

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Looking over a file of recent magazines and papers, and feeling just a little disappointed at their want of music, the following, in 'The Hermetist,' suddenly arrested our attention. We feel its truth as well as its beauty. It is entitled, 'Musician and Instrument':—

A musician was playing on the flute. There was exquisite music, and all were charmed. Presently the flute began to think of itself in the following manner: 'How wonderful are my powers! What a great thing am I! Have I not charmed so many with my sweet notes? Look! how pleased and moved they are! I shall go on conquering and triumphing in this way. I shall wipe away the tears of the widow, and cheer up the helpless orphan. The sick and the sorry will find a friend in me. I shall gladden the poor man's cottage, and fill the rich man's heart and home with joy and mirth. Even the birds and the beasts will be pleased with me. The sparkling reptile shall I tame. My fame will spread throughout the world. In every home, in every heart, I shall find a place. Thus shall I establish my victory over every thing and over every land. And there shall be none to dispute my power.'

While the flute was indulging in these conceited thoughts, the musician finished his tune, laid aside the instrument, and walked away. All men departed with him, leaving the little thing behind them. No one inquired of it, no one praised it; all praised the musician for his excellent music. It was time now for the flute to think of itself. Poor thing! It could not even move. Lifeless and quiescent, it lay there a mass of dead matter. It came to its senses at last, however. Its pride was gone, and it was convinced of its worthlessness.

Now, the human soul was the flute, and the great Musician was God.

'The Christian World' is getting on to thin ice. Criticising a remark of Mr. Picton's as to the inspiration of Bible writers, it says there was, in their case, 'something superadded to the supreme literary genius—a spiritual genius, an illuminated consciousness delicately sensitive to impressions from the Father of Spirits, and marvellously responsive to suggestions from the unseen world.' But all that is common enough, in varying degrees; and, truly, if by 'inspiration' we mean only spiritual genius, and an illuminated consciousness sensitive to the Father of Spirits and to suggestions from the unseen world, no one has ever denied inspiration. But is it to be left to us to tell 'The Christian World' that being 'responsive to suggestions from the unseen world' does not necessarily mean being infallible, or even possibly accurate?

An impressive and in some respects beautiful book is 'Aster's' 'The Bridge of Light. A message from the Unseen' (London: Gay and Bird). It professes to be 'almost entirely gathered from original spirit-writings,' but 'a few of the scenes in the story are necessarily purely imaginary, created to connect the links in the chain of

messages.' The verbatim communications are given in italics. It is a book which merits attention, and which might give pleasure and consolation to many.

The only criticism we care to indicate is that the book is rather too lusciously written, with a surfeit of adjectives. We wonder how many times the word 'sweet' occurs. Why 'glad and joyous'? 'why 'happy merriment'? The word 'wondrous' is sorely overworked. Within a few pages, we have 'wondrous sweetness,' 'wondrous love,' 'wondrous revelation,' 'wondrous singers,' 'wondrous rapture' and 'wondrous peace.' As is often the case, this over-lusciousness goes with a tendency to the use of threadbare, third-rate phrases, such as 'halls of vice,' 'wrapped in bitter sorrow,' 'rapt surprise,' and the like; and there is at least one case of queer grammar,—'No one here is ever given any work for which they are unfitted.' We recommend the writer to surrender herself to the clean and fascinating simplicity of Olive Schreiner's 'Dreams.' It might purge her vocabulary and chasten her style.

We have received from 'The Alliance Publishing Co.' (New York) an elegantly printed book, by Dr. T. W. Topham, with an enormously long title; but, as the work is a practically useful one, and as the title exactly describes the book, we will give the whole of it:—'Health of body and mind. Some practical suggestions of how to improve both by physical and mental culture. An extended series of movements and passive motions for the improvement of the muscles. How the thought force can be directed to the part, function or muscle to be developed.'

The book is what it professes to be, and its suggestions and directions as to breathing are particularly valuable.

A sensible four-page tract by David Chambers, on 'A Great Delusion,' has been sent to us. The 'great delusion' is that a man's feelings should be taken as evidence of the truth of his opinions. In the course of a shrewd exposition, the writer says:—

Why accept a small portion of the untested, unverified spiritual phenomena in man's history, handed down to us through the most interested and unreliable channels, and yet reject similar and greater things in our day, after being put to the severest tests that the highest scientific attainments can devise, and verified by many thousands of men and women in all lands, many of whom are of unimpeachable veracity, some of whom have suffered, and are suffering, a social martyrdom for the truth? Have the laws of Nature altered, that special phenomena should cease in bygone times, when they are as much needed to-day as in any age? Or is it not rather that the churches have endeavoured to suppress these phenomena, that we may be compelled to go to them for spiritual guidance, in spite of the command, 'Go ye into all the world,' &c., 'and these signs shall follow them that believe'?

The answer to most of the foregoing questions seems to be *fear*, fear of offending public opinion or of losing something in this world or the next.

The men whom we most admire in bygone times had not these fears; how then can the Pharisees of to-day, and they who fear to speak 'the truths they needs must think,' be following in the steps of the martyrs of bygone times? Our fathers suffered for us, and there is plenty of similar work to do to-day for those who have the courage to do it.

Persons interested in Palmistry, or wishing to study it, would do well to take note of a little book (revised and enlarged edition) by 'S.J.A.', 'How to read the hand, or character in the palm' (London: L. N. Fowler and Co.). It is uncommonly comprehensive, but remarkably simple and to the point. The illustrations are small but effective. The whole thing is practical. The price is sixpence.

We have received a programme announcing a three days' jubilee celebration in Philadelphia, accompanied by newspaper cuttings reporting the exceedingly interesting proceedings. The 'Association of Spiritualists' in Philadelphia has held continuous meetings for half a century, and, if our good friend Mrs. Cadwallader can have her way, these meetings will never stop. We congratulate her and her friends. They seem to have had what we believe they call 'a quite lovely time.'

This, from 'Cape Ann Advertiser' is not bad:—

That quick wit is not confined to cities was proved last spring by a young woman who was rambling along one of our roads.

She was dressed smartly; and, when she met a small, bare-legged urchin carrying a bird's nest with eggs in it, she did not hesitate to stop him.

'You are a wicked boy!' she said. 'How could you rob that nest? No doubt the poor mother is now grieving for the loss of her eggs.'

'Oh, she don't care,' said the boy, edging away. 'She's on your hat.'

SERIOUS ILLNESS CURED BY A SPIRIT.

During the Congress in London last June, Mrs. d'Esperance was consulted on various matters, but more particularly by the sick as to the possible means of regaining lost health. Amongst those with whom she came in contact was a young lady of prepossessing appearance, and a winning, affectionate disposition. Between the two a strong friendship soon sprang up, and Mrs. d'Esperance took a great interest in her friend, not only as to her then present state of health, but also as to her future welfare, as she was engaged to be married some eight months afterwards—in the beginning of 1899.

All went well during Mrs. d'Esperance's stay with her friend, who was quite well when Mrs. d'Esperance left her to return to Germany. Letters passed between them until November last, when Mrs. d'Esperance was informed that her friend was very ill, and the prospects of recovery were lessened by the doctor's strongly expressed opinion that it was utterly out of the question that she could be married in January, 1899; her condition was such that she must put aside all thoughts of matrimony, for at the very least six months and possibly for a year.

When Mrs. d'Esperance heard of this, she consulted her spirit friend, 'Humnur Stafford,' as to what he considered best to be done. In reply, he wrote: 'If she cannot be brought to you, then you must go to her so that I may help her.'

As Mrs. d'Esperance had various important matters to attend to in Germany, proofs to read of her new book 'Northern Lights,' about to be issued by Mr. Redway, and arrangements with the publishers of 'Shadow Land' as to Swedish, French, German, and Dutch translations, she very reluctantly came to the conclusion that she could not go to her friend to assist her. This troubled her very much, and on Sunday, the 13th of November last, she consulted 'Humnur Stafford' again as to what was to be done, as she herself was unwell with overwork, and could not very well travel to England, even if other matters left her at liberty to do so. 'Stafford' then promised that he himself would go that evening to her friend and try to help her, after which he would report results.

After this consultation Mrs. d'Esperance went to sleep, and rested some hours in the middle of the day. She awoke much refreshed, so that during the evening she did not feel the

need of rest, and waited somewhat impatiently for the news, as to the condition of her friend, which 'Stafford' was to bring her. At last, about ten o'clock, she lay down on a couch to await the anxiously-desired information; but instead of receiving it she fell asleep and did not awaken until about one in the morning! Whilst asleep she dreamt that she went to England to visit her sick friend, whom she found to have suffered severely, and who was in a very weak condition, but at the moment of her arrival appeared to be lying in a half-sleeping, half-waking condition, from which she roused up as though startled by something.

The rest of the dream was indistinct, and when Mrs. d'Esperance awoke she took pencil and paper, in hope that 'Stafford,' might give her some definite news. About half-past two her hand began to move, and the well-known handwriting of 'Stafford' informed her that he had been to her friend, and had assisted her so much that he had every reason to believe she would soon be well.

Three or four days afterwards, Mrs. d'Esperance received a letter, written in pencil whilst in bed, from her friend, telling her of a very strange experience, and of her sudden recovery from what she otherwise had begun to regard as likely to be a hopelessly long illness. She said: 'On Sunday night (the 13th), I was dreaming about you a great deal. I cannot remember much, only that I was dreaming about you. Mother was sleeping with me. I awoke suddenly with a fearful start, and a most peculiar feeling as of lying on pins and needles, which spread itself all over my body, and then seemed to gradually ooze out at my finger ends. All the time there was a continual knocking going on. In my fright I awakened my mother, and she said next morning that she could remember hearing the knocking, but she went quickly to sleep again and only had a hazy recollection of it. I, however, was wide enough awake and no longer felt afraid of the knocking, but went to sleep again, and all I remember was that *I did nothing but dream about you and that you were holding my hand.* Since then I feel very much better, in fact so much better that I really cannot understand it. The pains have quite left me, so I have been able to get plenty of sleep. To-day, all the last three weeks seem to have passed away from me like a bad dream.'

In another letter to a friend, dated November 27th, she says: 'I cannot tell you how grateful I am to Mrs. d'Esperance and "Stafford" for all the trouble they have taken for me. For about three weeks I suffered terribly with neuralgia and depression, which nothing seemed to cure. I was very low-spirited and nervous, until mother was quite alarmed about me. The doctor said my whole nervous system was over-wrought.' The rest of the letter is much the same as that to Mrs. d'Esperance, concluding with the words: 'Next morning I felt much better, and rapidly improved from that day. None of us could understand why I got better so suddenly.'

Spiritualists are often asked what the spirits are doing, and whether they have nothing better to do than to knock tables about. The foregoing will give a glimpse of their desire to be useful, and that the knocking of tables or the repairing of injured bodies depends on the conditions provided for them. A piece of cloth sent from a healthy person to one who is sick is often sufficient to effect a cure—not of itself alone, but because the unseen workers take advantage of the opportunity given them to help.

A FRIEND OF 'HUMNUR STAFFORD.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, will be held, at 7 for 7.30 on the evening of Friday, January 27th, when

MISS ROWAN VINCENT

will give an Address on

PSYCHOMETRY AND CLAIRVOYANCE,

followed by illustrations by herself and other friends.

NOTE.—This meeting will not be held, as is usual, in the French Drawing Room, but in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall; entrance from Regent-street.

OUR PUBLIC MEDIUMS.

PART II.

In order that I may amplify certain suggestions made in my first article on the subject of organisation among our public mediums, which appeared in 'LIGHT' on December 24th, I will for the moment waive all the inevitable objections which are bound to arise regarding what I have thus roughly sketched, and I will suppose that the thought of some scheme is taken up and its feasibility seriously discussed with intent to bring it to a successful issue.

With that idea in view, and in the hope that a plan of action will be the ultimate outcome of concerted thought and endeavour, I venture on a few more suggestions, stating them as briefly as possible, well content in the knowledge that the cleverer and more experienced heads of our society are thoroughly competent to fill in all practical working details unnecessary to be enumerated at this stage in a short article. What to accept and what to reject from among the many suggestions coming from myself or others interested in these endeavours will be only a question of time to decide.

To proceed: The London Committee being of necessity the chief one should, I think, be made numerically the strongest as well; both for the sake of convenience in cases of non-attendance, &c., and also because I imagine it would be the hardest worked.

Each committee would have to nominate one of its members to fulfil the duties of secretary. This post in the beginning would not be a sinecure, as he or she would have the superintendence of all correspondence and see to the sending out of any printed forms or leaflets the committee might see fit to distribute.

As soon as each committee was settled on and had arrived at its working stage, a notice to that effect might be sent to all the spiritualistic centres and societies in their separate jurisdictions, the secretaries and workers in these societies again handing on the announcements to all whom it might interest or concern in their respective towns, and at their several meeting places, &c.

With every announcement, leaflets would be sent for distribution among the mediums, however obscure, within the ken of the societies and their workers. These leaflets, I hold, it would be most important to have carefully drawn up, for when filled and received at the various committee centres, they ought to be the means of forming some sort of census concerning the *local* and standing of the mediums.

The leaflet, it strikes me, might be drawn up somewhat after the following idea:—

MEDIUM.

Name.....
 Address.....
 Q. What is your form of mediumship?
 Q. Have you ever sat for test, and under what conditions?
 Name, if possible, three reliable witnesses or guarantors of good faith.

Note.—Kindly fill in the above, as we are desirous of issuing a printed classified list of working mediums.

By request of.....Committee.
 Return to.....

These leaflets it should be the earnest endeavour of the mediums to fill up faithfully and return as requested.

All members of societies should feel it their duty to bring these leaflets to the notice of any medium who may have been overlooked or forgotten in the first rush of work, and so loyally co-operate in this network scheme of centralisation.

As soon as these papers came in to the various committee centres, the prominent well-known mediums (being easily disposed of) might be taken first to head the list, after which the real work would be commenced of sorting, classifying and investigating the claims of the obscure, doubtful or wholly unknown mediums.

As I conclude it might be the wish of the committees—at any rate at first—to avoid the demand for fresh test sésances until they were in fairly good working order, great care would have to be exercised in well sifting the credentials of these latter people and their references, writing to their witnesses for corroboration, &c.

Test sésances would, of course, be exacted in all cases where the testimonials seemed unsatisfactory or for practical purposes non-existent.

In the event of anything cropping up at a distance of an important or difficult nature, and the committee feeling that personal information on the matter was necessary—(such as a case of fraud, real or unreal, interesting phenomena, &c.)—one of their members might be selected who would travel to the scene of action, and there investigate on behalf of the society. He or she would undertake to collect all details of an evidential nature and jot down any noteworthy observations which would be of use, becoming, in short, for the time being a sort of 'roving commissioner.'

I should like to urge that no claimant to public mediumship, *who takes money*, ought to be unknown to at least one of the committee centres.

Perhaps some of my readers will consider that all this savours too much of police supervision, and should this be the case I fail to see where the danger would come in. The matter requires looking at broadly and boldly, with a realisation of its possibilities and benefits, and in the end I venture to believe that all dissentients will agree with me when they see that the good can but remain unharmed, and the undesirable and injurious be slowly but surely eliminated. At least organisation would largely prevent the systematic *secret* fraud.

All we want is energy and good-will, joined to loyal co-operation from all ranks of our great society, and something of value, I feel sure, will be the result.

I wish we were already so far ahead with a practical working scheme that we could join 'hands across the sea,' and say 'American societies, please copy.'

J. STANNARD.

26, Corsia Deák, Fiume, Hungary.

Two ideas have recently been revived in our midst—one by Mrs. Stannard, to start at once a kind of College which shall give mediums licences and certificates to practise professionally; and the other by 'Quæstor Vita,' to start a central Institute where philosophers and students of all schools may meet together for experimentation. The ends aimed at by both these schemes are most desirable, but it is very questionable whether the means suggested will, under present conditions, secure those ends.

The first object of Mrs. Stannard's proposition is to prevent the public from experimenting with the quacks, frauds, and incompetents who advertise themselves as professionals, and cause the experiments of the genuine type to be jeered at. This is most laudable—but will the method of giving certificates lessen the chances of the jeers that come from the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees and the multitude who beset us? On the contrary, if the present method of allowing a professional to advertise and receive any chance visitor is continued, the chances are that our certificated practitioners will be shown up as frauds, and the jeers against us will tell with greater effect.

Mediums have only to go on selling their life energies for money without ever visiting the mountain-tops for recuperation, and some day there will come a knock at their door—an antagonist coming in the garb of a friend, and bringing with him a host of unseen adverse intelligences; and the old, old story will be repeated—certificate or no certificate.

Another object of the proposal is, I presume, to train and turn out mediumship by this central institution. If such a college is going to be founded on the plan of any of the present-day academies, I, for one, have no hope of its success. For a thousand years or so learned universities have instilled the idea into the human race that a college for training must necessarily be conducted with lectures and sermons and examinations, and there are many people about who fancy we shall get an increase of mediumship if we start professors lecturing on the art. Mrs. Stannard may not be one of these, but one might as well try to train roses as mediums by such means.

Lectures may be all very well for the gardeners, but the roses themselves, for the development of their blooms, require a rose-bed of good soil and a warm, moist, vitalising atmosphere. Psychic qualities are vegetative and shy, and will not unfold themselves in a chill, formal atmosphere.

Psychics and mediums require, in their daily surroundings, a feeling of fellowship, of brother and sister-hood, of common enthusiasm, of affection, of admiration, of devotion. In other words, we want a college in the old-world sense of the word—a home of God's sons and daughters, a fellowship, a brotherhood, a community.

Another reason why the development of mediumship especially wants the privacy of home life rather than the publicity of the lecture room, is that it depends chiefly on the establishment of automatic movement and cerebration. Stage dancers and gymnasts have to train themselves by a set of exercises, ridiculous in themselves but useful in the effect of suppleness they impart. So, too, with mediums. They have often to go through all the antics of Quakers and Shakers, or jabber gibberish, or say things with no reason for them, and act and speak nonsensically whenever they feel a prompting to do so. Now no one likes to play the lunatic in public, and would naturally repress such promptings; but in the seclusion of a home or a gymnasium, where no one else is present except fellow gymnasts and a trainer, they would not mind what ridiculous exercises they went through in order to attain to automatic ease.

The ideal institution which I have long hoped some of us will some day be able to carry out for the training of mediumship, would be more on the lines of a village home to begin with, and village community as the scheme expands. A quiet spot might be chosen with the conditions of good air and scenery, as near as possible to the great centres of population. Here cottages might be built and placed under the management of some ladies and gentlemen of leisure, who might be found to devote themselves to the useful work. To these homes mediums should be invited to come and reside free of expense. The institutions might be made self-supporting by providing board and lodging to visitors from the towns, who might come down on week-ends and holidays and make more intimate acquaintance with the mediums before they asked the privilege of a sitting with them. Mediums, as long as they remained in these homes, might be certificated, but not the public, unprotected prostitutes of psychic gifts.

As to 'Quæstor Vitæ's' scheme, it will be very admirable some day, but in our present conditions of barbarism in these subjects, we might as well expect the Hottentots to succeed in establishing a Royal Society when they have not a scientific instrument amongst them or the means for making or acquiring one.

F. W. THURSTAN, M.A.

As a medium who gets his living by the practice of his mediumship, permit me to offer a few remarks on the proposal of Mrs. Stannard, from the medium's point of view, and the difficulties with which it is surrounded.

In the first place, it is desirable to know what is to be understood by the terms, 'medium' and 'Spiritualism,' and whether the old definitions, which have been the bed-rock ones throughout the great spiritual wave, are to be discarded for some highly technical one, such as may be invented by the occult school of phraseology, and which requires a medical lexicon at hand to understand it. Also, if it is contemplated to embrace all phases of mediumship, or only that of test mediums; and also the general objects of the controlling body. Further, whether mere occultism, or Spiritualism, is to be the recognised primary factor. The first-named is generally understood to mean 'something hidden,' which makes it a very inferior substitute for the grand one of 'Spiritualism.' In what way would the newly-constructed organisation differ from the Psychical Research Society as to their methods; and, above all, do they propose to deal in a more generous manner towards mediums than the last-named body have the credit of doing?

The burning question of fraud, which appears to be the basis of this new scheme, is overrated so far as its importance is concerned, because, as in all spurious cases, it soon gets found out and becomes discredited, the mediums generally, by the aid of their gifts, being the detectors. Only the genuine article can live for any length of time, for 'by their deeds ye shall know them' is still true.

The primary questions from the medium's point of view are generally: 'Would the new body be self-elected, and

would they form a syndicate to provide the money necessary to properly support mediums?' In that case they will have the right to determine as to the disposal of the money, and form what resolutions they like, subject, of course, to what the mediums, under the advice of their guides, have to say about it. The last-named are the dictators in this matter, and will assuredly frustrate anything that will tend to mar their work, or belittle the great object they have in view.

Let there be no misconception about this money question. There are many persons looking into Spiritualism who have plenty of money, but who will not part with it to be frittered away. Meanwhile the mediums starve, lose their gifts from the harassing effects of mental anxieties as to ways and means, and are brought to judgment before those in comfortable circumstances.

If only those persons who so readily write about mediums knew the great task which devolves on spirit guides to find means for their mediums, and how, when they fail to do this, the medium is left to his (or her) own resources, to struggle on for a time on past reputation, they would be more charitable, and perhaps would not be too exacting when failure attended the desires of the medium. The Church provides sustenance for its teachers; but where is the provision for the mediums, those apostles who have done more to reveal the reality of the after life than any other body? One Christian sect has recently started a subscription of one million guineas, and I believe that more than one-half is already subscribed. Will our would-be controllers subscribe one million shillings? Take the balance-sheet of the Order of Progressive Spiritualists in last week's issue of 'LIGHT,' and compare its meagre total of £14.6s. 9d. with what it should be. I was in hope that before last year had expired, I should have been able to place at the disposal of the Executive of the 'Alliance' not less a sum than one thousand pounds as a contribution towards a real fund; and I trust that before this year closes, it will have become an accomplished fact. We have the property, and there is every prospect of this being realised. It has been promised that the great spiritual organisation, which from 'the other side' watches and controls this movement, will raise up funds for this purpose, and I have every faith such will be the case, when the obstacles can be overcome. Those who step into the breach and aid in such a work, will be indeed 'lending to the Lord,' and will find they have done wisely for themselves.

There have been enough of tests in the past, the object of which was to demonstrate the existence of life after death; the time has arrived for the spirit teachings to be put into practice in our daily lives, and then we shall be on the high road to the general peace now craved for. There are many abuses to be fought, many errors which are kept alive because of vested interests, to be destroyed, and such need funds for their accomplishment.

In the London Spiritualist Alliance we have already such an organisation as is suggested, which simply requires strengthening to be able to deal effectually with all such problems as have been alluded to in Mrs. Stannard's proposal.

W. H. EDWARDS.

MRS. BLOOMFIELD MOORE.—A well-known member of the American colony in London has just died in the person of Mrs. Bloomfield Moore, who passed away at her residence at 12, Great Stanhope-street, Mayfair. The deceased lady who had long been resident in England, was one of the most prominent financiers of the famous Keely motor.

HAZELL'S ANNUAL.—The fourteenth volume of the excellent publication known as 'Hazell's Annual' maintains the reputation earned by the previous issues. It is fuller than its predecessors, and has many new features. It is well up to date in every department, in spite of the difficulty of marshalling so much matter in a short time and it will be consulted especially for its able and succinct summaries of the great political and international questions of the past year, while the foreign questions are illustrated with recently constructed maps. The Parliamentary summary is full, complete, and accurate; it is also unique in no other publication can the information so ably presented here be found at all. A good and impartial notice is given of Spiritualism, the London Spiritual Alliance, and 'LIGHT.'

MATTER AND SPIRIT.

Mr. A. J. Wells, a writer new to us, has a brilliant essay in 'The Christian Register' on 'The lighted face.' It is a highly spiritual presentation of the truth that matter and spirit are vitally related, or vitally blended. He says:—

Not only is there no gulf of separation between man and God, but there is none between God and the universe. So near is matter to spirit that no one can find the dividing-line. We talk about atoms, but no one has ever seen an atom. Faraday thought that an atom was but a point of force. He meant, I suppose, that, if we could pursue an atom far enough, it would be lost in spirit; and scientists are beginning to talk about the atom as a mode of motion of spirit.

If we question our own existence, we cannot tell where matter ends and spirit begins.

Such seems to be the relation of God to the world and to man.

'Draw, if thou canst, the mystic line
Severing rightly his from thine,
Which is human, which divine.'

Matter is the medium of a divine life. It is a thrill with a divine presence. Not a particle of matter exists except as it is associated with and is the embodiment of an eternal spiritual force.

There is no occasion, then, to look back into the past and try to connect God with the race by means of a special and miraculous incarnation. He is incarnate in the race. He is the life of the world, 'the soul of this wide universe.' He puts as much of Himself into the atom as the atom can hold, as much into grass and flowers, bird, and beast, as they were capable of expressing, as much into each man as he is able to appreciate and illustrate. This is the basis of the largest hope.

Given the actual presence and residence of God in and through all things, then we ought, at least, to have faces lighted with hope. No pessimist was ever yet the Prophet of Humanity; and history and, if science reads them aright, Nature herself, in the records she has left, is a perpetual rebuke to man's despair. The story of our past is one long story of progress; and so far from fact is the nursery tale of Adam and his fall that the accumulated knowledge of the ages, in this latest century, speaks only of the rising race. To teach a religion which is but a stop-gap for a tide of evil once let loose, a religion which is a process of reconstruction, is to make the mind blush at its own credulity. To fear, to believe in the final victory of evil, is atheism. Is it a bad world? Then behind it, above it, around it, in it, is a bad God. Ah! how dear, how soothing to man, arises the idea of God, peopling the lonely place, effacing the scars of our mistakes and disappointments! And, when we add to this idea of God the necessary idea of absolute goodness, how triumphant life should be!

CHANCE - OR GUIDANCE ?

I am rather late in sending this, but the following narrative may even now prove interesting to some of your readers. The incident occurred at Worms on Rhein, when I was at school there some years ago. I was walking with one of the girls through a very narrow, stone-paved street, one winter's day. It was one of the busiest thoroughfares. Snow was just beginning to fall.

My companion, a young Jewess, who wore very long, pear-shaped gold earrings, suddenly put up her hand, exclaiming 'One of my earrings has just dropped off!' We searched diligently for some yards, but as it had dropped in the middle of the street we had to stand back frequently to let the heavy German waggons pass. The search was quite without success, and she resigned herself very quietly to her loss, not daring to hope that she would ever see the earring again.

After that, snow fell heavily for about two days. On the fourth day there was a thaw and we were again walking together in the same street. I believe we were not giving a thought to the lost ornament, when my companion said, sud-

denly, 'Why, there is my earring!' She picked it up from the snow and mud, perfectly uninjured.

Everybody in the school was amazed, and it does seem very extraordinary that the earring had not been completely destroyed by the continuous lumbering vehicles and traffic passing over it.

MARION KENYON.

Horsham.

THE MONTH'S ASTROLOGY.

The January number of 'Modern Astrology' is interesting reading. In its opening pages Mundane Astrology is thoughtfully, if not critically considered. The climax of 1899 will be a *Great War*. Next summer must see the breaking of the war cloud, or Mundane Astrology, we are told, will have to be studied anew. 'Bessie Leo' contributes a striking and suggestive paper, entitled, 'The Shuttle of Destiny.' Other articles deal with 'Astrology as a Divine Science'; 'The Art and Practice of Directing'—a concise and helpful exposition of a somewhat difficult branch of the science; 'Some Notes on the Zodiac,' and an exhaustive study of the sign 'Capricorn.'

Astro-finance figures largely in this month's 'Coming Events,' though in future it will be dealt with separately and the magazine devoted entirely to Natal and Mundane Astrology. The horoscope of the new moon (which occurs on the 11th) 'points strongly to war-like demonstrations, troubles in foreign affairs, change in the Government and a high rate of mortality.' There is a scholarly paper on 'The Astrology of the Hebrews,' and much interesting information respecting Chaldean Astrology. The 9th, 11th, 14th, 18th, 24th, 27th, and 31st, are given as storm periods, and very cold weather with a heavy downfall (snow?) from the 11th to the 26th, then warmer.

'Star Lore,' now a quarterly, has not yet come to hand.

A NEW 'SPIRIT-POET.'

If Disraeli was on the side of the angels, the angels seem to be on the side of Colonel Picquart—at least, some of them; for Mrs. Georgina Weldon has been visited by a 'spirit-poet' during the last five years, who has dictated 'thousands of magnificent verses' to her, as she tells us in the preface of a comedietta entitled 'The Plot of the Etat-Major,' the first act of which she has sent us as a sample. We cannot say that we are very much struck by the poetic genius of the communicating spirit, who, however, is *fervently* in favour of 'the truth.' The act consists of dialogue, in which Boisdeffre, Du Paty, De Pellieux, Gonse, and Mercier take part, and which ends up thus (a translation that would do justice to the 'spirit-poet' needs an inspiration we do not feel):—

Tous. (*chorus*.)

Nous méprisons, nous haïssons la République
Nous exécrons, nous maudissons la République !
Nous abhorrons, nous détestons la République !
Nous dédaignons et nous toisons la République !
Nous rudoyons, nous tutoyons la République !
Nous flagellons, nous empalons la République !
Nous bousculons, nous entamons la République !
Nous honnissons et nous raïllons la République !
Nous barbouillons, nous trahissons la République !
Nous embourbons et nous perdons la République !
Nous pourrissions, nous meurtrissions la République !
Nous tarissons, nous ternissons la République !
Nous noircissons, nous salissons la République !
Et nous démantibulerons la République !

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

'The Torch,' for January. Edited by G. H. BIBBINGS. Leeds: J. W. Lowrey & Co., 3, Grafton-street. Price 1d.

'The Suggester and Thinker.' No. 6 contains: 'Portrait and Biographical Sketch of Thomson Jay Hudson, LL.D.'; 'The Dual Mind'; 'Instructions in Hypnotism and Mesmerism'; 'The Subjective Condition,' &c. U.S.A.: 523, Superior-street, Cleveland, Ohio.

WE are requested to state that Mrs. Graddon has removed to 52, Adelaide-road, Haverstock Hill, N.W.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14th, 1899.

EDITOR E DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors

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A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of 'LIGHT,' 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.

A DISCOVERY AND AN INFERENCE.

We wish some of our clever critics would apply to Spiritualism a little of that useful commodity which Tyndall called 'the scientific imagination.' We do not ask for much; a little, a very little, will do. The philosophical and not entirely unpoetic scientist we have just named, emphatically declared that without the possession and the use of the scientific imagination, a man would do very little as an original investigator. Such a man might be a useful tabulator, but he would not be a live discoverer: he might know everything that is, but he would never know the thing that is to be. That needs genius, imagination, insight: and all that means the ability to draw inferences.

For the moment, we will take a very low seat, and make a very modest claim. We will do no more than claim that Spiritualism has nothing better to show than fidgetty movements of furniture and absurd scrawls of 'passive writing,' and that nothing either wise or good has ever been told us. We will even admit that, after all these years, we have still only come into contact with 'the devil.' We hope we may, without presumption, go as far as to say that there *have* been a few occasions, say half a dozen in a dozen years, when genuine signals or raps have occurred. But, of course, multitudes will deny even this. We are, however, discussing the subject just now only with those who admit that there is a residuum of genuine phenomena, however small and vague and paltry it may be.

The state of mind we have to deal with is indicated by the question, put in every tone of pity, or every cadence of contempt: 'And, pray, what is the good of it? What has it ever revealed? What has it done?' Let us admit that this is, in a way, a quite natural question. We say 'in a way,' because it is anything but a natural question, when the subject has properly ripened with any one.

Let us consider that, for three minutes. Granted that what has come to us from the unseen is so puerile as to be simply tiresome or so vague as to be practically useless: what then? Is it not the fact that all the great discoveries come with minute glimpses?—that a revelation which is to control the commercial destiny of a nation, for instance, first shows itself as a childish hint? It seems child's play to watch the play of the kettle lid under the influence of steam, but some tremendous consequences have followed it: but only after the exercise of the scientific imagination, and the drawing of intelligent inferences. In point of fact, the greatest discoverers have, as a rule, been those who took notice, and who went on taking notice, of the smallest things.

If one wished to demonstrate that telegraphic signals could be sent through space, without material connections, twelve inches would be practically as good as twelve miles: and very much less than twelve inches satisfies the early scientist of the right type:—a throb will often suffice—a film—the shadow of the shade of a phenomenon, however evanescent. Why should it not be so with experiments in our field? Why talk about the 'puerile'? Why get impatient with seemingly silly results? Why fail to bring to bear upon these small signs and tokens the illuminants of the scientific imagination? Why bother about the grammar or the sense of what is written? Does any scrawl come? Why talk about the 'degrading' notion that a spirit bothers with furniture or supplies the 'vulgar' rap?

Suppose it is made clear that an object *can* be moved in a laboratory or a séance room, without mortal hands, does it matter whether the object is a dignified or an undignified one? And suppose it is made certain that signals can be produced by some unseen power which appears to be intelligent, does it matter in the slightest whether the signals spell out sense or nonsense, lie or tell the truth? Does it matter, that is to say, to the scientist—to the student—who knows his business? Is it at all stretching the matter to say that what is involved is the existence of a novel force, suggesting another world? If Mars could somehow reach us, in the way of communication, what genuine scientist would stop to care whether the actual communication was more like the squeak of a mouse than the declamation of an orator?—or more like the tremour of a pin's point here and there than the ceaseless flow of the paper ribbons at the Stock Exchange? The vital matter is, not what is done, but what lies behind what is done—what is the inference from what is done?

The scientific imagination is just as much wanted on the ethical and æsthetic planes. Granted that the 'messages' indicate only deceivers and demons. Is it not perfectly conceivable that, on account of certain inevitable conditions, we have opened communications only with certain lower strata of intelligences? What if we admit that we are only experimenting in the sediment, engaged, as it were, in a sort of spiritual deep-sea dredging from below? Is it such an enormous demand upon the scientific imagination, that it shall infer a sea, and perhaps a sky?—especially if, now and then, we seem to reach the one and catch lovely suggestions of the other. Prove that, as yet, we have opened communications only with the queer creatures in the sediment, shall we dismiss the whole thing in disgust? How monstrously absurd! If we can prove that a crawling idiot, a vacant fool, a leering liar, goes on living after 'death,' is it not a million times more likely that the heroic, the wise, the saintly, survive? And, when we add to the mere likelihood, the thought that there is a just and righteous God, it seems unspeakably monstrous to resist the inference that if we prove the survival of the unworthy we demonstrate the continued existence of those who, by the unanimous vote of mankind, would be appointed unto life.

Magnitude and moral elevation, then, are not radically concerned with our discovery. However small and 'low' the experiment and its result may be, the sublime inference is the same.

THE MONEY QUESTION IN MEDIUMSHIP.—The commercial spirit in mediumship is a serious drawback to successful spiritual work. Every true and worthy medium should be paid for his services, but whenever and wherever money is made the prime object of the medium, or the sitter, the results cannot fail to be unsatisfactory. If pure spirituality were the first desideratum with mediums, Spiritualists and investigators, the question of compensation would speedily adjust itself. We believe in honest pay for honest work, but we are yet to be convinced that spiritual wares can be sold at the rate of several hundred dollars per week, and the genuine article always obtained.—'BANNER OF LIGHT.'

MENTAL SUGGESTION.

The 'Annales des Sciences Psychiques,' No. 5, gives an account of some interesting demonstrations by Dr. Joire of Lille, made in his psychological laboratory there, which works in association with the Institut Psychologique of Paris. Accounts of previous demonstrations by this experimentalist were given in 'LIGHT,' p. 519, 1897, and p. 135, 1898.

Dr. Joire has the advantage of using some of his medical students who are desirous of probing these phenomena by personal experience, as subjects. Their eyes are bound by a black bandage, padded so as to fit tightly to the face. He induces a superficial passive state in his mediums, as he calls them, in which they remain aware of and remember what transpires, yet being specially sensitive to suggestion.

Though Dr. Joire is a hypnotist, he induces this state mesmerically, by longitudinal 'passes,' going the length of the body, followed by holding the subject's hands and gazing fixedly in his eyes. The operator then stands at a distance from the subject and neither speaks nor moves, but determines the subject mentally.

In the present case the experiment was to consist in ordering him to go up to one of the assistants. To prevent any possible indication being unconsciously conveyed by the operator while still in contact with the subject, the selection of the person to whom he was to be directed was left to the assistants, and was to be signalled to the operator, after the subject had been rendered sensitive, by the person chosen raising his hand; the operator then mentally ordering the subject to advance in the necessary direction. To prevent the subject from being guided by an unintentional noise, all the assistants moved slightly when the signal was given. In the present case the operator misread the signal and consequently directed the subject, by mental command, to the wrong person. And it is here that the interesting feature in the demonstration comes in.

The subject advanced in the direction mentally ordered by the operator—towards the right; then hesitated and stopped when about half-way, showing signs of impatience. He then advanced towards the left, in opposition to the operator's commands, and went up to one of the assistants. The operator concluded of course that the experiment had failed, whereas it had really succeeded.

In advancing towards the right, the subject had followed the mental order of the operator. When he stopped, as he afterwards explained, he felt an opposing influence, followed by an impulsion towards the left. This impulsion did not come from the operator, it must be observed, but from the assistants, who were expecting a different result from the operator (who had misread the signal), and were suggestioning him to go to the left and advance to the person selected.

'We often see a suggestion nullified by a counter-suggestion,' says Dr. Joire, 'or by the influence of a spectator in too close proximity, but it is rare to see two counter-suggestions realised successively, when the suggestioners are themselves unaware of opposing each other's influence.'

Another instance of the effect of a mental counter-suggestion, by one of the spectators, determining a subject of M. de Rochas, and inhibiting the phenomenon, was given in 'LIGHT,' p. 387, 1897. M. de Rochas also gave an account in the 'Lotus Bleu,' January, 1896, of an instance in which one of his subjects, after having been suggestioned by himself for some time, passed under the influence of counter-suggestions from another and invisible operator who claimed to be discarnate. Cahagnet had similar experiences with his subject Adèle.* The writer has also seen the same thing occur in other cases.

* A recent lecturer affirms that Du Pôtet held the opinion that her powers could all be explained by thought-transference. Certainly many mediumistic subjective phenomena are so constituted. But the transmission may come from a discarnate suggestioner equally as well as from an incarnate one. Du Pôtet recognises this in his 'Magie Dévoilée,' saying: 'Man may still, by means of spiritual intermediaries, communicate with powers superior to himself, and thus relink the chain connecting him with Deity.' Man is a spirit now, and ever remains one. Hegel shows the identity of thought and spirit. Thought-transference is a power pertaining to spirit consequently. As spirit transcends time it is permanent; the powers of the spirit must therefore also be permanent. Consequently it follows that thought-transference may be effected between spirits; whether incarnate or discarnate does not affect the principle involved.

These experiments are most important as demonstrating the conditioning of psychic phenomena by the mental suggestions of the spectators. They show distinctly that the suggestions of the operator may be opposed and annulled and the realisation of counter-suggestions determined by the assistants. (It will be seen that this has an important bearing on the production of fraudulent phenomena through an entranced medium.)

In the experiments described in October, 1897, the subjects stated that they had felt a force acting within their arms or legs and moving these. One who had been specially sceptical tried to resist, but had to give way, to his own surprise. He had even believed at first that the operator was actually pulling him or forcing him to kneel. {Dr. Moutin's subjects have also described their being forced by mental suggestion to do things against their own will. Professor Boirac first produced similar phenomena. A most interesting account of his own experiences of being determined by verbal suggestion was given by a subject of M. de Rochas in the 'Annales Psychiques,' No. 3, 1895, and confirms the identity of effect, entailed by suggestion, whether mental or verbal.

These descriptions in which suggestions are shown to be realised apart from any participation of the subject's will, in which the operator's suggestions are shown to be nullified by counter-suggestions from the spectators, and entailing contrary realisations, confirm the teachings of Dr. Liébeault (p. 448, 1898) and Dr. Durand de Gros (p. 468, 1898), that suggestions are realised or accomplished by the sub-souls or sub-selves of the reflex-centres, constituting the functional basis of the sub-consciousness, and through whom the involuntary actions of waking states and so-called automatic or unconscious actions acquired by habit, are also accomplished. The central-self is not the accomplisher of suggestions; that function devolves entirely on the hierarchy of sub-selves, who, being endowed with sensation, intelligence, and will, carry them out with an apparent independence.

They also confirm the contention of M. Ochorowicz ('LIGHT' May 16th, 1896), that unconscious fraud may be determined through a medium (unconscious to the normal self of the medium), and illustrates the mechanism thereof, showing that such determination may originate in the mental suggestions of persistently sceptical or hostile investigators. Consequently the experimenters in whose presence fraudulent phenomena occur through an entranced medium, may be themselves the unwitting determining agents thereof.

But these illustrations also show that trance mediums for subjective phenomena (test communications, &c.) may also be partly suggestioned by the investigator, as well as by the invisible operator. The mental suggestions emanating from the investigator will no doubt be worked up and developed by the sub-selves of the medium, in a similar manner as occurs when the suggested idea of a personality is elaborated into an artistic rendering or personation, as in the case of Dr. Berillon's subject, Mlle. Myriam, and as occurred in M. de Rochas' subject Benoit (see 'États superficiels d'Hypnose'). In such elaborated form the investigator will scarcely recognise the effect of his own mental suggestion. Yet evidently this may occur, and should warn investigators of the danger of accepting implicitly whatever comes through a trance medium. Suggestions of this character will probably constitute the unreliable element in the communications of the trance medium, as similarly they may entail fraudulent phenomena in mediums for physical manifestations. And these considerations show that in approaching psychic investigations it is necessary to banish all flippancy, captiousness or hostility, unless we seek to degrade the manifestations.

But these demonstrations also show that it would be inexact to conclude that all that comes through a trance medium consists 'in the reflection and representation of the thoughts of the persons present,' as has been recently stated. If that were so, then the same law would apply to the production of objective phenomena through mediums, which is manifestly incorrect. Dr. Joire's and other similar demonstrations show that the subject is mainly suggestioned by the controlling operator, while the thoughts of the spectators constitute an inseparable element in the psychical conditions, and react in the phenomena. The contributory responsibility of the assistants in whose presence fraudulent phenomena occur

through an entranced medium, must consequently be recognised in future as an element in the laws of psychical phenomena.

These considerations further show that not only are subjective mediumistic phenomena determined by suggestions from an operator, but objective phenomena also. This is demonstrated in the organic effects entailed by suggestion in psycho-therapeutics, in stigmata, &c. It was fully illustrated in the experiments described on pp. 296, 399, and 519, 1897, as regards exteriorised phenomena, action at a distance, &c. It was also shown with regard to the phenomena produced through Eusapia Paladino, on pp. 76 and 92, 1897. It is suggestions from an operator that must be recognised as the force in action, in the production of both subjective and objective mediumistic phenomena. And this is in entire accord with the laws of 'accomplishing,' or realisation, as known in human experience, in which thought is ever the pre-condition of expression and manifestation. The difference being that we are now discovering that thought can be transmitted by other vibrations than those of sound merely, *i.e.*, by a process similar to that of wireless telegraphy, entailing its reproduction in the passive human radio-conducting telephone, and the latter's determination thereby, as if by his own thought.

Investigators who have studied the personations induced in hypnotic subjects, as above referred to, and compared them with those presented in mediums, while acknowledging the unity of nature subsisting in both, would not infer that the personations presented in a medium can be 'regarded as an invention of her sub-conscious imagination,' as claimed recently by a 'telepathist.' The former phenomenon requires as its pre-condition that a distinct suggestion be made by an operator, constituting the central-idea around which the sub-consciousness groups its associative contributions, drawn from previously registered impressions. The teachings of Dr. Durand de Gros in this respect, which will be summarised shortly in this paper, show distinctly that the sub-selves of reflex centres and ganglions which constitute the physiological basis of the sub-consciousness, cannot 'invent' anything previously unknown to themselves. They can, however, re-combine previously registered impressions and acquired habits in new groupings; whereas mediumistic personations are repeatedly associated with original communications, with facts and languages unknown to the medium, which cannot possibly be accounted for as being drawn from the experiences previously registered in the medium's sub-selves.

Unfortunately it is exceptional to meet investigators who have studied *both* of these psychical phenomena. Comparative study shows that the phenomena of both orders are undoubtedly of a similar nature, and consequently that a suggestioning operator must be the pre-condition of both. The fact that the subject of a human operator may be suggestioned by a discarnate being, while the subject of a discarnate operator (medium) may be suggestioned by the human audience, sufficiently demonstrates the unity of nature and of process, subsisting between the two orders of phenomena. This is further confirmed by the fact that while the human operator is usually in close proximity to the subject, yet he may also project his exteriorised double from a distance and suggestion the subject by that means, as illustrated on pp. 375 and 514, in 'LIGHT,' and on p. 171, 1896, which instances no doubt serve to show one of the modes by which discarnate operators may suggestion their subject.

Yet the distinctions between mediumistic and hypnotic phenomena are such that the latter must inevitably be classed as subordinate in character to the former.

It is to be regretted that similar opportunity is not afforded in England for the experimental study of suggestion as is presented in Paris. It is only by comparative experimentation that the unity of nature subsisting between hypnotic, mesmeric, and mediumistic suggestional phenomena, and their respective distinctions, can be recognised. Let us hope that experimental psychology will not always remain void of contribution from England. The Psychical Institute proposed on p. 7, might constitute a source of contribution to experimental knowledge.

'QUESTOR VITÆ.'

PSYCHICAL AND HEALING SCIENCE.

DR. BABBITT'S 'HUMAN CULTURE AND CURE.' THE PIONEERS OF MESMERISM AND SPIRITUALISM. RATIONALE OF TRUE CLAIRVOYANCE.

BY JOHN RUTHERFORD, ROKER-BY-THE-SEA, SUNDERLAND.

(Continued from page 4).

Dr. Babbitt's clairvoyance is of a thoroughly practical and philosophic order. Clairvoyance, it need not be said, is of vast interest to Spiritualists, yet few of the spiritist class know anything about its nature, and therefore too frequently confound it with a sort of *subjective* 'clairvoyance' which merely describes appearances of spirits. The philosophy of what is understood as clairvoyance by mesmerists, whose subjects can see through a brick wall, is made very plain by Dr. Babbitt. He observes:—

'When we see through glass or crystal, we are able to do it because: 1. The ordinary grade of light is able to polarise the atoms of that substance and go all the way through it; 2. Because our eyes are in *rapport* with this light, and thus are able to perceive what it reveals to us. Advanced minds have affirmed that there must be more refined grades of light which could penetrate even opaque substances. The so-called science of the day declared that there was only one grade of light, just as many declared there was only one grade of electricity. Now it has been demonstrated to them by Röntgen, Edison and others that there is an X ray, and the fluoroscope enables them to see through human bodies or other substances. This X ray must include mainly the odyllic or fluorescent light. Thorough clairvoyance requires the finer psychic light, though the odyllic grade, which is one octave lower, is as high as many clairvoyants have attained to. To show how real clairvoyance outruns science, I will state that in 1841 Henry Hall Sherwood, M.D., of New York, published, in a work on the 'Motive Power of the Human System,' an account of the discoveries made through a clairvoyant who had been blind from infancy. The leading discovery consisted of a kind of sun-centre in the very middle of the brain, which sends its rays to all parts of the cerebral cortex and the cerebellum. All the organs of the brain were seen to have small bright centres or poles, but the two poles of Causality on the one hand and of Amativeness on the other were especially bright and powerful, thus harmonising with the philosophy of mental and motive action which I have already explained. Now comes a work on 'The Brain and its Functions,' by the wide-awake scientist, J. Luys, physician to the Hospice de la Salpêtrière, France, in which anatomical proof of the correctness of the vision of the blind has been given.'

Dr. Babbitt then reproduces Dr. Luys' diagram showing that it was the optic thalamus which holds the position of honour, as the sentinel station that telegraphs to or receives telegrams from all the organs. 'We are led to consider,' remarks Dr. Luys, 'the masses of grey matter, usually described under the name of the optic thalami, as essentially central regions which are the bond of union between the various elements of the entire cerebral system.'

In this connection I may adduce an equally good case of clairvoyance which I take from Dr. Elliotson's 'Zoist,' No. VI., p. 293, July, 1844:—

'The Hon. Edmund Phipps, brother to the Marquis of Normanby, took hold of the hand of Alexis, the clairvoyant, who described his house in Park-lane in many points with singular correctness; but what was most remarkable, he said, among other things, that he saw a picture of a battle opposite the fire-place in the drawing-room. He saw men on horseback with spears and helmets, describing the whole very distinctly and correctly, and particularly insisted that there was a figure in the centre of the picture with a crown on the head, and a truncheon in his hand, leading on the battle, which Mr. Phipps denied, but the boy insisted that he was right, and that if Mr. Phipps would look when he went home, he would find it, for that he saw it distinctly. I (Mr. Atkinson) dined with Mr. Phipps that evening, and we examined the picture together, and found that the somnambulist was quite correct, as well as with respect to some other points described in another picture, which Mr. Phipps had never remarked before, but of too striking and curious a nature to be the effects of a lucky guess. Mr. Phipps was a sceptic, but is now satisfied of the extraordinary powers of clairvoyance.'

To return to Dr. Babbitt. His treatment of hypnotism and psychometry is able and extensive, and the aut

through an entranced medium, must consequently be recognised in future as an element in the laws of psychical phenomena.

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(Continued from page 4).

Dr. Babbitt's clairvoyance is of a thoroughly practical and philosophic order. Clairvoyance, it need not be said, is of vast interest to Spiritualists, yet few of the spiritist class know anything about its nature, and therefore too frequently confound it with a sort of *subjective* 'clairvoyance' which merely describes appearances of spirits. The philosophy of what is understood as clairvoyance by mesmerists, whose subjects can see through a brick wall, is made very plain by Dr. Babbitt. He observes:—

'When we see through glass or crystal, we are able to do it because: 1. The ordinary grade of light is able to polarise the atoms of that substance and go all the way through it; 2. Because our eyes are in *rappor*t with this light, and thus are able to perceive what it reveals to us. Advanced minds have affirmed that there must be more refined grades of light which could penetrate even opaque substances. The so-called science of the day declared that there was only one grade of light, just as many declared there was only one grade of electricity. Now it has been demonstrated to them by Röntgen, Edison and others that there is an X ray, and the fluoroscope enables them to see through human bodies or other substances. This X ray must include mainly the odyllic or fluorescent light. Thorough clairvoyance requires the finer psychic light, though the odyllic grade, which is one octave lower, is as high as many clairvoyants have attained to. To show how real clairvoyance outruns science, I will state that in 1841 Henry Hall Sherwood, M.D., of New York, published, in a work on the 'Motive Power of the Human System,' an account of the discoveries made through a clairvoyant who had been blind from infancy. The leading discovery consisted of a kind of sun-centre in the very middle of the brain, which sends its rays to all parts of the cerebral cortex and the cerebellum. All the organs of the brain were seen to have small bright centres or poles, but the two poles of Causality on the one hand and of Amativeness on the other were especially bright and powerful, thus harmonising with the philosophy of mental and motive action which I have already explained. Now comes a work on 'The Brain and its Functions,' by the wide-awake scientist, J. Luys, physician to the Hospice de la Salpêtrière, France, in which anatomical proof of the correctness of the vision of the blind has been given.'

Dr. Babbitt then reproduces Dr. Luys' diagram showing that it was the optic thalamus which holds the position of honour, as the sentinel station that telegraphs to or receives telegrams from all the organs. 'We are led to consider,' remarks Dr. Luys, 'the masses of grey matter, usually described under the name of the optic thalami, as essentially central regions which are the bond of union between the various elements of the entire cerebral system.'

In this connection I may adduce an equally good case of clairvoyance which I take from Dr. Elliotson's 'Zoist, No. VI., p. 293, July, 1844:—

'The Hon. Edmund Phipps, brother to the Marquis of Normanby, took hold of the hand of Alexis, the clairvoyant, who described his house in Park-lane in many points with singular correctness; but what was most remarkable, he said, among other things, that he saw a picture of a battle opposite the fire-place in the drawing-room. He saw men on horseback with spears and helmets, describing the whole very distinctly and correctly, and particularly insisted that there was a figure in the centre of the picture with a crown on the head, and a truncheon in his hand, leading on the battle, which Mr. Phipps denied, but the boy insisted that he was right, and that if Mr. Phipps would look when he went home, he would find it, for that he saw it distinctly. I (Mr. Atkinson) dined with Mr. Phipps that evening, and we examined the picture together, and found that the somnambulist was quite correct, as well as with respect to some other points described in another picture, which Mr. Phipps had never remarked before, but of too striking and curious a nature to be the effects of a lucky guess. Mr. Phipps was a sceptic, but is now satisfied of the lad's extraordinary powers of clairvoyance.'

To return to Dr. Babbitt. His treatment of hypnotism and psychometry is able and extensive, and the author

amply sustains his position that in mesmerism the operator radiates a real influence on his subject. Spanish fly blisters on the skin of mesmerised persons have been unable to produce any effect, because the operator declared it would not, demonstrating that a psychic force can be more powerful than a rude external force. 'Suggestion' has thus a medium. Dr. Babbitt observes :—

'The old scientists are quite unable to understand that all forces are things, in other words are fluids ; that imagination, thought and psychic forces, concretely considered, work by exquisite and indescribably fine fluids that rule in human brains and bodies, when gross conditions do not impede their action ; that homœopathic remedies, under the power of trituration, receive the subtle elements of the atmosphere, and in a multitude of cases cure disease contrary to the imagination or faith of those who use them ; that coloured rays of sunlight are entities which may be passed into water or other substances, as the most exquisite medicines, and that human magnetism may charge up the nerves of the sick, or even substances which come in contact with the sick, in a way to effect marvellous cures when they are least expected.'

Dr. Babbitt takes a comprehensive glance at phrenophysiology, and the student will find points of knowledge in advance of popular handbooks on phrenology. Suggestions, too, are given for the improvement of the brain by phreno-magnetism. To facilitate the memory of words and become proficient in language, Dr. Babbitt recommends one to magnetise the outer edge of the left eye and the left anterior temporal region by holding the ends of the fingers there for some minutes at a time, or get some one that is naturally fluent to do the same to you. To aid the development of reason, so much needed, I think, in spiritistic gatherings, he says :—

'I suggest three things : 1. Make passes several times a day over the whole forehead and around on the temples, or still better, have a developed magnetist do it occasionally ; the ethers that pass from the ends of the fingers will kindle more or less action there. 2. Get into a quiet state, close the eyes and think, until you are almost lost to the world around you ; then will the ethers to the front brain. This will quicken and gradually enlarge those organs. 3. Study works that make you think. Organs that are too small should be animated by manipulation, or psychologically treated, as already hinted at. In the case of organs which are diseased or abnormal in their action, the extra heat should be dissipated by passes. To offset congestion of the brain, an abundant pouring of water 105deg. to 113deg. over the occiput is very important, also very hot foot baths, and downward passes.'

Dr. Babbitt is great on the subject of the chemistry of mental action. The solution of this has not, I believe, been attempted by psychologists, but our author states what he sees, and there is good reason for thinking he is on firm ground. It should, however, be recollected that the play of forces described relates, not to the spirit innermost, but to the magnetic fluids with which it works, and which, after death, go to form what is termed the 'spiritual body.' God flows into us here, and into the souls of those beyond in proportion to their receptivity and development. Lotze, the great spiritual philosopher of Germany, rightly holds with our own illustrious seer, A. J. Davis, that the spirit innermost is quite a new and direct efflux of the Universal Spirit, which takes place on the occasion of the coming into existence of a suitable physical organism with its magnetic vesture. Our 'individuality' so-called is not thus absolute ; we are not self-existent beings, but continually dependent upon some deep ground of Absolute Being. The perfect 'celestial' essence needs no 'reincarnation,' as erroneously taught by Theosophists, while the spirit organism is absolutely indestructible, as proved by the facts of Spiritualism. God, therefore, energises and brings to perfection all souls, whatever may have been their stumbling and phrenological malformation on earth. This is the luminous intuition of the seers and our Emersons, Parkers, Channings, Pierpoints, and all advanced minds. Returning to the chemistry of mental action, Dr. Babbitt states his case thus :—

'All reasoning with perceptive faculties, Benevolence, Veneration, Spirituality, Hope, Ideality, Sublimity— or, in short, the whole of the front and upper brain up to Firmness—have psychic ethers as the quickening principle. These amazingly subtle forces of thought and perception must have

lightning activities, as their agents to power, and those whose inner vision has been opened can testify to the superlative beauty of their colour-radiations. Firmness and all the other organs, including the cerebellum, have to depend upon the animal ethers for their quickening. All the nerves, the optic nerve excepted, and all ganglia, transmit animal ethers. The exquisite images made on the retina by the light can be conducted to their sensorial picture ground only by so refined an agent as the psychic aura. During wakefulness, when Thought begins to work, the interior vision perceives a flashing out of the cells, or rather a combustion of the fine cellular essences that have been stored away during sleep. This is caused by ethereal streams sweeping over the whole frontal tract, which is the dwelling-place of the blue mental forces. What causes this stream ? By what chemical action is it made to move ? To bring about permanent magnetic or electric currents, a circuit must be formed. What is the pathway of this circuit ? Notice in Fig. 77, a bundle of nerve fibres moving directly from Reason or Causality to Amativeness in the cerebellum. That is the natural pathway of the blue reasoning forces as they are projected by the little cellular explosives of the front brain and drawn by the chemical affinity of the red elements of the cerebellum, which, although coarser, can act more or less chemically. The cerebellum becoming thus charged, sends its forces along the lines of nerves connecting with Self-esteem, thence to Firmness with all the motor centres, and so on until it reaches the frontal lobes again, thus making a complete circuit. This being done, it becomes easy and natural for it to continue to flow, so that the realm of Thought and Consciousness is kept in a bright, active condition, ready to receive or send out messages from or to the other parts of the brain or body. A strong, active stream gives great brightness and quickness to the thoughts on the one hand, while on the other hand, healthy cellular formations will cause a more active stream. Volition, when it is necessary to reach a certain part of the body, brightens up the mental streams, and aided by the cerebellum, quickens the portion of the motor tract which connects with that part of the body, causing these little explosions of the cells that send the ethers to their destination and their producing muscular contraction. Why do these ethers cause muscular contraction ? Because they are blue and electrical, for all electricity is contractive. But how do we know that these ethers are blue ? Because they come from Firmness, which is a fountain of blue forces. Thus wonderfully does nature provide the right kind of forces for the right place.'

Dr. Babbitt touches on a large number of weighty questions all of which have an important bearing on the soul and future life. Sufficient, however, has been said to convince the reader that Parts III. and IV. of 'Human Culture and Cure' contain a fund of important truths, and in closing this brief and imperfect notice I may say that in Dr. Babbitt I recognise a rich and profound mind, which during a very long course of years has devoted itself with persevering and untiring energy to the study of healing by the fine forces and to the Higher Spiritualism. As a writer he is plain and simple, his style aiming to express his own beautiful thoughts and to embody his own individuality rather than to secure anything in the way of grandiloquent effect. It is, however, impossible not to remark in his methods a great integrity of purpose and an unbiassed love of truth. All his works are alive with information, and their careful perusal cannot but produce a more steady belief in the divinity of the human soul, in higher ideals of human life, and in God as the absolute ground of all existences.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SEVERAL communications are of necessity held over for another issue.

ENQUIRER.—Sir William Crookes' attitude towards Spiritualism will be best gathered from his book 'Researches in Spiritualism,' in which he gives particulars of experiments carried on during the years 1870-73. In his recent address to the Royal Society he boldly declared that of what he then wrote he had nothing whatever to retract.

'THE LYCEUM BANNER.'—The January number of 'The Lyceum Banner' (London : J. J. Morse) is announced as the 'Eighth New Year's number.' It contains several portraits and pictures, with special stories for the season, notes of work done or on hand, some pleasant poetry, bright bits of criticism, and a selection of excellent matter for 'The Golden Group' ;—altogether a lively and instructive number.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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Our Public Mediums.

SIR,—I am glad to see that attention has been called to the important question of public mediumship—by Mrs. Stannard in 'LIGHT' of December 24th, and by 'Quæstor Vitæ' and Mr. John Lord in your issue of January 7th. For myself, I do not believe that in this country there is anything like the amount of fraudulent mediumship that is generally supposed, but there ought to be *none*—and investigators, who are seeking to learn the truth, ought in no case to be subject to the risk of being deceived either by dishonest mediums or by tricksters who pretend to be mediums, but are not.

But how is this desirable end to be attained? Your correspondents seem to suggest that mediums should be subjected to proper tests, and that, if their mediumship is proved to be genuine, they should be placed on an 'accredited' list, or even be granted certificates. The question certainly deserves very serious attention, and I for one should very much like to see the matter taken up and fully considered by the London Spiritualist Alliance. At the same time, I would warn the Alliance or any other body who undertakes the task, that there are rocks ahead! A medium might receive a 'certificate' of good behaviour to-day, and might cheat, or be believed to cheat, to-morrow.

The Society for Psychical Research testified, for instance, that Eusapia Paladino was honest during the experiments on the île Rouband; at subsequent sittings, in Cambridge, she was guilty of trickery, or the sitters thought she was; and now again she has been tested, this time at Professor Richet's house in Paris, and Mr. Myers asserts that 'the phenomena were absolutely convincing to all present.'

These facts show the great difficulties by which the question is surrounded. They may not be unsurmountable, and indeed there may be a very plausible explanation of the unfortunate occurrence at Cambridge. If Eusapia played tricks on that occasion she may not have done so intentionally or knowingly, but, while in a trance or semi-trance state, may have simply been dominated by the strong minds of some of the company. As I understand, Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Maskelyne were both present. Dr. Hodgson in all probability believes in no medium but Mrs. Piper, while Mr. Maskelyne would most likely regard all mediums as frauds, Mrs. Piper included. Therefore with Eusapia they expected tricks, and would have been disappointed if they had not had them; and so they got what they wanted. They controlled the medium, in fact, as a hypnotist or mesmerist controls his subjects.

I refer to this case for a purpose. By all means let us, if possible, have none but honest mediums. But if we are to have a list of 'accredited' mediums, I would suggest that honest mediums should refuse to give séances to any but 'accredited' sitters.

ALPHA.

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SIR,—In your article entitled 'The Spiritual Significance of Work,' you quote from T. T. Lynch's charming hymn, No. 2, in the 'Rivulet,' inaccurately.

My dear friend, Lynch, was most punctilious in his use of words and phrases, and would ask you to correct it were he here, and probably does so now through me!

The words you quote, instead of reading

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MORELL THEOBALD.

'Homely Language.'

SIR,—In your 'Notes by the Way' of December 31st, you draw your readers' attention to the remarks of a writer in the 'Harbinger of Light,' on the desirability of using homely language in discussing the philosophy of Spiritualism, and you quote his words, which I need not repeat. I think it will occur to most of your readers, as well as those of the 'Harbinger,' that the writer of these remarks would have been wiser had he not made them, and I feel sure it was only due to editorial courteousness that they have been published.

For what do they show? Simply that the writer, being in an elementary state of intellect, desired that all knowledge should be made clear to him by means of language comprehensive to him!

He gives a large order, and, needless to say, one that can never be gratified. It requires little reflection to understand that all knowledge is obtained only by labour, and is a gradual acquisition. Would not the writer have a poor opinion of some uneducated man applying to Edison, or Sir William Crookes, or Marconi, or any such celebrity, and asking them to explain, in simple language, how it is all 'done,' and, in short, in a few easy sentences, 'without long and unpronounceable (to him) words,' to convey the desired information without giving him any trouble whatsoever, to obtain the flower of the thought of these great thinkers?

There has been some such request, I almost think, in 'LIGHT' occasionally; though perhaps not with the great simplicity (to put it mildly) of the writer in the 'Harbinger.' But there has been discontent on the part of some minds, because they do not at once understand all the terms used in writings dealing with mystic and spiritual subjects. These complaints have always appeared to me eminently unjust. No one entirely ignorant of metaphysical philosophy, for instance, on taking up some able writers of this order, would find it light reading, that he or she could skim over, taking it in by the eye and not by the mind. Is it not plain that a mental education must precede such study? Is it not infinitely better to lay the blame on oneself when studying the deep thoughts of a mystic philosopher, of one deserving that high encomium; to believe that the fault may lie, not in the author using 'long, unpronounceable words,' but in *oneself*, not having attained to the mental standpoint when such words may be the very ones alone competent to convey the illuminating information designed by the writer? In the words of the great Chinese philosopher, Lâotze: 'Great knowledge is wide and comprehensive,' therefore comprehensive words naturally convey it. 'Small knowledge, partial and restricted'—few and simple words would be adequate here. 'Great speech is exact and complete,' therefore only exact and complete words precisely to the point, and not interchangeable in any random way, are chosen; then adds Lâotze: 'Small speech (or writing) is merely so much talk.'

Lest my letter fall under this latter category (having myself once gratefully received such advice), I venture to advise any reader of occult thought, as it is designated (I myself preferring the word mystic), to conclude that the writer chooses such words intentionally, and that if the reader does not understand them he must study further until he does. If after due study such words are found finally to be unsuitable and empty, well then he is within his rights to give weighty reason for such objection.

There is a disastrous tendency in the thought, or rather want of thought, of the day to boil down everything to the level of the uneducated mind. This is the true profanation, for in reality it is a philanthropy of the falsest kind, and indirectly does grievous injury to humanity such as we know it in the general society of the men and women of to-day and when the subject is thoroughly thrashed out, it will be found that financial interests are usually at the bottom of such schemes.

The great thoughts, the 'great knowledges,' recede further or rise still higher, and are never touched, because the unprepared minds have known but the senuous contact of the eye. The lower the thought is, the less is it profaned when given forth; and so it comes that a thought a little above that of the thinker will elevate and educate such thinker, whereas an idea that is incomprehensible to a reader or hearer, though

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happily he may respect it, as the old woman did the word Mesopotamia in the sermon, still he is none the wiser, and like the writer in the 'Harbinger,' may think it to blame, and not himself, unfortunately.

To lower phraseology to suit unlettered minds would indeed be a misfortune, as it would infallibly end in the loss of the knowledge itself. We are told, of all things, to pray for 'understanding.' It is our partial and poor knowledge that is to blame, not the noble truths we seek for; and certainly one of the first steps either to obtain or diffuse knowledge is careful phraseology.

That this is so, we must know from our literary researches, until we finally come to those of the sacred writings of East and West.

We may not concede in the literal and literary sense that such writings are verbally inspired by 'God'; but we do feel that the most scholarly critics are those who are most careful in suggesting change of words.

All students know the charm of being in the company of a classical writer—feeling in an exalted atmosphere. This is not only due to the thought, but also to the exactitude of language—words suiting thought with an accuracy that gives double point to the conception. Why, then, seek to lower such charm? Why, because the reader be unqualified, should the writer be charged with delinquency?

Let the complainant in the 'Harbinger' take heart; struggle with dictionaries if necessary, or seek less advanced writers, or have a little patience and industry; but even in the small channels of popular psychology and Spiritualism, he should at least try to understand what the writers wish him to learn, or leave the subject alone.

Moreover, clairvoyants tell us that beyond a certain point, language, as we know it, cannot be found by which to convey the vision. Symbolism has then to be resorted to as the only means; and there even it can fail. The more intellectually able the seer, the better he is able to expound, until the region is reached beyond language, because the ultimate of language is also reached. We have reason, therefore, to respect the synthetic and studious wording of the true seers, because we know its very exaltation was a proof of its being near the terminus of the mere human mind and approaching its entry into celestial regions.

It is quite true that short and simple words are often found in the most important writing, and long words by no means invariably spell wisdom. It is the *suitability* to the end that is the necessity. And psychic phenomena, as with chemical phenomena, theology, biology, psychics, eastern philosophy, and all the arts, must each have somewhat of a distinctive phraseology, well understood by their initiates if not entirely by our favourite analogy nowadays, the man in the street.

A man who has never been at a materialising séance will be puzzled at the expressions used by one who has, and he may say, 'Oh, put it plainly and then I can understand,' but he really cannot. But when he has been at such a séance he will find that more or less such expressions were naturally resultant from the circumstances.

ISABEL DE STEIGER, F.T.S., &c.

Liverpool.

The S.P.R., Mrs. Piper, and Mrs. d'Esperance.

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of January 7th there is an article by Mr. Charles Dawbarn on the subject of Mr. Myers' attempts to discover evidence of 'the guidance of a scientific spirit' through the mediumship of Mrs. d'Esperance.

Mr. Dawbarn seems to think that Mr. Myers and the Society for Psychical Research are not patient enough in their inquiry and investigation into the possibility of obtaining scientific revelations through mediums. Although an old Spiritualist, I think that this investigation is the most absurd thing that the Society for Psychical Research or Mr. Myers has ever done, and that it should be discontinued at once if the society is to be saved from incurring the ridicule of all thoughtful persons.

No intelligent Spiritualist has been, or could be, satisfied with the evidence that has convinced Dr. Hodgson, or that in the case of Mrs. d'Esperance would convince Mr. Myers. Does Mr. Myers really think that if every scientific question of his or the 'Senior Wrangler' had been answered

correctly, it would have showed conclusively the presence of a 'controlling spirit' at all, far less one of profound scientific knowledge?

Have Mr. Myers, Dr. Hodgson, and Mr. Dawbarn forgotten the undoubted proofs of telepathy as a factor to be reckoned with in all trance mediumship; and that the only safeguard against self-deception is that the questioner shall know nothing of the subject concerning which he is questioning the medium, or control, whether his queries refer to personal details or scientific knowledge? Then, and only then, is mind-reading impossible.

At the same time, is the inquiry for scientific revelation not an absurd one in itself, apart from the question of the ineptitude of the method of investigation? Trance speaking is not a new thing, it can be traced back for some hundreds of years; yet, up till now, nothing scientific, moral, or religious in the nature of a revelation has been obtained thereby; and it is quite time to give over seeking for such. In all ages of the world, no doubt, simple people have endeavoured by this and other occult means to obtain knowledge, and the result has always been absolute failure. I have never found an educated Spiritualist who believed in the possibility of such a thing; although I am well aware that there are many who call themselves Spiritualists who regard this as the thing of most supreme importance in Spiritualism.

If Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Myers really wish to investigate satisfactorily, let them get a trance test medium, and, when the sitting begins, *on each occasion* let the investigator state that only spirits who are not known to history; who are not known directly or indirectly to any of the persons present; whose earth life has not been contemporaneous with that of any member of the circle, are to be allowed to communicate; then that the alleged spirit *be asked to supply the means of verification*. The facts inquired about should be such simple details as—His age at death? If married? Name of wife before marriage? Place of birth? Place where body was laid? Number of family? How many alive? When he passed away? and so on. An investigation of this kind satisfied me and made me a confirmed Spiritualist. Had I investigated as Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Myers are doing, I should still be an unbeliever.

VIR.

Immortality.

SIR,—As long ago as November 6th, 1897, there appeared in 'LIGHT,' under the head of 'Spirit Teachings of Stainton Moses,' No. LXXII., the following: 'Below that are the miserable, abandoned spirits who sink down deeper and deeper, who become unable to rise, and who gradually lose their personality; even as the purified when they near the presence of the Supreme. . . . In the end they die the final death, they never reach your earth again.'

Although I have seen in 'LIGHT' allusion to the above paragraph, I have not seen any attempt there to explain it categorically.

Our great teacher, Mr. Stainton Moses, in this short paragraph, seems to imply not only the doctrine of conditional immortality, but that of reincarnation also. So, while leaving to others the task of explaining the latter, and while feeling strongly that it is presumptuous for me to do so, I nevertheless would undertake a brief consideration of the former assumption.

It is apparently to the soul and body only of man that conditional immortality applies, *not to his spirit*. Cruden, for instance, in his well-known 'Concordance' (a reference so largely consulted), under the heading of the word 'Soul,' assumes there that a man's *personality* consists in his soul and body, but not in his spirit, for he says: 'Soul is taken for *the whole person*, both soul and body.' He alleges, truly, we believe, that beasts have souls. Cruden also alleges that animals possess a spirit, which he connects with the breath. But he also assumes that man alone has the immortal spirit, which he graphically describes as: 'That spiritual, reasonable, and *immortal* condition which is the origin of our thoughts, of our desires, of our reasoning, which distinguishes us from the brute creation, and which bears some resemblance to its Divine Maker.'

And thus, on the consideration of our soul and body, the

body ethereal and the body carnal being alone our personality, not our spirit, it seems but reasonable that the two former can not only be lost, according to the words of Jesus, but extirpated. After which it seems quite logical to premise that *our immortal spirit* may receive a new personality, which may evolve into infant humanity. And we who believe in the natural law of evolution or progression, may well admit the reasonableness of words from 'The Torch' of December, 1898: 'That, although every sin brings its punishment, yet all men are saved, because all men are spirits, and therefore immortal.' Although we may quite agree also with a quotation from 'LIGHT' of August 28th, 1897: 'That destruction, not only of one unit, but of countless units, is perpetually going on; but the great constructing universal power is equally going on.' I do not remember Mr. Stainton Moses ever denying reincarnation here. But he often alleged that he hoped he never should come back here. And no wonder—such a powerful physical medium as he was, with all its sufferings, mental and bodily! I think probably he will not return. He has done his work here already, and well, too.

WM. R. TOMLINSON, M.A.

Books to Read.

SIR,—In Mr. Stainton Moses' book on 'Spirit Identity,' he says that he is impressed with a belief 'that one cause of failure in some inquirers is that they have not prepared themselves, by gathering antecedent knowledge and clearing away old fallacies, to receive new truth. The ground has not been ploughed up, harrowed, and cleansed of weeds, so that new seeds may have a chance to grow.'

One who five years ago started from complete ignorance of psychic matters to find a way through perplexity and apparent confusion to the discovery of some standing ground where the order which prevails beneath all phenomena would reveal itself in this subject also, may possibly be of some use to those of your readers who are in the position in which I was five years ago, by giving a list of the books which have been of inestimable value to myself. If you think this would be of service to others, will you insert this letter in 'LIGHT'?

I will give the books approximately in the order in which I read them:—

A series of articles in the past Reports of the Society for Psychical Research, 'On the Subliminal Consciousness,' by F. W. H. Myers.

Two articles on the Experiences of Mr. Stainton Moses, by F. W. H. Myers, in one of the same Reports.

'Spirit Teachings,' by W. Stainton Moses.

'Phantasms of the Living,' by Messrs. Myers, Gurney, and Podmore.

* 'Spirit Identity,' by 'M.A. (Oxon)' (W. Stainton Moses).

'The Unseen Universe,' by Messrs. Stewart and Balfour.

* 'An Investigation of Spiritualism,' by Professor Crookes.

* 'From Matter to Spirit,' by Mrs. DeMorgan.

'Psychism,' by Dr. Haddock.

* 'Automatic or Spirit Writing,' by Sarah Underwood.

'Do the Dead Return?' by a Clergyman of the Church of England.

'Footfalls on the Boundary of another World,' by Dale Owen.

An article on 'The Drift of Psychic Research,' by F. W. H. Myers (appeared in the 'National Review').

'The Burton Messages,' by Miss X. (appeared in 'Borderland.')

* 'Report of Mrs. Piper's Trances,' by Dr. Hodgson (published 1898).

* 'Do we Survive Death?' by F. W. H. Myers (appeared in the October number of the 'National Review,' 1898).

* 'Homes and Work,' by Miss Theobald.

I have marked by an asterisk those that I consider *most* valuable, but the whole list is a selection of the more important works only; others of less value but of great interest might be added. Those numbers of 'LIGHT' which contain portions of 'Spirit Teachings' not published in the above named volume, are especially helpful and instructive to those whose minds have been prepared by previous study to estimate them rightly.

As the study is a very difficult one, and fraught with much perplexity, I should like to bear my testimony to the fact that personally I have been amply repaid for the trouble involved. To anyone who is willing to go thoroughly into the subject, with patience, openness of mind, and with constant endeavour to discover the laws which underlie all phenomena, the study is one which must be very illuminating, and very destructive of those idols of the mind which are stumbling blocks to progress; it leads one into new heavens and a new earth, or rather opens one's eyes to see that which is always about us with a transformed vision. Those who have neither the time nor the patience to take up the matter thoroughly, and who are attracted to it chiefly because it feeds curiosity and excites wonder, would probably do better if they left it alone. 'A little learning is a dangerous thing,' and on this subject most especially is it misleading.

I should like to add to my list the title of one book of a different character. I wish to do so because it impressed me when I read it, not only as the work of one who had been trained by an intimate knowledge of psychic facts, but it suggested to my mind that the writer might himself have received the ideas in the book by impressional mediumship. Whether this is so or not I cannot say, but I have since learned by the obituary notice in 'LIGHT' that Mr. Farquhar was a Spiritualist. I allude to his book on 'The Gospel of Divine Humanity' (published by Elliot Stock); it is not a book likely to be ever widely popular; it is, however, of great value, full of suggestive ideas which repay thoughtful study and consideration.

116, King Henry's-road, N.W.

H. A. D.

The Ascension of Jesus.

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Voysey's courteous letter in your issue of the 7th inst., in reply to your gentle criticism of his sermon on the Ascension, I see I have in my Bible a pencil note on Luke xxiv. 19, to the effect that this verse was quoted by Ignatius as follows: 'δαμόνιον' οὐκ ἔστι' ἀσώματον'—'A spirit is not bodiless.' The note was made some decades of years since, and whence taken I have no recollection; perhaps some of your readers more familiar with the Fathers than I am can verify the statement. It seems to me interesting in this connection.

Gale House,
Ambleside.

AUGUSTUS JOHNSTON.

SOCIETY WORK.

BRISTOL, 24, UPPER MAUDLIN-STREET.—On Sunday last we had a fine address from the control of Mr. Woodland; subject: 'Man's Relationship to God.' Other mediums are coming on now, which is very encouraging. 'LIGHT' always on sale.—W. WEBBER.

4, MERRINGTON-ROAD, ST. OSWALD'S-ROAD, WEST BROMPTON.—On Sunday evening last Miss Porter was again with us, and gave a fine inspirational address, followed by very successful clairvoyance. Mr. H. Austin Herbert sang very beautifully, 'Nazareth' and 'The Holy City.' Next Sunday evening, at 7 p.m., Mr. A. Peters.—W. S. S.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday last our president opened the meeting with a reading, after which Mr. J. A. White gave excellent clairvoyance, nearly all descriptions being immediately recognised. Next Sunday, Mrs. H. Boddington, of Battersea, will occupy our platform.—OSCAR HUDSON, Hon. Sec.

ISLINGTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL-UPPER-STREET, ISLINGTON.—On Sunday last Mr. Catto gave a reading bearing upon Egypt. Mr. Brenchley spoke on 'The History of Egypt of the Past Fifty Years, with the Life of the late General Gordon in the Soudan, and his Mission for Uplifting Humanity.' Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Brenchley, subject, 'Earth-bound Spirits.' Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle, for members only; medium, Mrs. Brenchley.—C. D. CATTO.

HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—On Sunday last, Mrs. Bessie Russell-Davies gave a most interesting lecture on 'How to Develop Mediums.' There was a large and intelligent audience in the evening, who listened with great interest to the well-delivered lecture. The questions which followed were answered very satisfactorily. Our worthy president, Mrs. Boddington, who occupied the chair, also spoke a few words. Next Sunday, at 3 p.m. Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. Bradley.—J. MURRELL.