

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !" — Goethe.

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

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

The Editor has left town for a short time, and he therefore asks his friends and correspondents to bear in mind that —while all communications intended to be printed will have due attention—he will be unable to reply to letters of a private or personal nature during the month of July.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have received a circular giving full particulars as to the next meeting of the International Congress of Psychology. The Congress will be held in Paris from August 20th to the 25th, next year. The invitation is signed by Th. Ribot, *President*; Ch. Richet, *Vice-President*; Dr. P. Janet, *Secretary*, and Mr. F. Alcan, *Treasurer*. The circular announces a splendid International Committee and Committee of Reception, and a very strong list of Presidents of sections, including the following subjects:—

1. Psychologie dans ses rapports avec l'anatomie et la physiologie; 2. Psychologie introspective dans ses rapports avec la philosophie; 3. Psychologie expérimentale et psychophysique; 4. Psychologie pathologique et psychiatrie; 5. Psychologie de l'hypnotisme, de la suggestion et questions connexes; 6. Psychologie sociale et criminelle; 7. Psychologie animale et comparée, anthropologie, ethnologie.

The languages permissible are German, English, French, and Italian. Ladies will be admitted on the same terms and with the same rights as gentlemen. Applications for information or tickets should be addressed to M. le Dr. P. Janet, 21, rue Barbet-de-Jouy, Paris.

The following paragraph strikes the right note:—

Professeurs de philosophie, physiologistes, médecins, jurisconsultes, naturalistes, étudiant, chacun de leur côté et avec des méthodes différentes, la pensée de l'homme; n'auraient-ils pas profit et plaisir à se connaître davantage les uns les autres? Ce Congrès pourra, comme les précédents, rendre un grand service aux études psychologiques, s'il permet à tous ceux qui, dans des pays divers et dans des situations différentes, s'intéressent aux mêmes recherches, de se rencontrer, de se connaître et de s'apprécier davantage.

'The South African Spiritualist' contains a thoughtful article on 'Fraud.' It advises the strictest carefulness, but refuses to give way to the often shallow cry of 'Fraud!' The matter is not as simple as outsiders imagine. How often do we hear the honest and intelligent medium say, in private circles: 'I really wonder whether I am doing it, after all!' or, 'I seem to know what is coming, and yet I know I'm not doing it!' The article before us contains the following practical remarks:—

In watching a medium for automatic writing, you will see him, pencil in hand, with paper before him, writing, to all appearances, just as an ordinary writer would do; he

simply sits and writes, and frequently knows what he is writing, and the words that are coming before they are written. Were it not that the written matter is altogether foreign to the writer's knowledge, what could appear more like fraud when the medium declares that he is impelled, and almost compelled, to write what appears on the paper? The matter, however, which is written is the only proof—yet proof enough—that the writer was inspired, and throws considerable light on inspiration generally.

I remember sitting with a medium some years ago who obtained all his communications from the spirit world by means of a moving table, the result of putting his hands on it. The man deliberately pushed the table up and down, and caused it to reply to questions and spell out messages. I taxed him with using his own muscular force to the moving operation, and to my surprise he freely admitted it, but he said that although his hands did the work some other power controlled his hands. I had a striking proof of this before the sitting closed, for, after answering many questions, and giving information which did not strike me as being outside the medium's own knowledge, the spirit supposed to be communicating intimated that he must leave us as he wanted to welcome a relative of mine to the spirit world, for he was passing away. The name and address and circumstances were spelt out with precision, and repeated at request. The relative alluded to lived more than forty miles away, a young man; he had been ill some months before, but had recovered. The medium had never heard that I had such a relative, nor were any of the attendant circumstances within his knowledge or mine. Yet, notwithstanding the appearance of fraudulently moving the table himself, I heard some days afterwards that at that very hour my cousin Walter *did* pass away to the life beyond, and the communication was true in all the minute details.

'The New York Herald' gives a long account of Professor Hyslop's experiments and conclusions. Professor Hyslop is Professor of Logic and Mental Science in Columbia University, and is a recent convert to the truth of spirit-communion. We give a few paragraphs from the 'Herald's' report:—

Professor Hyslop recently said that as a scientific man he had long ago accepted the materialistic view, but for fifteen years had laboured tirelessly in the line of psychical research. He has established many important facts to his own satisfaction, but is unwilling to state his conclusions in detail until he has finished his report, which he hopes to make scientifically convincing.

While unwilling to anticipate the scientific features of his report, Professor Hyslop is willing to stand by the general statement that he has found scientific proof of the immortality of the soul or, at least, its continued life after the death of the body.

He does not like to say that he is convinced he has held communication with his dead father, because he modestly concludes that his own belief is not convincing to the public, but he says that the outcome of the work of the Society for Psychical Research will be such a wave of excitement as the world has never seen before.

The bearing of one statement upon another has been compared, with the result that Professor Hyslop is compelled to choose one of two decisions—that Mrs. Piper has an infinite mind, or that she is controlled by the minds of the dead.

Professor Hyslop says that while he has investigated hundreds of other cases he finds that Mrs. Piper offers the best opportunity for communication with the dead, for the purpose of scientific research, because the society has been able to control her demonstrations for the last fifteen years. They have had a contract with her, so that they have been able to get a great mass of evidence.

Professor Hyslop finds that there is also a progression made from one sitting to another; in other words, things that are left in confusion at one sitting are cleared up at the next. The severest test, and the one which eliminates the hypothesis of telepathy, is the receiving of statements which

those present cannot verify, but which are afterward verified by information received from distant States.

He thinks scientific men interested in this subject should be united in a society, with strength or funds enough to enable them to push forward their investigations in a thoroughly scientific manner. This would relieve in some measure the danger the public would be likely to experience from the exposition of the startling facts now promised. While not fearing publicity, the professor maintained that he was not yet through with his experiments. He thought it might be a year before he could complete a report which he would be satisfied could not be broken down.

We must confess to the having a kindly interest in all that comes from Mr. F. J. Gould. We often wish he could see as we see, and let his warm heart and eager spirit overleap the barriers of sense and time, but we are willing to take him as he is. He is a practised teacher of the young, and has suffered for his conscientious refusal to give what is called 'religious instruction' in public schools; but he loves the work, and is helping it bravely in other spheres and with his pen. His ethical and social teachings are superb, as his latest work shows. 'The Children's Book of Moral Lessons' (London: Watts and Co.), with its thirty-eight Lessons, is a mine of wealth for parents and teachers. The opening paragraphs, unfolding 'A Plan of Moral Instruction,' are beautifully thought out, and are as sane and strong as they are simple. It is called a book for children, but not many men and women know and feel all there is in this book.

'The Banner of Light' says:—

The Sunday paper is not wanted in England. The 'Daily Mail' tried the experiment, and the public immediately frowned upon the enterprise. The proprietor bowed to public opinion, and withdrew his paper. The Sunday paper has become a fixture in America, and no progressive citizen would think of attacking it. It will take the English people some time yet to realise that they really need a Sunday paper.

Now, that is precisely the paragraph we do not understand. Why should anyone *want* us to want a Sunday paper? What we want is a blessed one day in seven as different as possible from every other—a day of peace and joy and pure refreshment; and no one needs that so much as the newspaper producer and the eager newspaper reader.

No; we do not want a Sunday newspaper, and we do not want anyone to want one. We go all the other way in these noisy, hurrying days.

We observe with pleasure that 'The Humanitarian League' has forwarded a resolution to the Home Secretary, protesting 'most earnestly against the practice of handcuffing together on a chain "remand prisoners," women as well as men, and taking them into crowded public places, such as railway stations, on their way to trial. To have their disgrace thus forcibly brought under the notice of the public would be bad enough in the case of convicted prisoners, but that this should be done with unconvicted prisoners—whose guilt is yet to be proved, whose innocence may yet be established—must be revolting to the feelings of all humane people.'

M. Camille Flammarion has come to the conclusion that certain 'revelations' contained in his book 'Genèse' are incorrect; and therefore, says 'The Pall Mall Gazette,' he has given up Spiritualism. M. Flammarion now holds that the 'revelations' proceed from or are in close accord with the ideas, convictions and impressions of those who surround the medium. And 'The Pall Mall Gazette' says that this is an 'explanation of Spiritualism.' Then the 'Gazette' proceeds to make a series of crude remarks which once more show how little these smart scribes know about this subject.

We have declared for years that the 'revelations' do not necessarily come from the persons whose names are given, and yet we are fast Spiritualists. The 'Gazette's' explanation is as old as the hills, but it only concerns Spiritualism at one of a hundred points.

'The Pall Mall Gazette' may be very sure that M. Flammarion is not so inexperienced as to give up Spiritualism because he has found that he made a mistake in one matter. It might as well say that a banker would give up business if he took a bad sixpence, or found an error in an entry.

We have received from the publisher in America a few copies of Dr. M. J. Savage's brilliant sermon on 'The Significance of Spiritualism.' It can be procured at the office of 'LIGHT.' Price 3d.; or by post to any address, 3½d.

DR. ERMACORA.

Psychic science in Italy has suffered a great loss in the death last year of Dr. G. B. Ermacora, Editor of the 'Rivista di Studi Psichici.' A memorial sketch of this gifted man has been published by his family, to which is appended the obituary notices of the Italian press and numerous letters of condolence and appreciation received from distinguished men all over the world, testifying to the high estimation in which his labours in this field of science were held. At the age of thirteen he wrote an essay in French for a competition offered by the Scientific Institute of Harlem regarding the mode of determining the thermic, hygrometric and electric state of the upper strata of the atmosphere; and a letter from this academy, highly praising the work, expressed the regret that it could not be accepted because signed, whereas it should have been enclosed in a sealed envelope with a motto. In 1881 he presented to the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Padua a thesis, 'On a Mode of Interpreting the Electro-Static Phenomena,' a work which he published in 1882 in enlarged form, and which with 'unconscious intuition,' as he expressed it, reproduced the ideas of Maxwell. In 1891 followed 'Contributions to the Study of the Field of Faraday,' in which he propounds a theory of the nature of gravitation; and in 1892 'Notes on a Fundamental Point of Electro-dynamics and Induction'; in which, with the help of experiments, he claims to prove the existence of a fourth electric field that he calls magnetostatic. He also turned his attention to astronomy, photography, and even to the construction of a musical instrument based on the zither. But the most important work of his busy life was in the field of psychic science, where he adopted the rigorous experimental methods of the Society for Psychical Research. With the object of diffusing a knowledge of this subject and provoking discussion, he founded the 'Rivista,' which he edited in conjunction with Dr. G. Finzi, of Milan. At the time of his death a series of articles on telepathy was appearing. These have now been collected and published separately, and although incomplete, contain so much that is valuable in carefully observed and recorded facts (some already known to the Society for Psychical Research) and in the wise criticisms with which they are interspersed, that the monograph is the most important that exists in Italian on this subject. It is published at two francs, and the author's family intend the proceeds to go towards founding a Society for Psychical Research in Italy. We hope it may soon come into existence to carry on the work to which Dr. Ermacora devoted so much of his time and talents.

C. J. V.

'MODERN ASTROLOGY,' edited by Alan Leo, in the July issue states that July 1st, 13th, 18th, and 27th are favourable days for 'psychic, weird, spiritualistic, and mediumistic affairs,' and 'those who are investigating phenomena and hidden things may hope to succeed,' but trance mediums and those who are investigating 'Spiritualism or things occult' had best beware on July 6th, 16th, 22nd and 29th, as those days are under adverse influences. It would be interesting to know if the experiences of any of our readers confirm these forecasts, or otherwise.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—'LIGHT' is kept on sale by W. H. Robinson, 4, Nelson-street, and Book Market.

TRANCE AND INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKING.

WHAT THE SPEAKERS THEMSELVES SAY.

BY MR. J. J. MORSE.

I.

In responding to the courteous invitation of the Editor of 'LIGHT' to contribute some account of my experiences and opinions of and upon the above topics, I do so simply in the hope that my remarks may prove of interest to students and inquirers. I cannot hope to state anything new, nor have I any startling revelations to make of weird or wonderful experiences. A brief chronicle in sober phrase is all that I can promise my readers.

Some twenty-five years ago—to be exact, in the summer of 1874—I had the honour of reading a paper upon an identical subject, before a Conference of the old British National Association of Spiritualists, held in Lawson's Assembly Rooms, Gower-street, London, and, on turning to the printed report of that paper, I find much of it stands for my opinions, even now. Added years have confirmed many points, and beyond methods of expression I do not see much to correct. As a new generation has come into our ranks since the time referred to, it may be best to make the present article something more than a *réchauffé* of the 'paper' mentioned above.

The title refers to two distinct phases of mediumship, involving two distinct methods of operation, and sets of conditions, each depending on the action of spirits, and each affording distinct classes of results. But, as I consider it just as natural for a spirit to control a person, as for a mesmerist or hypnotist to do the same thing, I see nothing 'supernatural' or sacred in the phenomenon; nor, *inter alia*, do I see that a spirit is entitled to any more respect than an embodied person is; that is to say, the respect I accord to men, in the form or out of it, is governed by my experience of their conduct, and their intelligence. I know many mortals for whom I have the utmost esteem and affection, as I also know many spirits for whom I entertain similar feelings, while I have met many mortals and spirits for whom I feel neither attraction nor respect. Unctuous hypocrites and high-flown pretenders are encountered among mortals and spirits alike; experience alone enables us to discriminate.

However, 'Trance' mediumship differs in essential points, it seems to me, from the 'Inspirational' variety, and having experienced each, I may be permitted a somewhat positive statement regarding them. The 'trance' medium usually exhibits one of two phases, but in some cases both are manifested in the same person. The first phase I should describe as 'automatic' control, the second I should call the psychological control, or control by 'suggestion.' In the first case the entire body—muscles, nerves, and brain—is entirely dominated by the operating intelligence, and the medium is physically insensitive, and mentally unconscious. The response to the will of the controlling spirit is virtually complete; facts, arbitrary details, and unquestionable personations of unknown individuals, are made manifest. It is 'test' mediumship in its most useful form; rare, it is true, but of great value as affording the evidences of the actual identity of the spirit operators. In appearance it seems as if the spirit was incarnated temporarily in the body of the medium, but my experience is that this is not at all true in any case; all that is involved is, that the spirit has a practically complete hold of the entire bodily machinery of the instrument, or 'sensitive.' In the second case the subject, or 'medium,' is equally unconscious, but the control of the organism is not nearly so absolute. The work is done by 'suggestion' made to the subjective mind of the medium, and that 'work' may be either in the nature of 'test' communications, descriptions of appearances, or symbolic representations, which, while conveying ideas, do not give specific facts or exact data. In the first case, facts unknown to the medium, and frequently unknown to the sitter, are given; in the second case facts are also given, accompanied by observations, but not in such a way as would lead to the supposition that they exceed the highest abilities of the subject. By this I mean that, while the facts underlying the communication transcend the knowledge of the medium,

the description of them would not exceed the highest effort of the medium if culture had lifted his capacity beyond the level at which it stood in normal life. My strong opinion is that only in the case of the 'automatic' control do we obtain the *ipsissima verba* of the controlling spirit; while, also, my experience has been that in such cases the possibilities of any sustained address or discourse are extremely small.

My earliest experiences of mediumship were of the 'automatic' kind, and then definite facts, names, and data entirely beyond my knowledge, were given; but the strain on body and mind was very great, too great for comfort or health. The 'automatic' phase was subsequently replaced by the 'suggestive,' and at times this method is still employed by the spirit operators. I then personated, described scenes, persons, places, and gave names,—in most cases Christian names, not surnames—frequently ages, and could pick out from photographs the 'spirits' I had described, for the pictures I had seen 'in the sleep' remained imprinted on my waking state for some hours after returning to consciousness. Wisely, or unwisely, which is a matter of opinion, I desired to become a speaker, for I dimly perceived that 'test' mediumship did not appear to promise any enlargement of my mental capacity, and in due course my mediumship changed its character, and the coveted phase was developed. I little dreamed of the thirty years of arduous work and hardship to which it would lead! Could I have foreseen the results I might have declined to proceed, but I do not now regret having endured the strain and toil.

For many years I described myself as an 'Inspirational' Trance Medium, and I still consider it a fairly correct definition of my mediumship. It is really akin to the second phase described above. I am unconscious, I am controlled, but not absolutely insensitive, for on several occasions I have suffered great inconvenience from being touched while in the sleep; being made seriously ill, at Kilburn on one occasion, and at Edinburgh on another; while I am always more or less sensitive to surroundings, my chairmen being a particular anxiety to me at all times, on account of their personal auras. The facts in my case are briefly these: I require a period of rest before undertaking my duties; this is usually obtained by a sound sleep in the afternoon of the day I am to work. I have no 'fad' as to dieting, merely taking care to avoid heavy meals and stimulants, prior to the meeting I attend. On sitting for control I strive to become as passive as possible, not always an easy task in a crowded hall. Presently a sensation as of a mild electric current passing down the outer side of my arms is experienced, causing a gentle twitching of the muscles; the 'current' next spreads over my neck, and ascends to the brain; the action of my lungs becomes somewhat spasmodic, and a feeling of suffocation occurs; when this ceases, a sensation of pleasant stupor supervenes, which deepens into unconsciousness, and I experience the sensation of falling backwards; then all is over, and I am lost to external surroundings.

Sometimes, though rarely, I retain a consciousness on awaking, of having visited places and met people, but this is never so vivid as to be entirely clear. If the 'control' has been successful I experience a strong mental and nervous exhilaration for some hours after waking. This is followed by a period of reaction, more or less prolonged; quite prolonged if the 'conditions' have not been harmonious; but I can say, with the utmost satisfaction, that, though my labours have been long and hard, my health has not been injured, but rather improved.

There now remains the question of how much of the spirit and how much of the medium are included in the 'trance' addresses. To answer this at all satisfactorily, I must make a statement that I trust will be received with sympathetic consideration. It is this: Circumstances over which I had no direct control, deprived me of anything but the merest elements of education in my youth. Perhaps it was a blessing, or it may be counted otherwise; yet, young and raw as I was when my work commenced, it was the universal verdict in this country that the addresses given through, or by, me, were characterised by ability, eloquence, logic, and general grasp of philosophic thought far beyond my own capabilities. The late Serjeant Cox, as well as our honoured friend Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, bore striking testimony to this fact. Hence, then, the subject matter, at least, was quite beyond me, as was the method

of the addresses. But the actual wording—was that an exact reproduction of the words of the control? I think not, my own impression being that the control induced in me a state of exaltation, stimulating my subjective faculties to their utmost, and inspiring me on that plane of thought, so that the sense, import, and substance of his ideas were uttered by me, as is the case with a mesmeric subject. For the time being, I was infused with the thought and personality of the spirit, and am so yet when under control, but though the relation is so intimate he is not I, nor am I he. To me the personality of my control is beyond question, there is no doubt in my mind as to the separateness of our personalities. One curious point is that so far as I am concerned, I have never desired that this unconscious method should give place to the conscious or 'inspirational' one.

With the passing of the years the result of the work has, of course, been the overcoming of the early educational deficiencies referred to. The subjective work has influenced for good the objective life. This, I take it, is my compensation.

As concerns 'Inspirational' mediumship, where the subject is quite conscious, I can say but little, so far as actual experience is concerned. At times, in public meetings, a wave of 'inspiration' passes over me, there is a sudden clearness of thought, and an increase of capacity for expressing ideas, and I am conscious of the presence and the influence of the spirits. But never do the results approach those of actual control. I am of opinion that in 'inspirational' mediumship there is a more marked infusion of the medium in the utterances, indeed, I cannot see how it could well be otherwise. But not being such a medium, I must leave it to those who are to state their own view of this aspect of the question.

Finally, let me give it as my strong opinion, based on my own experiences, that health, and good health at that, is the best foundation for mediumship of the kind under consideration. The submission of the will to another need not imply any weakening of mental power, or deterioration of character. A level head, ordinary common-sense, reasonable control, and a determination neither to be led away by vanity on the one hand, nor by undisciplined emotion on the other, will prove that neither mediumship, nor intercourse with spirits, need detract from our own powers, or make us the slavish servants of those who come to help and teach us, even though they come from that world about which there has ever been so much mystery, and consequent misunderstanding, in the past, but about which we are at last, through mediumship, slowly and surely learning something definite.

The next communication in this series will be contributed by Mr. Walter Howell.

CHILDREN IN SPIRIT LIFE.

Speaking at the funeral of two little boys who had been drowned in the Grand Junction Canal, at Rickmansworth, the Rev. W. Colin Bryan is reported in the 'Watford Observer' to have said:—

'He wanted his hearers, especially the young people, to understand that there were in the coffins only the bodies of the lads, their spirits had passed on, they believed, into the presence of God . . . There was one thought which was always very comforting to him when young lives were taken. They should not like on earth, in the earthly homes, to have only grown-up men and women there, and one of the great charms of home life was that there were people of all ages. And was it not in a sense natural that He should take away children so that when they went home they should not find the heavenly mansion inhabited only by people who had attained to years of maturity.'

Does the Rev. Bryan wish us to believe that God 'takes away the children' from their earthly homes, on purpose to add charms to the homes hereafter? In that case he presents us with a very questionable idea of the All-Father. Would it not be better to admit that God does not intervene in such a manner as Rev. Bryan suggests, but that, since children do pass into the spirit world, their presence there is natural, and they add to the charms of home life in the beyond?

MR. A. PETERS will be out of town until after the 15th inst.

SOME RECENT EXPERIENCES.

BY 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

IV.

In the end of May last, I replied to an advertisement of a country house in a part of Westmoreland with which I was not particularly well acquainted. The reply as to the accommodation and surroundings seemed most satisfactory, but my trouble was, that business engagements prevented me personally visiting the place and of being satisfied of its suitability for an autumn holiday; while other members of the family were also from various causes unable to make a journey of 200 miles and back to solve the difficulty. It suddenly occurred to me that as the control of the lady medium so often before referred to by me was, when in earth life, a native of Westmoreland, and for a time practised as a doctor in a populous centre in the county, I might ask him to favour me with his opinion on the subject from every point of view, including the sanitary one, which was the most vital. I accordingly addressed a communication to this ex-doctor, craving his views in the matter, and handed it to the lady medium before referred to. The next time she called, which was a couple of days thereafter, she informed me that the doctor 'would write me.'

On the following day she brought me a letter extending to two pages of note paper in the usual caligraphy so well known to me, in which the 'spirit doctor' informed me that the house advertised was in every way suitable internally; but situated in a far too bleak and cold portion of the Lake District; that there was no recreation for 'my five girls' and that the getting of provisions by a carrier's cart would, as he said, be 'a perfect nuisance.' He also said the roads were lonely and infested sometimes with tramps who were dangerous to unprotected persons; as three ladies had been molested and alarmed there last year. This settled the matter, especially as, pending the receipt of the communication, I had made some other inquiries which had led me to doubt the suitability of the spot as being too hilly and exposed for my family.

Within two days after the first communication from the spirit doctor was received, he again controlled the medium, and automatically wrote me a message extending to ten pages of note paper, regarding our family affairs and the state of the health of one of the household, to whom he recommended 'Aloin Tablets' and the use of hot water before meals. I had never heard of this medicine before; but it was readily obtained at a large drug store, and was found most efficacious. I had not asked advice from the doctor, not being cognisant of the necessity; but found on inquiry that he was right in his statement of the health of this particular member of the family.

Among other topics in the spirit doctor's long letter he dealt at length on the beauties of Windermere and the district, including Kendal, with which last place I used to be very familiar, and mentioned one particular eminence or 'point of vantage' near the latter place called 'Benson's Knott,' from which a very fine view could be obtained. This was to me very striking, as in August, 1869, I had ascended this eminence accompanied by a Nonconformist clergyman and a Kendal merchant; and until the name of the place was again written I had quite forgotten the incident or the place.

The spirit doctor's message also referred to the recent visit of S. T. Coleridge to the medium and as to the views his (the spirit doctor's) father used to express regarding the poet's sermons, or 'monologues,' as they were often called. In short, the message dealt with the local colouring of the Lake District, and also with the events of Coleridge's time in a manner clearly denoting that the writer was full of the traditions and events of the county in which he was born, and where his mortal remains were laid to rest; and I therefore greatly prize the message because of its coherence, wise counsel, and local information regarding one of the most beautiful of our English holiday resorts.

This further experience has been chronicled for the simple purpose of showing to doubters how real a thing spirit communication has become to us; and how little weight one can attach to all the theories and speculations of psychical

researchers, 'hoverers' of the Miss Freer type, unreasoning and bitter sceptics like Mr. Podmore, or clever conjurers like Mr. Maskelyne. Spirit intercourse is *real* to those who find it. Many never get it—probably because they neither know nor understand 'conditions,' or, as often happens, it fails to come, because of other reasons unknown or undiscovered on this side. To me at least, and many other dear friends who have quietly and reverently pursued the sacred quest in the home circle, Spiritualism is a real and abiding thing, a consolation, and an undoubted revelation from the beyond.

(Conclusion.)

A DRAWING MEDIUM IN HUNGARY.

The following narrative, taken from the 'Rejtelmas Vilag,' has been translated into German, and published in both 'Psyche' and the 'Uebersinnliche Welt' for June :—

Matthias Wallent is a musician at the Royal Opera at Budapest, and likewise a student of mathematics and astronomy. He has been interested in Spiritism since last year, and having studied the subject theoretically, thought he would experiment practically, and at the very first séance obtained results. After some days he and his wife heard raps on a large and heavy table, and in a short time the furniture began to move. Both their children, a little girl of twelve, named Agatha, and a boy named Edgar, were moved while sitting in their chairs from the table to the window ; but as the children were frightened at this, Wallent asked his wife to try for automatic writing. The first séance for this took place on March 9th, when the pencil moved rapidly and drew cloudy forms and arabesques. The next day the progress was amazing, and first a moon-light landscape and then a flower were drawn. The drawings increased in size, and while Frau Wallent at first only completed one a day, now from three to five are drawn under any circumstances. Sunshine, open windows, noise, talking, and even smoking make no difference. She even talks while drawing, is always wide awake, and leaves off if she has anything special to do. The pencil draws quickly and steadily. Sometimes, if the picture is too large, the medium has to stand up and stretch across the table. The drawings are executed most artistically and are of great beauty, no false stroke nor erasure being required. Frau Wallent can draw from five to six hours at a time without being in the least fatigued or exhausted ; she is healthy and blooming, only rather short-sighted. The finest drawings are executed with a soft unpointed pencil, and these are so peculiar and wonderfully executed as to give the idea of being supernormal. Between March 9th and April 19th, that is in forty-two days, she completed eighty drawings, all perfectly unlike one another. Extraordinary geological formations, and plants as though from another sphere, illustrate these pictures, which represent landscapes, rocks, exotic flowers and birds. The execution becomes more complicated and the celerity with which they are done greater and greater.

The medium is said to be controlled by a spirit who calls himself 'Ralph' but has hitherto declined to give any further information about himself. He seems to have difficulty in writing, and more often answers questions by throwing things down.

Wallent and his wife have often asked him whether this strain upon the medium would not injure her, but he always replies, 'No, not at all ! I watch over and protect thee.' To their questions he answers, 'Only have patience, everything in its time ; I will explain everything ; you will dictate and your husband will write. I will make known the other world to you after a time ; now all you have to do is to draw ; you will need an enormous quantity of paper before you have finished, and then the explanation will be given.' When a picture is finished, Ralph signs his name underneath it. Frau Wallent has no idea beforehand what she is going to draw ; she is unconscious of any strange influence or power, and yet it is quite evident that she works like a machine. Often it happens that the paper is not large enough, and she asks how much will be required, when 'Ralph' immediately tells her ; sometimes as many as from

two to eight sheets of paper are drawn upon before he signs his name.

Ralph writes that he is so expert in drawing that he knows no obstacle ; by day or night, wherever the young woman may be, he is ready to work. Wallent once photographed his wife in the hope of obtaining a transcendental photograph. Such experiments, it is well known, succeed but rarely, even with powerful mediums ; but in spite of his having but a poor little camera, quite unfit for such a purpose, there appeared on the second plate taken the features of a child's face. The plate is now in the possession of Herr Gabanyi, of the National Theatre.

That this constant exercise of medial power does not injure the medium's health is proved by the fact that she has healing power also. Little Agatha was cured of sore throat by her mother passing her hand over it three times, and her son was cured of toothache in the same way. It is but six weeks since Frau Wallent began to exercise her medial powers, so that they are still in the process of development, and no one can say what they may yet become.

This relation is founded upon facts. Baron von Mikos, the leader of the Hungarian Spiritists, and Herr Franz von Siraky, editor of the 'Rejtelmas Vilag,' the organ of Hungarian Spiritism, and writer of this article, visited Wallent on April 19th, and themselves witnessed the facts. The simple housewife, a woman now in her thirty-sixth year, who had previously shown not the smallest talent for drawing, executed in their presence, with wonderful rapidity, two elaborate pictures without hesitation or alteration ; the pictures were drawn with a pencil, and are highly artistic and finished.

M. T. (Tr.)

THE BANGS SISTERS.

Dr. J. M. Peebles, writing in the 'Progressive Thinker,' of June 17th, gives the following report of a séance with the Bangs Sisters in which he obtained 'direct writing,' which he says is similar to that which is given through Mrs. Everitt's mediumship. He says :—

'I had never seen these ladies, so upon my return from California to Chicago, accompanied by that solid, sound-headed writer and lecturer, Will C. Hodge, whom frauds fear and genuine mediums honour, I repaired to the Bangs Sisters' residence. After glancing at their magnificent spirit pictures painted without hands, something as are Mr. Duguid's, in Glasgow, Scotland, I stepped into the séance room, with one of the sisters. She handed me a pad, saying, "Write down your questions, put them in an envelope, and seal it." She stepped out of the room. I was now alone, save with the invisibles whose presences I distinctly felt. It was broad daylight, the sun shining into the room. I wrote my questions, carefully sealed the envelope, and tapping the bell, Miss Bangs came into the room. She handed me several slates, saying, "Put your sealed letter between two of them." I did so, and then put rubber bands around, then another slate atop of these, and a heavy rubber band around them all. While touching them with the tips of our fingers, the sun still shining brightly into the room, she said, "I see the letter L over your head—I see more now, I see the name Leonard"—that was the name of a brother and the one to whom I had written in the sealed envelope. She saw other names and gave me clairvoyant testimonies and messages. They were beautiful. It was bright daylight all this time.

"They have answered your questions," she said. And now mark—this letter was sealed and never out of my hands. I put it between the two slates myself. I put the bands around the slates, and I never took my fingers from the slates until the writing was said to be done. The sun was still shining brightly into the room. I removed the rubber bands, opened the slates. Nothing was written on any of them. I opened the letter, and there were several well-written pages—beautiful messages from ascended friends. They not only answered my questions, but wrote of things that were not at all in my own mind.'

DETERMINE to master your temper, to cultivate at all times a spirit of cheerfulness and loving helpfulness, and frankly to confess your wrongs one to another when temper has been allowed to overcome good resolutions. This is only one step in that all-important self-culture which nourishes the spiritual side of life and denotes true nobility. Let us learn how to live in harmony with all that is pure, noble, and uplifting.—'The Coming Age.'

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EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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'THE MOTHERHOOD OF GOD.'

Let us be hospitable to all who bring out from the treasury 'things new and old,' the 'pearl of great price' or the questionable grain of gold. Especially let us be hospitable to the interesting thinkers who increasingly remind us of the ancient proverb that wisdom comes from the East.

It is now something like sixty years since the first of a band of liberal thinkers came from India with a remarkable blend of rational and spiritual religion, giving at once a hand to the ancient religions of India and to Christianity. Rammohun-Roy surprised and delighted multitudes in this country with teachings as tenderly spiritual as they were sweetly reasonable; and good judges saw in him, with deep delight, the meeting of the waters. After him came the Brahmo Somaj and the highly inspirational teachings of Keshub Chunder Sen and his disciples, followed later by Mr. Mozoomdar, Swami Vivekanandi and his friends, and Mr. Nagarkar, to say nothing of mysterious messengers from the Himalayas. If all these could be brought together, it would probably not be long before that which has befallen Christians in the west would befall 'the wise men from the east.' And yet, as with Christians, so with these teachers from India, there are certain characteristics which belong to them all. The western man is concrete and creedal; the eastern is abstract and mystical. The western man loves a shell; the eastern loves freedom. The western man is a practical philosopher when he is not a philosophical theologian; the eastern is essentially poetic and idealistic. The western man dearly loves a boundary and an orthodoxy; the eastern delights in boundless vistas or infinite haze. But the eastern has been rapidly learning how to be concrete, simple and practical, and may yet surprise his western brother as a guileless but subtle logician.

A rather good specimen of this blend of mysticism, logic and simplicity appears in that thoughtful Indian paper, 'Prabuddha Bharata,' in the form of a lecture by the Swami Abhedananda, on 'The Motherhood of God,' a subject which, apart from its working out, is sufficiently suggestive of unconventionality. The western man may expect eccentricity or even a touch of flippancy, but his mistake would be fundamental. The lecture is serious, logical, awakening, and one can hardly help feeling that only 'use and wont' prevent us from recognising that the phrase, 'The Fatherhood of God,' is really assailable.

In the word 'Nature' we find the clue which leads to the idea of 'The Motherhood' of God. Nature is the produced or, better still perhaps, the producer, the born or that which bears. We know nothing of the mode of being of God, and it is quite arguable,—we believe it has long

been held in India,—that Nature has been the Mother of God, in any sense in which God is conscious. The Universe, says Swami Abhedananda, is a cosmos, one harmonious whole; and behind every step of evolution there is some orderly hidden purpose and energy. It is that purpose, that energy, which gives birth to all forms of life and intelligence. 'Thou art the *Parā Prākriti*,' says an ancient Indian writing, 'the divine energy of the Supreme Being. Of Thee is born everything of the Universe; therefore Thou art the Mother of the Universe.' 'Wherever there is the expression of any force or power in the Universe, there is the manifestation of the eternal *Prākriti* or the Divine Mother,—Mother, because that energy contains the germ of the phenomenal Universe, projects it into space and preserves it when it is born.' Brahma himself is her child, and the Hindus have worshiped her time out of mind. In the Rig Veda, the most ancient of the Hindu Scriptures, the Divine Mother is made to say:—

I am the Queen of the universe, the giver of all wealth and fruits of works. I am intelligent and omniscient. Although I am one, by My powers I appear as manifold. I cause war for protecting men, I kill the enemy and bring peace on earth. I stretch out heaven and earth. I have produced the Father. As the wind blows by itself, so I produce all phenomena by My own will. I am independent and responsible to none. I am beyond the sky, beyond this earth, My glory is the phenomenal universe; such am I by My power.

'Thus' says Swami Abhedananda, 'we see the Divine Mother is all in all. We live and move and have our existence in that Divine Mother.'

The influence of this fundamental idea is felt, says the Swami, all over India:—

As woman represents motherhood on earth, therefore all women, whether married or unmarried, are representatives of that Almighty Divine Mother of the universe. It is for this reason women are so highly revered and honoured by the Hindus. India is the only country in the world where God the Supreme Being is worshiped in the form of a woman as the Divine Mother of the Universe. In India the wives do not adopt their husbands' name, they do not merge their individuality into their husbands' as they do in the West, but they keep their own name separate. If a wife's name be Rādhā, and her husband's name be Krishna, and if we say them together, we should say Rādhā-Krishna and never Krishna-Rādhā. The wife's name must be said first.

We have long needed a little more of this 'superstition' and sentiment in 'this happy English isle.'

But, after all, it will perhaps be time enough to cease talking of 'The Fatherhood of God' when we have truly mastered it and truly believed in it. At present we are, as a rule, not much beyond the old Israelitish notion of Jehovah: and here we find this enlightened Indian's teaching specially rational and wholesome. The Hebrew religion gave us the picture of a Jehovah, stern, arbitrary, and exacting as an eastern autocrat. Says the Swami:—

As a ruler punishes his disobedient subjects, so Jehovah punished those who disobeyed Him or His laws. The duty of a subject was almost the same as that of a slave to his master. As a slave serves his master through fear of punishment, so the Hebrews served Jehovah. The transition from such a relation to that of a father to a son was indeed a grand step. It was no longer an eternal relation to power and strength, but it became a kind of kinship, a kind of internal or blood-relation, which exists between the earthly father and his son.

But 'the same Jehovah when considered as the Father of the universe by Jesus and his followers, did not lose this extra-cosmic nature. Even to-day the majority of the Christians cannot go beyond this idea of an extra-cosmic God.' And that is where we are to-day, for the most part. What if the profound eastern idea of the Motherhood of God, allied to our already fruitful idea of the Immanent (instead of the transcendent) God, should turn out to be the practical emancipation of the western mind, delivering it from the anthropomorphic images that cluster about this 'extra-cosmic' God, and introducing it to a thought of God which will bring Him absolutely near?

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.

THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF W. STANTON MOSES.

(Continued from page 308.)

Our circle stands in a peculiar position, entirely distinct from any others in your country. And that must be borne in mind in estimating our advice, nay our commands; for if they be not obeyed, we shall fail of success. We do not seek for aught but what subserves our purpose. And we have done for you hitherto what entitles us, on common grounds of trust, to be heard on this point. You have received that which others have longed for in vain. We regret that we have not been able to admit to the privileges which you share, many who would value and respect them. You know our reasons, and they obtain still. It is not necessary that the power which we use should be supplemented by any other. Were it so we know best how to evoke what we desire.

It is to us a mournful source of sorrow that the Adversaries should so beset us; and that the most vulnerable point of attack should have been selected with any hope of success, such as we foresee. But we have a claim on all our friends to aid us in resisting to the uttermost. Assuredly we may hope that none of you will be ranged against us. Nor do we fear that when the veil is lifted it will be found so.

It will not now be long before we shall be for a time separated from our circle. It will be well for you to refrain from sitting with others. It would be well for you to bear in mind and act on such rules as these: Do not sit in circle soon after a heavy meal; or when mind or body is tired and worn out; or when the spiritual atmosphere is inharmonious. Do not before sitting enter into any exciting or distracting or argumentative conversation, nor into any that requires severe mental exertion. The mind should be passive and the body easy.

Do not meet in a room that retains in it a loaded atmosphere. If possible, exclude light, three or four hours before you meet together. Burn in the room a little aromatic gum, when you close it, but only a very little. If the atmosphere is loaded or unpleasant, let a current of air through the room. Sometimes the atmosphere has been charged by the communicating spirits and is too much loaded. If any of these conditions be frustrated, do not sit at all, or only under strong impression; and cease to sit as soon as inharmonious influence is felt.

In sitting seek not curiously for anything. It mars our plans frequently to have a strong, positive will present which is fixed on any point. Cultivate perfect passivity. Be ready always with questions on any points which are not clear to you. Try and aid the manifesting spirits by making easy for them that which is frequently harder than you know. Do not needlessly or heedlessly throw obstacles in the way. A set speech is frequently impossible when questions could readily be answered.

Maintain, as far as you can, a serious and attentive mind.

Inattention at once removes an element of power. The mind should be passive, yet interested and attentive.

Above all, be earnest and prayerful, ready to hear, and anxious for higher knowledge, soaring up, not bound to earth. If ye will follow these rules much trouble may be saved both to us and you.

Farewell. The Supreme bless us and you.

+ I. S. D.

(To be continued.)

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

'SEERS AND PROPHETS.'

The article on 'Seers and Prophets,' an epitome of which was given in last week's 'LIGHT,' excited a good deal of interest among the readers of 'L'Echo du Merveilleux.' The Editor being seemingly almost as ignorant (as is the present translator) concerning the author's personality and history, wrote to him inquiring who he was, and whether his theory was founded upon actually observed facts. The Abbé responded in a letter, which, with the omission of a few unimportant passages, is translated in full in this paper. His answer was not originally intended for publication, but permission to print it was subsequently given in the following short note.

H. A. D.

SIR,—If you think my letter will be useful I authorise you to make what use of it you like, although I shrink from publishing these private occurrences.

You can exert considerable influence by means of 'L'Echo du Merveilleux.' Warn your correspondents against illusions, and remind your readers from time to time that they should never surrender their reason and accept folly. Also warn the incautious, who imprudently throw themselves into all sorts of experiences, that occult practices are full of dangers. If a phenomenon presents itself spontaneously, it must be studied calmly, fearlessly, without excitement; to provoke phenomena is always dangerous. —Yours faithfully, ABBÉ J. A. PETIT.

THE LETTER OF ABBÉ PETIT.

SIR,—I should not have written the article on 'Seers and Prophets' if you had not referred to a concurrence of prophesies. With few exceptions I do not intervene except when I feel impelled as a duty or as a matter of charity to do so. You would hardly believe how much I shrink from publicity. . . . In what concerns phenomena of a superior order that have occurred with me, I do not know how to denote the feeling which hinders me from speaking; it is certainly not fear nor modesty, but a sort of reticence which impedes me much. I am so made: it is repugnant to me to make these things known.

My first impulse was not to sign the article which I addressed to you. I thought, however, that it would be preferable on all accounts to declare myself the author, but so to express myself as to leave it an open question whether the phenomena happened to someone else or to myself. If I spoke of personal experiences, I did so *à propos* of circumstances over which it was possible that I might have had no control. With you, in the privacy of a letter, I can express myself otherwise. I only spoke in the article of what happened to myself.

When referring to a church as the scene of the pictured vision,* I alluded to an imposing scene which was developed in the church of St. Augustin on January 21st, 1893. When speaking of the delicate distinguished features of the faces, I was thinking of Louis XVI. As represented in pictures he looks like a fat bourgeois. What struck me was the *distingué* character of the monarch; it impressed me more, perhaps, than even the delicacy of the features of Marie Antoinette. One detail attracted my attention on that day, as on other occasions. I am very short-sighted; but I perceived the smallest objects at a distance. Therefore, in whatever way it may present itself, it cannot be the natural eye which sees this sort of vision. I should say just the opposite of crystal visions. I only once saw these and on the following occasion.

I was in Lady Caithness' apartments. We had been speaking of Joan of Arc. Madame Georgina Weldon (the fellow-worker with Gounod) arrived, and brought with her a very fine crystal ball, which had not been used. We talked of various topics, then a young lady approached me and said, 'M. l'Abbé, will you look?' To please her I took a seat at the table with her. On every occasion of a collective experience I have made a point of never being the first to speak. I have let my companions say what they have seen, and have observed whether their statements agree with what I saw myself. On this occasion the young lady said to me, 'M. l'Abbé, do you see anything?' 'Yes, I see.' 'Do you recognise?' 'Yes, perfectly.' 'It is Joan of Arc.' Exactly.

At a distance this vision grew confused; therefore in this case it was the natural eye which saw; my short-sightedness made itself felt.

What a number of facts I could tell you if we should ever meet!

(The Abbé then proceeds to give a few details of no particular interest, relative to the occasion which led up to an occurrence which took place at the house of Lady

* For brevity's sake this paragraph was omitted in the résumé of the Abbé's first article which appeared in last week's 'LIGHT.'

Caithness, where a gathering was being held of a religious character. He then continues:—)

Lady Caithness called to me and asked me to speak a few edifying words to the audience. I was quite unprepared to make an address. I was far from having expected to do so. 'Speak, M. l'Abbé,' said the ladies, 'the Holy Spirit will guide you.'

'Speak!' but what should I speak about? You can imagine how I appeared before a select audience of fifty or sixty persons. The Duchess made me sit by her on the same sofa, and I began to speak. You can guess that I was not eloquent, a true 'Casseur de Cailloux.' I had seized at hazard a well known subject, 'Prayer'; but I was worse than detestable. After a fashion (a very poor fashion) I discoursed on the nature of prayer, as I understood it, not as an act of entreaty, but as an act by which we operate upon the universal vital force—upon God. Then suddenly I found myself in a condition of mind I had not expected. I began to speak on the *receptive state* with real eloquence.

I was more surprised than anyone both at the elevated thoughts which I expressed, and at the graceful form in which I clothed them.

When I had finished the Duchess sent Madame de Morsier to fetch from a drawer of her chest a small manuscript. It was a short article she had written a few days before on the receptive state, and the audience was astonished when they recognised that I had repeated in French and in parts word for word, what Lady Caithness had written in English.

A more striking occurrence took place on another occasion. Lady Caithness was considering a passage of Holy Scripture. 'If the Abbé were here,' she said, 'he would give us his opinion.' On the same day, at the same hour, at a distance of thirty miles, I felt myself uncontrollably impelled to write to her on this particular subject. Why? I knew not; a letter which I received from Paris on the following day revealed to me the mystery.

You probably know that Mgr. Fuzet, Bishop of Beauvais, put an end to these curious experiences, forbidding me, under threat of being interdicted, to set foot in the house of Lady Caithness. I was consequently obliged to separate myself entirely from this remarkable woman, who had been to me a true sister. I obeyed. But this prohibition, which nothing could justify, was the inciting cause of one of the most remarkable phenomena.

On November 2nd, 1895, at about 2 a.m., I was thoroughly awake; mechanically I had thrown out my arm across the bed, my hand rested on the coverlet. After a few minutes a phosphorescent form approached the bed, and pressed my hand (the feeling was rather like the touch of muslin), but I heard no words. Although the form was not very clear I thought I recognised the Duchess. On the morning of the following day I spoke of it to several people, who can witness to the fact that I did so. We received a great shock in the news of her death.

Madame de Morsier wrote to me, after getting the letter in which I informed her of what had occurred, that the fact was sufficiently definite to be worth imparting to competent men; she begged me to send the account to Dr. Dariex, to be published in the 'Annales Psychiques.' Then changing her mind, she wired to me not to do anything, in case it should displease the Duke.

Perhaps you have already heard that Lady Caithness intended to found a psychic institute and to endow it munificently. The statutes were read and approved by Dr. Richet. I have a list of the French and foreign members who were to belong to it. But she experienced so many difficulties that she was obliged to give up the scheme. The almost insurmountable obstacles raised by the French Legislature, and the abuse of authority evinced by the Bishop of Beauvais, had cooled her interest in the French. I know that she had the intention of instituting this psychic society in England, and that Mr. Myers came to Paris on several occasions about this matter; I do not know with what result.

But with all these narratives I have strayed from my point. You ask me 'to state in a short paragraph who I am and to recall especially my experiences with Lady Caithness.' I should be obliged if you would excuse me. I may tell you confidentially that with the exception of complete materialisation I have been the object or the witness of almost the whole series of phenomena of which we hear so constantly, from messages to direct manifestation. Lady Caithness gave me her confidence, and the benefit of her long experience. . . . In losing her, psychic science has had an irreparable loss.

ABBÉ J. A. PETIT.

THE fool says in his heart, 'There is no God,' and rightly so; there is none—for a fool. Wisdom is not discerned by foolishness, nor music by deafness. The melody is one-half in the singer's voice; the other half is in the cultured ear. Beauty is but half canvas; its complement is the refined vision.—NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL FEDERATION.

The Spiritualists of Blackpool, Lancashire, have a beautiful spiritual church, and on Saturday, July 1st, the tenth annual conference of the Spiritualists' National Federation was opened there, under the presidency of Mr. J. J. Morse, of London. Mr. H. E. Howes, president of the Blackpool Society, kindly welcomed the conference and visitors on behalf of the local friends.

Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader presented her credentials from the American National Spiritualists' Association, as also did Mr. T. Grimshaw, of St. Louis, as 'fraternal delegates bearing messages of sympathy and good will from the American Spiritualists to their British brethren,' which were received with acclamation. Mr. B. B. Hill, president of the First Society of Philadelphia, and Dr. Harlow Davis were also invited, as 'distinguished visitors,' to participate in the deliberations of the conference. The minutes of the previous annual conference at Keighley, and the special conference in October last at Southport, were read and adopted.

The printed reports of the general secretary, Mr. W. Harrison, and the Propaganda Committee, per Mr. J. Swindlehurst, the organising secretary, were taken as read, and adopted.

On Sunday morning, an earnest invocation by Mr. T. Grimshaw was followed by an admirable and timely presidential address by Mr. J. J. Morse, in the course of which he claimed that the fact that the Federation had grown to its present dimensions was an evidence of the patience and devotion of those who during the past decade had worked so earnestly in its behalf. After a graceful acknowledgment of the services to the local cause of Councillor and Mrs. Butterworth, and Mr. H. E. Howes, and a passing reference to the work of the Federation and its officers during the past year, he expressed the hope that something would be done to draw the societies and Lyceums together, and that a National Benevolent Fund might result from the resolution to be submitted by Mrs. Wallis. Referring to the vexed question of 'settled speakers,' he hoped that 'some plan would be formulated by which the recognition of speakers, and the definition of certain well-defined qualifications, would be decided upon by the national body.' He recognised 'indications of a revolt' against the practice of giving clairvoyance from our public platforms, 'not because phenomena are not desired, but because so much of what passes for spiritual phenomena affords so little clear proof of spirit return or presence. Thinly disguised "fortune telling," quasi medical and legal advice, and rambling utterances devoid of point or proof, have wearied many of our congregations, with the result that societies are now announcing their intention to make their meetings educational instead of sensational. Phenomena are vital to our work, but they must be phenomena that prove up to the hilt that our dead live, and return to demonstrate the fact; all other matters are best left to the private circle, or special consultation with the mediums suited to such work.' Commenting upon the growing tendency to call our societies churches, he said: 'We meet for aspiration, education, communion with the higher life, and in loving fellowship; therefore the term "church," which has signified so much to many of us in the past, does not appear inappropriate. If generally adopted, a uniformity in the description of our meeting places would be rendered possible.'

The above address was unanimously adopted, and Mr. Morse was complimented on his courage in dealing with the important reforms advocated in the closing portion of his address.

On the motion of Mr. A. Rocke, seconded by Mr. S. S. Chiswell, it was resolved by a 'standing' vote, 'That the National Federation of Spiritualists, in conference assembled, sends to its time-honoured co-worker, Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, its heartiest sympathy and affectionate greetings,' and the resolution was sent by telegraph to Mrs. Britten.

Considerable time was occupied by discussions respecting the delay which had occurred in printing the second edition of the National Hymn Book (the said hymn book, however, was ready and on sale), and regarding the treasurer's statement of accounts; the figures were correct, but required re-arranging, and that having been done the

statement, which showed a total balance to the credit of the Federation of £567 12s. 2d., was adopted, as also was the detailed statement of last year's bazaar accounts, after a number of explanations, in the course of which it transpired that the Lyceum children had contributed nearly £26.

It was resolved, upon the motion of Mr. J. Venables, of Walsall, seconded by Mr. Coupe, of Blackpool, 'That in future the Executive Committee of this Federation shall hold its meetings at various centres where convenient, and when invited by the local society or societies; that public demonstrations be held on the Sunday following in conjunction with such societies, with a view to assisting them in their work, and furthering our spiritual cause generally; and that before such demonstrations are arranged, the Federation Secretary and Lyceum Union Secretary shall confer together, so that there shall be no clashing of such demonstrations held by the Lyceum Union and Federation Executive Committees.'

On the motion of Mr. Howes, of Blackpool, seconded by Mr. J. J. Parr, of Bootle, it was decided that efforts should be made to unite the societies and the Lyceums, and that the Federation Executive should not only use its influence to induce societies to establish Lyceums, but should confer with the Lyceum Union Executive with a view to co-operation in efforts to establish harmonious relationship between Lyceums and societies.

On the motion of Mrs. M. H. Wallis, of London, on behalf of the Council of the Order of Progressive Spiritualists, seconded by Mr. H. Lucas, of Birmingham, it was decided to adopt the funds hitherto carried on as the 'O.P.S. Sick, Benefit, and Pension Funds.'

The Credential Committee reported that there were present two 'fraternal delegates' from the National Spiritualists' Association of America and Canada, two 'distinguished visitors' from the United States, fifteen members of the Executive, sixty-six delegates, and eighty-three Associates; total, 169—the largest attendance at any of these conferences.

The elections resulted as follows: President of Conference, Mr. J. J. Morse; hon. treasurer, Mr. R. Fitton; secretary, Mr. W. Harrison; auditors, Mr. T. Taylor (Manchester) and Mr. Greenwood (Sowerby Bridge), and the following members of the Executive Committee: Messrs. S. Butterworth (Blackpool), A. Kitson (Dewsbury), G. H. Bibbings (Nottingham), J. Parker (Bradford), J. Whittaker (Keighley), W. Johnson (Hyde), J. J. Parr (Bootle), and W. Mason (Burnley).

The conference in 1900 will be held in Bradford on Saturday, June 30th, and Sunday, July 1st.

The usual votes of thanks concluded the business.

In the evening a largely attended public meeting was held in the Empire Theatre, when, after an invocation by Mr. G. H. Bibbings and an appropriate speech by the chairman, Mr. J. J. Morse, short addresses were given by Mrs. M. H. Wallis and Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader, and by Messrs. J. Armitage, W. Johnson, J. B. Tetlow, J. Howes, T. Grimshaw, T. O. Todd, G. H. Bibbings, W. Phillips, J. Parker, E. W. Wallis and S. S. Chiswell. Mrs. M. E. Place gave a number of successful clairvoyant descriptions, and Miss Elaine French and Mr. Brookhouse rendered solos very acceptably, accompanied by Mr. A. Rocke.

MR. J. W. BOULDING.

Mr. J. W. Boulding, an experienced Spiritualist, whose address to the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on March 24th last, gave so much pleasure to those who heard it, has produced a new play, 'a romantic drama of the historical kind,' entitled 'The White Queen,' at the Birmingham Theatre Royal. The 'Birmingham Daily Gazette,' on Tuesday, June 27th, referring to its production, said: 'It proved a decided success, and considerably added to the author's already excellent reputation. The play has many passages of literary beauty, with some easy and spontaneous epigram, and considerable humour. Throughout there is a loftiness of sentiment, a wholesomeness, and a contempt for the mean, the base, the tricky, and the paltry, which cannot be too highly praised.'

At the close of the performance the author was called for and heartily applauded. Mr. Boulding's many friends among our readers will congratulate him upon this success.

ARE WE FREE AGENTS?

Dr. Max Muehlenbruch, of Oakland, California, sends us the following thoughts on the question of Free Agency:—

I have often been requested to write my views concerning life—why it is that some have plenty and others have not. Being liberal, I accord to all the right to think for themselves, and I claim the same privilege. I have made this subject a life study and have many proofs from my own experience and investigation, but my knowledge will not do for another. A thought given now and then begets discussion. Let us take all criticisms with the kindest of feelings, cultivate true love from the depths of our own hearts, and adopt the feelings of universal brotherhood when we argue.

Are we our own free agents? Are our lives laid out for us? No, not exactly. To illustrate: Before leaving your home or office (whichever it may be) you may have settled upon a certain place to go to. On the way you meet a friend who asks you to go with him in a slightly different direction, and as you go, that changes your course somewhat. You meet another friend, and he takes you in another direction. That again changes your course; but at last you reach your destination, as you had at first planned. By this you will see the point I am trying to convey—that we are not our own free agents, but that our lives are in a measure outlined for us. We may turn a little to the right or the left, changing our course slightly, but the main road of our lives we have to travel.

A person may go to a psychic who describes the future for him, as it will come to pass. How can a psychic do this if the path of life is not planned? Someone may say that things did not come to pass as described. In this, everything depends upon the conditions of the sitter and psychic.

Let us think for ourselves. What were we given reasoning faculties for, unless to make use of them? If they are dormant, our souls do not unfold.

A person may say: 'If my life is laid out for me, I might as well take things easy—I cannot change matters anyway.' You are placed here to unfold your spiritual nature, to get yourself ready for the life to come, as we know there is another life—that this is not all. Hence we should live as true as possible. If we do wrong, we must undo the wrong. When we understand that, we shall have a better class of people.

Again, you may ask: If our lives are planned for us, does not the murderer come under this law? Most certainly, but I have also said that we are placed here to unfold our *higher* natures. We are largely controlled by planetary influences; hence, when the planet under which we are born crosses with others whose influences are not good for our physical, mental or financial career, we feel the effects. More or less sickness is thus caused. We must overcome these conditions and rule our planets, not be ruled by them.

Are we not a spark of the Divine, incomprehensible to our minds, call it what you will—God, Good, Jehovah, Allah?—it is all the same.

It is customary to gauge people by the degree of attachment they show to things serious or shallow. In reality, the distinction lies with ourselves, not the affairs we are engaged in. Everything has its surface and its depth; some people dwell more on the former; while others love to penetrate the latter. Our minds are made free when we give up wishing, and only think of bearing what is laid upon us and doing what is given us to do. Pleasant work, when one knows how to render it skilfully, is still pleasanter when one can improve upon it. Purity of heart is that sensitive delicacy to which even the thought of evil is offensive. There is no real search for truth that does not first begin to live the truth it knows.

Sorrow is not given to us to brood over, but to give us strength by the knowledge that we are all a part of the higher power, incomprehensible to us at first, but by our souls' unfoldment we come to understand it. Sorrow is given us to make us more thoughtful. Why live half way up the hill, enveloped in mists, when we might have an unclouded sky and a shining sun, if we climb higher into the light?

All things are natural when guided by natural law. If events of national consequence are foretold, how could it be done if those events did not already exist in spirit? We cannot limit space; the very thought you send into space is a creature of itself, and will affect someone who is psychic enough to receive it. If for good, you will receive good results; if for bad, you will be rewarded accordingly. Hence, we should send out only good thoughts and do all the good possible. Thoughts are things; you can cure or kill, if you understand the laws of nature and their force. Your life is given you to live out, no matter how hard it may seem. I expect death at any moment, and all, as philosophers, should do likewise. Be ready; live lives of truth and honesty;

treat others as you would have them treat you ; do not depend on anyone, but be your own master.

Knowing that our lives are determined for us, we should not be looking backward, but forward ; not worrying, let the higher life unfold. Do not look enviously at others and then life will be sweeter and brighter, and tranquillity of mind will be yours. Make a heaven within, and the beauty of life will shine in your heart.

RECEPTION TO MRS. M. E. CADWALLADER.

The committee of the Junior Spiritualists' Club of Great Britain, finding that Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader was on a visit to England, in company with her father, Mr. B. B. Hill, decided to avail themselves of the usual club quarterly social evening to tender these good friends a reception. Accordingly the event transpired on Tuesday evening, June 27th, at the rooms of the club, 26, Osnaburgh-street, Regent's Park, London. There was a large attendance, and a very enjoyable evening was spent.

The earlier portion of the time was pleasantly employed in informal conversation and greetings to the guests, Mrs. Cadwallader being a vice-president of the club. At a later stage Mr. J. J. Vango, the president of the club, tendered the visitors a hearty greeting, and assured them of the pleasure all experienced at having them with us. He was glad to find that Mrs. Cadwallader had so far recovered her health as to be able to visit London again, and that her interest in the club was as strong as ever. He was proud of our American honorary vice-president, and glad to meet her father as well.

Mr. J. J. Morse, the vice-president, expressed the pleasure he felt at having the two distinguished visitors with us, and recalled the gratification all had felt in meeting Mrs. Cadwallader last year. Devoted as she was heart and soul to our cause she was sure of a warm welcome from British Spiritualists in general, but particularly so from the executive and members of the Junior Spiritualists' Club. They were proud of the fact that she was a member, and welcomed her and her respected father right heartily and warmly once again.

Mr. E. W. Wallis made a pleasing and interesting speech, recounting many of the fraternal kindnesses received at the hands of the guest of the evening while he was visiting her country last year. He referred in feeling terms to the bereavement Mr. Hill had sustained, and rejoiced that it was his good fortune to be of some slight service at that trying time. Friendship was a sacred thing, and he prized the friendship of the two dear friends who were present that evening.

Mrs. M. H. Wallis made a short address in harmony with the occasion, and referred to several humorous incidents in connection with her acquaintance with Mrs. Cadwallader, in her home in Philadelphia. She, too, was delighted to meet her again, and to shake Mr. Hill by the hand as well. Such gatherings did us all good, and helped to unite us.

Mrs. Cadwallader then made a graceful and touching response to the welcome accorded her, and said how glad she was to be back again. She had been very ill since being here before, and they had suffered a great outward loss in the departure of her beloved mother. But she knew that it was not death, and that her mother was still with them all. She brought to the club the fraternal greetings of the Young People's National Spiritualists' Association of the United States, and they expressed the hope that a fraternal affiliation should be established between the two bodies.

Mr. B. B. Hill next responded, making a short but excellent speech, in general harmony with what had been said by his daughter. After his remarks pertaining to the occasion were concluded, he desired permission to deal with another matter. Turning to Mr. J. J. Morse, he addressed that gentleman in moving terms, expressive of his deep appreciation of the very great kindness and the attentions bestowed by Mrs. and Miss Morse and himself upon Mrs. Cadwallader last year. They could never forget it, nor repay it, but he desired to make some little acknowledgment therefor, and to that end he desired Mr. Morse to accept, for himself and family, a small presentation to indicate the appreciation in which he and they were held by Mrs. Cadwallader and himself. The presentation was in the form of a magnificent bronze medallion of Abraham Lincoln, mounted on a splendid blue plush background, enclosed in a massive gold frame, the whole comprising a beautiful and valuable work of art. Mr. Morse was at first too much overcome with surprise to be able to reply, as the incident was quite unexpected by anyone. But he subsequently made an eloquent acknowledgment for his family and himself, and while warmly thanking his friends, said he had only done for them as he had been done to whenever he was the guest of their country. This incident excited unbounded interest and was loudly cheered.

Miss Jessie Dixon, Miss Alice Hunt, Miss F. Samuel, Miss Percival, and Mr. A. Lysons very kindly contributed

vocal and instrumental numbers during the evening. Refreshments were served with the club's usual bountiful hospitality.

Among the large company present during the evening the following were noticed : Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Morse, Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Vango, Mr. and Mrs. E. W. and M. H. Wallis, Mrs. Aspinwall, Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader, Mrs. Graddon, Mrs. Marjorie Jenkins, Mr. and Mrs. Lealtad, Mrs. Mason, Mrs. Neville, Mrs. J. Parker, Mr. and Mrs. Rushton, Miss F. Cooper, Miss E. Ditt, Miss Jessie Dixon, Miss Graddon, Miss Alice Hunt, Miss Marshall, Miss F. Morse, Miss Percival, Miss May Robertson, Miss Ada Stoneham, Miss E. Taylor, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. R. Drayson, Mr. B. B. Hill, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. A. Lysons, Mr. Mason, Mr. A. Mason.

Cor.

LIFE'S BITTER-SWEET.

In the great loom of life the threads of pleasure and of pain are woven across each other into the pattern we call character in the strangest and most wonderful manner. Unmitigated evil and unalloyed bliss do not exist for mortals. The bitterest griefs and losses have their compensations, the divinest delights their attendant sorrows. Love, sincere and unselfish, affords us the sweetest joys in life, yet it is love that intensifies our grief and arms Death with the power to wound us most severely. This aspect of the discipline of experience may well be considered by those who think to relieve the Deity from the charge of injustice by affirming reincarnation to explain away the inequalities in the lives and environments of men.

In some subtle way into every life there falls shadow as well as shine, suffering as well as satisfaction ; and both seem indispensable. Every heart knoweth its own bitterness, and when we imagine that some people are more favoured than others, we do not know what cross they bear or what Gethsemanes they have experienced ! As we evolve our spiritual nature, develop our love of the beautiful and the good, learn to distinguish, appreciate, and respond to the pure and the harmonious, the more susceptible do we become to, and are pained by, the impurities, discords, and ugliness that surround us.

The following verses enforce the fact that while love lightens labour and illumines life, it lays us open to stings and pains, which, though they may be necessary to our spiritual education, are often exceedingly hard to bear. Even our sensitiveness has to be schooled until we can gain such spiritual self-possession as to 'under all circumstances keep an even mind,' even when those 'we love the best' wound us to the quick. It is the high privilege of love to bear without retaliation, to endure the injustice and the smart, and still love and serve those who, perhaps unconsciously, have been the cause of the agony and the tears.

They say the world is round, and yet
I often think it square,
So many little hurts we get
From corners here and there.
But one great truth in life I've found
While journeying to the west—
The only folks who really wound
Are those we love the best.
The man you thoroughly despise
Can rouse your wrath, 'tis true.
Annoyance in your heart will rise
At things mere strangers do.
But those are only passing ills ;
This rule all lives will prove—
The rankling wound which aches and thrills
Is dealt by hands we love.
The choicest garb, the sweetest grace,
Are oft to strangers shown.
The careless mien, the frowning face,
Are given to your own.
We flatter those we scarcely know,
We please the fleeting guest,
And deal full many a thoughtless blow
To those who love us best.
Love does not grow on every tree,
Nor true hearts yearly bloom ;
Alas for those who only see
This, cut across the tomb !
But soon or late, the fact grows plain
To all through sorrow's test—
The only folks who give us pain
Are those we love the best.

HAS ANYTHING BEEN SETTLED?

HAVE THE SPIRITS DEMONSTRATED ANYTHING REGARDING THE FUTURE LIFE?

Dr. J. M. Peebles asserts that after more than fifty years of study of Spiritualism he regards the following points as having been reasonably and satisfactorily established by the teachings and testimonies of spirits:—

1. That man is a spirit now, and that this indwelling spirit is the centre of life, consciousness, force, intelligence, will, and purpose.
2. That there is not only an unconscious, but a conscious and continual intercommunion between the visible and the invisible realms of existence.
3. That the spirits, influencing and entrancing mediums, are the spirits of human beings once vested in mortality as we now are - our risen friends and ancestors—and right here with us, now.
4. That spirits identify themselves in the future world—know each other—knowing as they are known, in those higher spheres of substantial realities.
5. That progress is a privilege and a law in the spirit-world, as well as in this preliminary stage of existence—spirits there, through discipline, growing in knowledge and wisdom, approximating perfection.
6. That scientists, musicians, reformers, philanthropists continue their inspired pursuits in spirit life, teaching the brotherhood of all tribes, races, nations, and even of those unnumbered planetary worlds that glitter and stud the measureless spaces of immensity.
7. That spirits, divested of their earthly bodies (as well as mortals here) reap by virtue of inexorable law what they have sown and what they are still sowing.

'OUR ATLANTIS.'

Long time upon the mast our brown sail flapped,

Our keel ploughed bitter salt, and everywhere

The ominous sky in sullen mystery wrapped

What side we looked on, either here or there.

The welcome sight of land long sadly sought,

And that Atlantis, hid within the sea,

The city with our hope and promise fraught,

We saw not yet, nor wist where they might be.

But while we sailed, as manful as we might,

And counted not the sail more fit than oar,

Lo! o'er the wave there burst a vision bright

Of wood, and winding stream, and easy shore.

Then, by the lofty light which shone above,

We knew, at last, our voyage sad was o'er,

And we the haven near for which we strove,

And soon all past the need to wander more.

Then, as our craft made safely to the strand,

And we, all well, our weary brown sail furled,

We gazed, as strangers might, at that fair land,

And hardly knew if it might be our world;

Till some one gently took each weary hand,

And led us on to where still waters be,

And whispered softly, 'Lo! it hath been planned

That thou, at last, this pleasant place should'st see.

And, as those dreaming, so awakened we,

And looked with eyes unhurt on that bright sky,

And whispered, hand in hand and eye to eye,

'Tis our Atlantis, risen from the sea—

'Tis our Atlantis, from the bitter sea—

'Tis our Atlantis, found at last, O friend! by thee

and me!' E. HOUGH.

SYMPATHY.

The most potent thing in existence is thought. If Spiritualists, and other mortals as well, would but remember this fact, they could become powers for good in the world. When their friends were ill they could send them kind, sympathetic, and inspiring thoughts to help them to return to health. When their friends were falling into evil ways and making serious mistakes in regard to conduct, they could send them such potent thought-sympathy and loving suggestion as to turn them into paths of rectitude and noble living. If all readers of these lines will but put the above suggestions into practice they will be surprised at the growth of their own souls, as well as at the vast amount of good they have done. Living and doing for others is the true life.—'Banner of Light.'

WAS IT A 'DOUBLE' OR A SPIRIT?

Among the officials who have suites of rooms allotted to them within the precincts of the Houses of Parliament is Mr. Archibald J. C. Milman, Clerk Assistant of the House. With his wife and family, he has charming rooms just off the Speaker's Court. The dining-room in particular is a very beautiful chamber, panelled nearly to the ceiling, and decorated with some very exquisite blue and white china and a good many valuable old prints. This room, together with others of the suite, opens out of a kind of transverse corridor. Not once or twice, but several times, and in broad daylight too, the exact counterpart of Mrs. Milman has been seen to pass up and down the corridor, in and out of the rooms—and always in the absence of the lady herself. Servants have seen it several times and so have other people.—'M.A.P.'

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'The Humanitarian,' for July. Contains: 'A Natural History Observation and its Consequences,' by PROFESSOR MELDOLA, F.R.S.; 'The Colour Problem in the United States'; 'Some Ideals and Practices'; 'Concerning Dr. Pitres of Bordeaux'; 'The Ethical Teachings of Mahomet,' &c. London: Duckworth & Co., 3, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, W.C. Price 6d.
- 'Foretokens of Immortality. Studies "for the hour when the immortal hope burns low in the heart."' By NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS. Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier. Price 1s.
- 'The Photogram,' for July, with coloured supplement. London: 6, Farringdon-avenue, E.C. Price 3d.
- 'Immortality.' No. 5. Devoted exclusively to Illumination. J. C. F. GRUMBINE, Editor, 1718, West Genesee-street, Syracuse, New York, U.S.A. Price 25 cents.
- 'Modern Astrology,' for July. London: 9, Lyncroft-gardens, N.W. Price 1s.
- 'The Englishwoman,' for July. London: 8, Paternoster-row, E.C. Price 6d.
- 'The Lyceum Banner,' for July. London: J. J. Morse, 26, Osnaburgh-street, N.W. Price 1d.
- 'Methods and Problems of Spiritual Healing.' By HORATIO W. DRESSER. London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, Bedford-street, Strand, W.C. Price 2s. 6d.
- 'The Alleged Haunting of B--- House, including a Journal kept during the tenancy of Colonel Le Mesurier Taylor.' Edited by A. GOODRICH-FREER (Miss X.) and JOHN, MARQUIS OF BUTE, K.T. London: George Redway. Price 2s.
- 'Mind,' for July. Contains: 'Experimental and Transcendental Psychology,' by QUESTOR VITE; 'The Esoteric Art of Living'; 'The Spiritual Utility of Physical Correspondence,' by HENRY WOOD; 'The Value of Understanding,' by HORATIO DRESSER; 'Higher Laws,' by STANTON K. DAVIS; 'The Trinity and the Virgin'; 'Lost Arts'; &c. New York, U.S.A.: The Alliance Publishing Co., Life-building, 19 and 21, West 31st-street. Price 1s.
- 'The Suggester and Thinker,' 'Freedom,' 'Progressive Thinker,' 'Humanity,' 'Agnostic Journal,' 'Church Gazette,' 'Inquirer,' 'Literary Digest,' 'Agricultural Economist,' 'Zoophilist,' 'Psyche,' 'Light of Truth,' 'Banner of Light,' &c.

A FORM OF BEQUEST.

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

THE VERY SILLIEST THING on the face of the earth, it seems to me, is to go to mediums for advice in regard to financial matters. I am fairly up in arithmetic; but I should hope nobody of sense would come to me, if they could, after I was dead, about stocks on Wall Street. I do not know why I should be supposed to know so much about a thousand things because I am dead. Fools die every moment; and I suppose they are as big fools five minutes afterwards as they were before. If I wanted advice in financial matters, I would rather have a word from Pierpont Morgan than from a congress of a thousand spirits, although I knew the message genuine. — REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Reincarnation and the Theosophical Society.

SIR,—With your kind permission, a few lines in reply to my esteemed friend Madame de Steiger's letter in your issue of June 24th.

That reincarnation is not a Christian doctrine is so much the worse for Christians—as a whole. Fortunately for some of them, they can help themselves, without shame, and to their own gain, to doctrines outside their own creed—and no one can call them in question.

I suppose Madame de Steiger will admit that it is of little importance who resuscitated the doctrine of reincarnation—if it is a true doctrine. If the knowledge of it is helpful, let it be taught with no uncertain voice. If it was resuscitated by our friends the Spiritualists, they do not appear to do much to keep it in life.

Very little is said in 'The Perfect Way' about the doctrine; it is more stated as a fact than enforced as a fundamental truth, which cannot be magnified.

If the teaching of reincarnation has become specially identified with Theosophy, it is only because the members of the society appear to have more thoroughly grasped its vital importance than any other body, and so seem to have made it their own.

Theosophists do not claim to have a monopoly of proof of the continuity of life after physical death. Spiritualists supplied truck-loads of proof before the foundation of the Theosophical Society. But can the Spiritualists point to any concise, clear, definite teaching on the subject in their writings, equal to those of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, F.T.S.—such as are given in his 'Astral Plane,' or 'Devachanic Plane'? Whether Spiritualists agree with the teachings or no, they cannot but admit that they at least contain all the best that is essentially spiritualistic on the subject; and what is beyond them is just as likely to be true as not, even if they cannot comprehend it.

In taking hold of teachings which may be essentially spiritualistic, or even fantastic, and making them their own, Theosophists exhibit one of the strongest characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon race—the ability to appreciate, and fitness to assimilate, whatever comes in its way, as best for and essential to its life; and what the Society takes, it appears to keep and improve for the benefit of humanity as far as in it lies. In showing this characteristic it gives signs of healthy life and assured usefulness. We are indebted to Madame de Steiger for the historical notes which direct our attention to the fact.

But surely she is not serious when she says: 'The best advice I can possibly give to seekers on these matters is that they should put aside the writers of this century.' She must know that such teaching is highly valued by many men and women who have not the leisure to spare, nor the bent of mind which can appreciate some of the 'sages of antiquity.' 'As long as we find it possible to be precise, it is a fatal mistake for the student of spiritual science to be content with vague suggestions. Cloudiness of language is not depth of thought. Obscure, allegorical forms of expression are not superior, in occult dignity, to definite and exact phraseology—though in the past such forms have often been pardonable, either because the writers who used them were pledged to partial secrecy, or precluded by the bigotry of the age from being quite explicit.' So says Mr. A. P. Sinnett, and it is not an inapt quotation, when comparing some of the 'sages' with the straightforward teaching of some of the 'present century' writers of Theosophy, whom Madame de Steiger suggests we should ignore.

Now Madame de Steiger must know perfectly well that reincarnation is *not* a tenet of the Theosophical Society. Because not having *any* tenets—but only three objects—reincarnation could not be incorporated amongst them. We both know at least one friend, and fellow member of the society who does *not* believe in reincarnation. That the society 'only accepted and taught it after its *complete acceptance* elsewhere,' is scarcely correct, considering the correspondence in your columns. If Spiritualists 'resuscitated' the doctrine, they at least have not given it *complete acceptance*. Who else has? A. P. CATTANACH, F.T.S.

67, Brunswick-street, Edinburgh.

Spiritualists' National Federation.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to call the attention of affiliated societies to the very important resolution passed by the Conference at Blackpool on Sunday, July 2nd, and to ask all secretaries to bring the matter before their committees

as soon as possible. I should esteem it a favour if those societies desiring the Executive Committee to visit them would forward their invitation to me not later than Friday, July 28th, as the Executive meets on the following day and could then consider the various applications. It would much expedite the work in considering the applications if societies would enclose a list of the open dates they have for that purpose (along with the invitation), and for their further guidance I may suggest that the meetings are usually held during the months of September, December, March, and June, in the last three during the early part of the month. I append the full text of the resolution passed by the Conference. Thanking you in anticipation.

37, North-street, Burnley. W. HARRISON, Gen. Sec.

[See the report of the Conference on page 320 for the resolution.—Ed. 'LIGHT.']

SOCIETY WORK.

CAMBERWELL, 33, GROVE-LANE, S.E.—On Sunday last an excellent meeting was held, and the text, 'I am God, and beside Me is none other,' was spiritually explained. At a good after-circle, clairvoyance was given by Mr. Lovatt.—J. BEAR.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD (Near Alexandra Theatre).—On Sunday last we had a good attendance, considering the counter attraction at High Beech of the Spiritualists' Conference Meeting. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., service will be held as usual; address and choir services, solos, part singing, &c.—I. H.

BATTERSEA SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Lyceum excursion by brake to Riddlesdown, on July 19th, not 17th, as previously announced. No visitors' tickets can be issued after the 16th. Representatives from North and East London are going to have a field day in Battersea Park at 3.30 p.m., on Sunday, July 16th. Two platforms will be used. Tea will be provided in Henley Hall, at 5.45 p.m. Mr. Symons, park caterer, also supplies refreshments. Will those who desire tea tickets for the 16th, or who are willing to give a ten minute address, please write, so that arrangements can be made, to H. Boddington, 99, Bridge-road, Battersea? Next Sunday's subject, at Henley Hall, at 7 p.m., will be 'The Gift of Tongues'; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; on Thursday and Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., members and friends.—H.B.

LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' CONFERENCE and annual outing to High Beech, Epping Forest, on Sunday, July 2nd, 1899. The general assembly was at 11 a.m., after which each one enjoyed himself until 2.30 p.m. When the Conference was about to be opened we were stopped by the keeper of the forest. Some of our friends were in favour of testing the case but I am glad to say wiser counsels prevailed, so our friends sang hymns and conversed with each other. The secretary and Mr. Bullen made arrangements with the gentleman who was supplying the refreshments to allow us to use one of his rooms for the evening meeting, at which Mr. Davis presided, Mr. Gibbs being absent owing to family sickness. Mr. Davis spoke upon the need for self-cultivation. The following speakers addressed the meeting: Mr. Brooks, Mr. and Mrs. Boddington, Mrs. Truscott, Mr. Kinsman, Mr. White, 'Evangel,' and Mr. Clegg, the secretary of the Conference. Other speakers were present from societies which were represented but time did not permit the chairman to call upon them.—M. CLEGG.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT.

That persistent dream of the ages, the brotherhood of man, must be actualised into a living reality if civilisation is to continue its upward trend. With intellectual growth we must have moral development. The fate of Greece and Rome is a significant warning of what inevitably follows physical development and intellectual culture, when such blessings are not accompanied by spiritual growth. We must develop the ethical side of man's nature. We must emphasise the idea of moral responsibility. The Golden Rule is the foundation upon which to build the superstructure of a higher civilisation. It is the advance order for humanity to-day. All men are brothers; but the needy, the unfortunate, and the erring are the ones who call most urgently for our aid, our help, and our best endeavour.—'The Coming Age.'

SIR WALTER SCOTT's last entry in his journal reads: 'We slept reasonably, but on the next morning —' Thus death breaks off the sentence of man's career. How incomplete and pathetic would life be for millions without immortality! Society holds on its way, despite life's defeats and pains and glooms, because it believes that 'on the next morning' it will enter into eternal light and infinite love.—NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS.