

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

We offer our respectful congratulations to 'The Nottingham Daily Express.' A certain clerical person has been writing in the 'Express' respecting Spiritualism, and it appears that he brought out again the tiresome Old Bogie that it is all part of a subtle and diabolical attempt to kill religion and destroy faith in God;—the most preposterous conception imaginable. It proved to be too much for the 'Express,' which followed up the clerical person's observations with remarks of its own. These remarks are so judicious, so serious and so unusually sensible (as newspaper references to the subject), that we think they deserve special notice. The writer in the 'Express' is the member of the staff who adopts the growing fashion of writing in the first person singular:—

No doubt a good many people would be, like myself, interested in reading the remarks of Canon Ferris on 'Modern Spiritualism,' which were reported in yesterday's 'Express.'

I do not, however, at all agree with the Canon that these investigations into what we may call the forces of psychic cerebration come from a sect which is part of a great attempt of an evil force to lead men away from God.

I believe it is just the other way about. The modern spiritualistic movement, the clairvoyance, even the palmistry charlatanism are symptoms of a reaction against the deadly materialism, propagated by our nearly successful attempts to ruin our children by alleged scientific teaching without any religious counterpoise which have been going on for so long.

The world appears to desire to return to God, but is shy of returning on the old way. I dare not say that I disbelieve in the alleged spiritual manifestations; because the record of extra-normal experience is unbroken in the written history of mankind; but we have had no useful modern development of Spiritualism.

Still, it is better surely for the world that there should be this longing after the unknowable than the mocking, satirical scepticism of the hardened materialist.

This is a new note, or, at all events, an unusual note, for a newspaper, and we cannot but express our gratification, and offer our congratulations.

We are glad to note that, as a rule, these attacks upon us now usually bring out stalwart defenders. Thus, at Nottingham, a writer, 'Verax,' vigorously combats the Canon's fusty old assumptions, and carries the war into his own camp. The Canon quotes the Old Testament's forbidding of spirit-communion. Here is 'Verax's' sturdy reply:—

It was rather a pity that Ahaziah's consultation with the prophet or soothsayer of Baal should be immediately followed by the statement that the Kings of Israel drove such out of the land. The God who set a veto upon the

study of psychic laws (Deut. ix. 8-9) was not the God whose love and mercy are manifold and unchangeable, but the jealous, cruel, spiteful, revengeful Jehovah, who slew His foes, favoured His own selected few, and visited the sins of the fathers upon their innocent children. If, then, this fearful Deity had shown Himself jealous upon former occasions, may we not attribute the text Deut. ix. 8 to a fit of jealousy?

The poor Canon had better leave these thick boots alone.

There is a good deal of force in a 'Banner of Light' Article, by Mr. H. S. Collins, on 'The faces that are gone.' We always like to see driven into a corner the good people who sentimentalise about 'the touch of a vanished hand,' and then get almost angry if you take them at their word, and tell them it is all true. Mr. Collins puts it well:—

I have met with many people who, while quite enthusiastic over the beauty and pathos of those lines of Tennyson's, would, if one suggested to them the possibility of really feeling 'the touch of a vanished hand,' or actually hearing 'a voice that is still' (to all earthly appearances), immediately tell you that they did not believe for an instant that such things could be; that all friends of theirs who had died had crossed the bourne from whence no traveller returns, and so forth. And yet we read in The Book that, eighteen hundred years ago and more, the travellers did return.

Though a vast majority of Episcopal clergymen will talk to you of the 'angels hovering near,' and quote the Bible, showing how they guarded and helped those on earth in times past, and remind you how that it is written, 'He shall give his angels charge concerning thee,' &c., yet, suggest to most of them the possibility of feeling and seeing their presence, and they will tell you that that is something we must not consider for a moment, that such is not 'permitted,' and strongly advise and caution you not to attempt to dive into the 'unseen,' and, as many term it, 'unknowable.'

Why not? Is it not permissible to rightfully use, as much as possible, the intellect with which God has endowed us? Is there a line drawn on which, when we have reached it, we shall see the words, 'Thus far shalt thou go and no farther'?

But this is the way of the world, poor thing! First it scoffs: then it is frightened: then it says this unfamiliar thing is wicked: then it maunders and simpers about it; and then it says, 'Of course, everybody believes that!'

Clemence Royer writes in 'The Humanitarian' on 'Vibrations and Sensations,' and maintains that light is 'an objective reality, independent of every instrument constructed to concentrate its rays, and of every being so constituted as to perceive it.' In like manner, sound may be present though no one be present to hear it: and colours, too, are objective, in the absence of eyes. We wonder at 'The Humanitarian.'

As a matter of fact, it is impossible to test this matter by an experiment, as, in the absence of a person with the ordinary human faculties, it is impossible to tell what happens. Unfortunately we cannot be absent and yet peep. But we can pretty safely say that what we know as sound is absent when there is no interpreter, and that what we know as light must be something very different in the absence of an eye. Of course, in the absence of sensitive organs and an interpreting mind, there are still causes that are adequate for the production of what we know as the

sensations of colour and sound; and that is about all we can say, except that instruments which calculate the rates of vibrations have fully enabled us to connect these rates of vibrations with everything we know as light and sound, electricity and heat.

By the way, does a dead body feel the heat of the crematory? There is something there that can consume, but there is no sensation of heat. Heat is a sensation, and nothing more: therefore if there is no life there is no heat, whatever may be there to give the sensation of heat when conscious life comes in.

The Rev. R. Heber Newton writes wisely in 'Mind' on character-building. He deprecates the partly unreal and partly soul-depressing nursing of the confession of sin. What we need is the upward look and the vision of the ideal:—

Imagine (he says) the sculptor sitting himself down before the mass of clay and calling up visions of physical malformation as a preliminary step towards the creation of a form of physical beauty! Imagine him summoning before his soul a vision of ideal ugliness, if we may use such a contradiction of terms, thinking thus to create in the clay a model of ideal loveliness! What preposterous folly this would be! Yet, is it not parallel with the posture of mind of the Christian when he seeks to create a character made in the image of God by preoccupying his mind with a vision of a character made in the image of the devil? He sets himself down before his spiritual material, and deliberately and systematically calls into his mind the hateful forms of spiritual evil—thinking thus to aid him in creating the desired form of spiritual goodness! The wonder is not that the world is not getting further ahead in the creation of the human form divine, but that it has gotten as far ahead as it has under such a system.

The following, too, is very neatly to the point:—

Your first step towards character-culture must be the resolution to put every evil thought out of your mind and to keep it out. So you bar the door upon every evil wish, every unholy imagination, every wicked desire. Will any noble form of soul arise around a being while its mind is soiled and stained with such presences? No light task this, certainly—but the first primal and fundamental task of the man who would build a character. As the rustic said: 'Yeou cayn't help heaven' bad thoughts come into your head, but yeou haven't no need fer ter set 'em a chear.'

In 'Afterthoughts,' a small selection of short poems, by Joseph Truman (London: Macmillan and Co.), we find much that is thoughtful and tender, and something that nearly suggests the possibility of great poetry. Here is a picture 'In Memoriam.' Blessed is the memory that could deserve it!—

A life of many thoughts and busy days,  
A life of prayer, love, sacrifice, and praise,  
That patient sweetness kept when friends were few  
And, to his hurt, the shafts of slander flew;  
Vivacity and pathos, learning, skill  
Of Art, a woman's softness and man's will,  
A brave and radiant speech, keen sense to know  
The highest voice, and a stout heart to go  
Where'er the trumpet of stern duty blow;  
For meekness all, as though his richest hoard—  
Best service were unworthy of the Lord;  
And so the mellowing years went stealthy on,  
Nor found his light, grace, wisdom, pureness gone;  
What wanting, but the peaceful end that came  
To crown the story of a gentle name?  
What wanting, but the grand embrace of death,  
To fill the fainting breast with loftier breath?  
What wanting, but the opening of the door,  
That the tried steward might have further store,  
And reap the fields of Life for evermore?

As a mild satire upon some of our very scientific critics, this, by Mortimer Collins, is not bad:—

There once was an ape in the days that were earlier,  
Centuries passed and his hair became curlier;  
Centuries more gave a thumb to his wrist,  
Then he was a MAN—and a Positivist.

## DREAMS.

Colonel de Rochas has contributed such an interesting article on 'Dreams' to the May-June number of 'Annales Psychiques' that we regret that its length precludes the translation of the whole of it. He begins by commenting on M. Bergson's address on this subject, delivered before the members of the Psychological Institute, which we noticed in a recent number of 'LIGHT.' After a few courteous words of appreciation he proceeds to offer certain very just criticisms, and to deal with an aspect of the subject upon which M. Bergson merely touched at the close of his address, viz., those significant dreams which M. Bergson admitted awoke in the dreamer sensations of a remarkable or indefinable kind.

'I can affirm,' says Colonel de Rochas, 'as the result of my researches, that there are many peculiarities in dreams which cannot be accounted for merely on the theory of the sleeper's dream consciousness of physical sensations or of reminiscences.'

He also regards the hypothesis that the sensation of flying can be explained by the absence of pressure on the soles of the feet as altogether inadequate, 'for in this case the dream should be constant, since it is the normal position of the sleeper,' and he favours the view that it is suggested by an actual separation of the psychic body from the atomic, as one which at least has the merit of more adequately accounting for the facts, and as being supported by some amount of evidence.

In this connection he quotes, from a Report of the London Dialectical Society, the following instance narrated by Professor Varley (member of the Royal Society). Professor Varley says:—

'I was to embark on a steamer the following morning, and I was afraid of not awaking in time, but I determined to fix in my mind firmly the will to awake; this plan had often been successful with me. In the morning, I saw myself sleeping heavily in my bed. I tried to arouse myself, but I did not succeed. I was conscious of being anxious to find an effectual way of succeeding in rousing myself, when I saw a heap of wood for building purposes piled up in the courtyard and two men approaching it. They mounted on the pile and lifted a big beam. The idea then came to me to make my body dream that a shell which started with a whistle exploded in front of me, and that a fragment of it had wounded my face. This awakened me, but I distinctly remembered my dream.'

I at once jumped out of bed. I ran to the window, and I saw before me in the courtyard the pile of wood for building and the two men, exactly as my mind had seen them. I knew absolutely nothing of the locality in which I was; it was dark when I arrived the evening before, and I was quite unaware that there was a courtyard attached to the house. Evidently I had seen all these details whilst my body slept; I could only see the wood by putting my head out at the open window.'

As Colonel de Rochas justly remarks, this dream does not admit of explanation by M. Bergson's theory, that memory always forms the basis of our dreams. The next case Colonel de Rochas takes from a work by Dr. Carl du Prel, 'Psychologie Experimentale,' but we must content ourselves with giving a *resumé* rather than a verbatim translation of it.

The 'subject' was Mlle. Lina. The doctor suggested to her hypnotiser, M. Notzing, of Munich, to give her during the hypnotic state an order (which was to take effect when she had passed out of this state) to dream on the following night of a particular person, to get *en rapport* with her, not to forget the dream, and to relate it next day. Dr. Carl left it to the experimenters to select the individual to be dreamt of. They chose someone whom the 'subject' had never seen, and of whose dwelling-place she knew nothing. The experiment was quite successful. She recounted on the following day, as a surprising and inexplicable occurrence, that she had dreamt all night about this individual (designated by the initials M. F. L.). She described the personality, and gave details as to manner of speaking and costume, &c. She said the person was seen by her in front of a villa reclining in an arm chair, and she spoke of the view of the lake that could be seen from the roof of the house, of a wood in the neighbourhood, of the presence of a black St. Bernard dog, &c. All these details might possibly have been present in the minds of the experimenters, so the theory of thought-transference as an explanation is not pre-

cluded; but they were unaware of the following fact which Lina added, and which was afterwards verified, viz., that there were two young dogs at the villa. She stated also that M. F. L. had been attending a lady, whom she described. The description did not at all correspond with the wife of M. F. L., but did correspond with the appearance of a friend of the family, who was recognised by the description of her.

This clairvoyant dream involved a retrospective or prospective vision, since M. F. L. would not have been outside his villa in the night. Lina has frequently had this 'vue à distance.'

It is by the consciousness of a past which has belonged to our ancestors that Madame Marie de Manaceine ('Le Sommeil tiers de notre Vie,' p. 319) explains the 'sentiment of pre-existence,' as Walter Scott expresses it; the sense of 'déjà vu' belongs to this order of experiences.

Colonel de Rochas inserts a long and interesting quotation from Balzac, referring to an experience of this kind which his friend, Louis Lambert, told him of. Louis Lambert, when visiting with him a new locality, exclaimed: 'But I saw that last night in a dream!' He recognised the scene in detail, and was deeply impressed. 'Does this not give evidence of some unknown faculty of spirit locomotion equivalent to the locomotive faculties of the body? Do we not here touch a new science?' he questioned. 'It at least suggests the frequent dissociation of our two natures.'

'I own,' adds Colonel de Rochas, 'that the precision of detail (in prophetic dreams) indicates a prevision of the future so distinct that it baffles the comprehension alike of spiritualists and materialists.'

He then emphasises very interestingly the inexplicably strange fact that a sleeper is able to keep count in some way of the flight of time. Dr. Carl du Prel has discussed this enigma under the heading: 'The Watch in the Head,' in a work entitled 'Le Dedoublement du moi dans le Rêve—Philosophie du Mysticisme.' Hypnotised subjects are marvellously accurate in their measurements of time. Dr. Kerner had been told by a somnambulist to awake her at eleven o'clock. He altered the clock so that it might strike two minutes before the hour; but the somnambulist did not move until the two minutes were over; then she said: 'Now it is eleven o'clock, awake me!' Dr. Kerner adds: 'She always regulated her sleeping and her arrangements by the house clock; if that was put on or put back, it did not affect her actions, which were always in accordance with the time it should have indicated. But if the hour of the clock was changed whilst she was still awake, then her sleeping and arrangements were regulated accordingly.'

'Suggestion,' says Colonel de Rochas, 'is, happily, not generally effectual unless the subject is willing to accept it. . . For my part, some time ago, I corrected two individuals of rooted defects by causing them to see in sleep the consequences of their faults. Healings have also been effected in this way.' Remedies have been dreamed of which have proved effectual. The article closes by giving a detailed instance of this.

In the last paragraph Colonel de Rochas refers to the interesting article by Mons. Bozzano in 'Revue des Etudes Psychiques,' the first part of which we noticed in 'LIGHT' soon after it appeared, and which came under Colonel de Rochas' notice when his own article was in proof.

The continuation of Mons. Bozzano's article in the April-May number we briefly referred to (July 13th). It is too long to reproduce, but one experience of the writer's is so particularly interesting in relation to this article on 'Dreams' in 'Annales Psychiques,' and also supports so strongly Mons. Bozzano's contention that the sentiment of 'déjà vu' is attributable to a premonitory dream, that we must subjoin it to this article.

Mons. Bozzano relates that last summer he was intending to visit a village in the Maritime Alps. Until a few days before his departure he was unaware of the existence of this village. On the morning of his departure, having been suddenly awakened by a bell, he was aware that he had been dreaming, but the subject of his dreams was so insignificant that he did not find it worth while to pause upon the recollection. He dreamed that he had dismounted from a carriage, in the middle of a little Alpine village. A few feet off a

fountain bubbled and poured out abundance of water. In front was a young peasant woman, carrying a child, who looked at him fixedly, as if in an ecstasy. Suddenly a big black dog came out from behind the fountain, bounded towards the young woman, seized a piece of bread that the child had in its hand and escaped with its prey. That was all; it was quite insignificant, and a few minutes afterwards was forgotten. On the afternoon of the same day he reached his intended destination. There he found the very scene of his dream, the fountain, the peasant woman with the child in her arms, gazing at him attentively with the expression of ecstatic astonishment. Up to this point, no recollection of his dream recurred to his mind; when suddenly a big black dog came out from behind the fountain, fell back whimpering, then bounded towards the woman, seized a piece of bread from the child's hand, and fled. Then the sensation of 'déjà vu' gripped hold of Mons. Bozzano, and he recalled the dream of the morning.

This personal experience decided Mons. Bozzano's conviction as to the origin of this frequently occurring sensation.

H. A. D.

#### A CONDITION OF NERVOUS BREAKDOWN.

A gentleman, at present residing at a seaside place on the Norfolk coast, sends us the following appeal for help in the restoration of his health:—

'Marion Crawford's "Mr. Isaacs," who, I take it, was a Theosophist, claimed to be able, by virtue of occult agencies, to dispel diseases not of an organic character. If any such power really does exist I should be most grateful to be put in communication with anyone who could restore me to health from a condition of nervous breakdown.

'Last autumn, under stress of very severe and persistent worry from outside friction, I sank into a trance and became unable to react against an influence which worked upon my nervous system till it gave way, with resulting loss of power in the legs and a loss of mental and physical vigour that has never, though now long in favourable circumstances, been regained.

'Seeing that the cause of the breakdown was primarily emotional, and I am assured that it is functional in character, and not organic, it seems to me a case that could be successfully dealt with by what, for lack of knowledge of the correct term, I may call transfusion of energy by the exertion of the influence of a qualified agent. Normally of much energy of mind and body, I am now in very great prostration of both; and yet there is nothing lacking but nervous vitality, which at the age of thirty-one ought surely to be recoverable. I cannot afford to spend money in mere experiments, but if you know any agency that could restore me to health in a month I will gladly pay £30 either to the agent or to any object he or you may nominate.'

Responses to this appeal, addressed to 'H. J.,' care of Editor of 'LIGHT,' will be duly forwarded to our correspondent. We sincerely hope that he may be speedily restored to perfect health.

#### SPIRITUALISTS IN A THUNDERSTORM.

We learn with deep regret of a tragic occurrence by which two Spiritualists lost their lives, and four others were injured by lightning, on Sunday last, during a terrific thunderstorm which raged in the outskirts of Huddersfield. A party of Bradford Spiritualists, men, women, and children, were proceeding in a char-a-banc to a united meeting of Yorkshire Spiritualists at Bradley Gardens, Kirkheaton. At the bottom of a hill near the gardens the majority of the party left the vehicle, intending to walk the remaining distance. Six men walking together were suddenly struck to the ground by lightning. Alfred Marshall (fifty-four), of Bradford, and Frank Hodgson (twenty-eight), a lodger with Marshall, were killed outright. Fred Watson, head warehouseman, Laisterdyke; Joseph Collins, master tailor, Little Horton; and Joseph Whitehead, insurance agent, Bradford, and secretary of the Yorkshire Union of Spiritualists, were all seriously injured, and were removed to Mirfield Memorial Hospital. The sixth man, Thomas Wade, mechanic, Bradford, was also injured, but was able to proceed home. Watson is fearfully injured about the chest, and, like all the other injured men, he complains of pains in the head. When placed on the ambulance he appeared to be in terrible agony, and piteously begged to be allowed to die. Collins was struck on the legs, of which he has lost the use. The two men who were killed were upon the list of speakers appointed to address the meeting that was to have been held, but was, of course, abandoned.

CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL  
SOCIETY:  
EUROPEAN SECTION.

A very successful Convention of the European Section of the Theosophical Society was held in London from Friday, July 12th, to Monday, July 15th. The absence of Mrs. Besant, who is remaining in India this year, was expected to reduce the attendance at the public meetings on Saturday and Sunday evenings, but, notwithstanding this, large audiences assembled in the Small Queen's Hall on both occasions, the hall being crowded to excess on Sunday evening.

The Convention began with a reception of members in the rooms of the section, 28, Albemarle-street, on Friday evening. The rooms were densely crowded, and it was felt that more accommodation would have been eminently desirable.

The business meeting on Saturday morning was attended by about 120 members. This was, of course, devoted mainly to formal business, but short addresses were delivered by representatives of foreign sections and by the vice-president of the society, Mr. A. P. Sinnett, who took the chair.

MR. BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, speaking for India, said that the society was extending the area of its work. It was bridging over the differences which existed among the many castes, and was counteracting the materialistic tendencies which had followed the introduction of Western methods of thought into Indian life. The extension of the work had been largely due to Mrs. Besant's efforts of the last few years, and the new Central Hindu College which she had been the means of founding, was an evidence of the substantial nature of the help given to India by the members of the Theosophical Society.

MRS. WINDUST, on behalf of the Dutch Section, spoke of the growth of the society in Holland. It had extended its premises, and its literary activity was constantly increasing. A new field had been opened in the Dutch West Indies, where a branch had been formed.

MR. LEADBEATER gave an interesting account of his impressions of America formed during his recent visit. He had travelled about 20,000 miles, and had visited towns in all parts. Everywhere he found that the subject of Theosophy was received in a fair manner, and was accorded a good hearing. Without exception the papers were ready to give unbiassed reports of his lectures, though, as the reporter generally wanted the whole of Theosophy explained in five minutes, the reports were not in all cases entirely correct. The intense and universal interest in psychic matters was referred to, an interest especially manifested in the extraordinary spread of Spiritualism and Christian Science.

MR. SINNETT's concluding address was listened to with great interest. Theosophy, he said, had appealed to different people in different ways—to some as a religious or an ethical movement; to others as occultism; or again as an investigation into the origins of religions. He wished to emphasise what he regarded as the special feature of the present movement which had made it a success, while older but similar movements having the same ultimate source had failed. This was the scientific statement of the laws of spiritual growth which had been put forward for the first time, which formed the main point of difference between the old and the new movements. We were now able to support the movement upon the basis of a precise and accurate knowledge concerning human evolution. The work needed was to spread this knowledge far and wide, that others might build upon it what structures they liked; the basis of all would be the conception of human evolution through the reincarnations of the soul, guided by the law of Karma.

The afternoon of Saturday was devoted to an informal gathering of members in the rooms of the society.

In the evening Mr. Bertram Keightley and Mr. Mead addressed the public meeting in the Small Queen's Hall.

MR. KEIGHTLEY dealt with the speculations as to the immediate future of humanity which have been prominent in contemporary literature and pointed out that almost all such speculations ignored what he regarded as one of the most important factors—that of religion. It seemed to be tacitly assumed that the influence of religion on the future

of the race would be almost *nil*. With this view he entirely disagreed. Religion was based upon the higher emotional part of man's nature, and, while that remained, religion must exist as a means of satisfying it. Religion was not to be regarded as a mere set of intellectual propositions, but an integral part of the emotional life of man. Another factor, which was also generally ignored in the speculations referred to, was that of the introduction of new ideals. We find if we look back over the history of our own country that there has been a great change in national ideals. A century ago the dominant ideal was that of a narrow insular patriotism which had now given place to a wider patriotism. It was part of the work of the society to act as the channel of new knowledge and thought, to aid the progress of the world.

MR. MEAD, whose subject was 'The Gospels and the Gospel,' spoke on his favourite topic, the origins of Christianity. He dealt with the views of the Higher Criticism as represented in its two great divisions of the 'moderate' and the 'advanced' schools; the first, while rejecting the older dogma of the verbal inspiration of the Bible, still holding to the divinity of Jesus; the second having as its characteristic the rejection of the special divinity of Jesus and of all events which could not be explained on the lines of ordinary experience. The 'advanced' view thus rejects all 'miracles.' The plenary inspiration of the Bible could now be regarded as an abandoned hypothesis so far as the vast majority of educated people were concerned, but the destructive Higher Criticism not merely upset that idea, but also undermined all that most Christian people would regard as the essence of their religion, and yet the professors of it were leading teachers within the Church itself, and the future theologians of the Church were their pupils. Mr. Mead put forward a view which he regarded as intermediate between the 'advanced' and the 'orthodox,' which might, he thought, be the basis of a common platform. It was substantially that of the Gnostic schools of early Christianity. They held the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, not as that of the man Jesus, but of the power which overshadowed him—of which he was a representative on earth. The Christ had appeared before in other forms, and would appear again. We could not limit the wisdom of Eternity to one little manifestation in one little part of the earth. There was a great hierarchy of beings which stretched upwards from humanity in an unbroken series to Deity itself, and from that hierarchy the religious teachers of the world were chosen.

On Sunday evening the speakers were the vice-president of the society, Mr. Sinnett, and Mr. Leadbeater.

MR. SINNETT, whose subject was 'Theosophy—the Science of the Future,' began by quoting the well-known phrase, 'All the world's a stage,' &c., and said that the physical world was like the stage on which the players acted, but which was only a part of the whole theatre. Behind the scenes were others at work managing affairs and essential to the play, though invisible; so, but to a still greater extent, the invisible worlds around us entered into our physical life. The physical senses were limited in all directions, though there was no limit in the scale of vibrations of the external world. Beyond the physical vibrations were those of astral matter, and these would soon be a subject for scientific research, which already dealt with matter beyond the condition of the chemical elements and with bodies smaller than atoms. The limit of physical research in both the infinitely little and the infinitely great had already been reached, but along occult research we possessed a mass of information which science would have to take into consideration. When it did so, the conflict between religion and science would be finished. The progress of the Theosophical movement had been marvellous, but still greater results would be obtained in the coming century.

MR. LEADBEATER, who followed Mr. Sinnett, dealt with 'Possibilities of Human Consciousness,' and spoke of the various planes into which theosophical teachings divided the universe. Clairvoyance was a capacity to receive vibrations beyond the ordinary limits. Its lowest form was etheric vision, dealing with the higher states of physical matter, and those possessing it were able to see through ordinarily opaque objects. We had, however, more than physical matter in our make-up; to begin with, there

was also astral matter. Incidentally Mr. Leadbeater touched upon the problem of death, and said that at death man laid down his physical garment but still retained his astral body. The astral senses were much keener than the physical. The aura surrounding a person would be seen, and much which was concealed from ordinary vision. Sight upon the mental plane brought into view a still grander world—the heaven world which religions gave as the reward of right living. With extended consciousness there were extended opportunities of helping others in all directions. The time was at hand when the higher powers would be within man's grasp, but they must be used only for the benefit of our fellow-men.

### ENCOURAGEMENT FOR INQUIRERS.

When the subject of spirit return is introduced into conversation one is frequently met by the remark, 'If I could see someone I know, or get writing I could consider a test, it would give me faith.' I think such people must be in earnest, and I should therefore like to add to what has already been written by others, an account of my own personal experience in this subject, having had to grope my way quite unassisted. I am sure good proof will be given to all who approach, and follow up, the inquiries in a reverent manner.

Last year I lost, in one week, by death, my father, to whom I was more than ordinarily attached, and my own son (the latter eight and a-half years of age). At that time I knew nothing of Spiritualism. I was reared in a Christian home with the usual prejudices, and dread of death. I say usual, for I find even those who consider themselves 'saved,' which I did not claim to be, have a shrinking from death, probably born of the vague idea as to what follows it. I suffered, as I think only a mother does suffer in the loss of a child who has formed her whole world. Yet I could not think God, who I had been taught loved me as a parent, could mean me to suffer the anguish I must endure if He took my boy right out of my life. No human father would deal so harshly with his child. I then began to doubt the truth of such a doctrine, and to cast about for an explanation. No matter how beautiful the home to which my child was taken, I felt that his little life would lack something, for he had loved me dearly and must miss me as I did him, though I would not bring him back to suffer. Good friends tried to comfort me with descriptions of the life in heaven, but this had a very disquieting effect upon me; it was so unlikely to prove sufficient for a bright intelligent lad. The clergy were kind, but knew too little of the subject.

Just at this point a chance (?) remark from a stranger brought Miss Marryat's book, 'There is no Death,' under my notice. What an awakening! I then read all the books I could get upon the subject of spirit communion and return, and hearing of Planchette I procured one. Messages came quite readily from some of my friends in the spirit world (I have many there). I urged them to bring my father and my boy, and received their promise to do so if I would be patient. I had not long to wait. My father wrote first; then he brought my boy. Do you know what it is to lose your most valued possession, and then have it restored to you? Try, then, to imagine what joy this was to me. At first we were sorrowful, but they tried so sweetly to comfort me, and when I found, as I did by the character of the communications, that they knew and were interested in the incidents of my daily life, I ceased to feel that I had lost them.

One evening I was told that if I would go to a séance they would try to come and show themselves to me. I quickly journeyed from my home in the South of England to London and visited Mr. Husk. I went as a stranger, having made no appointment. I simply offered my card, and, finding it necessary, gave a reference. My bereavement was a thing unknown to anyone present; indeed, I was a total stranger to all in the room. The séance room was quite ordinary—a round table in the centre, a dozen or so cane-seated chairs, a musical box, a zither, and a candlestick comprising the whole of the furniture. Across the window, which overlooked a garden, was a crimson cloth curtain. This excluded all light except the glimmer of a candle, which was extinguished as we took our places and

linked our fingers each with those of his next neighbour. We were soon treated to beautiful music upon the zither, and the musical box was wound up from time to time by our spirit friends. Presently quite powerful voices were heard in conversation with some of the sitters. Then followed the arrival of 'John King,' who bade me welcome. From such reading as I had done I had gathered that I must not expect at my first sitting to receive my own spirit friends. I was therefore much surprised by being gently tapped upon the shoulder and compelled to look in front, where stood my sister's late husband. This was the more surprising to me because I expected that, if any visitor came for me, it would be my father or the boy. The vision lasted about two minutes, then quickly faded from my sight. Other spirits came for those present. During this time my hand was being gently stroked by little fingers. Then once more I was touched upon the shoulder and there, quite close, stood my dear old dad. He has a clever pleasing face, good shaped nose, high forehead, and long beard, a face not easily mistaken. I heard others remark upon his looks. Naturally I was excited with the meeting, *but I was not deceived*. I gazed upon his happy face until it had faded from my sight, and all was dark again. Whilst other forms were appearing, a voice, which I recognised, said to me, 'Did you see me, dear?' I exclaimed, 'Why dad, you are speaking to me. See you? Oh yes, I saw you. It was beautiful.' 'So glad, dear child,' said he. 'I want to tell you, Flo, that I am afraid your boy cannot come to-night as he may not be able to build up a form, but he will try to come next time.' I replied that I felt disappointed and was told to be patient. He talked to me for a few more minutes, and then left me. Shortly after this the powerful voice of 'John King' requested 'Mrs. L.' to 'stand up, please.' I complied with the request and from the centre of the table came the figure of my boy; but the face was not so very true to life, though I have since remembered that it was like what he had grown in his last few days of earth life, and which I had tried to forget. I said: 'Well, this may be my boy, but it is not very like him.' A sad look stole over his face, and the vision faded. After the lapse of a few minutes I was once again ordered to stand up, and then my boy rose before me again. I exclaimed: 'Oh, yes, this is Cyril,' and his little face smiled so sweetly, and he nodded his head in a jaunty way that had been peculiar to him from babyhood. After the vision had gone my hand was again gently stroked from time to time throughout the whole sitting. My father returned to talk to me for a little time, telling me not to grieve, but be glad. I said: 'Yes; but it is hard to let you both go again.' 'Yes, yes,' he replied, 'I know, dear; but we shall not leave you, though you do not see us, and you will come again. Give my love to Ada and tell her,' &c. After this wonderful sitting I showed my locket to a gentleman who had sat next to me, asking him if he had ever seen anyone like the picture there displayed. He quickly replied: 'Oh, yes; this is the old gentleman who came for you to-night.' This, again, should prove to the sceptical that I was not led away by my feelings, as so many like to suppose. Those who know me would describe me as cool and level-headed, a most unlikely person to give way to hysteria; indeed, my friends have felt my arguments in favour of Spiritualism the more convincing owing to my matter-of-fact way in dealing with most subjects.

Should my experiences be read by any sorrowing, bereaved mother, let me say to such an one: 'Try the spirits for yourself, whether they be good or evil. Take the comfort which God in His mercy has provided for us; He does not mean that we shall be cut off from our dear ones, and if you, through your unbelief, hold aloof from this, you are forcing your child to lose one of the greatest pleasures God has provided for us.'

My dear boy watches for our evening talks with an eagerness that equals my own. We chat with each other now with the freedom enjoyed when he was in the flesh, revealing constantly his old characteristics and love of fun. To this has been added a beautiful faith in the love of God, through Whom he has reached such perfect happiness. Does any mother ask for more than this?

FLORENCE L.



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

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## Light,

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### POTENTIAL IMMORTALITY.

A book by Dr. S. D. McConnell, on 'The Evolution of Immortality' (London: Macmillan and Co.), calls for serious attention. In some respects it is new: in other respects, though not new, it is fresh and original in tone: though we had better say at once that the utmost we can profess is that there is only just enough of substance in the argument to warrant it being sent down to a jury.

Dr. McConnell, in company with multitudes of other thoughtful and humane men, has evidently been disturbed by the old horror of eternal punishment; but he says very little about this, and goes behind that subject to a previous question: Is man naturally immortal at all? His answer is an emphatic *No*. This belief, he boldly says, is not a Christian but a Pagan belief: and even paganism has not always cared to father it. He goes boldly over the borderland, to Science, and invites us to a study of Spiritual Biology. Supernaturalism (whatever that may mean) is abhorrent to him. All is natural: and, if a 'soul' achieves immortality, it does so only as man emerged from some lower type of being.

Dr. McConnell makes Greek influence and the Platonic doctrine responsible for the intrusion of the notion of natural immortality into the Christian Church. For some time it was withstood, he says, notably by Theophilus, Irenæus, Clement, and Athanasius, who assailed it as 'a pagan error.' He says bluntly: 'A pagan speculation has masqueraded so long as an elemental Christian truth that now, when the intelligent world is well disposed to receive and comprehend Jesus' revelation of the life to come, Plato stands across the path and is commonly mistaken for Christ.' 'Mind,' he says, 'is something else than the product of organised matter'; and Huxley and Clifford are cleverly quoted as to, at all events, its independence. Huxley scoffed at the idea of being able to trace the steps by which the passage from molecular movements to states of consciousness is effected; and Clifford helped us greatly with the admission that the psychical and the physical are 'on two utterly different platforms': 'the physical facts go along by themselves, and the psychical facts go along by themselves.' This helps Dr. McConnell also, who pushes home the question: 'Is the possibility of individual immortality only reached at a point more or less advanced in the progress of man himself? In fine, is man *immortal*?—or is he only *immortable*?' We know his answer.

But, at this point, another barrier is planted in our way. What if there is a distinction between immortality and bare

persistence beyond what we call death? Dr. McConnell only consents to use the word 'immortality' in a very general way, and as possibly meaning only temporary survival after death. He wishes, above all things, to be strictly scientific. 'The soul,' he says, 'is an organism'; and 'the condition of every organism continuing in being is that it shall be able to function, and that it shall correspond to its environment': and he does not see why these conditions may not be violated hereafter as well as here, and with a similar result. Why may there not even be the possibility of suicide there as here? 'It is not easy to conceive the possibility of a conscious personality being kept alive against its own determination to make an end of itself.' All he aims at, then, is to establish, if he can, 'a means of transit' from life here to life there.

All this seems to lead on to what is known as 'Conditional Immortality,' but Dr. McConnell will have none of it. It is arbitrary, unnatural, unscientific. The Conditional Immortality people, he says, go upon the vicious assumption that all human beings are possessed of the same natural quality; and they treat immortality as a gift,—something imported from without, and for a consideration. This is bad. Immortality must be regarded as natural; and, if anyone wins to it, it must be 'because such a life has already reached a stage of spiritual fixedness and stability which will make survival "natural" and destruction "unnatural" to it.' In truth, 'it is a biological process we are seeking to trace, and a biological classification we attempt to discover.' It comes under the category of 'Natural selection,' and all ecclesiastical talk about regeneration by baptism or sacramental efficacy through the Eucharist, is idle. And even 'faith in Christ' as an effective cause, is idle too, unless we make it naturally effective. As Dr. McConnell says: 'It depends upon what you mean by "Christ." If the Christ be figured only as a personage in human history, and his work as occupying a certain place and date in space and time, then the objection would be fatal.' But 'the eternal spirit of life is not functionless until set in play in an upper chamber in Jerusalem, A.D. 33; and it is not essential that the work done by the Christ should be confined to those who knew him by his Judean name of Jesus';—a curiously fruitful and thought-provoking remark!

Not 'Conditional Immortality,' then; and yet a condition. Dr. McConnell finds it in goodness, righteousness, the evolution of a saintly conscience. 'The place of escape from out the closed ring of what we call nature is not the body, nor the mind, but conscience. If that gate be not found, or if it be too narrow for egress, there cannot, in the nature of the case, be any thoroughfare.' The enduring life for man must, he says, be reached through his highest quality; and the highest is the ethical. Its evolution has been slow, but it is the culmination: and it is that which will enable him, if at all, to hold his own and persist.

It is a bold stand to take, in face of the formidable array of facts, suggestions, difficulties and prepossessions that confront him: and we hardly see how he is to get his verdict. But this part of the subject is too great to be gone into at the close of a notice like this: we shall have to return to it, mainly for the purpose of testing the soundness of the 'biological' conclusion that it is goodness or the development of conscience which grows an immortal soul. Goodness will help in the march on, and conscience will set the march to music, but neither can cover the whole ground; as we think we shall see.

In the meantime, we must just glance at his somewhat courageous quotation of an instance—Jesus Christ—of whom he says: 'Let it be well understood right here that the question involved is not of the "supernatural" as opposed to the natural. If Jesus survived his own death,

it was because it was natural for him and such as him (*sic*) to do so.' So 'the Gospel contained in the resurrection of Christ is the last term in an evolutionary process which begins with the eternal chaos and reaches its culmination in the man become immortal. . . . This is nature's way, and nature's way is God's way. This way is the "Way of Life," from the protoplasmic slime to the Son of Man.' We need not turn aside to inquire how the resurrection of Christ was effected; suffice it to say that in Dr. McConnell's opinion it was natural and a specimen. He even goes so far as to say that the apostles took his general view, and that 'their argument was that the man Jesus had definitely realised the process whereby a natural human being might attain to the possession of a psychical life, so exalted in quality and so tenacious in substance, that corporal death could not break it down.' This, at all events, brings into a penetrating light the thesis he is anxious to maintain.

#### SOME GOOD CASES OF CLAIRVOYANCE.

Some good cases of clairvoyance are reported in 'Die Uebersinnliche Welt,' by Count Günther Rosenhagen. A good many years ago the writer, on hearing of a military friend's marriage, was told 'the lady is a clairvoyante,' which fact he received with a smile of amusement. On calling on the lady he noticed that during the conversation she began suddenly to show signs of uneasiness, and on being asked whether she did not feel well, she explained, 'No, but I don't know what is the matter with my husband. On his way home he suddenly turned back, walked some steps in the wrong direction, and is now again coming towards home. The shutters of the windows of the room where this conversation was held were closed at the time on account of the heat. When the husband reached home it was found that what his wife had 'seen' had literally taken place.

Some years later the husband took part in the Franco-German war, and Count Rosenhagen was put in charge of a hospital in the same town where the wife of his friend was living. One day he received a wire that Captain V. M., his friend, had died of wounds, and he was asked to break the news to the widow. She received him cheerfully, and told him she knew her husband was perfectly well, though she had not heard of him for a week. 'Are you sure?' asked Count Rosenhagen, remembering her claim to be clairvoyant. 'Quite sure,' was the answer, and though he told her what had been communicated to him, she shook her head and maintained she knew her husband was well. Next morning another wire made him go to the lady to ask if she would like her husband's body to be brought home. 'It is all nonsense,' she said; 'my husband is not dead.' As, however, an answer had to be sent she asked to have the body brought home. On its arrival she insisted upon the coffin being reopened, and, behold! the body was that of the husband's brother who served in the same regiment.

Even this, however, was not all. A few days later Count Rosenhagen was lunching with the lady in question, when suddenly she uttered an exclamation of pain, dropped her fork, and rose from her chair with an ashen face. 'Leave me alone,' she said; 'you can do nothing for me. My husband has just been killed on the battlefield.' Count Rosenhagen, in going away, wrote down the date and hour. Next day the news came that Captain V. M. had been killed at the very time his clairvoyant wife had indicated.

THE 'REFEREE' 'TEST SÉANCES.'—As our readers are doubtless aware, the columns of the 'Referee' have been open for some weeks to correspondence upon Spiritualism. Mr. Maskelyne was challenged by 'A Searcher after Truth,' to attend some séances for materialisation phenomena under severe test conditions. In the last issue of the 'Referee' it was announced that the test séances will commence this week, but Mr. Maskelyne will not be present. The names of the committee of observation are not yet divulged, but the hope is expressed that within three weeks a report of the proceedings will be published. It is alleged that by the conditions accepted every possibility of fraud on the part of the medium is absolutely precluded. We await results with some amount of curiosity.

#### OLD-TIME EXPERIENCES.

(Continued from page 344.)

Materialising mediums differ from each other in many ways. They are all in some way characteristic, not only as to the phenomena, but also in the *mise en scène* of the séance. Mrs. Gray used to stand beside the cabinet, or walk about between it and the sitters, her son, Mr. Hough, being in the cabinet. The first part of these séances was held in total darkness, and the fact that during this time the mediums were not in any way 'controlled' by the sitters—by being held, tied, or shut up—was, of course, very unsatisfactory, especially to those who came prepared to believe in a future life or not, according as they judged these mediums honest or otherwise. For my part I can hardly realise the mental condition of anyone who would say, 'I suspect Mrs. Gray herself touched me surreptitiously in the dark, therefore Spiritualism is humbug; and, alas! there is no future life'; yet such people exist.

I must say the dark séances of these mediums were unsatisfactory to me, not only because the mediums were not under control, but also because the 'spirit lights' that then appeared were uncommonly like fingers, waved about and rubbed together, which had phosphorus on them, although I never could detect the slightest smell of phosphorus, however near my nose they came. We used to have the usual dark-séance fitful ringing of a bell and thrumming of a guitar, and then a female form came close to the sitters and whispered to them, and touched them, sometimes allowing an *habitué* whom she could trust to take hold of her veil-covered hand. In the light séance which followed, the spirits sometimes materialised under Mrs. Gray's skirt, which trailed some eighteen inches on the ground behind her. She was generally standing about four or five feet from the cabinet when this happened; the skirt, which had previously lain close to her figure, would begin to be inflated behind her, or at the side, and after puffing out and falling again once or twice, it would swell up more than ever, and 'Colonel Baker,' or some other cabinet spirit, would crawl from under it. My readers may remember that this phenomenon of dress inflation was observed with Angélique Cottin, the 'electric girl' who puzzled the scientists some fifty years ago; any article of furniture that was touched by Angélique's inflated skirt was violently repelled or overturned.

'Joan of Arc' was a frequent visitor at Mrs. Gray's séances. She was a very good materialisation, and sang the 'Marseillaise' (in French) in a strange, weird, quivering voice, at the same time waving a *tricolore*. A small table stood on one side of the cabinet, and 'Joan' used to rise up to that table and stand on it. She certainly did not climb up on it, but appeared to float up to it, singing and waving her flag, and descending afterwards in the same mysterious way. Somehow, I never took much interest in the séances of these mediums; the light was generally poor, and the cabinet spirits showed very little intelligence, and were to me unsympathetic. I have met people who said that one séance with these mediums was enough for them, for there was an atmosphere of trickery about the place. For my part, I went time after time until I had fully satisfied myself the materialisations were thoroughly genuine. One evening there, I obtained a good 'specimen' of *how not to behave at a séance*. There were not many sitters that evening, but among them were three women whom I had noticed in the ante-room, for they sat in a corner, with their heads together, whispering and laughing, and staring insolently at us others. From the very beginning of the séance these three women talked to each other out loud, regardless of the request of Mrs. Gray for silence, and our 'hushes.' 'Well I call this humbug, and that's all about it'; 'Whatever made us come'; 'There's three dollars thrown away!' and so on, and so on! The consequence was a completely spoiled séance; inasmuch that when those three foolish women had flounced out, Mrs. Gray offered free tickets for the next séance to the other sitters. My experience shows me clearly that any expression of doubt or

disbelief affects the phenomena disastrously; and I only wonder that they are not completely inhibited by the tyings, sealings and undressings so commonly resorted to by people who distrust not only the medium, but also, apparently, their own senses and intellects.

I heard that Mr. Hough gave a private and curious exhibition of 'thought reading' (if one chooses so to regard it), so I made an appointment for a séance for one afternoon, and this is what happened. I stood beside Mr. Hough in front of a table on which was a board about 18 in. square, bearing the letters of the alphabet; and he grasped my right hand firmly in his left hand, telling me to hold out my index finger as a pointer; and then he told me to ask a mental question. Hardly was a question formulated in my mind when Mr. Hough jerked my hand vigorously here and there over the board, so that my finger pointed to different letters in succession, moving from letter to letter so quickly that I had some difficulty in 'catching on' to them. I quite forget the questions I asked (some half dozen of them), but I remember that in every instance the answers were appropriate, but in none of them was anything told that I did not know myself.

This was also the case with Mr. Mansfield, 'the spirits' postman,' with whom I had a sitting about this time. He gave me pieces of paper and a pencil, and told me to write letters to friends that have passed over, addressing them by their full name, and then to sign these letters, and fold them carefully up; then he went out of the room. I wrote about a dozen letters as directed, so secretly that I hardly think he would have seen what I wrote had he been looking over my shoulder. When he came back he pointed to a gum bottle on the table, telling me to fasten down the flaps of my letters, and this I did, making them about an inch square. Then with one hand he mixed them all together in the middle of the table, whilst the first finger of the other hand began to tap, tap, tap, on the table as if he were operating a telegraphic transmitter. Presently he said, 'I hear the name of (let us say) Thomas Smith,' at the same time picking out one of the little squares and throwing it across the table to me. Then he took a pencil and quickly wrote an answer to this letter in this fashion: 'Dear Cousin James Brown, of course I remember the day you fell in the river. It is a blessed privilege to be able to write to you like this. I am often with you. We are all greatly interested in your search after the truth. Your affectionate cousin, Thomas Smith.' In every instance the reply was found to fit the letter picked out; but in none did the answer convey any information—not even as much as might have been got out of my own memory by 'thought reading.' For example, I asked a lady to whom she wished a trunk delivered which she had left in my care shortly before she died; and the reply was that the spirits were sorry that Mary Jones was not able to be present that afternoon to answer my question about her trunk. I was too green an investigator in those days to lay any traps, such as writing letters to living people, or to fictitious personages. I must, however, say, in justice to Mansfield, that several people have told me that they had obtained satisfactory tests of identity through his mediumship. Mansfield remained perfectly cool and collected all the time of the sitting, whereas Hough got very excited, almost hysterical, while the answers were being given.

I may say here that there was a similar unsatisfactory result as regards the identity of the communicating intelligence in the case of a sitting I had in London with Dr. Slade, during the proceedings instituted against him by Dr. Ray Lankester. Dr. Slade offered to cancel my appointment, but I told him that the Police Court proceedings had only made me more anxious to have a séance with him, as I should be able then to form my own judgment not only of Dr. Slade but also of Dr. Ray Lankester. The conclusion I came to, I remember, was that Slade's phenomena were undoubtedly genuine; and that Ray Lankester, therefore, was a rather interesting and instructive compound of a conceited fellow and a wily self-advertiser.

'CHRONOS.'

(To be continued.)

## EVIDENCE OF SPIRIT IDENTITY.

Monsieur Segundo Oliver, of Barcelona, a remarkable drawing medium and an indefatigable investigator, has sent me a communication which he wishes me to lay before the readers of 'LIGHT.' He writes as follows:—

'In November, 1880, I was asked by Monsieur C. M. to go to the house of one of his friends. I accepted the invitation and went at once. There I found three gentlemen, well-informed, but incredulous, who desired in good faith to arrive at the truth. They asked me to try for the production of some phenomena which might satisfy them of the reality of communication with departed spirits. I told them that my special mediumistic gifts lay in the direction of diagnosing diseases, without resort to auscultation, or the sense of hearing, without questioning the invalids, or using any of the methods ordinarily adopted by medical men. Two of the gentlemen suffered from chronic complaints, and especially entreated me to indicate to them what organs were affected. I made them no promises, but decided, if possible, to prove to them the truth of my professions, and having been furnished with the necessary writing materials, I asked them to withdraw for a few seconds. As soon as I was alone my hand wrote as follows, quite mechanically, and without the concurrence of my will:—

"Isidora—age fifty years; born at San Sebastian; died on March 31st, 1870; disease, intestinal cancer; left three sons—their names and ages, P. fifteen years, C. nineteen years, M. twenty-five years."

'Having traced these words and figures, without the smallest notion of the meaning of the communication, the pencil fell from my hand and I obtained nothing more. I thereupon called to the three gentlemen to re-enter, and without telling them the nature of the communication I proceeded to read it to them inversely; that is to say, I commenced with the number "twenty-five M." and so continued. "Gentlemen," I said to them, "during the few moments that you have been absent, has any one of you thought of the number twenty-five, and of the letter M. at the side of such number?" They all replied that they had not. "Have you thought of the number nineteen preceded by the letter C.?" The response was again in the negative. "Have you thought of the number fifteen, with the letter P. preceding it?" All replied that they had not. I continued to interrogate them in the same way until I came to the name "Isidora," which I did not utter—the name at the beginning of the message. The responses were always in the negative, that is to say, they had none of them thought of anything which my hand had written during their absence. "Very good, gentlemen," I said, "since you assure me that you have not thought of anything which my hand has written, it is quite impossible that you have suggested these words to me, or that I can have read them in your own thoughts; but here is the communication, and as I do not understand it, I beg of you to help me to interpret it. It is possible that the words come from a spirit who knows you; has any one of you known a lady of the name of 'Isidora'?" "Certainly I knew such a lady," responded one of the gentlemen. "What age was she?" Answer: "Fifty years." "Where was she born?" Answer: "At San Sebastian." "Do you know the time of her death?" Answer: "Yes, the 31st of March, 1870." "Of what disease?" Answer: "Intestinal cancer." "How many sons did she leave?" Answer: "Three." "What is the first letter of the name of the youngest, and what was his age?" Answer: "P., fifteen years." "And the second?" Answer: "C., nineteen years." "And the eldest?" "M., twenty-five years." "Do you recognise in this communication the identity of a spirit... or perhaps it is an indiscretion on my part to ask you who she was?" Answer: "No, she is my mother. All that she has said is exactly true, and I affirm that I had not been thinking of her, and that instead of desiring any proof of identity, which she has now given us, I had been hoping to obtain a diagnosis of my disease." This gentleman, extremely surprised and overwhelmed with emotion by the communication he had received, begged me to ask the spirit of his mother if she had any counsel to impart to him. I accordingly took the pencil in my right hand, but judge of my astonishment, and the gentleman's intense gratification, when the pencil traced in five minutes the exact portrait of his mother! The surprise was the greater when I told him that I did not know how to draw and that I had never learned to do so. It is impossible to describe the gentleman's joy at possessing his mother's portrait, especially as, during her lifetime, she had never consented to be photographed. In the end I obtained proofs which satisfied the gentlemen completely; but what surprised them most was the diagnosis which I was able to give of their maladies, without touching the gentlemen at all, and without even putting to them a single question. One of



them, a medical man and apothecary, exclaimed: "You have more skill in diagnosing than is possessed by all the professors in the world." I had not much trouble in making these gentlemen comprehend, however, that none of the merit was due to me, and that my own part was solely the important one of enabling the spirits, through my mediumship, to give proofs of immortality to all who sought them in good faith, without prejudice, and in purity of heart.

Not having authority to give the names of those present, I am obliged to withhold them from publication, but I may say that one of them is a professor of mathematics, the second a doctor of medicine and pharmacy, and the third a priest, who gave me the promise that he would never preach against Spiritualism.

Mons. Segundo Oliver, who resides at Barcelona, No. 9, Calle de Fernando Puig (San Gervasio), has obtained by his mediumship six original designs; one of these I enclose, and Segundo Oliver has asked me to say that amongst the readers of 'LIGHT' may be a medium who is able to explain the signification of this symbolical design.

JOSEPH DE KRONHELM.

Gajsin, Podolia, Russia.

[We are unable to reproduce the design referred to, but it may be seen at our office by those who wish to inspect it. The communication of our esteemed correspondent is an extremely interesting one, but it would be much more valuable, of course, if the accuracy of Mons. Segundo Oliver's narrative had been attested by the three gentlemen present at the séance.—ED. 'LIGHT']

### A WEIRD STORY OF A VAMPIRE.

The name of Augustus J. C. Haro is of course familiar to many of our readers as that of the author of a number of charming books of biography and of 'wanderings' in many lands. They have all been very popular, but his 'Story of My Life,' in six volumes (published by George Allen, Charing Cross-road), will probably be regarded as, upon the whole, even more intensely interesting than any of his previous works, with the single exception, perhaps, of his 'Memorials of a Quiet Life,' which has run through no fewer than nineteen editions. In the 'Story of My Life' he gives graphic accounts of places he has visited, people he has met, and conversations in which he has taken part, during all the years between 1834 and 1900, and he tells, especially in Volume IV., some remarkable stories. Here is one which he says he heard while dining with Lord Ravenscroft in 1874, Captain Fisher being the narrator:—

'Fisher may sound a very plebeian name, but this family is of very ancient lineage, and for many hundreds of years they have possessed a very curious old place in Cumberland, which bears the weird name of Croglin Grange. The great characteristic of the house is that never at any period of its very long existence has it been more than one storey high, but it has a terrace from which large grounds sweep away towards the church in the hollow, and a fine distant view.

'When, in lapse of years, the Fishers outgrew Croglin Grange in family and fortune, they were wise enough not to destroy the long-standing characteristic of the place by adding another storey to the house, but they went away to the South, to reside at Thorncombe, near Guilford, and they let Croglin Grange.

'They were extremely fortunate in their tenants, two brothers and a sister. They heard their praises from all quarters. To their poorer neighbours they were all that is most kind and beneficent, and their neighbours of a higher class spoke of them as a most welcome addition to the little society of the neighbourhood. On their part the tenants were greatly delighted with their new residence. The arrangement of the house, which would have been a trial to many, was not so to them. In every respect Croglin Grange was exactly suited to them.

'The winter was spent most happily by the new inmates of Croglin Grange, who shared in all the little social pleasures of the district, and made themselves very popular. In the following summer there was one day which was dreadfully hot. The brothers lay under the trees with their books, for it was too hot for any active occupation. The sister sat in the verandah and worked, or tried to work, for, in the intense sultriness of that summer day, work was next to impossible. They dined early, and after dinner they still sat out in the verandah, enjoying the cool air which came with evening, and they watched the sun set and the moon rise over the belt of trees which separated the grounds from the churchyard, seeing it mount the heavens till the whole lawn was bathed in silver light, across which the long

shadows from the shrubbery fell as if embossed, so vivid and distinct were they.

'When they separated for the night, all retiring to their rooms on the ground floor (for, as I said, there was no upstairs in that house), the sister felt that the heat was still so great that she could not sleep, and having fastened her window, she did not close the shutters—in that very quiet place it was not necessary—and, propped against the pillows, she still watched the wonderful, the marvellous beauty of that summer night. Gradually she became aware of two lights—two lights which flickered in and out of the belt of trees which separated the lawn from the churchyard; and as her gaze became fixed upon them, she saw them emerge, fixed in a dark substance, a definite ghastly *something*, which seemed every moment to become nearer, increasing in size and substance as it approached. Every now and then it was lost for a moment in the long shadows which stretched across the lawn from the trees, and then it emerged larger than ever, and still coming on—on. As she watched it the most uncontrollable horror seized her. She longed to get away, but the door was close to the window, and the door was locked on the inside, and while she was unlocking it she must be for an instant nearer to it. She longed to scream, but her voice seemed paralysed, her tongue glued to the roof of her mouth.

'Suddenly, she never could explain why afterwards, the terrible object seemed to turn to one side, seemed to be going round the house, not to be coming to her at all, and immediately she jumped out of bed and rushed to the door, but as she was unlocking it she heard scratch, scratch, scratch upon the window, and saw a hideous brown face with flaming eyes glaring in at her. She rushed back to the bed, but the creature continued to scratch, scratch, scratch upon the window. She felt a sort of mental comfort in the knowledge that the window was securely fastened on the inside. Suddenly the scratching sound ceased, and a kind of pecking sound took its place. Then, in her agony, she became aware that the creature was unpicking the lead! The noise continued, and a diamond pane of glass fell into the room. Then a long bony finger of the creature came in and turned the handle of the window, and the window opened, and the creature came in; and it came across the room, and her terror was so great that she could not scream, and it came up to the bed, and it twisted its long, bony fingers into her hair, and it dragged her head over the side of the bed, and—it bit her violently in the throat.

'As it bit her, her voice was released, and she screamed with all her might and main. Her brothers rushed out of their rooms, but the door was locked on the inside. A moment was lost while they got a poker and broke it open. Then the creature had already escaped through the window, and the sister, bleeding violently from a wound in the throat, was lying unconscious over the side of the bed. One brother pursued the creature, which fled before him through the moonlight with gigantic strides, and eventually seemed to disappear over the wall into the churchyard. Then he rejoined his brother by the sister's bedside. She was dreadfully hurt and her wound was a very definite one, but she was of strong disposition, not given either to romance or superstition, and when she came to herself she said, "What has happened is most extraordinary and I am very much hurt. It seems inexplicable, but of course there is an explanation, and we must wait for it. It will turn out that a lunatic has escaped from some asylum and found his way here."

'The wound healed and she appeared to get well, but the doctor who was sent for to her would not believe that she could bear so terrible a shock so easily, and insisted that she must have change, mental and physical; so her brothers took her to Switzerland. Being a sensible girl, when she went abroad she threw herself at once into the interests of the country she was in. She dried plants, she made sketches, she went up mountains, and as autumn came on, she was the person who urged that they should return to Croglin Grange. "We have taken it," she said, "for seven years, and we have only been there one; and we shall always find it difficult to let a house which is only one storey high, so we had better return there; lunatics do not escape every day." As she urged it, her brothers wished nothing better, and the family returned to Cumberland. From there being no upstairs in the house, it was impossible to make any great change in their arrangements. The sister occupied the same room, but it is unnecessary to say she always closed her shutters, which, however, as in many old houses, always left one top pane of the window uncovered. The brothers moved, and occupied a room together exactly opposite that of their sister, and they always kept loaded pistols in their room.

'The winter passed most peacefully and happily. In the following March the sister was suddenly awakened by a sound she remembered only too well—scratch, scratch, scratch upon the window, the same hideous brown shrivelled face, with glaring eyes, looking in at her. This time she screamed as loud as she could. Her brothers rushed out of

their room with pistols, and out of the front door. The creature was already scudding away across the lawn. One of the brothers fired and hit it in the leg, but still with the other leg it continued to make way, scrambling over the wall into the churchyard, and seemed to disappear into a vault which belonged to a family long extinct.

'The next day the brothers summoned all the tenants of Croglin Grange, and in their presence the vault was opened. A horrible scene revealed itself. The vault was full of coffins; they had been broken open; and their contents, horribly mangled and distorted, were scattered over the floor. One coffin alone remained intact. Of that the lid had been lifted, but still lay loose upon the coffin. They raised it, and there, brown, withered, shrivelled, mummified, but quite entire, was the same hideous figure which had looked in at the windows of Croglin Grange, with the marks of a recent pistol shot in the leg; and they did—the only thing that can lay a vampire—they burnt it.'

What do our readers think of this marvellous narrative? Can it possibly be true?

### FLOATING OR LEVITATION DURING SLEEP.

I have read with much interest the letters which have appeared in your valuable paper, and though not a Spiritualist, should like to add my experiences to what has been written. Many times I have dreamt that I was floating in my bedroom, then along the landing to the top of the stairs, and when about to descend have been seized with a sudden fear that I should strike the banister opposite—but to my surprise I have gone right through and alighted gently at the bottom of the stairs. Once I went out into the streets, floating three or four feet above the ground, to my place of business. It was a fine moonlight night when this occurred, and I distinctly remember that I did not meet a single person. I dreamed about a week ago that I found myself at a certain place in an old part of the town, and I thought I had to jump from the roadway on to the pavement, which is several feet lower. Again I had the sensation of fear, and having had a gymnastic training I naturally adopted the best position for lessening the expected shock. I was surprised to find that on touching the pavement I rebounded several feet in the air, and the sensation being a pleasant one I continued the operation.

Contrary to the experience of Mrs. Kate Taylor-Robinson, I perfectly enjoyed the sensation of floating, and on awaking had a feeling of elation and renewed strength—my only dread being when I had to jump from a higher to a lower level. I should be glad to have some explanation.

'DAVID ELGINBROD.'

The correspondents in 'LIGHT'—'H. B. G. M.,' Basil A. Cochrane, 'W., Ilfracombe,' and others—are not alone in their experiences of floating or levitation during sleep, for I have had sensations of this sort, and, like them, have felt myself gliding along, without either flying or walking. Of the first two or three occasions I can recollect nothing beyond a glimpse of an orchard which was then in our tenancy, and a few houses on the road, being certain parts of the streets I usually passed through. It was always twilight. I always seemed to be moving about ten feet above the pavement. I have no recollection of ever seeing anybody or speaking to anybody. On one occasion I remember seeing myself lying pale and still on the bed, but an instant later I found myself moving in bed, and my dream or flight was at an end.

My object in writing this is to relate my recollection of one particular occasion, which impressed me very much, and which I consider remarkable.

It is only a year since I had any knowledge of Spiritualism whatever, so it could have been in no wise caused by my reading on the subject or attending séances, as this dream, or whatever it was, passed through my mind (or I really experienced it) two-and-a-half years ago. I will, however, state briefly what I do remember of it.

I was gliding in the air without effort. I felt that I was not alone although I could see no one. I sailed up and up, higher and higher. I saw the ground sink beneath me;

I saw the houses fade from sight; I saw the lurid light of lamps fade and disappear into one mass of grey mist; I saw the black, glistening waves of the sea licking the dull, ragged outline of the land. Nothing needed explanation; the moment anything of the nature of a query entered my head, and before the question was formed, I seemed to thoroughly understand the meaning of everything I saw. I seemed to rise higher and higher till my view could grasp the circumference of the earth, and at this point I seemed to be endowed with vision of such penetrating power that I could see right into the earth. I could see blocks of metals and stone, and in one or two places I could see sparkling gems, like pin points of sunshine penetrating a darkened room. I felt perfectly secure and was conscious of having a guide, although I neither saw any form nor heard any voice. The meaning and explanation of everything seemed to be impressed on me, or I became possessed of a wonderful comprehension which needed no tuition. There seemed to be no time, or journeying from one scene to another. Coming nearer to the earth again, but still at a great distance, I saw what appeared at first sight to be a few drops of dew or tiny liquid globes of various shades of colour rolling slowly about in all directions. My reasoning power told me they were actually human beings and that their varying hues represented their spiritual qualities. Some were of a creamy whiteness, some brightest blue, some crimson, some red, some brown, some a dirty greenish yellow smudged with blackish red. On coming nearer the earth I observed something which appeared to be a mountain, but on looking into it, it seemed to be the brain of a man, magnified millions of times, and that every cellule forming the brain was a picture clearly defined, representing scenes and acts in the long life of a man who was at death's door. I saw a spark kindle and glow in the midst, and each picture light up and flicker in its turn, and the burning continued from picture to picture in every direction, as a piece of paper which has been chemically prepared to sparkle and smoulder away. I knew that this was the dying man's recollection of the leading acts and thoughts of his life. A tiny light of a dull bluish colour settled on his forehead, and grew into a faint form of a man and gently rose from the ashes left from the consuming sparks of human consciousness. It was the spirit passing over, taking its own account of his earthly thoughts and acts, and his colour classing him according to his worth. I was made to understand that men make their own Heaven and their own hell, and condemn themselves or justify themselves by their own acts, and are classed either with the 'sheep or the goats according to their deserts.'

The whole of this experience may have been accomplished in much less time than it has taken to write it. Perhaps some of your readers can give an interpretation of it. For myself I admit that it is past my normal comprehension; but the little pictures in the brain, which lighted up and faded away one after another, showing in perfect detail scenes which, as they flashed on my vision, excited feelings of sympathy or aversion, admiration or disgust, have caused me to think very seriously of my own acts. If it was all fancy I feel sure that we should all be very much improved if only it led us to set a watch over our own lives: but if it is really true that the brain registers every thought of our life, by which we shall eventually be judged and classified, surely we need to let purity of motive guide us, and love and charity preponderate in all our works, so that we may gain a joyful welcome when we cross through the gates of death to the land beyond.

'THEM.'

THE YORKSHIRE CALAMITY.—At the conversazione held by the Stoke Newington Spiritual Progressive Church, at 99, Wiesbaden-road, on Monday last, Mr. E. W. Wallis made reference to the calamity that had occurred on the previous day in Yorkshire, when two well-known Bradford Spiritualists were killed by lightning, and four others seriously injured, while on their way to attend a large district open air meeting. They were ardent workers for Spiritualism and personal friends of Mr. Wallis's, and he proposed a vote of sincere condolence with the bereaved mourners and of deep sympathy with the injured. Mr. Belstead, vice-president of the church, seconded the resolution, and Mr. E. Whyte, the president, put the motion to the meeting, when it was adopted by a silent standing vote.

A PLEA FOR INQUIRY.

Sir Isaac Newton modestly compared himself to a little child playing upon the seashore and contenting himself with finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than usual, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him. The great ocean of truth still lies all undiscovered before us; but how many of us stand upon its shores and, gazing across its gleaming waters, try, like little Dombey, to learn the language of its waves? How many of us even are intent on finding the smooth pebbles and pretty shells with which its shores are strewn? How many of us retain the spirit of inquiry, the healthy wonderment, and trusting faith of the little child? 'Slide back into the cradle,' cried Ruskin, 'if going on is into the grave:—back, I tell you; back out of your long faces and into your long clothes. It is among children only, and as children only, that you will find medicine for your healing and true wisdom for your teaching.'

Our friend the Secularist, after eloquently refuting all religions that have ever been taught, will throw open his arms and announce his readiness to believe in anything we like to bring along that will stand the test of Reason. But when Spiritualism is suggested he will denounce it in unmeasured terms, and prove it—to his own satisfaction—a degrading superstition. He will listen to an account of the simplest forms of psychical phenomena with an incredulous smile. He will quote Hume's famous definition of a miracle. He will refer you to Maskelyne and Cook. He will do almost anything except light his lantern and set out in search of the truth.

The Secularist declines to go beyond his arm-chair for evidence for or against Spiritualism. Why? Because, he says, so-called spiritualistic phenomena never take place. How does he know that? Science tells him so; science and—Mr. Maskelyne.

By 'Science,' of course he means scientists. 'No class of persons,' says Mr. Maskelyne, 'can be more easily puzzled by trickery than scientific men. I will back one sharp schoolboy to discover more tricks than half the scientific men in existence.' Clearly our Secularist is betwixt a certain person and the deep sea. He cannot serve two masters. He must throw over 'Science' or Mr. Maskelyne. Which shall it be? Perhaps, as he has already thrown himself over, it does not matter which.

We appeal to all true friends of Freethought not to receive their opinions ready-made at the hands either of self-satisfied scientists or prosperous conjurers. Research has proved the existence of powers which are considered by many people of intelligence to be supernormal in their nature. It is the duty of the Agnostic who is tied down by no creed, and who considers himself an intellectual freeman, in the interest of true science to attempt to discover the source of those mysterious powers, the existence of which can no longer be denied. If Spiritualism is a fallacy it is one of the greatest delusions that has ever bewildered the brain of mortal man. Poets, statesmen, scientists, ecclesiastics, and men of letters innumerable have fallen under its influence. How better could the Agnostic employ his critical energy than in searching for truth, higher than which there is no religion? Most of those who have minutely investigated the phenomena of Spiritualism have become convinced of its reality. But we do not expect anyone to believe against his reason. We do expect him, however, to enter into the matter with an open mind, prepared to accept the true and reject the false, and not to give up the search because—as in all systems, political, social, and religious—he will probably, sooner or later, come into contact with charlatans and quacks. Spiritualists do not claim to be morally or mentally superior to the members of other bodies, but the names of eminent men and women in their ranks entitle them to the respect which is so seldom accorded them.

The decline of aggressive Freethought and the rise of the theical movement—which numbers among its supporters spiritualists and Theosophists as well as Rationalists—show that dogmatic materialism has done its work. Men can no longer join hands in a policy of mere negation; their faces are turned once more to the rising sun. Many, like the

writer of these lines, to whom orthodox religion has appealed in vain, have been mastered by facts, and have found in Spiritualism the living faith which animated the spirit of brave old Victor Hugo when he said:—

'I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest once cut down; the new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, towards the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds. You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets and the roses, as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvellous yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history. For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and in verse; history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode, and song, I have tried all. But I feel I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like many others, "I have finished my day's work." But I cannot say, "I have finished my life." My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight, it opens with the dawn.'

ARTHUR RONE.

FRAU ROTHE, THE FLOWER MEDIUM.

In the current number of 'Le Spiritualisme Moderne' (36, Rue de Bac, Paris), Madame de Komar, the Editor, reviews at some length the report of séances with Frau Rothe which recently appeared in 'LIGHT,' from the pen of 'Madame L. I. F.' She expresses her surprise that an English journal should have been favoured with this record of phenomena produced in France, in the presence of one of the leading French scientists, seeing that several excellent spiritualist journals are published in Paris. She especially regrets that the 'procès-verbaux' were not given in the French Press from the fact, which she readily admits, that they were remarkably well drawn, and would form an admirable model for all Spiritualists. She holds, however, that the essential qualifications for observation are absolute freedom from irrational scepticism on the one hand and a pre-existent bias on the other; and that it is just because of the absence of these qualifications that the observers at the séances reported by 'Madame L. I. F.' have failed in arriving at just conclusions.

From this point of view Madame de Komar criticises the report at some length, and makes it abundantly evident that her faith in the genuineness of the phenomena which occur in the presence of Frau Rothe, with whose séances she is herself familiar, has in no way been shaken. We should have been tempted to quote freely from Madame de Komar's article, were it not that we have already in hand a long communication on the subject from Professor Sellin, which we hope to publish in next week's 'LIGHT.'

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.*

'Genuine Palmistry.'

SIR,—I have been interested in reading, under this title, in 'LIGHT,' of the 13th inst., an account of the fulfilment of a prophetic vision or impression, but the writer is wrong in calling it 'genuine palmistry.'

Your correspondent, 'M. B.,' is evidently clairvoyant. Psychic gifts combined with a knowledge of palmistry are a great aid in delineating the past, present, or future, and the most successful palmists possess these; but it is also possible to read the events of life from the lines of the hand alone, and to some extent to foretell the future. This can be done from impressions, or casts, of the hand, without seeing the face or touching the person.

Under these conditions any prophecy may be called genuine palmistry, but not when it is necessary to 'study the face' or 'hold the person's hand.' It ceases then to be scientific palmistry, and passes into the region, no less valuable, of occultism.

E. RENÉ.

## 'Freedom.'

SIR,—Miss Beeby's letter in 'LIGHT' of the 13th inst., appears to me to convey an altogether mistaken idea of organisation among Spiritualists. Spiritualistic societies, &c., enable inquirers—both by private intercourse and public gatherings—to come into contact with those who are acquainted with the subject of Spiritualism, and thus to obtain information and assistance which they would otherwise, in many cases, be unable to gain; and Spiritualists, by availing themselves of such opportunities for interchange of thought and comparison of experiences, are thereby assuredly the gainers. Such societies, &c., cannot be sustained without a certain amount of organisation and systematic action.

The statement that 'absolute freedom of thought cannot exist where system prevails' is, to my mind, quite misleading in this connection. I venture to say, and say emphatically, that there is 'common ground' upon which Spiritualists can (and do) meet and form societies, &c., to the advantage of all concerned, and where 'freedom of thought' need not be (and is not) interfered with.

Whilst *sectarian* organisation may lead to 'doctrine, dogma, and creed,' it by no means follows that organisations of Spiritualists must of necessity lead at all in those directions. As to the statement that 'organisation leads to leadership,' I would suggest that wherever order is required leadership is necessary, and order is surely needed in the ranks of Spiritualism as elsewhere.

The fact that 'organisation gives the subject importance' is but a secondary consideration; the first and most important consideration is that organisation gives advantages to Spiritualists and inquirers which would not, in many cases, be otherwise attainable.

LEIGH HUNT.

## 'A Weak Spot in Spiritualism.'

SIR,—A letter from G. H. J. Dutton, which appeared in your issue of May 18th, was headed 'A Weak Spot in Spiritualism.' I really think too much stress is laid upon 'Spirit Identity' so far as it concerns people generally. Spiritualism is not a religion for the masses at the outset, but for the home. I would have an inquirer keep away from all public sittings, and even all developed mediums. This may sound rather sweeping, but no matter what the test, nor how conclusive the evidence at the time, in a few days the receiver generally comes to the conclusion that it would have been better if it had been so and so, he fancying that he has hit upon the weak spot in his test. No amount of evidence from others will persuade a man; each must test the matter for himself, and there is no better way than to form a circle in your own home, and to admit no one with whom you are not in perfect harmony and in whom you cannot place fullest confidence. And don't have too many; I would say six is enough. There are very few who have no friends with whom to sit, but to those few I would say 'sit alone' twice or three times a week for half an hour, have pencil and paper at hand, be perfectly regular in your sittings, and do not get disheartened at failure nor give up under six months or a year. When spirit communion occurs in the home, and one has watched development, it is impossible not to be convinced. Little tricks of manner, particular forms of speech, unexpected details, a look even or a gesture, all add their mite to make up the whole. These are generally all missed in public circles or with paid mediums. I would suggest to Mr. Dutton, if he has not already done so, that he form a small circle, not more than four or six, and sit in an earnest, prayerful, and patient spirit once or twice a week regularly: then if he has obtained nothing on which he can rely in, say, not less than twelve months, he will have a better case than he appears to have made out at present. After one has obtained conviction in the home circle is the time to frequent public gatherings.

Pietermaritzburg, Natal.

W. E. M.

## A 'Vital Question.'

SIR,—Can experienced Spiritualists answer the following vital question? When a spirit passes to the higher life, is it always as anxious to communicate with loved ones left behind as these are for a word of greeting in their deep grief? If not, why not?

Is it right or wrong to seek for a message of love from the other side?

THOUGHTFULNESS for others, generosity, modesty, and self-respect, are the qualities which make a real gentleman or lady, as distinguished from the veneered article which commonly goes by that name.—HUXLEY.

SPIRITUALISM.—Its temple is all space; its shrine the good heart; its creed all truth; its ritual works of love and utility; its profession of faith a divine life.—THEODORE PARKER.

## SOCIETY WORK.

SOUTHALL—1, MILTON-VILLAS, FEATHERSTONE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Millard spoke upon 'The Profound Teaching of Spiritualism.' Much was said that will, if followed out, be of great benefit. No meeting will be held on Sunday next.—E.B.

MERTHYR SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MERTHYR TYDFIL, WALES.—At the Drill Hall last Sunday afternoon and evening, two powerful addresses were delivered by Mr. Geo. H. Bibbings, to large audiences. The subjects, 'The Road to the Hereafter,' and 'Spiritualism: A Cure for Materialism,' were dealt with in an eloquent manner.—W.M.H.

PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTITUTE, 36, VICARAGE-ROAD, CAMBERWELL.—On Sunday last Mr. Adams gave an able address on Spiritualism, which was much appreciated. Miss Pierpont gave an interesting reading. On Sunday next, the fourth anniversary services, at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., will be conducted by Mrs. Holgate, Mr. Bullen and others.—S. OSBURN.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Boddington named a baby. The ceremony was very impressive, and was listened to with great attention by a crowded audience. A vote of condolence was passed to Mr. R. Boddington on the recent passing on of his wife. She knew and realised that 'we do not die; we cannot die.' Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. G. Cole.—C.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—The subject of the address delivered by Mr. E. W. Wallis on Sunday last, 'The Spiritual Side of Spiritualism,' gave much scope to the eloquence of the speaker, whose stirring utterances were greatly appreciated. A solo by Miss Edith Brinkley, 'Always together,' and a few able remarks by the chairman, Mr. Edwards, gave much pleasure to all assembled. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. A. Peters will give clairvoyance; doors open 6.30 p.m.—S. J. WATTS, Hon. Sec.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday evening last the meeting was opened by the usual reading, after which Mr. Alfred Peters delivered an address upon 'Protestantism and Reformers,' describing Spiritualism as distinctly a religion of reform. Mr. Peters afterwards demonstrated his powers as a clairvoyant, by giving several detailed descriptions, which, with few exceptions, were recognised. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. D. J. Davis will give the address.—O. H.

DUNDEE SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday, July 7th, Mr. Walker, of Glasgow, came to us through the 'Pioneer Mediums' Fund,' and gave an admirable address. Mr. Walker is the third capable medium we have had in connection with this fund, and we feel it but right to testify to the good work that is being done through its agency, and to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson, of Glasgow, and their spirit friends, on the success attained. Mr. Walker will receive a warm welcome back to Dundee.—J. MURRAY, Secretary.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION, QUEEN'S HALL, 1, QUEEN'S-ROAD, PECKHAM.—Our service on Sunday evening last was well attended. Mr. Payne offered an inspiring invocation and Mr. Clarkson ably demonstrated that, in many instances, Spiritualism was substantiated by the records of similar phenomena in the Bible. The after-service circle was helpful to many who remained. A harmonium, presented to the mission by the committee, and played by Mrs. Bird, proved a valuable addition. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Adams, of Battersea, will speak on 'Prove All Things.' At 8 p.m., public circle.—H. E. B.

CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—During the absence of Mr. W. E. Long upon his annual holidays, the morning and evening services on Sunday last were again conducted by members of the Church. Both meetings were successful and harmonious. In the evening inspiring and helpful addresses were given by Mrs. J. Checketts and Mr. Butcher. The after circle was well attended and beneficial. We are glad to announce that on Sunday next, Mr. W. E. Long will resume his place upon the platform. At 11 a.m., a public circle will be held; at 3 p.m., children's school; and at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long will address the audience.—J. C.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, S.W.—An able address was given by the Rev. — Samson last Sunday evening. Commencing by relating his experiences as an investigator of Spiritualism, he claimed that each one must develop his own spiritual nature and expressed his belief that we are on the threshold of a wonderful movement that will eventually lead up to that golden age foretold by all the cults of the world, and that we can only ascend 'the Path to God' by way of the cross. Mr. Boddington presided. On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 3.30 p.m., meetings in Battersea Park and on Clapham Common; at 7 p.m., public service. On Tuesday at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope. On Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., a public séance will be held.—YUL.