant son. She was the only daughter of Mr. B. D. Godfrey, who, with his family, will have the deep sympathy of many spiritualistic friends in their bereavement.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. S.—We cannot find room this week, but it shall be inserted next, and we will send a copy to your American address.

PERSONAL IDENTITY OF SPIRIT FORMS.

AS TESTED IN A SERIES OF PRIVATE SITTINGS.

BY GENERAL FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

During an investigation of the subject of spirit return continued through forty-four years, the almost total failure of my nearest spirit friends to prove their identity by returning to some memory of their earth life has been to me a constant source of distressing doubt, and especially at their coming at materialisation séances, when spirit forms are very rarely so made up as to be recognised. My spirit daughter has often told me that the presence in circles of uncongenial or inharmonious elements is sufficient of itself alone to prevent such proof being given; and that if I could only give them the right conditions they could do much better. And this is why I lately arranged with a materialising medium for a series of séances for myself alone—an experiment I had never before tried. I kept full notes of all that occurred; writing them out sometimes immediately on my return to my lodgings, and, to the best of my recollection, never later than the next morning after a séance.

In the report I now make of these séances I have faithfully recorded everything said or done bearing on the question of identity, whether *pro* or *con*. I have omitted only (1) What has no bearing on this question; (2) What is of too private a nature to be made public (and which in all such cases *strengthened* the evidence of identity); (3) What would have little or no weight from the fact given being known to the medium (for whatever is known to the medium is known to the spirits, though the converse of this is by no means true); and (4) I have always suppressed real names where their living friends would probably object to their being known. I have also been careful to respect the privacy of my present family, existing now for thirty-one years. But in regard to my own personal relatives—my great uncle, John Lippitt, who died ninety-nine years ago; my mother, who died eighty-one years ago; my infant son, who died forty-two years ago; his mother, my first wife, who died thirty-seven years ago; my aunt, Lucy Ann Lippitt, who died thirty years ago; and my daughter, who died fourteen years ago—believing that my late experiences will be an important help in spreading a knowledge of spirit return, and especially as to spirit identity, I have decided, casting aside all considerations of personal reticence, to make them known to the world.

Much more satisfactory results would undoubtedly have been obtained, but for certain reasons. And first, nothing is better established than that in materialisation séances some of the psychic power is drawn from the sitters; so that, up to a certain point, the greater the number of them—excluding, of course, all inharmonious elements—the greater the brain power in the cabinet, on which the mental operations, of course, depend. So, if there be but one sitter, the brain power will be comparatively feeble. And, secondly, most of the brain power is evidently drawn from the medium; so that the medium's mental condition is an important factor in the communications coming through the spirit forms. Now, in the present case, from August 8th to August 25th, as will be seen, the medium's mental condition was very much disturbed; and not only this, but my own physical condition throughout was 'below par,' owing to the after effects of a sunstroke I had had in the summer of 1895; a recrudescence of which was caused by ten days of intense heat in the summer of 1896.

In these séances the female spirit forms were always enveloped from head to foot, face and hands included, in the usual gauzy drapery. In the few instances in which I was allowed to see their faces, there was no resemblance whatever to their faces in earth life. The male spirits that appeared were dressed in male attire. Of these, the only one that was perfectly materialised and distinctly visible was my son, who died in infancy; in whose case, of course, no recognition was possible. Now, as to this, I wish to state that during twenty-two years of constant attendance at materialisation séances, in which the number of forms (or rather of appearances) seen by me must count among the thousands, in only sixteen instances

were the forms so made up as to be recognisable by me from their resemblance to their appearance in earth life; and that of these sixteen forms only one was a woman.

On July 22nd, at the fourth séance of the series, I began the important experiment of giving to the respective spirits a written list of names to be conned over in their spirit homes, where their mental faculties would be in their normal condition, to serve as a reminder. It is important to add that in every one of these lists bare names alone were given, with nothing to indicate whether the persons who bore them were related to the spirit in earth life.

Least it should be supposed that, on my hearing a name announced by a spirit as being recalled, the particulars that followed were read by the spirit in my own mind, I can only say that during my forty-four years of investigation of every phase of these phenomena, almost invariably the test I was hoping for, and so eagerly that it was almost at my tongue's end, did not come; and that when a test has come—a very rare event at materialisation séances—it has been, in almost every instance, unexpected and unthought of. And in these experimental séances never would there have been a mistake or a failure to remember could the spirits have read my mind.

If the pulse of a materialised spirit-form is very feeble (see séances 17 and 18), would not this of itself suffice to explain the mental confusion and want of memory by the spirits in regard to their earth life when asked for by a sitter!—the fact showing deficient cerebral circulation and consequently deficient cerebral power.

I first saw Mrs. Jennie Hatch at Onset in the summer of 1895. She may have known my name, but she could have known nothing of my family history. She had never been in Washington (my home, except two years at Annapolis) since 1875. At the first of her séances that I attended my daughter came to me, giving her name, as also did the spirit of a lady friend whose home had been at a place some five hundred travelling miles from Onset, and where Mrs. Hatch had never been, and where the lady herself had died some nine years before, never having been at Onset. She came to me, giving her full name, and whispered to me at great length, disclosing particulars of a confidential nature, and ending by imparting to me the motive of the disclosure, which was entirely a proper one. At the next séance my daughter came again, and also her mother, my first wife, saying, 'Lilies of the Valley,' which she had told me some eight years before through a trance medium would always be her signal. At the following séance both these spirits came and talked with me a long time; my daughter leading me to a sofa, where she sat by my side, continuing the conversation, the subject of which was a certain course of conduct they wished me to adopt in relation to a certain matter. They reasoned just as clearly as they could have done in their earth life. But they failed to convince me, and afterwards, through another medium, they came and spontaneously advised that I should use my own judgment in the matter.

In July, 1896, I found Mrs. Hatch at Onset again; and, in view of the great degree of brain power manifested at her séances, in the extraordinary facility of the forms in carrying on a long conversation, I arranged with her for a series of séances for myself alone. Her cabinet was a bedroom, in which was a door opening on a corridor. Not expecting, owing to past experience, to receive anything important enough to make public, I neglected to ask to have that door securely barred, although at the first séance I locked the door myself, keeping the key in my pocket. But as to this, when what is communicated cannot have come from any living mortal, the question of possible confederacy becomes unimportant. And, for the benefit of doubting readers, I will state that in the conditions attending the four séances held in Boston, commencing with the fifteenth of the series, there was nothing to criticise. At these I thoroughly examined the cabinet at the outset, finding no possible means of entrance into it except the opening in front. I sat always at about 10ft. from that opening, and facing it; and at every séance there was light enough to make it impossible for any living mortal to enter through it unseen by me.

I learned from Mrs. Hatch that her control states herself to have been the daughter of a Persian king who lived some two hundred and sixty-five years ago, and that she died of a snake bite when about twelve years old; that her real name was Eulieka, but that she prefers to be called 'Buttercup.'

The lady friend who came to me in 1895 had then given me 'La France' as her signal.

SERIES OF PRIVATE SEANCES WITH MRS. HATCH AT ONSET,
MASSACHUSETTS, IN 1896.

JULY 10TH.—FIRST OF SERIES.

The cabinet was a small bedroom, having a side door opening on a corridor. I locked it and kept the key in my pocket. Captain Hatch, the medium's husband; Mrs. Green, a young friend of Mrs. Hatch, staying with her; and Mrs. Hatch's son, playing the auto-harp, were the only other persons present. After a few sances, Captain Hatch had to return to his business in Hartford, and Mrs. Green was absent from the greater part of them. Mrs. Hatch's son was present at all but one, when Mrs. Green played the auto-harp in his place. The control calls herself 'Buttercup,' which name, for shortness, I shall write 'Bp.' Her voice somewhat resembles the medium's, but they are plainly different personalities. Mrs. Hatch is impulsive and excitable—'Bp.' always cool, calm, and deliberate in speech. Mrs. Hatch is a perfect type of a blonde in hair, eyes, and complexion—'Bp.' a clear brunette, with black hair and eyes, and dark complexion; and a little taller and more slender than Mrs. Hatch.

My daughter came saying, as usual, 'Papa! Carrie.' She said, 'Mamma is here.' She spoke to me in whispers, so that I could not perfectly understand her, being somewhat hard of hearing. She retired, saying, 'Wait!' but presently returned, speaking in an audible voice. 'Bp.' says this voice was produced for my benefit, and it was used at all the subsequent sances by all the spirits that came, with a slight shade of difference between them. 'Carrie' said: 'You must take care of yourself' (referring to the effects of a sunstroke I had had). Then another spirit came, giving her whole name; but I shall always call her 'La France,' her signal given me in 1895. (She died about ten years ago.)

'Uncle John' was announced. I said, 'But I have three uncle Johns.' 'Bp.' said, 'Captain John.' Then I knew who it was, he being mentioned in our family genealogy as my father's uncle, who died in 1797, ninety-nine years ago. I went up and received the grasp of a man's hand. He was dressed in a dark grey suit, and spoke in a man's voice. He said: 'I never saw you, but your father knew me. You see we don't lose interest on this side in our connections on yours.'

'Bp.': 'He says he was a sea captain, and visited many foreign places' (true). 'When did you pass over?' (Puts hand to brow) 'Will tell you next time.' 'Had you any children?' 'Yes, one daughter.' 'Name?' 'I don't remember.' (The genealogy gives him ten children.)

'Mrs. L.' came. Not at all like the medium. She sang 'Old folks at home' and two other songs in a beautiful voice, accompanied by the auto-harp. While singing she would appear and disappear alternately. Captain Hatch introduced me to her. I went up and took her hand. She greeted me with graceful courtesy.

JULY 15TH.—SECOND OF SERIES.

'Bessie' came, giving her signal, 'Lilies of the Valley.' She was 'Carrie's' mother, my first wife, who died thirty-seven years ago. Greeting me affectionately, as usual, she spoke anxiously about my head. 'You will have to be treated for it,' she said.

'Bp.': 'The power will increase every time.'

'La France' came, and I said: 'May I see your face?' She declined to show it, and retired. 'Bp.' said her face was not materialised; that the power for that was used up in producing the audible voice. Then there emerged from the cabinet a form whose bent figure and feeble step made me suppose her to be an aged person. I asked, 'Who is it?' Captain Hatch understood her to say, 'Mother.' I incautiously exclaimed that it could not be my mother, who was only about twenty-five when she passed over. I accompanied her back to the curtain; when, in answer to my inquiry, she said she was really my mother. Although, in her after appearances, there was never any trace of age or of feebleness, it was some time before I could get rid of the unpleasant impression then received. But I ought to have reflected that my mother had died of consumption after a long illness, and that spirits coming materialised for the first time usually take on their bodily condition at the time of their decease. She said: 'You must not look back on the errors of youth. We are all mortal. I am proud of you—so just and upright.' (A mother's partiality is always forgiven.) 'You lost me before knowing me.' (But I am not quite sure that this fact was not known to the medium.)

JULY 17TH.—THIRD OF SERIES.

I asked 'Bp.' if the medium was entranced or hypnotised by spirits. Not catching my meaning exactly, she answered: 'No. The spirits themselves are hypnotised by her.'

'Carrie' came and I asked: 'Anything special to tell me?' She replied: 'It is hard to remember one's earth life. I have a general remembrance of the last part of my life. It was not quite happy. You were away from me so much on account of business.' (True.)

'Uncle John' came, and I inquired: 'How many children had you?' 'Can't remember.' 'In what part of the world did you pass out?' 'Can't remember. In Pacific Ocean, I think, or the Archipelago.' (The genealogy says he died of a fever on the coast of Africa.)

I asked my mother: 'Shall I meet you on the other side?' 'I shall be the first to greet you when you pass over, and then I shall never come to earth again.' She added something that was evidence of identity, but of too private a nature to be reported.

JULY 18TH.—A PUBLIC SEANCE.

I had a conversation with 'La France,' but I omit reporting some confidential statements which she made while I was talking with her in the cabinet. During our conversation 'Bp.' twice called out to Guy, the auto-harpist, to 'go on with the music,' evidently to prevent what was said being heard by the sitters.

'Bessie' came, and I asked: 'Do you know why I come specially to-day?' 'An anniversary.' 'Of what?' 'A birth into spirit life.' 'Whose?' 'Carrie's.' (True.)

JULY 22ND.—FOURTH OF SERIES.

My mother came, but could show no remembrance of earth life, nor of father, mother, brother, or sister. She asked: 'Do you remember crossing the ocean?' adding, "'Bessie' whispers to me it was when we went together to Rome.' (We never went to Rome.) 'Have you no remembrance of the dearest friend of your childhood and youth?' I asked. She replied 'No.'

'Carrie' was announced. I could get from her no remembrance of earth life, but she spoke of the test given me by her mother on July 18th, the anniversary of her birth into spirit life.

'Bessie' also showed no memory of earth life. She spoke of the interest taken by our great men of the past in our present politics. 'Many speakers of the day,' she said, 'are inspired by them.'

'Mrs. L.' came out and sang; and at my request lifted the veil from her face. It was as different as possible from the medium's.

'Bp.', in answer to my inquiries, said: 'Every materialising medium has a band. One of them is a chemist, another a moulder of the form, another of the face; and another acts as a guard to keep away deceiving spirits.'

Discouraged at the little evidence of identity received thus far, I bethought me of a plan (to which I have referred above) that would probably aid the spirits in recalling something of their earth life; and eventually I was not disappointed, as will be seen. The plan was to hand to the spirit a written list of names of persons—passed away or still living, as the case might be—whom the spirits would be most likely to remember about. So, for this seance I had prepared a list for 'Carrie' of eighteen names, to which I afterwards added three more. This list I put, folded up, in her hand; explaining to her the purpose of it, and asking her take it with her to her spirit home, where her mental condition would be perfectly normal, and return it to me at the next seance, after having marked with a pencil those she remembered about. She promised to do so, thinking, as she said, that a written name might serve as one end of a thread in a tangled skein, which, by being followed up, might possibly lead to some satisfactory result. She retired into the cabinet, which was pitch dark, and instantly reappeared at the curtain, exclaiming, 'Yes! Sister Gertie! Sister Gertie!' Now Gertrude ver Mehr, whose name was on her list, for some years after her mother died had the care of her as an elder sister when she was a little child in California. A moment afterwards 'Bp.' reported that 'Carrie' had dematerialised, taking the list with her.

JULY 24TH.—FIFTH OF SERIES.

Thick, rainy weather. 'Mrs. L.' came out and sang with her beautiful voice. 'Bp.' had told me that she does this 'to help the forces.'

'La France,' in reply to my questions, could not recall the name of any one of her sisters. She said: 'My mother is with me' (true), 'but not my father; he does not believe in this' (true). 'If the medium should come to — I could remember through her perfectly.'

To my mother I said: 'All I seek is some proof of identity. Cannot you give me some memory of earth life?' She put her hand on my chest and began to cough; and kept coughing till she went down apparently through the floor. She died of consumption.

'Jessie S.' came. She gave her name as 'Lillie.' I said: 'But Mrs. S.'s daughter was named Jessie?' She seemed to assent to this. 'Where is your mamma?' 'In Washington, S.W.' 'Doing what?' 'Earning her support.' 'How long there?' 'A year.' 'Why doesn't she inform Mrs. B. or General W. where she is?' Her answer afforded striking evidence of her identity. She said 'Extremely reticent. Pride keeps her aloof from all, owing to her changed financial condition. She misses me very much in her solitary life.' Yet she could not remember her father's name.

'Uncle John' was announced and I went up to him. He appeared to be a man of forty-five or over. He could not remember where he died, except that it was at sea. I asked: 'Of what?' 'A fever—very sudden.' 'What do you remember about your children?' 'I remember three—perhaps more.' (He then went straight down.)

JULY 25TH.—A PUBLIC SEANCE.

'Carrie' took me into the cabinet, drew me to where the medium was seated, took my right hand—after making me pass into my left hand the list she had returned to me—and made me put it on the medium's head and pass it over her face several times. I asked: 'Did you come to me to-day through Mrs. Stevens?' 'No, I was studying the list for you.' 'What do you remember about any of the names?' 'Nellie Morris.' (An intimate friend she had made in the spirit world.) 'I think I was at school with her' (wrong). 'And Sister May Agnes' (her dearest friend at the Convent School of the Visitation), 'I saw her when I was sick' (?).

Of 'Bessie' I inquired: 'Did you come to me to-day through Mrs. Stevens?' 'No: I was helping "Carrie" about the list.' (I now gave the list back to her for 'Carrie.') 'She will try to do better the next time.'

My mother spoke anxiously about my physical condition. She said: 'You must be very careful, or you will soon come over. I told you how I passed out. I took on that same condition; and the medium was coughing all night.' 'Do you remember about any other of the family dying about the same time?' (My baby brother died a week or two before her.) 'I think I remember a sister dying of the same disease.' This was true; but she had died some years before. Further on (seventeenth of series), it will be seen that the remembrance of my baby brother came to her at last.

(To be continued.)

SPIRITUAL SHORTCOMINGS.

The following quaint verses by Dr. George MacDonald truthfully tell, for many, the story of life's spiritual defects and disappointments; and probably the best amongst us will best feel how true the pathetic record is:—

Lord, I have laid my heart upon the altar,
But cannot get the wood to burn;
It hardly flares ere it begins to falter,
And to the dark return.

Old sap or night-fallen dew has damped the fuel,
In vain my breath would flame provoke;
Yet see, at every poor attempt's renewal,
To thee ascends the smoke!

'Tis all I have—smoke, failure, foiled endeavour,
Coldness and doubt and palsied lack;
Such as I have I send thee, perfect Giver!
Send thou thy lightnings back!

The consolation is that he who longs for even God's 'lightnings,' to set his dull heart on fire, has still 'the root of the matter' in him.

GIVE money, don't lend it; to give makes only ingrates; to lend makes enemies.—DUMAS.

'THE AVATAR OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY; OR, THOMAS LAKE HARRIS, THE INSPIRED MESSENGER OF THE CYCLE.'

The above forms one of a series of pamphlets relating to the Brotherhood of the New Life, and is the fifth in order of sequence, three of which are already published, while eight others are in course of preparation, by a London gentleman, whose pen-name is 'Respiro,' and who contributed largely to 'The Unknown World,' a magazine which has now ceased to exist.

My object in calling the attention of the readers of 'LIGHT' to these publications is not to advertise them but to point a moral, and possibly 'to adorn a tale,' for assuredly if a basis of fact is required for a psychical romance, the hero will be found in the adventures and work of the remarkable man who has put forth the astoundingly pretentious claim indicated in the heading of this article. He is only one of a number in several countries who are clamouring for recognition by the outside world as modern Messiahs in one form or another. In the commercial world, if a man is successful in introducing a good paying thing, there are many looking on who are desirous of 'sharing the plunder,' and thus we have rival traders and competitors, each advertising his own wares as the best. The same spirit is manifest among the now numerous claimants to Messiahship, who one and all claim to be recipients of revelations from God, which in their own persons are given out as a 'speciality'—using the trade term again—which 'revelations' are trumpeted forth as truths and messages from God to man. If we include many in the great spiritualistic world of thought and life who flatter themselves with the notion that they are 'mediums with a mission,' their name is legion. One trait is common to all the class, which is, the ignoring of all other claimants to Divine honours, and posing as centres in their own persons, from and through whom must radiate truths, or otherwise, that will affect mankind and change the aspect of human thought and sociology. The present century has been prolific in producing persons who, inflated by the notion of their own importance, have formed communities—largely on the American continent—for 'carrying out into ultimates' their own specialities, many or most of which have ended in disaster and collapse, to the detriment of their deluded followers and votaries.

In a work entitled 'Modern Messiahs and Wonder Workers,' published by me in 1889, I gave a history of some of the most prominent of Messianic pretenders—Thomas Lake Harris among the rest—and for details of his history, &c., I refer the readers to that volume; but from the prospectus of the series of pamphlets forwarded to me, I see that the vagaries of this claimant are put forth with a seriousness that deserves notice, if only to put people on their guard, lest they should be duped by the 'Brotherhood,' as some have been to their cost.

In forming a judgment on a public man who poses as a teacher and benefactor of the human race, it were well to know something of his antecedents. Born in England in 1824, he went with his parents, in 1827, to America, in which country he has lived ever since. In 1845 he was pastor of a Universalist church in New York. While in this position he came in contact with spiritualistic phenomena, and joined the circle who were then receiving revelations through the mediumship of Andrew Jackson Davis, the Poughkeepsie Seer, as he was called. In 1848 he went on a lecturing tour through the United States, advocating Spiritualism in general, and Jackson's 'Nature's Divine Revelations' in particular. His first attempt, in conjunction with a Baptist minister, was to establish a society and community styled the 'Apostolic Circle,' which culminated in what is known as the Mountain Cove Movement, but which, by reason of the quarrels between Harris and his co-partner, ended in a fiasco, and, according to the testimony of one who was an influential member and supporter, it became a veritable pandemonium. After the collapse of this miserable affair he returned to New York, where for a few years he lectured to a spiritualistic society; but this not being in accordance with his ambition, he started in 1857 the 'Church of the Good Shepherd' in New York, of which he became the leader and pastor. About this time he formed a 'New Church' Publishing Association, and issued a monthly magazine in the interests of the 'Lord's New Church,' which continued for three years, and then collapsed. In 1858 he published the 'Arcana of Christianity,' in which he says: 'It was my privilege to behold the

Lord in His Divine appearing, who laid upon me the charge of receiving and unfolding the celestial sense of the Word.' It is needless to say that the work is a plagiarism of Swedenborg's 'Arcana Celestia,' and in this we have the first intimation of his pretentious claims, which afterwards assumed such astounding dimensions, as manifested in his past and present career. The issue of the magazine alluded to above, called the 'Herald of Light,' was attended with what Harris terms a 'fiery trial,' lasting over four months, caused by a band of infernal spirits, headed by Joseph Balsamo—the famous or notorious Cagliostro—who assumed the likeness of our Lord and endeavoured to impose himself upon me as the Redeemer.'

About the same time he published the 'Songs of Satan,' containing an amount of literary filth which is simply shocking and loathsome to any ordinary mind that revolts at a travesty of what is spiritual and religious. His next move was the formation of a community styled the 'Brotherhood of the New Life,' floated by means of flaming announcements that it was to be on the 'principles of co-operative industry and associated life,' from which would radiate the principles and power of solidarity that would influence the whole world. This was in 1886, and in the next year he received into the community Laurence Oliphant and his mother, Lady Oliphant, whose wealth was utilised for the purchase of land, &c., and the erection of buildings at Brocton, in the State of New York. After undergoing strange experiences and humiliations the Oliphants seceded from the community, but not without a serious monetary loss. The cause of their withdrawal was—according to Mr. Oliphant, in a letter I received from him, and which I still have—the avarice and selfishness of Mr. Harris. After the break-up of the society at Brocton the headquarters were removed to San Rosa, in California, which is now a vineyard and winery on a large scale; but according to my latest information Mr. Harris is living in retirement in the city of New York, waiting for the coming of the 'fire deluge' which is to destroy the greater portion of mankind—of course, Harris and his followers excepted.

The strangest and most revolting of his works is entitled, 'The Lord, the Two in One, Declared, Manifested, and Glorified,' published in 1876. In this work the mask is dropped, and he claims that 'This Primate Pair (i.e. Harris and his angel counterpart) of the society hold in their midst, as incarnation from their incarnation, the Lord Jesus and His Lady Yessa, God manifest through the flesh.' Speaking of himself, Harris says: 'He has gone up in his discrete degree, and moves no longer on earth save through a certain visual appearance'—(what about his marriage with Miss Waring some years after this was published?)—'no more of earth, yet substantially present.' As a result of his amours with his angelic counterpart he tells us that a child was born, whose sayings and doings form the chief portion of the work just referred to, from which I forbear to give more than one extract, as it is on a par with the shocking statements of his 'Songs of Satan.' He says the Lord Jesus spoke to him and said: 'I descended, involving my organism far below the condition of the worst man in the earth; I sank into the loathsome womb of a syren woman in the depths of hell; and she brought me forth as if I had been begotten between two devils,' &c., &c. This refers to the historical Jesus who is said to have made His second personal advent through Harris, who now is posing, or affects to pose, as the sin-bearer of the race; as witness: 'The Lord spake; when those who are terrified look to Thee, and through Thee to Me, I will put forth the arm of strength through Thee; and those weak ones shall not perish.'

Your space will not permit me to give more of the farrago of this braggart, which can only be regarded as the outcome of psychic insanity and an inordinate inflated self-hood. According to present appearances this farce is nearly played out, and none will suffer except those of his votaries who have been deprived of their money to assist Harris to 'ultimate' his vagaries. As an episode in the great spiritual movement of recent times, the career of this man demonstrates the danger caused by the abuse of psychic power in unprincipled hands, and should prove a warning to such as are 'lifted up by virtue of revelations given to them,' of whom T. L. Harris stands out a most conspicuous object lesson, pitiable and contemptible, to all well-balanced minds.

Notwithstanding these strictures on the claims of T. L. Harris, it must be conceded that he was at one time a man of remarkable literary ability, and a poet of no mean order, although many of his poetical effusions may be designated poetical rhapsody.

W. O'LEARY.

THE TALMUD IN ENGLISH.*

The Babylonian Talmud is in course of translation for the first time, entire and unabridged, into English. The enterprise is of American origin, and the London publisher, or agent, is Mr. George Redway. The first volume has recently appeared, but the complete work will extend to twelve volumes. The magnitude of the undertaking makes it a signal instance of courage on the part of all who are concerned in it, and our recognition should be ungrudging and unstinted.

Outside the members of the Jewish faith—of whom at least a considerable proportion may be supposed to be familiar with the language of their sacred literature—there are two classes to whom a translation of the Talmud will appeal, the student of the religious observances, manners, traditions, and antiquities of Israel, and the student of Occultism. To the majority in both classes it has been hitherto a sealed book, because few in either—given even a working acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue—are sufficiently equipped to face the formidable difficulties of this strange and multifarious work. It is true that selections from the Talmud have appeared occasionally in English; that of Polano is well known and has been included, at a popular price, in a standard series; there is also a more ambitious Talmudic Miscellany; but it is not an exaggeration to say that these collections bear much the same relation to their voluminous source as Lamb's 'Specimens' bear to Elizabethan dramatic literature. In other words, they are wholly out of proportion, nor is it possible that they can convey any accurate idea of a work so composite in its nature. As the Talmud, from whatever point of view it may be regarded, is of high and unquestioned importance, it is most desirable that it should be translated *in extenso*, and a great debt of gratitude is, therefore, due to Mr. Michael Rodkinson, who is dispensing to us the treasures of his knowledge, and to Dr. Wise, president of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, who has undertaken to see that the gift is perfect after its own kind.

There are two varieties or recensions of the Talmud—that of Babylon and that of Jerusalem, the one being referred to the fifth and the other to the middle of the fourth century, A.D., as the periods of their final compilation. It is the former which has been selected for translation, though the reason for the choice is not assigned. The present writer is at the moment unable to state whether there is any important point of difference between them or one preferable to the other. No reference to the Jerusalem codices occurs in the introduction to the volume under notice.

The course pursued in translating seems to have been as wise as it was certainly laborious. The Talmud is the growth of ages, and even after, and for long after, the period of its growth, it has been subjected to numberless interpolations and confusing accretions. To excise this superfluous matter was necessary before a readable and practical version could be produced, a task which permits us to regard Mr. Rodkinson as little less than a rabbinical Hercules. The result of the clearance is a reasonably intelligible presentation and a reconstruction of the original text. As regards the contents of this first volume, it is occupied with the tract called Sabbath, forming part of the section which deals with the Festivals of Israel, and is devoted entirely to the discussion of things permitted and prohibited on the Day of Rest. The subtleties, the ingenuities, the humours, the quaintness of this discussion are beyond formulation in any brief criticism; there are some respects in which this wonderful tract might well seem an excerpt from the archives of Sirius, so remote is it from all modern interests, so outside our own orbit. Yet in other respects it is not outside our interests, not remote, but rather close at the very doors of the humanity which is in us all. Casuistry in *excelsis* and the art of ruling scruples by eternal differentiation and balance of opposites will have a weird power of appeal to many of us, unfortunately but too well acquainted with the complexities of 'conscience cases,' while others, not thus afflicted, will begin to realise for the first time what kind of burden was that Old Law which St. Paul declared had become intolerable.

The editorial introductions make scarcely enough allowance for the destitution of the English reader; they tacitly presuppose some acquaintance—elementary, no doubt; but with the best intentions, interest, and even sympathy, most English

* 'The Babylonian Talmud.' English translation by MICHAEL L. RODKINSON, revised by the REV. DR. ISAAC M. WISE. Vol. I, First Sabbath. (New York: New American Book Company.)

readers have none. Lastly, it will be interesting to note what effect this translation may have upon the mind of occult students. Eliphas Lévi tells us that the Talmud, so far, at least, as it is the work of Rabbi Judah, the Prince, is composed according to all the rules of transcendent initiation, written within and without, that is, possessing an interior meaning. We must not judge a part by the whole, but at present, and as regards this first volume, there are few works of which it would seem more difficult to predicate a second sense than the Babylonian Talmud. In fact, to grapple with the first sense is at times like striving with an angel.

A. E. WAITE.

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.]

'The Elixir of Life.'

SIR,—I write for more light on this subject than I find in the article you published on November 14th. Will you permit me to describe my difficulties, in order that the author of the article may turn his lantern onto the obstacles in my way, and enable me to overcome them, or, perhaps, show me the easiest way to avoid them? I find these obstacles in many parts of his paper. In taking them as I propose I shall not misrepresent him, although I seem to wrench them from their original context:—

1. 'It is essential to bear in mind that the ideal human form is physically perfect, and as it is able to manifest conscious spiritual power, theoretically it can be indefinitely preserved.'

2. 'Every form whatsoever is nothing but the temporary manifestation of the Life-Principle, which works with two arms—positive and negative, or right and left.'

3. 'The elixir has been found. In one word it is Will.'

4. 'Knowledge is indispensable in order to give the Will full play.'

5. 'Will, or to give it another name, SPIRIT, possesses the inherent power of modifying polarity of the atom.'

6. 'Spirit can sport with time and space at pleasure, and can make one day as a million years, and a million years as one day.'

7. 'Perfection of physical life takes place when the integrating force is outbalancing the disintegrating.'

8. 'The two poles of light—the red and the blue—constitute a most important "ingredient" of the Elixir of Life, but Will, or Spirit, is the essence, without which no success is possible.'

9. 'Instead of playing upon the sum of vital force in the system, the Will can directly increase it by drawing out the latent life-force constantly surrounding us and permeating us.'

10. 'This force is inexhaustible, and as soon as man recognises this and gradually cultivates his power he will see a new meaning in John's saying, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."'

Now, sir, before proceeding further I must remark that John would be surprised at this treatment of his writings, supposing the passage quoted is a fair rendering of the original; to make sense, in the connection in which our author uses it, the passage should read: 'Whosoever wills (wills to do so), let him take the water of life freely.' The italics are mine in many instances above, and I so treat portions of my quotations to emphasise the character of the obstacles in my path.

1. What is the ideal human form, and what is physical perfection? Because of 'conscious spiritual power' these ideals 'theoretically can be indefinitely preserved' by the inherent Will possessed by man: but how, I fail to perceive, for—

2. Every form whatsoever is nothing but the temporary manifestation of the Life-Principle. Is this Life-Principle subject to Will or Spirit? No, I am told it requires something positive to come to its aid, or rather to serve as a foundation, namely—

4. Knowledge. This is indispensable in order to give the Will full play. Certainly, I can see some reason in this. Before I can will to do I must have knowledge of the character of the consequences.

5. An 'atom' per se has no energy. It is substance, of whatever nature, subject to law; and is the vehicle of circulatory ethers, which are acted upon by spirit, finite or infinite, conscious or unconscious. As in vegetation—the peculiarities of each plant or tree are the results of unconscious spirit action

upon the atoms selected to build up the blade of grass, the rose, or the oak.

What is that force but polarisation of atoms which results in the time keeping plants, which, no matter to what climate they are transferred, whether summer or winter, keep the times of closing and opening? Is it Spirit or Will which orders the movements of the climbing plant?

It seems to me essential that a sound scientific apprehension of the true basis of the structure of the material Universe must come before man's Will or Spirit can wisely act. Now this is a very large order! Many people may desire to remain on earth indefinitely; but if real happiness is the true object of existence, this desire is unnatural and futile, for unless all those who have been companions and associates through life, and conduced to make up the sum total of earthly comforts of body, and mind, and spirit, be equally inclined, and have knowledge and Will in the like direction, life would become a dreary dragging on.

We were not evolved here for such a purpose. We have this planet in our custody at present to utilise to the best end, which is to draw out our faculties and to enlarge our ideal of the Universe beyond; illimitable in its vastness, and beyond the power of language to describe as to its majesty and glory!

And my notion is that the spirit draws faster upon the physical as knowledge increases, and there comes a period in life when it seems Nature's law that the spirit casts its shell of clay, as the butterfly leaves its shell in the soil.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the Great Spirit is immanent in the whole of the incomprehensible Universe. The earth, with which we may be supposed to be best acquainted, teems with life. The mineral kingdom is the book of ancient periods, and in its pages we read of past life no longer typified. In the vegetable kingdom to-day we find no suitable spot on earth neglected between the Poles and the Equator. In the world of microscopic life we count in drops of water, or feet of air, living spiritualised beings by millions upon millions—each, after its order, pursuing the destiny assigned to it. The Great Spirit has no void, no space for idleness, no useless efforts, no regrets that life is not long enough for the special purpose of His designs. Up through the scale of life, through vegetable and animal existence, the All-Wise and All-Powerful works His Will. Only man is discontented, and seeks 'the Elixir of Life.' But like the alchemists of past days, imbued with a 'little knowledge,' man wants to remain on earth until it pleases him to leave it. There is no transmutation possible.

Then we have Elixir—Will—Spirit as synonymous terms!

Elixir—a liquor for prolonging life.

Will—the faculty which is exercised in determining to do, or not to do.

Spirit—self-conscious life.

'Sporting with time and space' does not seem appropriate in characterising the power of Spirit—finite or infinite. 'Time and space' are not related to infinity; and only as parts to a whole, and then only as arbitrary terms of no fixed value, are they related to the finite. Time may have relation to a month, a year, or a still greater cycle; space to that which we occupy and that which is outside and beyond us.

And so my difficulties do not appear to grow less, or fewer in number, as I contemplate the so-called great discovery of 'the Elixir of Life.'

Does our author know any person, or persons, who have made much progress in the direction he would have us take? Is he able to give us clear directions how to avoid or overcome difficulties? If all men had the knowledge, and the desire, and power to will indefinite duration of life, what would become of our increasing population on this planet, supposing selfishness subdued and all were imbued with the like desire to live—say for five hundred or a thousand years before casting their earthly covering?

We are entitled to put these practical questions. Why desire to remain longer on earth than we can be useful and happy?

I have faith that my knowledge of continued life 'beyond the veil' will serve all useful purposes; and when I reach the other shore I may find useful work, among fitting companions, to occupy me probably for ever, in seeking out those less favoured by opportunity than I was on the earth plane. But if all missionary work amongst the lowly-developed ones of past long ages shall ever be accomplished, there will, in my opinion, be never-ending pleasure in passing, if fitted and permitted, from world to world, and system to system, in that great beyond, which for ever and ever will still extend infinitely in all directions.

If this be so, why seek to stay here cumbering the ground, which will be more fittingly occupied by higher, and ever higher, types of humanity?

JOHN LORD.

Mourners.

SIR,—In your issue of November 14th, Mr. Thurstan remarks that 'test seekers' sought admission to his experimental meetings—'who, having lost some beloved one, and being in a state of depression, and groping for proofs of their continued existence, thought they had a right to bring their atmosphere of gloom and fog into a gathering of people who were laying bare the sensitiveness of their sympathetic natures to mental impressions. A person in that frame of mind,' Mr. Thurstan said, 'should keep aloof from the society of his fellow beings, and should take an example from that noble animal the stag, who shuns the company of his herd when he has lost his health, or is shedding his horns.'

Now, sir, we readily grant that mourners would have been altogether out of place at experimental meetings such as Mr. Thurstan's, but we strenuously deny that mourners 'should keep aloof from the society of their fellow beings.' Rather should they seek such society, and thereby find sympathy and consolation in their bereavement; and, further, we Spiritualists ought to deny ourselves somewhat to give to such sorrow-stricken ones the desired proof that their departed are not dead but alive.

With regard to the 'noble stag,' we conceive that it is not he who, when wounded, shuns the herd, so much as that the herd shuns him because of the dogs who follow him up, and, when sick, he is driven out by his stronger rivals. Let us not emulate the stag in this, but let us seek to comfort all mourners and minister to those who are in trouble.

J. S. H.

SOCIETY WORK.

CANNING TOWN SOCIETY, 11, SWANSCOMBE-STREET.—On Sunday last an address was given by Mr. Bartell on 'Practical Spiritualism.' Mr. Bartell's guide told us to understand that Spiritualism is not to be shut up in our homes, but spread abroad for the benefit of all.—A. HOPPER.

DAWN OF DAY SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, 85, FORTRESS-ROAD, KENTISH TOWN, N.W.—On Sunday last Mr. W. E. Walker, of Edmonton, gave a short address and satisfactory clairvoyance. On December 6th, Mr. Ronald Brailey, trance address, in aid of Mrs. Spring, who is still very weak.—MRS. RORKE, Hon. Sec.

CARDIFF PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ST. JOHN'S HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. E. Adams gave an address, entitled 'Is there a Summerland?' in which some of Miss Florence Marryat's statements in her address upon 'The Summerland' were controverted. Mrs. Dowdall's 'Snowflake' kindly followed with clairvoyant descriptions.—E.A.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, ISLINGTON.—On Sunday last Mr. Arthur Lovell gave his lecture on, 'How to Cultivate our Forces.' After dealing with the scientific aspect of Spiritualism, the lecturer gave 'concentration' as the keynote for this cultivation or unfoldment of the spirit in man, and practical instructions for the development of the same. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded.

EDMONTON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, BEECH HALL, HYDE-LANE.—On Sunday last an interesting address was given by the guides of Mr. R. Brailey, who discoursed excellently upon 'Who and What is God?' On Thursday, the 26th ult., a hearty vote of thanks was accorded Mr. J. T. Dales for his most instructive and interesting address upon 'The Sun's Influence on Character.' Next Sunday, Mr. and Mrs. Branchley.—A.W.

STRAFFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mr. Veitch gave an interesting lecture on 'Spiritualism,' when we were pleased to have the opportunity of welcoming our president back again. Next Sunday 'Evangel' will lecture on 'Swedenborg: the Great Spiritual Reformer.' Public circle and Lyceum every Sunday and Tuesday at 13, Fowler-road, Forest Gate, E. On December 11th a dance will be held for the benefit of our Building Fund. Tickets: 1s. 6d. for two; 1s. single. Rev. J. Page Hopps at our hall on December 17th.—THOS. MCCALLUM.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last an opportunity was given to a gentleman calling himself a 'Scientific Spiritualist' to expound his views on the subject. It is to be regretted that the speaker has not developed the power to understand as well as collect facts. The discussion which followed was so animated that it was adjourned till Sunday, December 6th. Only early arrivals can expect seats. In the evening Mr. W. E. Long spoke concerning 'The Judgment Day,' with the evidence that Spiritualism offers of the eternal nature, the continuous judgment, the law of cause and effect in daily operation. The speaker presented a volume of illustration, showing it was better to understand than believe. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., adjourned discussion; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long, address; at 3 p.m., Children's Lyceum.—R.B.

BATTERSEA SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, TEMPERANCE HALL, DODDINGTON-GROVE, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD (NEAR THE POLYTECHNIC).—On Sunday morning Mr. Simons' recital of experiences caused our discussion to be protracted long past closing time, and forced that gentleman to adjourn his reply till

next Sunday morning, at 11 a.m. One or two speakers, while avowing themselves non-Spiritualists, voiced such decidedly spiritualistic experiences that we certainly should not have recognised them as opponents but for their assertion. In the evening solos were ably rendered by Mesdames Hodder and Boddington. Addresses were given by Messrs. Adams and Boddington. On Thursday, December 17th, we purpose holding our first social and dance. Tickets, 6d. each, may be obtained from any of the members or from the secretary, H. Boddington, 30, Upper Tulse-hill, S.W. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., adjourned discussion; at 7 p.m., Mr. Atwood and friends; Thursday, at 8 p.m., Mr. Smith, psychometry. No admittance after 8.30 p.m.—H. B.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—Mr. T. Everitt, the President of the Marylebone Association, occupied the platform here on Sunday evening last, followed by Miss MacCreadie, who gave clairvoyant descriptions. The president's remarks had reference to some criticism which had been recently offered in connection with an address delivered by him some few weeks since. He strongly combated the idea that life was the outgrowth of planetary evolution, a position taken by the writer of the criticism referred to, and also contended for the reasonableness of a phrase used by him in his previous address, viz., 'dead matter.' He alluded to the confession of a leading scientist regarding the impossibility of bridging the gulf between mind and matter, as tending to support his position that life is a foreign agent, and might be wholly divorced from matter. He considered that the existence of mind and matter as two separate entities disproved the unitary conception of the universe. It is possible, however, that a Monist would suggest as a solution of the problem that mind and matter were two aspects of the same thing. Miss MacCreadie afterwards gave some twenty delineations with great success, nearly all of them being at once recognised. So accurate, indeed, were the descriptions that at the conclusion of the meeting a gentleman remarked that, in view of the precision shown in the descriptions given (including one which he had himself received, and which was remarkably correct), he thought it curious that in only one or two cases were the names given. The clairvoyant explained the great difficulty of doing this; but added that she was endeavouring to cultivate this particular accomplishment, and expected before long to be able to give the names and surnames of the persons described, an announcement which was received with applause. Probably the difficulty which clairvoyants find in giving names is not only (as was suggested) a question of clairaudience, but is also due to the fact that, generally speaking, names and surnames have only a verbal and not a mental significance. Miss Butterworth gave a pianoforte solo during the evening, and accompanied her brother, Mr. Frank Butterworth, who sang 'He roamed in the forest,' with much acceptance. Next Sunday Mr. W. T. Cooper is announced to deliver a short address, followed by clairvoyance by Miss MacCreadie.—D. G.

A MONTH'S WORK AT DAULBY HALL, LIVERPOOL.

November had five Sundays, and the management provided as speakers Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten on the 1st, Mr. E.W. Wallis on the 8th, and Mr. Walter Howell on the 15th; who presented the philosophy of Spiritualism in such a manner as to educate the members, and rivet the attention and command the respect of a large number of strangers, whose interest had been aroused by the recent 'Pembroke Debate,' which ended so satisfactorily for the Liverpool Society of Spiritualists. The genuineness of the phenomena was well established by Mrs. Green on the 22nd, her clairvoyant descriptions being of a most convincing character; and the clairaudient and clairvoyant medium, Mr. Thomas Wild, on the 29th, gave one of his unique manifestations of spirit control; friends being described and full names and addresses given in each case, some of which were immediately pronounced correct and others left over for verification. One lady in the audience said: 'The name, address, and particulars are correct, and I am not a Spiritualist.' Each Monday evening a circle for members only has been held with a full attendance and satisfactory results; on the 16th Mr. Walter Howell was present and answered questions, and on the 23rd Mrs. Green gave the members her valuable assistance. On Tuesday evenings a public circle has been held, on each occasion with a crowded attendance, and several of the sitters have joined the society that they may have an opportunity of studying the literature. The Lyceum held their preparation class and circle on Wednesday evenings, and the meetings were very enjoyable. On Thursday evenings a class for members and friends has been conducted by Mr. W. J. Rae, with Mr. Hudson Tuttle's 'Arcana of Nature' as the text book. The Children's Lyceum has been held every Sunday at 11 a.m., and both officers and children have been regular in their attendance. The 'Lyceum Banner' Lesson Plan has been adopted, and in addition the 'Liberty Group' and visitors are studying Mr. W. J. Colville's 'Mental Therapeutics' under the direction of Mrs. Chiswell. The weekly offerings are about the average, but an improvement would be of great advantage to the society. The bookstall has been well supported, and there is a growing demand for the weekly papers. The library has been well patronised, and efforts have been made to purchase recent books.—S. S. O.