

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

The decease of John Fiske has taken from our earthly vision one of the few strong original thinkers whose work it was to blend in one the conclusions of the Evolutionists and the intuitions, and more than the intuitions, the inferences, of the Spiritualists. His small books on 'The Idea of God,' 'The Destiny of Man,' and 'Through Nature to God,' reach high-water mark in relation to Theism and the Belief in Immortality. His larger work, on 'Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy, based on the Doctrine of Evolution,' was praised by Darwin in glowing terms. We had as much hope of him as—perhaps more hope of him than—of any living man. We cherish the hope that he may help and inspire many, from the Unseen. One who knew him contributes, in 'The Christian Register,' the following sonnet, in his memory. It is significant that the first word of it is 'Unfinished!' And truly, so it seems:—

Unfinished! In the fulness of its power,  
The drowsy brain refuses to fulfil  
Its chosen work. The lagging pulse grows still.  
Is there another with an equal dower?  
A giant, over other men to tower,  
And so complete the Herculean task at will?  
Call him! None dares to answer! Who can fill  
Like him the measure of the chosen hour?  
Nor yet the brain alone, the heart we mourn,  
That beat responsive to humanity.  
He thought, he felt, and loved his kin and kind,  
And kindly words his written page adorn.  
He who had faith in man's high destiny,  
Be it his own such destiny to find.

Canon Scott Holland is a sensible man, but we often wonder at what he permits himself to say as a preacher. Here, for example, is a sermon on 'Can civilisation be christianised?'—a good practical question, the answer to which might be entirely and intensely modern; but what does the preacher do? He sheers off into a discussion of 'The glorified Lord' and the resurrection of Christ 'in the flesh,' of which he says, 'it is under its impetus and inspiration that we are moved to care so deeply for the bodies of men whose flesh has been sanctified by Him who rose in that flesh.' Did he rise in 'that flesh'? and, if he did, why should that be our chief inducement to care for people's bodies in Shoreditch and India and South Africa? We feel at once the artificiality of the reference, the sentiment, and the argument.

The Canon says: 'We declare that this doctrine of the risen Christ is what gives value to the flesh and blood of men.' That may perhaps sound right in a pulpit; but has it any value in the hospital, the street, the battlefield? We

are afraid not. Nay, we are afraid that it may act as cant (and as even honest cant) nearly always does—in turning attention away from the plain and homely truth.

We hold that 'what gives value to the flesh and blood of men' is the knowledge of what it has cost to bring them to their present grade of evolution;—the knowledge too of what joy or grief can be inflicted through flesh and blood; or what flesh and blood may be to deathless souls. We want nothing less modern, less urgent, less actual than that. Besides, he who relies upon the resurrection of the flesh of Christ, to give anything value, is relying upon a broken or breaking reed—and may suffer bitter loss.

A Paper in 'The Harbinger of Light,' on deep breathing, is distinctly useful, if, in some respects, fantastic. We entirely agree that deep breathing generates vitality, purifies the bodily fluids, and stimulates and healthily exercises a great variety of all-important functions. But the main essential is pure air. Deep breathing done in bad air may be deadly. Right methods are also of importance. In most cases, the breathing had better not be too energetic. This writer recommends 'a rhythmic breathing of about seven seconds to each inspiration and respiration.'

Describing a certain method of teaching, he says:—

The pupil is taught to sit in an upright position, spinal column straight, other limbs and muscles relaxed, with weight of the body balanced upon the base of the spinal column and weight of lower body balanced on the balls of the feet, hands resting lightly on the knees with thumbs out, since the will power is represented in the thumb, and a closed thumb represents a negative condition.'

There may be something in that 'closed thumb' business; but we doubt it except as a self-suggestion, but then sucking the thumb might do as well.

The following, on the whole, shows knowledge, though it is decorated with little flares of phantasy:—

In all breathing exercises all strained action is to be avoided. Our clothes should be loose. Ladies should not be harnessed up with corsets. When we take our right position we need no support, the spinal column being properly adjusted. Our rooms should be well ventilated with plenty of sunshine, and decorated with colours that harmonise with our different temperaments.

When we retire at night we should relax every muscle of the body from all tension and take full and regular inhalations through the nostrils until asleep. Suggest to ourselves that we go to bed to rest and recuperate the physical body. Sleep with the head to the north and upon the right side.

When we awaken in the morning we should open our windows and if possible face the east, and take long, regular, deep breathing exercise for three minutes.

Mental gymnastics are a good thing to practise in connection with all breathing exercises. We must concentrate the mind upon why we breathe, viz., to obtain by each inspiration more life than we inhale, and when we exhale we desire to expel from the system all the effete matter. By such breathing one can generate vital force and make nimble the stiffest muscles. Repeated during the day it will aid in overcoming many of the undesirable conditions that the human body takes on, thus exhilarating every atom, cell and organ of the body. Will power is required to concentrate the mind upon what one is doing at all times, to overcome the drifting tendency of the senses.

'The Lyceum Banner' for July prints 'Topics for advanced students: A study in re-embodiment,' (or, as the writer must have intended, 'Reincarnation'). Here is the opening of a summary:—

MEANING OF TERM.—To incarnate over again—i.e., to take on flesh over again. Each *soul* lives many times in many bodies, each new body corresponding to the mind he has gained.

PROOFS.—Reincarnation cannot be generally demonstrated, but it may be taken as a reasonable hypothesis, because:—

1. Many great people remembered former existences—e.g., Buddha, Pythagoras, Confucius, and Lao-tse.
2. It explains evolution.
3. It explains the rise and fall of nations.

This is somewhat amusing. We should like to see the evidence that Buddha, Pythagoras, Confucius and Lao-tse remembered their former existences. We know that some persons in our own day have affirmed they remembered being Mary Queen of Scots, &c., but we prefer to believe that it is easier to palpably fancy this than to evidentially remember it.

As for Reincarnation explaining evolution, that is precisely what it would upset, if it could be proved. Evolution entirely turns upon natural processes of Selection, through mundane environment, and survival of the fittest, not upon conjuring tricks turning upon spiritual tenants taking possession of baby shells.

What Reincarnation explaining the rise and fall of nations means we cannot imagine. The philosophy of history may have room for inspiration from the Unseen; but that is an entirely different matter, and one that is strictly amenable to rational and scientific thinking and experiment.

The remainder of the summary is packed with sheer assumptions, about as arbitrary and as imaginative as anything could be.

'The Self-culture Society' (Chicago and London) sends us a small book by G. B. Moore on 'What the world wants: or Hints on Self-help.' It is a sensible work, but with much in it that is obvious. The advertisement of 'The Self-culture Society' and 'A new revelation,' at the end, is sensational, and not without swagger.

#### A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM.

In my dream I saw a young lady whom I knew, attired in evening dress and looking radiantly handsome. Call her Miss C. Other young ladies were talking eagerly to me and complaining how cruel Miss C. was to her 'poor slaves.' Save the mark!

I defended her hotly and then blazed forth that they were only airy nothings, dream figures, and bade them depart. In a moment they all seemed to recede into the far distance and melted into vacancy.

Then another fierce, aggressive looking girl began also to denounce Miss C. to me for her cruelty to her 'slaves,' and almost thrust her forbidding face into mine in her excitement. In more wrath than ever I told her too that she was only a phantom and bade her vanish, which she did.

Then I cried out, or seemed to, that I would awake, and I did awake with a terrible effort, in a strong state of excitement.

I soon fell sleep again and had a second dream, in which an uncle of mine appeared. I told him I had recently had an odd dream and described fully to him dream No. 1, about Miss C. and her 'slaves.'

Is not the fact of a first dream being told to a dream figure in a second dream on the same night, passing strange?

H. B. DOVERON.

Karsfield, Torquay.

#### OLD-TIME EXPERIENCES.

(Continued from page 363.)

Although I have all along anxiously sought 'tests of identity' which would be personally satisfactory to me, I nevertheless think that the first thing to get clear in one's mind is the *actual existence of invisible beings*, in close proximity to us and able in certain circumstances to make themselves perceptible to us; and this belief or knowledge has, during a number of years, grown up gradually in my mind, in so much that the existence of those beings has come to seem as natural to me as the existence of fishes in the sea. If there were people who denied that fishes exist in the sea, I should expect to find them divisible into three classes: those who argued that as there was no sea there could be no fishes in it; those who had never caught a fish (because they had never tried); and those who had procured a hook and line and had fished for a whole hour in a washing-tub without getting a bite. I should expect to find the deniers of fishes divided into those three classes, because I find that those who deny the existence of invisible beings either disbelieve in any invisible universe; or have never investigated; or have investigated in a perfunctory or in a ridiculous fashion. Occasionally, indeed, one meets with someone who joyfully proclaims himself a convert to the belief in fishes—whales, sharks, codfish, herrings and all—because he himself has actually caught a real sprat in Mrs. Somebody's tub, and, after years of 'scientific' investigation concerning Mrs. Somebody and her tub, has concluded that the good woman did not put the sprat there herself.

Now, the death of a very dear friend in New York, who had promised, if possible, to come to me at séances, gave me the opportunity of applying a test of identity. During the fortnight following her death I went to Mrs. Williams', Mrs. Cadwell's, and Mrs. Caffrey's séances, taking care not to give any intimation or suggestion of anything unusual with me; but at none of these séances was there the smallest evidence that the spirit of my dear friend was present, or that the cabinet spirits knew anything about her; but when I told the mediums of the death, in the case of two of them my friend's spirit greeted me from the cabinet the next time I went; but she never gave any sign of her presence in the séances of the third medium, and in none did she ever materialise. I have met others, as anxious as myself to obtain tests of identity which satisfied them, but who were unable to do so—to whom came only spirits attracted by sympathy, not the spirits of those whom they had known during life; but on the other hand, many persons have recounted to me incidents which, had they happened to myself, would probably have given me that *personal assurance* which I have sought in vain. It may be, however, that in my case, as in that of some others, the inability to obtain the desired tests is due to some psychic peculiarity in myself.

I had a sitting with Dr. Rogers in New York at this time, to try to get a message from the friend above mentioned, by means of slate writing. I gave no name, and Dr. Rogers had never seen me. I cleaned and tied up a couple of slates, putting the usual grain of slate-pencil between them; the medium told me to lay these slates on my left shoulder, holding them in my right hand. After a minute or two, as I heard no writing going on in the slates, Dr. Rogers, who had been sitting at the opposite side of a small table, came and stood in front of me, and laid the tips of the fingers of his right hand on the slates (his hand was in full view, and it was broad daylight), and at once I heard the familiar scratch, scratch, inside the slates. Now, before this experiment, Dr. Rogers had given me the baptismal name of my deceased friend, as being that of a spirit that was present, and the communication on the slate purported to be from her, although in the handwriting of the medium's late wife, who generally acted as amanuensis for the spirits. The communication showed a knowledge of my circumstances, but it was vague, and in style quite unlike that in which my late dear friend would have written; it was, however, exactly what might have been expected from a spirit who could read my mind in a general way; and as far as it went it was 'a specimen,' or I should not mention it here.

I used to meet Judge Nelson Cross as a sitter at Mrs. Williams' séance, and as a caller at her house. One day I showed Judge Cross the slate writing I had obtained through Dr. Rogers, and he said that perhaps I could obtain better evidence of the identity of the spirits through a good clairvoyant; and he gave me the address of a Mrs. Henderson, in whose honesty I might have perfect confidence. I thought, however, that I would test her powers. I had read in that morning's paper that the mummified body of a woman had been found among some cinders in a cellar, and had been taken to the morgue; so I went there, and having made friends with the man in charge, I procured a piece of the dress of the woman and some of her hair, and these I took with me to Mrs. Henderson, done up securely in many folds of paper. I called on her without notice, and introduced myself as an investigator of clairvoyance. It struck me at once that my presence made her feel uncomfortable, and presently she said that she was impressed that I had come from the police, and that if so she must refuse to give me a séance. She explained that some detectives had consulted her a short time before, and when they found that she gave them facts they would have charged her with being an accomplice in the crime they were investigating, had she not had influential friends. I told her she had made a very 'bad shot,' for a friend of her own, Judge Cross, had sent me to her; and I asked her what had put it into her head that I belonged to the police. She said she felt with me the same peculiar sensation of crime that she had felt when the detectives had visited her. Then I remembered the little package in my pocket!

Well, I gave her that little package to hold without giving her the least hint of what it contained, and the effect was very striking. She at once began to shiver and shake, tears ran down her cheeks, and she sobbed convulsively. Presently she found voice and cried: 'Oh, what a dreadful thing! Oh, the poor woman! It is a crime, a dreadful crime; it is a murder! I see the two men who did it. I would know them anywhere. I hear their names. One of them is now a few miles from New York; the other is out West. But I will tell you no more. I have said too much already!' I did my best to get Mrs. Henderson to say enough to enable me to verify this vision; but she had too much dread of the stupidity and malevolence of the police; and, thinking she was quite justified, I reluctantly abandoned the attempt. I had several subsequent sittings with this clairvoyante, but without any result as far as the identity of the materialised forms is concerned.

As to evidence of identity satisfactory to others, I have seen plenty of it. One evening, for instance, I took a lady to Mrs. Williams' séance, who said she only came to please me, as 'the idea of spirits tilting tables and ringing bells seemed too supremely ridiculous,' she said; while death itself seemed so 'awful.' She was called up to the curtain, and I saw her shoulders shaking while the spirit was speaking to her. 'What a shame to laugh like that,' I thought, 'the other sitters will be annoyed.' But when she turned again I saw that her face was suffused with tears. She told me that when the curtain opened she saw before her the grandmother who had brought her up, 'just exactly as she used to be,' she said, 'with her little curls and side combs, and big tortoiseshell spectacles.' The form said to her, 'Don't you know me, my child? I am your grandmother Grace.' This grandmother was never out of England, and had died years before, and it is almost certain that no one in the United States but this lady had ever heard of her existence. I had two grandmothers, but neither of them has appeared to me; one of them was quite bald; if she would only come and let me pull off her wig, as she used to do when I was a child!

'CHRONOS.'

(To be continued.)

## IN DEFENCE OF FRAU ROTHE.

BY PROFESSOR C. W. SELLIN.

(Concluded from page 365.)

It is rather difficult to offer critical remarks respecting Mrs. F.'s account without entering into greater detail than space permits, but I will try my best.

Regarding the ends which Mrs. F. had in view in inviting the German medium to Paris, and in publishing the account in question, I have to confess that at first I was rather in the dark, and perhaps some of the readers will have been so too. Now, after having received a letter from Mrs. F., in which she writes: 'I recognise a great medium in Frau Rothe, but I am filled with fear that her mediumship will produce no lasting results, . . . it is of vital importance that the facts be related in detail and freed from all personality, &c., the reader will know what to think about it. Her intention was a good and praiseworthy one, I have no doubt, but I am bound to repeat here that she has missed her aim owing to want of the experience required for the task she had taken upon herself. She has even, in some way, made bad worse. But, hoping that she will not be offended when I say that she has put the cart before the horse—i.e., investigated and reflected on facts before having provided proper conditions—I will frankly state what, in my opinion, are the principal blunders she has made.

Beginning with the preliminary arrangements, I have to note at once a great mistake on the part of Mrs. F. She knows that establishing an aura of kindness, confidence, love and harmony is the most vital condition of good results. Confidence must prevail on both sides, with the sitters as well as the medium. Did she try to establish it in the beginning? I say no. When writing to Herr Jentsch, why did she not mention the names of those composing the circle? Why did she not vouch in an efficacious way for their kind disposition towards the medium and for their thorough experience in occult matters? Did not her hide-and-seek methods look like setting a trap? In my opinion there could not be mutual confidence under the circumstances, and it was an ominous blunder to overlook this. Disappointment on both sides was of necessity the result. I frankly confess that if I had been in Herr Jentsch's place, I should at all events have refused point blank to go to Paris under such conditions. I can even tell Mrs. F. that the kind-hearted Frau Rothe, highly sensitive as she is, only with the greatest reluctance yielded to the wishes of Herr Jentsch to undertake the step. She is not, I think, to be blamed for it.

And what is more unfortunate still, is that similar blunders were repeated in various forms during the course of her stay in Paris. First, when the German guests arrived there they were provided with lodgings as uncomfortable and unhealthy as could be. I must beg pardon of Mrs. F. for mentioning this. On my own arrival in Paris, on May 5th, I could not help wondering, indeed, how the poor woman had been able to stay in a similar dungeon for three weeks. I found Frau Rothe ill at that time, and suffering from home-sickness, which was but slowly disappearing after she had removed to another lodging. Was such the way of establishing confidence and harmony?

Now, as for the first personal meeting at Mrs. F.'s, it was not much better. Kind and courteous words alone do not produce kind feelings; there must be actions. The thing most needed was to give the medium at once the impression that Mrs. F. was not only interested, but also versed, in observing physical phenomena. Nothing of the kind happened. On the contrary, when sitting with the medium and her manager in a well-lighted room, only a yard distance being between them, no table preventing her from observing, Mrs. F. did not show herself prepared to observe the first *apport*, consisting of a flower taken an inch above her own head. Was this calculated to give the medium a firm confidence in the experience of the circle-leader? I need not answer it. And further on, when raps were accompanying the whole conversation with Herr Jentsch, why not avail herself of this splendid opportunity of examining the intelligence, or the reverse, directing these raps? Frau Rothe's raps are answering questions put in different

HEATON AND BYKER SPIRITUAL AND INVESTIGATION SOCIETY.—In the Assembly Rooms, Byker, Bridge End, Newcastle-on-Tyne, on Sunday, August 18th, Mrs. J. Stanward, of London, will deliver a public lecture at 6.30 p.m., upon 'The Philosophical Aspects of Healing and Mental Science.' Mr. Wm. H. Robinson, of Newcastle, will preside. —D. PINKNEY, Sec.

languages according to the spirits present. It is a pity that this opportunity was lost. Making use of it would at all events have been better and wiser than to apply the resonant case later on, on which, in contradiction with other testimonies of witnesses, Mrs. F. states that raps were not observed, and denies at last the intelligence of the raps altogether, in the face of hundreds of other investigators, who never found this intelligence missing. What a bond of confidence could have been secured if Mrs. F. had not let these first opportunities slip!

But it was not too late yet to improve conditions. All these preliminary mistakes could have been easily remedied at the dinner-sitting on the 14th of April. But this opportunity too was lost. Instead of familiarising the medium and her friend with at least a few persons destined to compose the circle, two foreign and probably not very sympathetic ladies, Mrs. and Miss Corner, were introduced on that occasion, M. R. being the only member of the circle present. Now I know very well that the Corners were the guests of Mrs. F. at that time. But why did she invite them just then and even arrange with them for séances for materialisation? Has Mrs. F. never heard anything of jealousy of mediums and its effects? Every occultist will tell her that here she made a deplorable mistake, which I need not explain at length. Moreover, I am in a position to assure Mrs. F. that her friend, M. R., is in full agreement with me on this point. In her place I should have suggested that Mrs. N. should be invited on that evening. This good and kind-hearted lady speaks German fairly well, and Frau Rothe would undoubtedly have felt herself in her company more at home and better prepared for the séances to come.

In spite of all these omissions there seems to have been a relatively kind and confiding disposition of mind. This, as it seems to me, I am entitled to conclude from the fact that the first *apport* of flowers appeared on M. R.'s head before the eyes of two guests and the servant-maid. As far as my experience goes, this is almost always a symptom of good conditions prevailing. But, unhappily, we cannot be quite sure of the fact, owing to her still unprepared state of mind, as Mrs. F. herself admits. Otherwise it would indeed have been a good case of a flower being materialised in full view of the sitters. At all events this first, and also the second *apport* of flowers taken from the right-hand shoulder of Mrs. F. did not yet show the least influence of adverse conditions.

But just at that moment doubts seemed to be creeping in. Mrs. F. had found among the flowers a red anemone that was wired. Indeed a shocking fact for him who is not familiar with the phenomena with Frau Rothe. I willingly admit this, but otherwise it is not so very uncommon with a great many mediums for *apports*. A change obtrudes itself upon our notice almost immediately, the following *apports* being all drawn from under the table, as is mostly the case under unfavourable conditions. Other suspicious occurrences being added, the outcome of that evening—Mrs. F. may acknowledge it or not—was a rather sceptical, if not distrustful state of mind of all present.

What results, then, could be expected in the four following séances? Especially if we take into consideration one circumstance that undoubtedly proved highly prejudicial to the results. I mean to say that Mrs. F.—to express it in a few words—practically changed these four séances, destined to be held for scientific purposes, into a series of mere promiscuous séances. The members of her circle had really been changing from beginning to end. I hope I need not say one word more about this point.

Space will not permit me to go into further details, so I shall restrict myself to the most decisive point, the most fatal blunder that was made. I think it is obvious that it is just at the beginning of a series of séances for thorough investigation that the severest and most unobjectionable tests should be applied, or that they should be dispensed with altogether. In many cases the latter way may even be preferable, and even the more scientific course. So I am quite at a loss to understand how Mrs. F., or her guests, or Herr Jentsch could overlook this simple truth. Frau Rothe alone seems to have felt it when asking to be thoroughly searched, and it was a great injustice to the medium not to yield to her wishes. As Mrs. F. refused it for reasons of her

own, of which I cannot approve, I wonder why it did not occur to her to apply, in the first séance, the test she had devised for the last one. Frau Rothe had, as we learn, put on Mrs. F.'s own costume; why not at once sew up its opening under her feet? The medium would, to be sure, have willingly submitted to this sort of test; all the former blunders would have been amended, and all been set right again.

After having directed attention to this principal point it will be sufficient to say that the Paris report shows the effects of adverse influences continually on the increase with each séance. From the failure to bring an object to M. X., not excepting the splendid phenomenon of the glass ball coming from the air into the open hands of the medium—a phenomenon that represents only a heroic endeavour by Frau Rothe's spirits to overcome the antagonistic influence—to the weeping of the medium, undoubtedly not with joy, after the fourth séance, there is an unbroken series of signs that conditions were growing worse. So I do not even regret that the séances were broken up before the fifth and last one, to which again a new sitter, M. Y., was on the point of being introduced. Of course I do not approve of the manner in which the séances were brought to an end by Herr Jentsch, although there may be reasons for excusing him, but it seems to me at all events certain that the hope of getting better results at the last séance was nearly lost. If I had to decide I should have given up further trials after the second séance in view of the useless and utter expenditure of force, if I had not been able to overcome and change the improper conditions.

Mrs. F. has asked me to help her if possible to continue and finish her séances with Frau Rothe, and I have promised to do so, as far as my influence goes. I need scarcely add that it is a very limited one. At present Frau Rothe is in a very bad state of health, requiring total rest for some weeks at least. Even her guides have enjoined this advice in the most emphatic way. I visited her a week ago and must say that, in my opinion, séances even under the most harmonious and therefore least exhaustive conditions would decidedly do her harm at present. That she has been exhausted by too frequent séances as well as by the shameless slanders of rude sciolists and unscrupulous penny-a-liners, there can be no doubt. Whether or not she will recover her forces time will show.

But this, at least, I can tell Mrs. F., that her séances in Paris have not contributed to diminish the natural shyness of that simple woman towards science. She is not able to distinguish between true science, the only aim of which is truth, and nothing but the truth, and that mock-science to which killing the honour and poisoning the life of mediums before entering into investigation seems to be the only scientific method. She has had enough of the latter sort of science in her own country to induce her to send it about its business for ever.

But I know that there is a true science still, not yet dishonoured by the caricature I have pointed out. To this I recommend the German flower medium as a worthy object of investigation, and I hope she will be willing to lend her forces to it, for she knows that she has a mission to fulfil. Let us hope, then, that we may succeed in rescuing her from the hands of peevish marvel-hunters, as well as of slandering sciolists, who have succeeded in breaking down her health for a time. If Mrs. F. will help me in my endeavours I shall be thankful to her.

Berlin.

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MUSIC AND SONG.—All inmost things we may say are melodious; naturally utter themselves in song. The meaning of song goes deep. Who is there that in logical words can express the effect music has on us? A kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the Infinite, and lets us for the moment gaze into that. All deep things are song. It seems, somehow, the very central essence of us is song; as if all the rest were but wrappings or hulls! The primal element of us; of us, and of all things. Poetry, therefore, we will call musical thought. The poet is he who thinks in this manner. See deep enough, and you see musically, the heart of Nature being everywhere music, if you can only reach it.—CARLYLE.

## POTENTIAL IMMORTALITY.

Your leading article in 'LIGHT,' of July 27th, refers, I think, to a most interesting, vitally important subject. You touch upon its central point, and the very one that should engage the attention of all reflective minds—I mean 'Potential Immortality.' I think it has often been pointed out in your pages by 'C. C. M.' and other true thinkers, that there is a vast difference between the soul's survival after death and its immortality.

There is all the difference in the world. Many Spiritualists, and most of the investigators into psychical science, 'psychical researchers,' seem to think that if they prove the fact of continued consciousness after the death of the body, such conclusion proves immortality.

I have not read the book that you review, Dr. McConnell's 'Evolution of Immortality,' so I cannot venture much concerning his reasoning, but I do not know what he quite means by 'natural immortality.' It seems to me there is no such thing naturally. It is well said by a great but little known thinker of to-day, 'man is immortalisable but not immortal,' a phrase much like the author's query: 'In fine, is man *immortal*, or is he only *immortalisable*?' The word immortalisable strikes me as a better one, and answering the question in the affirmative.

The reason, I presume, why there is the distinction between mere persistence beyond the state called death and immortality is on account of the man's own soul condition.

In one case a man is so purified and exalted, really what was anciently called 'regenerated,' that he has in truth obtained his Immortality in this life; that is, he has entered into such consciousness and has won 'the promised land,' or immortality, while still in this world of Effects.

In another case, a man may be so engrossed in things of this world, so deep in mortal life (these two words, *mortal* and *life*, making the continual paradox which runs through subjects, including any other planes of existence), that he has but mere empty words to express his views regarding his future existence. Such a man would doubtless survive after death, for nature has a tendency to push on, and she will do her share and push on the soul from *her* territory to the next in waiting: but it will be, so to speak, a poor weak push. Nature is tired in such case; the soul is weak and poor, the individual consciousness dying out and lazy, and, in consequence, may be composed of such mixed quality (substance exists on all planes—in different guise but *substance* all the same), that though it may be able to stand the one transplanting and survival after death, perhaps half consciously, finally it may disintegrate entirely, the spirit or higher self finally separated. And the spirit is the true life and immortality. Otherwise the mere survival is but a poor thing.

Doubtless Dr. McConnell, as he says that immortality is the evolution of a saintly consciousness, will teach that such aim is of such primary importance that a man should work most seriously towards that end; that immortality must be worked for, and if the workman be a true one he will attain self-conscious immortality as his due, his birthright, not as a gift, which always pre-supposes favouritism. Immortality is the rightful heirship for a man, but he does not inherit without proving his claim, and then it is *with rejoicing*.

It would seem that the object of all deep philosophies is to teach men how to attain to their liberation. The whole teaching of the Vedantic philosophy is to this end—liberation, salvation. To be with the Father in His Kingdom, as Son and Heir, brother of Christ, is the aim of Christian teaching. The object of the Mysteries was to instruct men how to get beyond nature from mortal to immortal life. To survive after death is no certainty that you will survive for ever. If, in case of a very evil life, the soul sinks below nature to the sub-mundane plane, that of chaotic suffering, misery, and confusion, there can certainly be no immortality there, for its very life consists of constant change, disintegration, and finally what is called the second death, when all conscious individuality is lost in the dissolution of all form. If all this were not a matter of the most paramount import-

ance to man, there would have been no need for any revelation or religious teaching. Man would, perhaps, gradually have found out (what the mechanical evolutionists teach) all that is necessary for him to know concerning his body, and doubtless also would have evolved some notion of his survival after its death; and had that been all, well, then, the Higher Powers need not have troubled much about such an unimportant side of nature; man might have jogged on pretty well alone.

But it is because man has a tremendous and most important life in future, far exceeding anything earthly, that man is *not* left to 'find out things' for himself. He really could not. Hence Gods and men have taught us, by various good and vital ways, what we could not learn ourselves, and we are foolish beings if we do not pay attention; and above all things let us not be misled by the idea that survival after death pre-supposes immortality. The teaching of what is called orthodox Protestant Christianity has greatly erred from its own truths in not explaining all this, and in expecting that people will be satisfied with the monstrous fiction that a man when he dies goes for *ever* to Hell or Heaven. Such saying is a falsehood, and has necessarily given rise to the atheistic idea that man, when he dies, may die in good earnest, utterly, entirely, and go and be nowhere, —in fact be dead for ever.

Spiritualism, to its credit, and Psychical Research, assert this to be false, and that man does *not* die in such a way; but these do not prove that man is immortal. To become so—to be liberated, and one with his Higher Self—is the true object; and I venture to think that some Theosophists are unwise in their teaching that we should formulate certain ideas for conditions in our next life, *i.e.*, reincarnation. We should formulate no such desires or ideas concerning future reincarnation. We may be reincarnated, and perhaps get our desires, that turn out to be the very worst conditions possible, or we may not reincarnate at all; we may disintegrate as unfitted for long survival in any plane; or we may obtain our liberation or our immortality and not return to earth. Reincarnation appears to me more of a threat than a hope, only a degree less bad than mere survival in some sub-mundane plane, for it seems endless and Karma never to be exhausted unless *someone helps* who is more than human. A gardener is required in the vineyard, if the vines are to bear fruit. I feel that Dr. McConnell has, as far as I learn of his ideas from your article, expressed the thought of religious philosophy in all ages that the *enduring* life of man can be only reached by his highest quality—the ethical. When that is arrived at, it merges into what God is, Love, and when this is reached man is immortal and conscious of it. Nothing short of this is true Immortality.

ISABEL DE STEIGER, F.T.S.

P.S.—I would like to lay stress on self-conscious individuality, for it is only *I* knowing that *I* exist that makes the consciousness of the Ego, and individual immortality. If the Higher Self is separate the Ego is dissolved, and no true self-consciousness remains. The suffering in Hell or Avitchi is the want of self-consciousness and individuality. It is mad confusion and want of order or self-consciousness.

OCCULTISTS' DEFENCE LEAGUE.—The Yarmouth magistrates, after hearing some amusing stories of interviews by detectives and others with Madame Rennie, a palmist, declined to convict her of 'pretending to tell fortunes by subtle craft.' The chief element in the defence was the following form of agreement, which it was stated all consultants first signed: 'Mme. Rennie hereby gives notice to all who wish to consult her that she has no intention or desire to deceive or impose upon anyone. That any consultant is at liberty to believe or not her statements as to character, past life, or otherwise, or prediction, or foretelling of the future, if any, and anyone who consults her must do so upon the understanding that she has no intention to deceive or impose upon anyone or to obtain money by false pretences.' This is the registered form of the Occultists' Defence League, which defended Mme. Rennie, a middle-aged lady of French extraction, and this 'contract,' in the view of the Bench, met the legal statute which requires a person found guilty of imposture by telling fortunes to be dealt with as a rogue and vagabond.

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

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### A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

No one who patiently notes the movements of the stream of thought can doubt whither it is going. Turn where we will, go up stream or down, the result is the same. 'Old things are passing away: all things are becoming new': and all things make for the ideal merging of Spiritualism and Rationalism, or, as we might say, of Insight and Criticism. We want both: and both, hand in hand, are at the door.

The evidence of this abounds: and, from day to day, it is only a question of choice. Shall we watch the great ocean steamers which seem to know all about it, and to be proudly conscious of their destiny? or look at the little boats that are experimenting or putting out to sea as far as they dare? or simply note the floating scraps which, perhaps, best of all tell how the river speeds or how the tide is running? It is our duty to mark all these, and draw conclusions: and, doing this, we no longer form opinions, we know, positively know, that whoever may be regretting the flow of the tide, or the drift of the stream, we can only exult. It is all our way.

Here, for instance, is a book, by an almost anonymous writer, 'H. A. D.,' on 'The victory that overcometh': evidently written by a judicial, a devout, and an observant reader of great books—a watcher of the signs of the times. The writer claims no more. Beyond her personal equation, she disclaims originality. Any value that her book may have, she says, it derives from such men as F. Denison Maurice, F. W. Robertson and Basil Wilberforce.

I would not fain be one  
Who, satisfying thirst and breaking fast,  
Says no grace after meat.

'H. A. D.,' as her grace after meat, gives us her 'feast of reason and flow of soul,' the peculiar value of which is that, in her way, she can say with Christ;—That which I have heard, speak I unto you.

The twenty-one short Chapters which make up this book form a kind of critical spiritual exposition of the so-called 'Apostles' Creed': and it is most interesting to watch the subtilo play of the modern mind round some of these old-world crudities. Take the clause, 'He rose again from the dead.' Here is a summary of this writer's exposition of these words:—This is simply a way of stating that on the third day from his death the Christ appeared again in this world, so as to be apparent to men still in the flesh. On the third day he returned from his mission to the unseen realm, and, as his going thither is termed a 'descent,' so his return thence is called 'rising again.' He returned so as to be associated visibly with those still in the flesh. It is not said that he rose from the grave on the third day, but 'from the dead.' The body in which he appeared again

after his burial was not the same body as that which had died. What happened to that body we do not know. It is possible that by some natural but unusual process of disintegration, the material atoms were dissipated. Hence, when the disciples came to the grave, they were startled by the appearance of the drapery which seemed to have simply collapsed. The head linen was in a place by itself, and the drapery of the body was by itself, suggesting the dissipation of the body and the collapse of the drapery which remained *in situ*. The new body could enter 'when the doors were shut,' and 'vanish' when it pleased. The shell had gone: the spirit-self remained.

Or take the clause, the crucial clause, 'I believe in the resurrection of the body.' Here, in like manner, is a summary of our author's interpretation—an interpretation which she has learnt from the writers she has named, and especially from Archdeacon Wilberforce:—To say, 'I believe in the resurrection of the body' is not the same thing as to say, 'I believe in the resurrection of the substance which composes the body I now wear.' It is not necessary that there should be one single atom of the same substance in the resurrection-body as in our present flesh, in order that it should be 'our own body.' To believe this, is to be liberated from the supposition that what is disposed of at death will ever be raised up again to form a permanent vesture for the spirit. This is not out of harmony with Paul's analogy concerning the sowing and rising again of seed. Paul did not refer to the grave and to a dead body sown in it. The body that is 'sown in corruption' is the body that is born into this world; the resurrection is a resurrection from it. The husk must die, being corruptible, and, as it decays, the inner life grows, until the hour comes when it breaks away completely from the pod, and the expanding force springs forth with 'its own body.' So is it with man. 'Though the outward man is decaying, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.' 'If the earthly house be dissipated, we have a building of God.' If we recognise that we are now seeds, and that the body which is to be raised in incorruption is made to live while the husk of the flesh is dying, we shall then cease to expect a distant resurrection of the body of this flesh. We look, rather, for the uprising of an embodied life in the hour of death. The resurrection process, like all God's processes, is a continuous evolution, a harmonious development by gradual methods, of a higher organism out of a lower.

As far as possible, we have used the writer's own words in this summary of her exposition of a belated confession of faith. It is courageous, it is ingenious, it is a vast improvement; but we are afraid it is unwarranted. 'The resurrection of the body,' in the Creed, cannot fairly be made to mean the persistence of the spirit. The two things represent two entirely different stages of culture, and two entirely different states of mind. The compilers of the Creed and the people who put it into an Act of Parliament meant one thing; and the spiritual rationalist means another: the one meant an uprising of the body,—and even a Scott Holland means that in relation to the resurrection of Christ's 'flesh,'—while the other knows that the physical shell is, at death, done with, and utterly done with, for ever. We must make our choice.

We have, moreover, serious doubts about Paul and his seed corn analogy; and are afraid that he really believed in the resurrection of the body and a speedily coming 'Last Day.' He knows better now, and he probably prefers that we should say so instead of trying to make out that he was entirely far-seeing, scientific and logical. He, darkly, went the first steps of the way—the great, earnest, heroic soul!—and it is our duty to press on where he left off, and not to shelter ourselves behind him. Sufficient unto the day is the vision thereof.



## REMARKABLE CLAIRVOYANCE.

If you can find space for this communication in 'LIGHT' I shall be obliged, as I feel that the subject of it cannot be too widely known.

A friend, suffering from what was regarded as an incurable complaint, went on March 23rd last for a sitting with Mrs. Manks, who advised that Mr. Spriggs should be consulted. This was done, with such result that my friend is now practically cured of a most painful malady through Mr. Spriggs' control.

On Monday last I went to see Mrs. Manks, who told me many things of which I had no previous knowledge, but which I have since verified. But the two most convincing tests of her remarkable clairvoyance were yet to come. I had—though but recently introduced to Spiritualism—doubts as to whether a good deal of the so-called clairvoyance might not be mind-reading or mental telepathy; indeed, I felt this so much that I had resolved to go to no more sensitives for this branch of the occult. But, though of a sceptical turn of mind, the following experience has completely convinced me, since, as I knew nothing of the matter, it could not be read from my mind:—

'There is someone for you, who is dressed in very deep mourning,' said Mrs. Manks; 'she throws herself wearily on the couch—she is in pain. Oh! I feel it! rheumatism or—no, she raises her arm and I see there is *pus* forming under the bone. She will have to undergo an operation. Her father, who is in spirit-life, has come; he points to his cheek, he wants me to see a scar or something; no, it is a scar on his *daughter's* cheek, for I see it now!'

Is not this remarkable? My friend thought she had only a little eczema on her arm, but it is proved to be necrosis, and is to be immediately treated as such. This friend is staying at Harrogate, and her movements were unknown to me. She has, as Mrs. Manks told me, had pain in her arm for three years.

Another friend, living with me (the one treated by Mr. Spriggs), was then described, and I was told to give her a message; she had something the matter with her left foot, and was to be careful, and to rest it. This puzzled me, for I knew of nothing of the kind in connection with my friend; but, like Brer Fox, 'I lay low and said nuffin,' and heard much more of a private nature that made me, so to speak, 'sit up.'

On reaching home I gave Mrs. Manks' message to my friend, asking if she had ever felt any pain in her foot, and then I heard that at 1.20 p.m. (the time at which Mrs. Manks gave me the message) my friend had met with an accident—a heavy toilet basin having fallen and broken on her leg and foot! *This* was not mind-reading; with a deep sense of the 'folly of making up one's mind' upon any subject of which one can know so little as clairvoyance, I have resolved to suspend judgment, and to take in faith what the gods give me. I forgot to mention that I did not go to see Mrs. Manks professionally on Monday, but merely to leave something with her; but she gave me, without fee, a most successful sitting of one and a half hour's duration. Since I have joined the ranks of the Spiritualists (I do not like that name) I have received more kindness from strangers (to me) among them than from my *friends* in the churches with which I was connected for twenty years. In addition to Mrs. Manks—Mr. and Mrs. Lucking, Mr. and Mrs. Withall, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, and last, but not least, Mr. Spriggs, have given me time, talent and help of the highest kind, and 'all for love.' Enclosing my name and address, and thanking you in anticipation,

'SAYONARA.'

(A member of the London Spiritualist Alliance).

MISS MCCREADIE desires to inform her friends and clients that she will be out of town until the 8th of September next.

MRS. J. STANNARD.—On Sunday evening next, at 7 p.m., the platform at Cavendish Rooms will be occupied by Mrs. J. Stannard, when it is anticipated that a large audience will assemble to welcome her and listen to her address.

## ANIMISM? OR SPIRITUALISM?

Two articles in the July number of the 'Uebersinnliche Welt'—both by Herr Kaibel, of Munich—deserve some notice, though, perhaps, not altogether of an appreciative character. One of these is a review of the German translation of Mrs. d'Espérance's work, 'Shadowland,' under the title of 'Im Reich der Schatten,' and is, on the whole, very commendatory. It commences thus:—

'A remarkable book! I have read many works of the kind, but few which have impressed me so favourably. Above all, I would praise the matter-of-fact style in which Mrs. d'Espérance narrates her experiences. No preaching, no moralising, but a simple description of personal experiences; certainly a notable collection, for the authoress is one of the best mediums who has ever devoted herself to the cause of truth. . . . She appears through all the book to possess an eminently sensible character.'

I can heartily endorse this opinion of the book, though I think I may say I have read most of the principal works on Spiritualism in English, as well as many in French and German.

After some description of the contents of the book itself, Herr Kaibel proceeds to give his own views of the phenomena therein described. Mrs. d'Espérance's early experiences as a 'visionary' or 'clairvoyante,' long before she had any acquaintance with Spiritualism, or was aware that she was what is called a 'medium,' he attributes mostly to *hallucination*—that convenient word, explaining away so much, though really explaining nothing! Among these he especially notices the wonderful experience she had when, as a child, she was on board a steamer in the Mediterranean with her father, and saw the phantom ship, through which the vessel she was on passed bodily; when she nearly fainted with terror, thinking it was a collision, but on recovery saw the ship they had passed through behind them. Of this experience Herr Kaibel says: 'This appears to me to be a direct hallucination, excited by the tales told by the sailors, acting on her childish imagination.'

Passing from these early experiences, Herr Kaibel turns to the accounts of her later or mediumistic ones, and here, be it said, he does not throw a shadow of suspicion on the genuineness of what she describes, he only gives his own view of the causes of the phenomena; and these, in one word, are, according to him, not supra-mundane or transcendental beings, as they assert themselves to be, but Mrs. d'Espérance's own sub-conscious self; in other words, everything is due to *animism*!

After giving a short description of the contents of the book, Herr Kaibel writes: 'This is what the book contains; and what is its scientific value? We will cherish no illusion on the subject, but simply answer, "Null!"' Speaking a little further on of her dedication of the book to her principal and revered spirit control, *Hamner Stafford*—a 'savant of the transcendental world,' he adds: 'If indeed a transcendental world really exists!'

After avowing his conviction of the animistic origin of all Mrs. d'Espérance's phenomena, including those of materialisation, he thus writes:—

'Only one question can be put as to the animistic explanation of the phenomena. Which is most probable, that an *instrument* (the sub-conscious self) should represent twenty or a hundred different individualities, or that twenty or a hundred different individualities should make use of one and the same instrument to manifest themselves? The answer is self evident.'

Indeed I think it is, to all possessing long experience of spiritualistic matters and a fair proportion of common-sense; but not in Herr Kaibel's meaning. I can, however, quite join in his concluding words: 'And now, I advise you to buy—no—to read it!'

The other article by Herr Kaibel is indeed a wonderful one! It is entitled 'Post-mortem Form of Beings and Spirit Manifestations, a Study by Franz Kaibel.' On first looking it through, I was really hardly inclined to take it seriously; but on more careful perusal, I found it was indeed written in most solemn earnest, and the scientific terminology used in its composition, though it may not convert us to the author's views, must inspire our respect for the opinions of such a very learned writer.

First, I must remark that Herr Kaibel seems to have overcome his doubts about the real existence of a 'transcendental world,' and that he recognises the fact that 'transcendental beings,' i.e., departed spirits, if I may venture to make use of such an unscientific expression—really do communicate with mortals through the intervention of a medium. The question which exercises his scientific mind, and which he discusses in this paper, is in what form the released spirit or transcendental being continues to exist in the sphere to which it is relegated on leaving that of earth. The testimony of hundreds and thousands of such beings, who have returned to tell us something about the life hereafter, he looks upon naturally as of no scientific value. This testimony I need scarcely say is unanimous; and is to the effect that the transcendental or spirit body is a counterpart of the mortal body, of course composed of much finer or more ethereal matter; and that the spirit world so much resembles that of earth that many spirits on their first arrival have obstinately refused to believe that they have left the mundane sphere.

And now, at the risk of trespassing somewhat on the space at my disposal, I must translate one or two passages from this 'study,' which—or I am much mistaken—will amuse some of your readers as much as they have amused me. After some preliminary remarks we come to this:—

'It is self-evident that intelligence and that form of matter which we know to be the speciality of man, are not necessarily united with one another; that is, there may be and are beings who unite with intelligence a totally different material form. These extra mundane beings, with which we are now dealing, may therefore possess a form very unlike that of man, and in accordance with the natural law of development, throw off at death the superfluous material form. Man, in his rude material state, needs the organs of the body; he needs feet to walk with, hands to hold with, eyes to see with, ears with which to hear, &c. All this is done away with in the transcendental world, where—as experience teaches—the fourth dimension is used; passing through matter, thought movement, thought speech, thought sight, have replaced the functions of bodily sense-organs, and therefore these last are superfluous; so they die away. As intelligence, therefore, is the principal thing, matter must be reduced to its simplest form—*this is mist*. The simplest form of matter is, at the same time, its original form. After matter, according to natural law, has passed through its prescribed development and thereby has forwarded the growth of the intelligence, it is relegated to the background as soon as the intelligence obtains the pre-eminence; so that the latter only needs so much matter as is necessary for its existence. Matter there must naturally be; for complete immateriality excludes the idea of a separate personality. But, as a simple form of existence—as has been already said, the simplest—the original form of matter, that of mist, suffices. mist in the form of a ring or circle, with extension of space = a ball. Therefore it follows that the form possessed by transcendental beings is that of a ball of mist, that is, a ball-shaped aggregation of fine matter (*fluid or od*).'

After a little more 'science,' Herr Kaibel adds:—

'*Resumé: Transcendental beings have for their bodily forms a finely material ball, giving out light, heat and chemical rays.*'

This fact is confirmed, he says, by both new and old experience:—

'At materialisation séances we remark as a preliminary phenomenon, a faintly luminous ball-shaped mass of mist, out of which the human form becomes gradually evolved. When Rochas was experimenting in Paris with his somnambulist Laurent, and asked him once during the magnetic sleep how he was feeling, the recipient replied that *his exteriorised double was endeavouring to take the form of a luminous ball*. To a similar question put by Baraduc to his somnambulist, the answer was: 'I find myself like a ball of light in the dark.' Herr von B., for whose accuracy I pledge myself, told me that an old lady of his acquaintance, once passing accidentally late at night through a churchyard, saw many luminous balls, which came out of the grass.'

I really did not believe, till I read this, that in this enlightened age persons of any pretensions to culture believed that the spirit body—even if it be only a ball of mist—is buried with the decaying corpse, and that in company with others similarly disposed, it issues forth at night to prowl or float about the churchyard, either for the sake of exercise or for the amusement of frightening old women; returning, no doubt, at cock-crow to its ghastly abode in the coffin of its

former self. This is the only modern evidence he brings forward, but he finds several instances among the ancients. These are:—

'The oldest of the Faust legends describes the "devil" as appearing in the form of a ball of light' (Goethe, as a black poodle!) 'Plutarch even says that a person apparently dead, told him when he revived, that he had seen the souls of the dead as *flaming beings*,\* and to go even farther back, when Saul went to the witch of Endor, the figure of Samuel appeared as white mist.†

And this he calls evidence or proof!

But now let us turn to the spirit-phenomena of which he speaks, and we cannot but remark how inconsistent these animists are. In Herr Kaibel's paper on Mrs. d'Espérance, he distinctly affirms that all her phenomena are due to the unconscious self of the medium, and that even Hummer Stafford and Yolande are but manifestations of the same being; and now he speaks of spirits—or transcendental beings, as he prefers to call them—manifesting; and to prove his mist-ball theory, says 'that the helplessness and primitiveness of ordinary spiritistic phenomena are not due to the fact that the beings from the other world do not know how to come into communion with us, or that unknown natural laws make this difficult to them, but to their form.' And then he shows how in this simple form of a ball of mist, while necessary instruments such as hands and arms are failing to them, they have to make use of materiality from the medium in order to obtain sufficient strength even to push or rap the table or other objects.

Animists, as represented by the modern German occultists, seem to me very deficient in both common-sense and consistency; for if, according to them, the *anima* or sub-conscious self of the medium can and does perform all the wonders we attribute to spirits, where is there room for, or *raison d'être* for, the latter? What chance of manifesting could these poor helpless 'transcendental beings,' in their ball-shaped mist bodies, have when pushed aside by their rival, the sub-conscious self of the medium, that strong, clever, unscrupulous and lying being, who not only is able, but—like our old friend, Bottom the weaver—is eager to enact every part and character in the medium's repertoire? It seems to me, it should be either 'Animism' or 'Spiritism.' Common-sense certainly is in favour of the latter, as are also the dicta of men of world-wide reputation, such as Wallace, Crookes, and many others equally famous; so I am not ashamed of the name of 'Spiritualist,' in such good company.

No one can quarrel with Herr Kaibel for the complacency he shows in having proved to his own satisfaction that when he passes over to the transcendental world, his bodily form will be that of a 'ball of mist, giving out light and heat rays,' but I cannot help thinking that when he wakes up in the spirit world, he will be pleasantly surprised to find that he is equipped much as he had been here, and, after getting over his astonishment, let us hope that he will soon settle down as a useful member of some transcendental community, and—who knows?—often enjoy a hearty laugh, when thinking of the absurd pseudo-scientific theory he invented when on earth.

M. T.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have some communications in type on the sense of 'Levitation during sleep.' We shall print them as soon as space permits, and after that we think that the question may be allowed to rest for a time.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—We are requested to state that one or more members of the Council of the Alliance will be in attendance at the rooms, 110, St. Martin's lane, W.C., every Wednesday, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., when they will be pleased to meet any friends who may wish for an interview.

\* This reads more like bright or shining angels than balls of mist.—M. T.

† I have referred to the Bible, not caring to trust my memory, and find in the 1st Book of Samuel, chap. 28, v. 14, these words: 'And he (Saul) said unto her, What form is he? And she said, An old man cometh up and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel.' Not a word about a white mist! Surely a scientist should be a little more sure of his facts!—M. T.



## FOOD IN RELATION TO HEALTH.

By 'VERAX.'

The importance of good health can hardly be exaggerated; upon its preservation our general well-being mainly depends; for its loss there can be no adequate recompense.

The possession of a robust, vigorous, well-balanced physical body—the 'Temple of the Holy Ghost'—is a priceless treasure which makes optimism possible. A sound body will afford to its possessor possibilities of psychic experiences, of pleasurable emotions, and of genuine all-round happiness which the sick and suffering may envy but cannot share. To be spiritually sane and clear, strong and serene, there must be harmony and equipoise between the forces of soul and body, that they may act and react upon the consciousness with refreshing and stimulating power. No wonder, then, that increasing attention is being directed to the processes of living; not only to the influence of the body upon the mind, but of diet upon both body and mind; of the power of mind to affect the body; and the importance of right habits in regard to diet and drink in order to secure health, buoyancy, and well-being.

Dr. A. J. Davis, the gifted seer and author of the 'Harmonial Philosophy,' teaches that the best and safest path to spiritual unfoldment is—first, physical development; then moral and intellectual; and lastly the spiritual; and Dr. A. Gresswell, in 'LIGHT,' of June 1st, urged the 'paramount importance' of physical health to those who possess supernormal powers. Certainly anything which will throw light upon the problem of how to be healthy should be welcome to students of psychical science. For this reason I think your readers would do well to make themselves acquainted with a book written by Edward Hooker Dewey, M.D., entitled, 'The No Breakfast Plan and the Fasting Cure.'\*

In his 'preface' the author says that his book is a history 'of an evolution in the professional cure of the sick; it begins in inexperience and in a haze of medical superstition, and with a faith that Nature is the all and all in the cure of disease.' 'Every line' he says, 'has been written with the conviction at white heat, that enforced food in sickness and the drug that corrodes are professional barbarisms unworthy of the times in which we live.' This is a startling announcement, but Dr. Dewey proceeds to justify abundantly his convictions, to his own satisfaction, and it is but fair to add that hosts of people testify that they have regained health and strength by adopting his advice.

This work might more appropriately have been styled 'the confessions of a physician,' and the autobiographical portions are by no means the least interesting or illuminating—throwing as they do numerous side-lights upon the practices of professional medical men. Of course no mere summary, which is all I am able to make, can do justice to his book, which thrills with sympathy and sincerity and must be read to be understood; yet I should like to give the readers of 'LIGHT' an outline sketch of the author's evolutionary theory regarding the treatment of the sick, and the prevention of ill-health by abstinence from food, especially in the early part of the day.

Dr. Dewey regards disease as the summing up of the results of violated laws. He noticed, even before he began his study of medicine, that, 'whether disease were coaxed with doses too small for mathematical estimate, or whether blown out with solid shot, or blown up with shells, the percentage of recoveries seemed to be the same regardless of form of treatment' and he soon found, as the result of hospital service, that 'no matter what the disease, every physician was a law to himself as to the quality, quantity, and times of his doses, with the mortality in the wards apparently about the same,' and this led up to the conclusion that, in spite of the fact that patients are frequently almost reduced to barren wastes, they recover 'under even the most crucifying dosages: Nature really winning the victory, the physician carrying off the honours.'

Following upon these observations Dr. Dewey states that

he was called upon to attend an overgrown girl in early maturity, with a history of several months of digestive and other troubles, who was so ill that for three weeks not even a drink of water, not one dose of medicine, could be retained:—

'When finally water could be retained my patient seemed brighter in mind, the complexion was clearer, and she seemed actually stronger. As for the tongue, which at first was heavily coated, the improvement was striking; while the breath, utterly foul at first, was strikingly less offensive. In every way the patient was very much better. I was so surprised at this that I determined to let the good work go on, on Nature's own terms, and so it did until the thirty-fifth day, when there was a call—not for the undertaker, but for food—a call that marked the close of the disease. . . . There was not more wasting of the body than with other cases of as protracted sickness in which more or less food was given and retained, and all this with only water for thirst, until hunger came and a *complete cure*. Feed, feed the sick, say the books, to support strength or to keep life in the body, and yet Nature was absurd enough to ignore all human practice and in her own way to support vital power while curing the disease.'

This suggestive experience set Dr. Dewey thinking, and he recalled many cases in which his patients had been averse to food and had not taken enough nourishment to account for the support of their vital power. The effect upon him was such that he began to apply the same methods to other patients with the same general results, and very early the utility of withholding food from the sick during the entire time of absence of desire for it, and this with absolute safety, was demonstrated beyond all questioning. He failed, however, to find the explanation of the facts until he chanced to see in Yeo's 'Physiology' a table of the estimated losses that occur in death resulting from starvation, viz., 'Fat, 97 per cent.; muscle, 30 per cent.; liver, 56 per cent.; spleen, 63 per cent.; blood, 17 per cent.; nerve centres, 0 per cent.' From this valuable 'table' he realised that in human bodies themselves there is a large reserve of predigested food which the brain can absorb to maintain structural integrity in the absence of food from without or power to digest it. This eliminated the brain as an organ that needs to be fed, or that *can* be fed, from light-diet kitchens in times of acute sickness. 'Only in this self-feeding power of the brain is found the explanation of its functional cleanness where bodies have become skeletons.' Dr. Dewey's conclusion was that 'the head is the power-house of the human plant, but the brain the dynamo as the source of every possible human energy'; and that 'broken bones and wounds heal, diseases are cured, through energy evolved in the brain, or the brain system as a whole.' Still further, and equally important, he realised that 'the power of the stomach would be abolished were the nerve trunks cut off, so that the digestion of food is a tax upon the strength of the brain.'

How, it may be asked, in the light of this physiology, is the strength kept up? The universal belief is that it is kept up by the daily food, but Dr. Dewey does not think so. He says:—

'If food really has power to keep up the strength, there should not be so much strength lost by the general activities. But the fact remains that from the first wink in the morning to the last at night there is a gradual decline of strength, no matter how much food is taken, nor how ample the powers of digestion; and there comes a time with all when they must go to bed, and not to the dining room, to recover lost strength. The loss of a night of sleep is never made up by any kind of care in eating on the following day, and none are so stupid as not to know that rest is the only means to recover from the exhaustion of excessive physical activity.'

Dr. Dewey's strong point therefore is, that food is taken to repair waste, not to supply strength. He affirms that there is no movement so light, no thought or motion so trivial, that it does not cost brain power in its action:—and this is true of even the slightest exercise of energy evolved in digestion. Our *actual* need of food—not our imaginary need—and the best reason for taking it, are 'to make up for the wastes from the general activities,' and 'the brain is not only the centre and source of strength, not only a self-feeding organ when necessary, but it is a self-charging dynamo, regaining its exhausted energies entirely through rest and sleep.'

First, I must remark that Herr Kaibel seems to have overcome his doubts about the real existence of a 'transcendental world,' and that he recognises the fact that 'transcendental beings,' i.e., departed spirits, if I may venture to make use of such an unscientific expression—really do communicate with mortals through the intervention of a medium. The question which exercises his scientific mind, and which he discusses in this paper, is in what form the released spirit or transcendental being continues to exist in the sphere to which it is relegated on leaving that of earth. The testimony of hundreds and thousands of such beings, who have returned to tell us something about the life hereafter, he looks upon naturally as of no scientific value. This testimony I need scarcely say is unanimous; and is to the effect that the transcendental or spirit body is a counterpart of the mortal body, of course composed of much finer or more ethereal matter; and that the spirit world so much resembles that of earth that many spirits on their first arrival have obstinately refused to believe that they have left the mundane sphere.

And now, at the risk of trespassing somewhat on the space at my disposal, I must translate one or two passages from this 'study,' which—or I am much mistaken—will amuse some of your readers as much as they have amused me. After some preliminary remarks we come to this:—

'It is self evident that intelligence and that form of matter which we know to be the speciality of man, are not necessarily united with one another; that is, there may be and are beings who unite with intelligence a totally different material form. These extra mundane beings, with which we are now dealing, may therefore possess a form very unlike that of man, and in accordance with the natural law of development, throw off at death the superfluous material form. Man, in his rude material state, needs the organs of the body; he needs feet to walk with, hands to hold with, eyes to see with, ears with which to hear, &c. All this is done away with in the transcendental world, where—as experience teaches—the fourth dimension is used; passing through matter, thought movement, thought speech, thought sight, have replaced the functions of bodily sense-organs, and therefore these last are superfluous; so they die away. As intelligence, therefore, is the principal thing, matter must be reduced to its simplest form—*this is mist*. The simplest form of matter is, at the same time, its original form. After matter, according to natural law, has passed through its prescribed development and thereby has forwarded the growth of the intelligence, it is relegated to the background as soon as the intelligence obtains the pre-eminence; so that the latter only needs so much matter as is necessary for its existence. Matter there must naturally be; for complete immateriality excludes the idea of a separate personality. But, as a simple form of existence—as has been already said, the simplest—the original form of matter, that of mist, suffices mist in the form of a ring or circle, with extension of space = a ball. Therefore it follows that the form possessed by transcendental beings is that of a ball of mist, that is, a ball-shaped aggregation of fine matter (fluid or od).'

After a little more 'science,' Herr Kaibel adds:—

'Résumé: Transcendental beings have for their bodily forms a finely material ball, giving out light, heat and chemical rays.'

This fact is confirmed, he says, by both new and old experience:

'At materialisation séances we remark as a preliminary phenomenon, a faintly luminous ball-shaped mass of mist, out of which the human form becomes gradually evolved. When Rochas was experimenting in Paris with his somnambulist Laurent, and asked him once during the magnetic sleep how he was feeling, the recipient replied that his exteriorised double was endeavouring to take the form of a luminous ball. To a similar question put by Baraduc to his somnambulist, the answer was: 'I find myself like a ball of light in the dark.' Herr von B., for whose accuracy I pledge myself, told me that an old lady of his acquaintance, once passing accidentally late at night through a churchyard, saw many luminous balls, which came out of the grass.'

I really did not believe, till I read this, that in this enlightened age persons of any pretensions to culture believed that the spirit body—even if it be only a ball of mist—is buried with the decaying corpse, and that in company with others similarly disposed, it issues forth at night to prowls or float about the churchyard, either for the sake of exercise or for the amusement of frightening old women; returning, no doubt, at cock-crow to its ghastly abode in the coffin of its

former self. This is the only modern evidence he brings forward, but he finds several instances among the ancients. These are:—

'The oldest of the Faust legends describes the "devil" as appearing in the form of a ball of light' (Goethe, as a black poodle!) 'Plutarch even says that a person apparently dead, told him when he revived, that he had seen the souls of the dead as *flaming beings*;' and to go even further back, when Saul went to the witch of Endor, the figure of Samuel appeared as white mist.'

And this he calls evidence or proof!

But now let us turn to the spirit-phenomena of which he speaks, and we cannot but remark how inconsistent these animists are. In Herr Kaibel's paper on Mrs. d'Espérance, he distinctly affirms that all her phenomena are due to the unconscious self of the medium, and that even Hummer Stafford and Yolande are but manifestations of the same being; and now he speaks of spirits—or transcendental beings, as he prefers to call them—manifesting; and to prove his mist-ball theory, says 'that the helplessness and primitiveness of ordinary spiritistic phenomena are not due to the fact that the beings from the other world do not know how to come into communion with us, or that unknown natural laws make this difficult to them, but to their form.' And then he shows how in this simple form of a ball of mist, while necessary instruments such as hands and arms are failing to them, they have to make use of materiality from the medium in order to obtain sufficient strength even to push or rap the table or other objects.

Animists, as represented by the modern German occultists, seem to me very deficient in both common-sense and consistency; for if, according to them, the *animus* or sub-conscious self of the medium can and does perform all the wonders we attribute to spirits, where is there room for, or *raison d'être* for, the latter? What chance of manifesting could these poor helpless 'transcendental beings,' in their ball-shaped mist bodies, have when pushed aside by their rival, the sub-conscious self of the medium, that strong, clever, unscrupulous and lying being, who not only is able, but—like our old friend, Bottom the weaver—is eager to enact every part and character in the medium's repertoire? It seems to me, it should be either 'Animism' or 'Spiritism.' Common-sense certainly is in favour of the latter, as are also the dicta of men of world-wide reputation, such as Wallace, Crookes, and many others equally famous; so I am not ashamed of the name of 'Spiritualist,' in such good company.

No one can quarrel with Herr Kaibel for the complacency he shows in having proved to his own satisfaction that when he passes over to the transcendental world, his bodily form will be that of a 'ball of mist, giving out light and heat rays,' but I cannot help thinking that when he wakes up in the spirit world, he will be pleasantly surprised to find that he is equipped much as he had been here, and, after getting over his astonishment, let us hope that he will soon settle down as a useful member of some transcendental community, and—who knows?—often enjoy a hearty laugh, when thinking of the absurd pseudo-scientific theory he invented when on earth.

M. T.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have some communications in type on the sense of 'Levitation during sleep.' We shall print them as soon as space permits, and after that we think that the question may be allowed to rest for a time.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—We are requested to state that one or more members of the Council of the Alliance will be in attendance at the rooms, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., every Wednesday, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., when they will be pleased to meet any friends who may wish for an interview.

\* This reads more like bright or shining angels than balls of mist.—M. T.

† I have referred to the Bible, not caring to trust my memory, and find in the 1st Book of Samuel, chap. 28, v. 14, these words: 'And he (Saul) said unto her, What form is he? And she said, An old man cometh up and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel.' Not a word about a white mist! Surely a *scientist* should be a little more sure of his facts!—M. T.

## FOOD IN RELATION TO HEALTH.

By 'VERAX.'

The importance of good health can hardly be exaggerated; upon its preservation our general well-being mainly depends; for its loss there can be no adequate recompense.

The possession of a robust, vigorous, well-balanced physical body—the 'Temple of the Holy Ghost'—is a priceless treasure which makes optimism possible. A sound body will afford to its possessor possibilities of psychic experiences, of pleasurable emotions, and of genuine all-round happiness which the sick and suffering may envy but cannot share. To be spiritually sane and clear, strong and serene, there must be harmony and equipoise between the forces of soul and body, that they may act and react upon the consciousness with refreshing and stimulating power. No wonder, then, that increasing attention is being directed to the processes of living; not only to the influence of the body upon the mind, but of diet upon both body and mind; of the power of mind to affect the body; and the importance of right habits in regard to diet and drink in order to secure health, buoyancy, and well-being.

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Dr. Dewey regards disease as the summing up of the results of violated laws. He noticed, even before he began his study of medicine, that, 'whether disease were coaxed with doses too small for mathematical estimate, or whether blown out with solid shot, or blown up with shells, the percentage of recoveries seemed to be the same regardless of the form of treatment' and he soon found, as the result of his hospital service, that 'no matter what the disease, every surgeon was a law to himself as to the quality, quantity, and times of his doses, with the mortality in the wards apparently about the same,' and this led up to the conclusion that, in spite of the fact that patients are frequently almost forced to partake of whiskey and milk 'until their stomachs are reduced to barren wastes,' they recover 'under even the most crucifying dosages: Nature really winning the victories, the physician carrying off the honours.'

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This suggestive experience set Dr. Dewey thinking, and he recalled many cases in which his patients had been averse to food and had not taken enough nourishment to account for the support of their vital power. The effect upon him was such that he began to apply the same methods to other patients with the same general results, and very early the utility of withholding food from the sick during the entire time of absence of desire for it, and this with absolute safety, was demonstrated beyond all questioning. He failed, however, to find the explanation of the facts until he chanced to see in Yeo's 'Physiology' a table of the estimated losses that occur in death resulting from starvation, viz., 'Fat, 97 per cent.; muscle, 30 per cent.; liver, 56 per cent.; spleen, 63 per cent.; blood, 17 per cent.; nerve centres, 0 per cent.' From this valuable 'table' he realised that in human bodies themselves there is a large reserve of predigested food which the brain can absorb to maintain structural integrity in the absence of food from without or power to digest it. This eliminated the brain as an organ that needs to be fed, or that *can* be fed, from light-diet kitchens in times of acute sickness. 'Only in this self-feeding power of the brain is found the explanation of its functional clearness where bodies have become skeletons.' Dr. Dewey's conclusion was that 'the head is the power-house of the human plant, but the brain the dynamo as the source of every possible human energy'; and that 'broken bones and wounds heal, diseases are cured, through energy evolved in the brain, or the brain system as a whole.' Still further, and equally important, he realised that 'the power of the stomach would be abolished were the nerve trunks cut off, so that the digestion of food is a tax upon the strength of the brain.'

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\* Published by L. N. Fowler and Co., Imperial-buildings, Ludgate-circus, London. Price 1s. 6d. net.

Another important point advanced by Dr. Dewey is that 'disease in proportion to its severity means a loss of digestive conditions and of digestive power,' and therefore to force food upon a weak or diseased stomach is simply to make increased demands upon the patient's strength to secure its digestion, and not to build him up or afford him staying power. 'In times of health, if we eat when we are not hungry, or when very tired, or worried, we find that we suffer a loss of vital power, of both physical and mental energy; how then can food be a support to vital power when the brain is more gravely depressed by disease?' And further, if the weakened digestive organs have thrown upon them food which they cannot digest, the brain will suffer depletion; indigestion, inflammation, fever, and consequent accelerated waste of tissue and expenditure of vital energy, will inevitably result from the mistaken idea that food is necessary to keep up the strength.

Dr. Dewey logically concludes from all this that *feeding* the sick is a tax on vital power when they need all that power to cure disease, and he declares that :—

'For more than a score of years I have been going into the rooms of the sick to see the evolutions of health from disease as I see the evolutions from "the dead wastes of March to the affluence of June." As there was no wasting of vital power in the hopeless efforts to save the body from wasting, I had a clear right to presume that my patients recovered more rapidly and with less suffering. With no perplexing study over what foods and what medicines to give, I could devote my entire attention to the study of symptoms as evidences of progress towards recovery or death; and in addition to all this there was the satisfaction of being strictly in line with Nature as to when and what to eat.'

As to the alleged danger of death from starvation the doctor adduces an instance of a man who entered the army with a weight of 159 pounds. He was sent home so wasted from ulceration of the stomach and bowels that he actually spanned his thigh with his thumb and finger. He lived ten days after his return, and retained the clearness of his mind even on the last day of his life. At death his body weighed only 60 pounds, and it was the opinion of his brother, a medical man, that no food was digested during the last four months of his life. Dr. Dewey's opinion is that it took a much longer time for the brain to absorb more than 90 pounds of his body, and that his life was shortened by the more rapid loss of tissues consequent upon his disease, than would have been the case had it been purely an instance of death from starvation.

It is also well to remember that starvation may be caused by over-feeding, and our author cites a case in which a patient suffered for months from the effects of food masses in the stomach in a state of decomposition, and also relates an instance where an attorney endured a course of fever and at last struggled out of doors more like a colourless ghost than his former self, and this in spite of his eating freely—to regain his strength!—far in excess of his power to digest. He was again brought to his couch with mild fever, complicated with other ailments. Not one of his friends expected him to recover, because there had been death in his manner, movements, and looks for months. Says Dr. Dewey :—

'To this possibly hopeless case I was called, and from that time he was to suffer only from the disease. For nearly three weeks no food was called for; and yet power so increased that he became able to dress himself; and on the morning before hunger finally called for food he came down from his bedroom with a son on his back who weighed not less than seventy-five pounds. Thence onwards, life, colour, mind, muscle, rapidly came, until there was such a regeneration as to reveal a new body and a new soul.'

A case of another kind that was submitted to treatment by medical men is cited thus :—

'A man, a giant, in his eighty-eighth year, lost his appetite, and was put to death by the following means: a pint of whiskey and from one to two quarts of milk daily. Five months passed without any change in the bill of fare—five months of delirium, of imbecile mutterings before the last breath was drawn. These tragedies are common the world over. Do I cry against them with too loud a voice? Would that I had a voice of thunder!'

(To be concluded.)

## EXPERIENCES IN A HAUNTED HOUSE.

A correspondent who resides in the North of England sends us some particulars of spontaneous phenomena which will be of interest to our readers. The writer says :—

'We are living in a house which was described to us as "haunted," but at the time we leased it we did not believe in any such thing. We had been so much disappointed in the various religious bodies we had joined in search of truth, that we had come out from all of them and were content to live according to what we felt was right for ourselves and family—I am speaking for my husband and myself. We had no belief in Spiritualism, but a friend recently spoke to us about "spirit rapping," and we sat to the table for fun. We had had the pictures thrown off the walls, the curtain poles pulled down, and had heard many strange noises, including sounds that resembled footsteps tramping about the house, the rustling as of dresses along the floor, and the pattering of what seemed like the feet of animals running up and down the stairs. We had paid no heed to these things until one morning my husband acted like a madman, and the same evening my daughter, sixteen years of age, was controlled when we sat down to the table, for amusement more than anything else. The spirit who influenced her proved to be a child whom I never thought to hear of again. This opened our eyes to the serious character of Spiritualism and enabled us to account for the strange happenings in the house which we had previously attributed to animal magnetism.

A few weeks since my eldest daughter was lifted bodily out of bed and the rest of the night the spring mattress kept moving up and down. Invisible hands have been laid upon the shoulders of every member of the family at different times. A few days ago one of my daughters placed four half crowns on a table upstairs, but when she went for them shortly afterwards they had disappeared. Another sister went to help her to look for the money but neither of them could find it. Two other sisters went upstairs some time later and the money was then where it had been put by my daughter at first. We have had many such tricks played upon us. My girls hear a voice calling them "fools" and "scoundrels" and one of them has seen some of the spirits and has described three of them. But I am distressed because of their influence upon my husband during the night. My daughter, since we have held "sittings," has been controlled, and the spirits tell us that there are several earth-bound spirits in the house—one a young man who starved to death while he was locked in, in one of the top rooms. These earth-bound spirits refuse all our sympathy and spurn our offers of assistance at present, and we hardly know what to do under these circumstances.'

From the description which our correspondent sends us it seems probable that both her husband and herself are mediumistic, as well as her daughters. We have given her the best advice we can and await further developments. We are not authorised to give our correspondent's name or address to anyone at present—indeed, it would not be wise to do so; but we hope to be able to afford her some assistance.

Since the above was written, our correspondent has acted upon our advice, with the result that communications have been received from the haunting spirits, and the disturbances have ceased. Interesting mediumistic experiences are being enjoyed by the members of the family and a few friends who have formed a select circle for investigation, and further developments are anticipated.

## REINCARNATION.

It is a sign of the interest taken in the subject that the question of reincarnation more and more comes to the front and is debated now in nearly every number of 'LIGHT.' In fact it is the very key to the understanding of many Scriptural sayings which without it are quite meaningless, and in my opinion it is in complete harmony with common-sense. What signification would an incarnation of a day, or a week, or a month have if it were the only one? Would it not be as well to have been without it? And if we think of God's mercifulness, would it not be in harmony with the same if He gave a sinner a new opportunity of resisting the same temptation to which he had fallen a victim? But if so, the temptation must be under the same conditions as before, and there are many temptations which could not be

conquered in any other place than the earth—for instance, murder and suicide, drunkenness, sensuality, robbery, and many more. That reincarnation not only was accepted as a truth in all the early Churches, the Christian Church included, is, I believe, a well-known fact; but that it is in many places to be found in the Bible itself has been quite overlooked by the Church nowadays. The reason is that it has been withdrawn from the teaching of the Church; but now it has again been given to mankind, and gains ground every day.

It seems to me that Madame de Christmas's objections, in 'LIGHT,' for July 20th, are very superficial, and their foundation very materialistic. The personality does not lie in the name, but in the spirit itself. What has it to say if the spirit's name on earth was Goethe? Perhaps next time, the same spirit, with another name, will be still more developed. To cling to earthly fame is only vanity. She says she is hopelessly bewildered in the question. I am very much surprised, as I thought she had understood a little more of Theosophy. Theosophy does not teach anything without it having been experienced at least by three people. But of course it is left to everybody to accept the teaching or to reject it. How can this be called dogmatical? Heredity of character and intellect is not everywhere accepted as a truth, but even if it were, Theosophy must reject this so-called truth, as in reincarnation it has a much more sensible and truthful explanation of it.

In concluding, I wish to draw attention to the fact that while in England and America the greater number of Spiritualists are still antagonistic to reincarnation, it is on the whole accepted as a fact by Spiritualists on the Continent—Scandinavia included—and even by many mediums in England and America. Before long it will, I hope, be accepted by everybody as a wise, merciful, and glorious truth.

C. DE KROGH  
(from Copenhagen).

#### A SEVERN MYSTERY.

We are indebted to a number of friends for cuttings from the Birmingham papers referring to a letter which was sent from Paris by M. G. Gerdret, Chef de Bureau du Ministre des Colonies, to the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, detailing a message that was spelt out by table movements at an impromptu séance in Paris. The spirit alleged that he had been murdered on July 18th, and that his body might be found in the Severn, in which it was kept down by a stone. By a curious coincidence there appeared in the same issue of the 'Birmingham Daily Mail' a report of the discovery of the body of a man in the Severn at Pixham, near Worcester.

While we are thankful to receive newspaper cuttings likely to prove of interest to our readers, we prefer, before publishing any particulars in 'LIGHT,' to verify all such reports as far as possible, and in the present instance, whatever may be discovered ultimately with regard to the communication which was made in Paris to M. Gerdret and his friends, the facts which came to light at the inquest on the body discovered at Pixham prove that the body was that of Mr. C. Holden, who was last seen alive on July 25th, whereas the message stated that the alleged murder took place on July 18th, and it bore no marks of violence. Whether the inquiries promised by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham will lead to any results confirmatory of the message given by table tilting in Paris, remains to be seen—but—the most striking fact in connection with the case is this: Four French gentlemen, three of whom were sceptical and the fourth only an interested inquirer, at their first experiment received a coherent message in a foreign language, entirely unknown to them, and a word was used which they could not interpret even with the aid of a dictionary. Could this be the work of the 'sub-conscious self' of one of the sitters?

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##### 'The Mysteries of Spiritualism.'

SIR,—In regard to the communication headed 'Encouragement for Inquirers,' by 'Florence L.,' in 'LIGHT,' of July 27th, I should like to add a few words. A friend of mine, Mrs. Cooke, had returned from America and went to a séance at Messrs. Husk and Williams'. No one knew her surname as she had only used a second name in her reference, and she entered the séance room as 'Mrs. Hall,' a perfect stranger to those present, as she thought, but a voice hailed her out of the darkness: 'Hallo, Mrs. Cooke, are you here? How do you do?' Taken utterly by surprise she faltered out, 'Who is it?' The same deep bass voice answered her, 'Why, don't you know me? John King, of course; don't you remember meeting me at such a house—such a street in New York? Shake hands.' Her hand was gripped until she winced with pain, and she saw John King as distinctly as she had seen him in New York. One can imagine how very small she would feel when her efforts to 'try the spirits' incognito were detected and ruthlessly exposed.

I also note in 'Old-time Experiences' that the 'phenomenon of dress inflation' is mentioned. Sitting in the Salford developing circle the skirt of my dress has been gently raised about two inches from the ground, and also in the train going home. The more I penetrate into the mysteries of Spiritualism the more I recognise the fact that I am only at the beginning.

At our monthly circle for materialisations we have the curtains opened half a yard on each side, and bulging in the middle of the cabinet, both in and out. There are also soft lights like glow-worms, which the sitters in the circle see plainly, and I in the cabinet see through the thick damask curtains, and can tell the sitters where the lights are.

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KATE TAYLOR-ROBINSON,

Tweed Green,  
Whalley Range.

Another important point advanced by Dr. Dewey is that 'disease in proportion to its severity means a loss of digestive conditions and of digestive power,' and therefore to force food upon a weak or diseased stomach is simply to make increased demands upon the patient's strength to secure its digestion, and not to build him up or afford him staying power. 'In times of health, if we eat when we are not hungry, or when very tired, or worried, we find that we suffer a loss of vital power, of both physical and mental energy; how then can food be a support to vital power when the brain is more gravely depressed by disease?' And further, if the weakened digestive organs have thrown upon them food which they cannot digest, the brain will suffer depletion; indigestion, inflammation, fever, and consequent accelerated waste of tissue and expenditure of vital energy, will inevitably result from the mistaken idea that food is necessary to keep up the strength.

Dr. Dewey logically concludes from all this that *feeding* the sick is a tax on vital power when they need all that power to cure disease, and he declares that:—

'For more than a score of years I have been going into the rooms of the sick to see the evolutions of health from disease as I see the evolutions from "the dead wastes of March to the affluence of June." As there was no wasting of vital power in the hopeless efforts to save the body from wasting, I had a clear right to presume that my patients recovered more rapidly and with less suffering. With no perplexing study over what foods and what medicines to give, I could devote my entire attention to the study of symptoms as evidences of progress towards recovery or death; and in addition to all this there was the satisfaction of being strictly in line with Nature as to when and what to eat.'

As to the alleged danger of death from starvation the doctor adduces an instance of a man who entered the army with a weight of 159 pounds. He was sent home so wasted from ulceration of the stomach and bowels that he actually spanned his thigh with his thumb and finger. He lived ten days after his return, and retained the clearness of his mind even on the last day of his life. At death his body weighed only 60 pounds, and it was the opinion of his brother, a medical man, that no food was digested during the last four months of his life. Dr. Dewey's opinion is that it took a much longer time for the brain to absorb more than 90 pounds of his body, and that his life was shortened by the more rapid loss of tissues consequent upon his disease, than would have been the case had it been purely an instance of death from starvation.

It is also well to remember that starvation may be caused by over-feeding, and our author cites a case in which a patient suffered for months from the effects of food masses in the stomach in a state of decomposition, and also relates an instance where an attorney endured a course of fever and at last struggled out of doors more like a colourless ghost than his former self, and this in spite of his eating freely to regain his strength! far in excess of his power to digest. He was again brought to his couch with mild fever, complicated with other ailments. Not one of his friends expected him to recover, because there had been death in his manner, movements, and looks for months. Says Dr. Dewey:

'To this possibly hopeless case I was called, and from that time he was to suffer only from the disease. For nearly three weeks no food was called for; and yet power so increased that he became able to dress himself; and on the morning before hunger finally called for food he came down from his bedroom with a son on his back who weighed not less than seventy-five pounds. Thence onwards, life, colour, mind, muscle, rapidly came, until there was such a regeneration as to reveal a new body and a new soul.'

A case of another kind that was submitted to treatment by medical men is cited thus:

'A man, a giant, in his eighty-eighth year, lost his appetite, and was put to death by the following means: a pint of whiskey and from one to two quarts of milk daily. Five months passed without any change in the bill of fare. Five months of delirium, of imbecile mutterings before the last breath was drawn. These tragedies are common the world over. Do I cry against them with too loud a voice? Would that I had a voice of thunder!'

(To be concluded.)

## EXPERIENCES IN A HAUNTED HOUSE.

A correspondent who resides in the North of England sends us some particulars of spontaneous phenomena which will be of interest to our readers. The writer says:—

'We are living in a house which was described to us as "haunted," but at the time we leased it we did not believe in any such thing. We had been so much disappointed in the various religious bodies we had joined in search of truth, that we had come out from all of them and were content to live according to what we felt was right for ourselves and family—I am speaking for my husband and myself. We had no belief in Spiritualism, but a friend recently spoke to us about "spirit rapping," and we sat to the table for fun. We had had the pictures thrown off the walls, the curtain poles pulled down, and had heard many strange noises, including sounds that resembled footsteps tramping about the house, the rustling as of dresses along the floor, and the pattering of what seemed like the feet of animals running up and down the stairs. We had paid no heed to these things until one morning my husband acted like a madman, and that same evening my daughter, sixteen years of age, was controlled when we sat down to the table, for amusement more than anything else. The spirit who influenced her proved to be a child whom I never thought to hear of again. This opened our eyes to the serious character of Spiritualism and enabled us to account for the strange happenings in the house which we had previously attributed to animal magnetism.

'A few weeks since my eldest daughter was lifted bodily out of bed and the rest of the night the spring mattress kept moving up and down. Invisible hands have been laid upon the shoulders of every member of the family at different times. A few days ago one of my daughters placed four half crowns on a table upstairs, but when she went for them shortly afterwards they had disappeared. Another sister went to help her to look for the money but neither of them could find it. Two other sisters went upstairs some time later and the money was then where it had been put by my daughter at first. We have had many such tricks played upon us. My girls hear a voice calling them "fools" and "scoundrels" and one of them has seen some of the spirits and has described three of them. But I am distressed because of their influence upon my husband during the night. My daughter, since we have held "sittings," has been controlled, and the spirits tell us that there are several earth-bound spirits in the house—one a young man who starved to death while he was locked in, in one of the top rooms. These earth-bound spirits refuse all our sympathy and spurn our offers of assistance at present, and we hardly know what to do under these circumstances.'

From the description which our correspondent sends us it seems probable that both her husband and herself are mediumistic, as well as her daughters. We have given her the best advice we can and await further developments. We are not authorised to give our correspondent's name or address to anyone at present—indeed, it would not be wise to do so; but we hope to be able to afford her some assistance.

Since the above was written, our correspondent has acted upon our advice, with the result that communications have been received from the haunting spirits, and the disturbances have ceased. Interesting mediumistic experiences are being enjoyed by the members of the family and a few friends who have formed a select circle for investigation, and further developments are anticipated.

## REINCARNATION.

It is a sign of the interest taken in the subject that the question of reincarnation more and more comes to the front and is debated now in nearly every number of 'LIGHT.' In fact it is the very key to the understanding of many Scriptural sayings which without it are quite meaningless, and in my opinion it is in complete harmony with common-sense. What signification would an incarnation of a day, or a week, or a month have if it were the only one? Would it not be as well to have been without it? And if we think of God's mercifulness, would it not be in harmony with the same if He gave a sinner a new opportunity of resisting the same temptation to which he had fallen a victim? But if so, the temptation must be under the same conditions as before, and there are many temptations which could not be



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conquered in any other place than the earth—for instance, murder and suicide, drunkenness, sensuality, robbery, and many more. That reincarnation not only was accepted as a truth in all the early Churches, the Christian Church included, is, I believe, a well-known fact; but that it is in many places to be found in the Bible itself has been quite overlooked by the Church nowadays. The reason is that it has been withdrawn from the teaching of the Church; but now it has again been given to mankind, and gains ground every day.

It seems to me that Madame de Christmas's objections, in 'LIGHT,' for July 20th, are very superficial, and their foundation very materialistic. The personality does not lie in the name, but in the spirit itself. What has it to say if the spirit's name on earth was Goethe? Perhaps next time, the same spirit, with another name, will be still more developed. To cling to earthly fame is only vanity. She says she is hopelessly bewildered in the question. I am very much surprised, as I thought she had understood a little more of Theosophy. Theosophy does not teach anything without it having been experienced at least by three people. But of course it is left to everybody to accept the teaching or to reject it. How can this be called dogmatical? Heredity of character and intellect is not everywhere accepted as a truth, but even if it were, Theosophy must reject this so-called truth, as in reincarnation it has a much more sensible and truthful explanation of it.

In concluding, I wish to draw attention to the fact that while in England and America the greater number of Spiritualists are still antagonistic to reincarnation, it is on the whole accepted as a fact by Spiritualists on the Continent—Scandinavia included—and even by many mediums in England and America. Before long it will, I hope, be accepted by everybody as a wise, merciful, and glorious truth.

C. DE KROGH  
(from Copenhagen).

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‘Encouragement for Inquirers.’

SIR,—May it be understood from the statement of ‘Florence L.’ in ‘LIGHT,’ of July 27th, that her deceased son visits and chats with her, that she actually hears his voice? and if this is so, is that voice audible to anyone else? When confirmatory evidence can be given it should never be omitted.

C. A. M.

A Sensitive Young Lady.

SIR,—I should like to ask the following question, with the hope of receiving a satisfactory reply.

Can anyone account for ‘bells pealing’ having a depressing effect upon a young lady, even to the extent of causing tears, though there has never been any event in her life painfully associated with bells? The same young lady would scream and shrink from a doll’s head that had been severed from the body. On one occasion she was asked to fetch something from a table, near to which a doll’s head was lying. Directly she saw it she screamed and shrank back. It is the same with a dead animal if her attention is drawn to one. She says she feels that she has trodden upon it, and then if the subject is referred to even when the animal is out of sight, it has a most distressing effect upon her. She has tried to exert her will against it again and again, feeling it to be stupid, but all without success.

I wondered if this could be accounted for in any other way than by referring it to hysteria, or whether it was due to any psychic influence. It is certainly most curious.

LUCEM SPERO.

Organisation.

SIR,—I notice a letter from Mr. Leigh Hunt, in which remarks are made concerning a communication from Mrs. Beeby. Mrs. Beeby seems to think that organisation must tend to prevent freedom of thought. I would not like to say that all kinds of organised effort would do that, but I am quite certain that the kind of organisation that exists in various spiritualistic societies does so most effectually. In such societies there are a set of dogmas that are regarded as the minimum that a true Spiritualist may believe. These dogmas are to them a new revealed religion, and of course, being so regarded, it is quite absurd for Mr. Leigh Hunt to deny that freedom of thought does not extend to their denial. The dogmas I refer to are :—

1. Progression in the spiritual world.
2. That all have to suffer in consequence of their own evil acts here or in the next state.
3. That trance and inspired mediums are really uttering in their addresses the divine truths that are to be the inspired source of spiritual knowledge, just as the teachings of the prophets and seers of old were.
4. That we have to depend on this source of enlightenment, and no one need look for salvation to the work of Jesus Christ, or of Buddha, Confucius, or other great thinkers.

To such associations as those to which I allude, dogmatism and dogma are essential. The bond of union is belief in these dogmas, and in nothing else. Only let a reader of ‘LIGHT’ join, say, one of these associations and openly proclaim at their meetings his belief in free thought and total disbelief in the dogmas I have mentioned, and he would find that he was regarded as an undesirable member and an unspiritual person. I have a friend who joined a London association, on the understanding that they were all inquirers and that every one respected free thought. For two or three meetings my friend’s free thought was reluctantly borne with; but when it was found that he neither changed, by showing any tendency to believe in their dogmas, nor agreed to be silent at their discussions, they warned him that he would be expelled. Just to see how far their intense dogmatism would go, he refused to leave and was put out by main force. The only good these societies do is to sell copies of ‘LIGHT,’ and I am glad they do this. Reading ‘LIGHT,’ is the only chance the members have of getting their minds imbued with freedom of thought. As long as they go on listening to a few platitudes Sunday after Sunday, how can they learn anything? They do not seem to know that in the depraved psychological condition prevailing in such societies only the dogmas they believe in can be taught by the trance mediums. If there was open-mindedness and desire to welcome all opinions they would have the most diverse views expressed through the mediums, just as they exist in the spirit world itself.

Only once have I seen an instance of an association and a medium who encouraged this. It was in the association at Wellington, New Zealand, and there on many Sundays you could hear a discussion where one control took the view that Spiritualism other than its phenomena was a delusion, and another on the same occasion replied, giving his reasons for a contrary view. Both controlled the same medium, and the result was an intellectual and spiritual treat of the

highest kind. Sometimes the control who attacked this kind of Spiritualism had an obvious victory. At other times he might be defeated. But the open-mindedness on the other side made the same on this side, vastly to the advantage of hearers and medium. So far as anyone could judge, both controls were equally spiritually-minded and desirous of doing good.

A great preacher at Upper Norwood said in one of his sermons: ‘I have no faith in any religion that is not allied to ardent, all-embracing free thought.’ Whether religion is possible without it, I cannot say. Undogmatic Spiritualism without it would perish in a year.

Vra.

4, Castle Hill,  
Hastings.

Are Spirits Anxious to Communicate?

SIR,—Perhaps the following will answer the vital question put by ‘Left,’ in ‘LIGHT,’ of July 27th. Though coming from the other side, and acknowledging that our spirit friends are not infallible, I still think there is a grain of truth in it. ‘Mary,’ the control, said: ‘We think all, no matter how advanced, are anxious to communicate with those on earth because the change is always different, though having a similarity, to previous expectations, and when freed the anxiety is as evident to return as is the anxiety of the bereaved to hear. Not that earth has attractions, but because the disembodied want to repress the grief occasioned by the disunion. Moreover, all are anxious to press home the grand truth. Decidedly, it is not wrong to wish for a message of love; but it is far better to be patient, knowing that when it is possible the beloved ones will return to give the answering thought “Love for Love.” The delay is sometimes occasioned by conditions passing our comprehension.’

E. H.

Reincarnation.

SIR,—Your correspondent, A. S. Major, emphatically affirms in ‘LIGHT,’ August 3rd, on p. 369, that ‘none but an exceptional saviour of the race, who had renounced Devachan for the good of the world, would be likely to reincarnate in so short a space as twenty-five years; the ordinary good and holy person, whose chief idea of heaven is reunion with a beloved one, would be likely to have that joy for a period answering to 1,000 or 1,500 of our mortal years.’ Now, sir, without dwelling upon the many difficulties involved in the consideration of this point, if it be true, permit me to ask your correspondent who makes this explicit assertion, what knowledge he possesses, what facts he can cite, what evidence he can offer in support of his contention. We are surely entitled to have something more substantial than the bare statement that it is so, or will be so, in contradiction to the objection offered by the Rev. M. Savage, of whom I am an

ADMIER.

National Federation Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—On behalf of my committee permit me to acknowledge the contributions sent me during the month of July, as specified below. It is gratifying to state that the appeal in my last letter has brought a generous response, considering the fact that we are in the midst of the holiday season. While enjoying the pleasures of rest or recreation let it not be that the needs of the distressed in our ranks escape consideration. Since my last report one of the beneficiaries of this fund has ‘passed on’ and it is satisfactory to know that for some months the final days of the departed one were made smoother by the help afforded. I regret that the contribution of Mr. Joseph Thackeray was incorrectly stated in my previous letter as 1s., instead of 1s. 6d. Again asking our friends to remember the claims of the only National Benevolent Fund in the movement, I am, with the best thanks of my committee and myself,

Faithfully yours,

J. J. MORSE, Hon. Financial Secretary.

Florence House,  
26, Osnaburgh-street, London, N.W.  
August 3rd, 1901.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED DURING JULY.—R. J. C., 2s. 6d.; Councillor S. Butterworth, 10s.; J. W. Gardiner, 2s. 6d.; collection at the Federation Conference, Sheffield, £23s. 6d.; J. C. Macdonald, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Walter Appleyard, £1; Mrs. Kate Taylor Robinson, 3s. 6d.; A. Jones, 15s.; Mrs. Rhodes, 1s. 6d.; the Sheffield United Societies, per A. K. Jones, £1; Mrs. Amy A. Squire, 2s.; ‘Onward,’ 2s. 6d.; D. S. H., £1; Mrs. E. Lowe, 16s. 8d.; Miss E. M. Hodges, 2s. 6d.; ‘Star Lyceum Guild,’ per Mrs. Kate Taylor Robinson, 3s. 6d.; Mrs. Kate Taylor Robinson, 2s.; the Plymouth Society, for Mr. C. Ware, 3s.; Mrs. Lily Morley, £2. Total, £10 14s. 8d.