

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Dr. Peebles, writing in 'The Banner of Light,' tells, in his own trenchant way, some plain truths concerning the famous camp meetings in America, and those who attend them. He has glowing words of praise for much in connection with them, but his lash for the selfish, the mean and the cowardly makes us wince even at this distance, though we hope we are not amongst the sinners who deserve it.

Quoting a brilliant poem by H. Clay Preuss and telling a very interesting story concerning it, he says:—

This vision and poem of H. Clay Preuss reminds me of a very excellent and able article in the last London 'LIGHT,' under the heading of, 'The Psychic Powers of Jesus.' This is the first paragraph:

'If Spiritualists knew what was good for them, they would rally round the Jesus of the gospel with possibly more eagerness than they would manifest in any other direction. He is more truly their representative than any other being in history. From first to last, he is supremely the mediator or medium between the world of sense and the world of spirit.'

And yet, I say with a tear in my tone, there are Spiritists who would blot this medium and martyr out of existence, because, forsooth, sectarists have misconceived and misrepresented him.

We do not quite know why, but we do not care to 'give ourselves away' to fortune-tellers and palmists: and yet they are always proving their power to foresee destiny and anticipate Fate. Besides, the Bible is so very urgent in this matter. It almost forces belief. This may seem satirical; but it is not. We agree with blunt Thomas Pearce, who lately wrote:—

Fortune-telling is either true or false; the judge says 'tis false (alluding to a recent law case); our ministers of religion say it is true. Abraham had his fortune told. Joseph told his brothers their fortune, and when Pharaoh had forgotten his dream Joseph set him right. Jacob told his sons their fortunes; then think of Isaiah and the other Prophets. Josiah is sent to Nineveh to tell the people their fortune; and then we have in John iv. 29, the woman singing: "Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did."

'Coming Events' is in too great a hurry. It says:—

Can any reader kindly interpret the following note which appears in the Spiritualist paper, 'LIGHT':—

"Coming Events and Occult Arts" had better drop its over-minute predictions, especially about the weather. Almost anyone could draw up a prediction weather-chart for any month in the year; and it would be wonderful if, on the whole, it were not passably correct, and if, occasionally, covering, say, thirty days, there was not a good shot. This is the sort of thing 'Coming Events and Occult Arts' is trying on. It is hardly worth the trouble."

So 'LIGHT' thinks *anyone* can draw up a prediction weather chart that would contain accurate forecasts for

thirty days in that month. This is news indeed. I would suggest February as a good month to start on. If 'LIGHT' will forecast rightly *thirty days* in that month they will indeed be deserving.

Our Note was perfectly plain. We did not say that anyone could draw up a weather chart 'that would contain accurate forecasts for thirty days in that month'; or that any one could 'forecast rightly *thirty days* in that month.' What we said was that anybody could draw up a chart for any month, and 'it would be wonderful if, on the whole, it were not passably correct; and if, *occasionally*, covering, say, thirty days, there was not a good shot.' 'Occasionally a good shot during thirty days' is not the same thing as 'forecast rightly thirty days in the month.'

If 'Coming Events' cannot forecast better than it can read, we condole with its clients.

By the way, we are writing this on the 27th of August. 'Coming Events' predicts 'Hot, with pleasant breezes.' It has been bitterly cold with a gale of wind and rain. Yesterday, 'Coming Events' gave us simply 'Hot.' It was so cold that we had to turn back for a stout overcoat. These were *not* 'good shots.' We could do as well as that any day.

In a discourse by Dr. R. F. Horton, on modern scientific problems, we find a rather good reference to that which lies 'beyond the frontier' where science halts. We call it 'consciousness,' not knowing what we say. We only know that something emerges which is not a thing—which takes note of things, and wings its way beyond all our sciences, not hinderable and not defined. Of it, Dr. Horton says:—

When she came to reflect, science found that she had assumed consciousness, and into that vast and all-inclusive assumption she with her implements was unable to explore. And yet what lay in that consciousness which science knew that she could not explore? The moral relations lay there, admiration, hope, and love, by which we live; our wonder and delight; our recognition of other consciousnesses than our own; our perception of a consciousness, supreme and original, of which our own was like a drop—a drop of water in which a boundless heaven was mirrored. There lay the evidence of immortality, whilst science with her instruments found only death. For as there were three realities, matter, force, and consciousness—and science was compelled to maintain that matter and force were indestructible—it was much more certain that the third, the most important of all, was indestructible too. There lay the commanding reality of conscience: its moral law within was more august and more certain than the starry heavens above. There lay the knowledge of God, a knowledge much more inevitable than any of the empirical knowledge of science. Beyond the knowledge of science was this unknowable; beyond the self-conscious was the all-conscious.

Looking over Mr. F. Ll. Griffith's Oxford Inaugural Lecture, as Reader in Egyptology, we were sorry to find him committing himself to the strange assertion that to 'the seeker after occult symbolism' the Egyptologist can give no help. He may perhaps mean that the Egyptologist pure and simple is too busy with his utensils, his drawings, his mummies and his lexicons to bother with the occultist,

but even so the assertion is too sweeping and too abrupt. In so far as the Egyptologist secures results he cannot avoid giving help to any seeker, or even to any potterer, in that field. Besides, is he so sure that the seeker after occult symbolism has not help that he might give to *him*?

In 'The Daily News,' a friendly battle has been fought between our old friends the Pessimists and the Optimists. We should like to introduce both sides to the conclusion of a lecture lately delivered by our friend, Mr. W.J. Colville:—

The great struggle is now going on between two diametrically opposed views of life—the optimistic and the pessimistic. Victory in the long run must fall to the lot of Optimism, though Pessimism may temporarily flourish, greatly to the misery of all who permit themselves to be entangled in its meshes. This is a beautiful world, though by no means the highest of which we can conceive. Rational Spiritualism takes a wise middle course between that foolish devotion to earthly things which, as long as it continues, totally obscures all spiritual union, and the opposite fanatical course pursued by those hysterical religious devotees who seek to destroy all earthly enjoyments because they are so deluded as to believe that Heaven's blessedness is attainable through annihilation instead of consecration of all that enters into our inferior principle. Only as we come to see the true relation between body (earthly seat of appetites), soul (intellectual seat of aspirations), and spirit (seat of divine impulses), can we tread the holy, happy, Median Way, which surely leads to health, prosperity, and true abiding happiness.

Mr. C. Burton sends us the first of a series of 'Note books' on such subjects as 'Man, know thyself,' 'Phrenology and Palmistry,' 'Children's characters,' 'The money faculty,' 'Conscience, Morality, Law,' 'Phrenology and Religion,' 'Spirituality, Seers and Prophets,' 'Musical Talent,' 'Shakespeare's characters,' &c. The author is his own publisher (Corporation-street, Birmingham).

'The Open Court' (Kegan Paul and Co.) well maintains its interest, notably in relation to its beautifully illustrated Articles. For August the subject of this particular Article is 'The Temples and Archaeological Treasures of Burma.'

A correspondent sends us the following. She says it has helped her, and may help others. We do not know the author of the little poem. We believe it appeared in a book, entitled 'The dove on the cross':—

Show me the way, O Lord,  
And make it plain;  
I would obey Thy word;  
Speak yet again.  
I would not take one step until I know  
Which way it is that Thou would'st have me go.

O Lord, I cannot see;  
Vouchsafe me light:  
The mist bewilders me,  
Impedes my sight:  
Hold Thou my hand, and lead me by Thy side;  
I dare not go alone: be Thou my guide.

I cannot see Thy face,  
Though Thou art near;  
When will the morning chase  
Away my fear?  
When shall I see the place where day and night  
Exist not, for Thy glory is its light?

I will be patient, Lord,  
Trustful and still;  
I will not doubt Thy word;  
My hopes fulfil.  
How can I perish, clinging to Thy side,  
My Comforter, my Father, and my Guide?

LIFE is only well lived when men and women find their own good in doing good unto their neighbours. True Spiritualism teaches them how to do that good,

## FRAU ROTHE'S SÉANCES IN PARIS.

A REPLY TO MONSIEUR SELLIN AND OTHERS.

By F.

(Continued from page 424.)

My belief in Madame Rothe is purely intuitive; for, notwithstanding an ardent desire to receive irrefutable phenomena and a mind which harbours no sceptical thought, I have actually seen nothing remarkable save the crystal for Monsieur X., which I have elsewhere described at length. But established truths cannot be reversed or new ones chronicled upon such a phenomenon observed *once* only, and that once even demanding a repetition, thanks to Monsieur Jentsch. Neither can the experiences of others convince me. The published reports of other séances which Madame Rothe gave at Paris, though corroborating remarkably faithfully the Berlin séances reported by Princess Karadjia, are utterly unreliable—reports in which admiration takes the place of intelligence, and written, one would almost think, by children, and not by adult men and women—reports which will not bear analysis. For instance, Monsieur Béra states that the medium was completely undressed by Madame N. before the séance, and that her hands were held throughout the sitting by Mesdames N. and K.; whereas, in a letter to me, Madame N. says that 'the spirits suddenly controlled Madame Rothe and undressed her, leaving only her chemise, over which the spirits put Madame N.'s dressing-gown.' Further, Madame N. says that 'because of the law of magnetism (!) she did not hold Madame Rothe's hand, but that Madame K. took her hand from time to time to reassure the poor medium.' Monsieur Béra also omits to say that the book which constituted the first *apport* was actually in the room which the medium entered, before the séance took place. Again, the reader is forced to wade through a weary mass of ecstatic exclamations and assertions to discover that the circle was seated around a table. Therefore one is not justified in drawing good conclusions from so inexact a source. Monsieur B.'s reports are likewise, and for the same reasons, unacceptable. His criticisms of my report are so very crude—truth needs no criticism—that they call for no reply from me. He has, however, permitted one or two grave errors to appear in his little paper, which need correction. With regard to the flowers 'dry and crushed,' he now denies this. I have long given myself the habit of writing down immediately all incidents of the kind, a habit I would advise Monsieur B. to imitate. I re-copy herein my conversation, and then readers referring again to my account will see that I have neither added to nor taken away from what these two gentlemen, B. and X., told me, only curtailing for sake of abbreviation.

F.: 'Monsieur Jentsch tells me you received some flowers on Friday night at the concierge's door?'

B. (enthusiastically): 'Yes! Fallen—fallen—as though from the sky. They fell on my hat, then on to the pavement.'

F.: 'Were you alone?'

B.: 'Monsieur X. was there. We were saying good-night, &c.'

F.: 'Were these flowers wet?'

B. (looking somewhat uneasy): 'No.'

X.: 'No, they were quite dry.'

F.: 'Did they differ from those received during the séance?'

X.: 'No; *elles étaient sèches et froisées.*'

As to being able to 'preserve faded flowers for several days,' I can show Monsieur B. how to revive and preserve a crushed and withered flower, not only for days, but in some cases for weeks.

Elsewhere Monsieur B. leads it to be understood that the medium was seated next to him, '*à mes côtés*,' whereas the whole breadth, and at times the diagonal length, of a fairly large dining table separated him from the medium. Again, Monsieur B. appears to think the fraudulent manufacture of Monsieur F.'s tiny crystal would have been impossible without Monsieur R.'s connivance. Neither Monsieur R. nor I think so. Wishing to see if it could be done by prestidigitat-

tion, I took a penny, which is twice the size of the crystal in question, and told Monsieur R. that I intended to give it to him in the same way that Madame Rothe presented the pendant. Forewarned being forearmed, Monsieur R. was on the *qui vive*; nevertheless I was able to conceal and produce, without Monsieur R.'s detection, a crystal ball, and two minutes afterwards the penny, which in the interval had not moved from the fold of the coat collar under which I had placed it when 'manufacturing' the crystal ball. Had I taken the trouble to go to a manufactory, I might have procured a handful of powdered glass, and so completed the 'phenomenon.' If, then, I found this so easy to accomplish on first trial, may not a Dr. Bohn be pardoned for arriving at his conclusions if he has only seen what I have seen?

Monsieur B. is a sincere Spiritist. He was, at my earnest wish, made a member of these séances because, though conducting a spiritualistic movement in Paris, he had *never*—as he assured me—witnessed any phenomena, and knowing he would not be sceptical, and believing for his work's sake that he should be better armed, for these reasons chiefly he was invited to be present at our séances with Madame Rothe. I have a friendly feeling for Monsieur B., and admire greatly his naïveté: but naïveté is not a good qualification for the impartial investigator to bring with him. Poor blind leader of the blind, the movement, in itself so worthy, of which he is the head will not leave many traces behind it if he lack the courage to expose and study the weak spots of his own faith. Do the waves cease to menace though the barque keep her equilibrium?

It is one of the avowed desires of Spiritists to convince the world, consequently to proselytise. Therefore, what I am going to say must not wound kindly Madame N. nor Monsieur B. These two old Spiritists, who had been permitted to be present at our séances, knew that we were not satisfied with the results; yet, far from endeavouring to provide what they considered the 'right conditions' (which, nevertheless, only gave what we received) and affording us further opportunities for observation, they held—Monsieur B. especially—numerous séances to which we were not only not invited, but in the reporting of which Monsieur Béra, whom we do not know, referred to our séances as having been conducted with sceptical sitters and malevolent intentions! One may not discuss with the passions. This fear of admitting earnest and sympathetic, but free-minded, spectators to their circle calls up Don Quixote and his famous helmet of cardboard: testing it with his sword, he was surprised to find the first thrust brought disaster; undiscouraged, he made a new helmet, but even the second was not sword-proof; so he made a third, also of cardboard; but looking at the sword wisely remarked: 'No; I have tried often enough; besides, this time it is sure to be strong.' A more than superficial observer would say that Monsieur B. and his followers were afraid of their lives.

Once again, we are *not* sceptical, for no man having once seriously considered it, can go back to the formal theories of the sceptics. It is like putting on swaddling clothes again. But I would ask Monsieur B. and his followers to try in all charity to distinguish between honesty, or what he calls 'malevolence' and 'scepticism,' and the fanatical faith which refuses to see when black is black. Excess destroys power. It is the nature of fanatical admiration to compromise the very object it idolises. The disciple's unreasoning surrender renders the master's faults more visible. The spiritual death-warrant is signed when the intellect yields to a submission which demands the elimination of all personality, when the shadow of an original thought creates fear. Can any religion, any theory, wearing this double face of weakness and temerity, survive the heat of day before an audience which claims more than one intelligence ripened by experience, and fortified by many a battle of reason? Welcome doubt! The fanatical folly of his disciples lauded and left Socrates' school in its arms; whereas doubt, with desire, should have been their starting point. Why fear doubt? And, though I am far from abusing, why fear abuse? Only that which is abused. And the first instruction that the science of human understanding gives is, that it is not error which banishes truth, but truth which banishes error. All my critics blame me for exposing the truth, because it was a painful truth. But why

not profit by the past? Are Spiritualists—maybe the heralds of a great science—to fall into the quagmires wherein have perished so many hopes? Consider the abuses and errors innumerable which have hitherto disfigured and blackened the field of religious and divine sciences, and say is Spiritualism's last page near at hand bearing the mark of other dead things, the ineffably despairing word of Bacon, '*Ars instauranda ab imis*'? To avoid that fate, why not strive for higher things, for that perfection which is inherent in the nature of all things? And let us remember that no truth can afford to dispense with proofs, and that truths which have no more solid foundation than the words of witnesses are no longer truths.

Do not cast unkind words, nor see malignant designs where only disinterested earnestness exists, but give welcome to the bold explorer. He carries the plough into a land as ancient as it is new, whose soil can only be cultivated at the expense of much painful labour, in view of the old trunks which cover the surface, and the roots which intertwine and extend deep beneath; a land where he will learn that it is not the head which breaks in the pursuit of truth, but the heart. There are certain truths before whose face one may be justly incredulous, if investigation be only carried on half-way. It is necessary to penetrate to their very foundations that the head as well as the heart may be persuaded: sublimity and simplicity, light and love cannot be separated. '*In medio stat virtus*' is false, and opposed to true progress. Shade and silence are truth's favourite asylums, but the devotee should fear lest he impede its mission: he should dispose himself to propagate and not to bury his treasure. He is not justified in rendering the research of his truth so impracticable that the universe of thought turns away discouraged. Let those who know help those who wish to know, believing with Leibnitz that the present is big with the past and consequently with the future, and remembering that the end of all philosophy is to raise the soul, to know God, and to be like Him.

Paris.

#### A TERRIBLE VERIFICATION.

In August, 1899, I received from Dr. Max Muehlenbruch, of Oakland, California, a pamphlet of prophecies, one of which, recorded in the '*Philosophical Journal*' of July 7th, 1898, was as follows:—

'The White House was shown to me draped in black. A dark cloud is resting over President William McKinley. I will describe a vision which was shown to me on May 25th, 1898. A bright spirit came to my side and said, "See what we have to show you concerning our country, America (for I am an American)." He stepped aside and the White House at Washington, D.C., came in front of me, draped in black. Seeing it, I turned to my visitor and said, "What meanest thou by showing this scene?" He again pointed for me to look, but did not explain. I began to show signs of restlessness, when he pointed to a coffin heavily draped in black. Then all faded away. I looked for my visitor; he reached out his hand to me, saying "Danger," and then faded away. As an American citizen, I should have been glad had this been otherwise. Though being used to visions ever since childhood, this left me in a very excited condition.'

In November, 1900, I received a further pamphlet, from which I extract the following, written July 28th, 1900:—

'There are three assassinations in existence; one for President William McKinley, one for . . . one for . . . However, the one planned for President McKinley looks as if it will take place; his life is in danger up to November, 1901.'

The first edition of 'prophecies' also said (written June 10th, 1898):—

'The King of Italy will pass out very quickly and mysteriously. It looks like assassination.'

These extracts are, I think, sufficient to prove that Dr. Max Muehlenbruch possesses powers which put him in the very front rank of psychometrists.

G. B. RICHMOND.

Deal.

THE good woman is she who thinks more of doing some kindly deed for another than she does of adorning her person with costly raiment and glittering jewels.

## ANOTHER SUGGESTION ON REINCARNATION.

While reading lately Andrew Jackson Davis's book 'Views of our Heavenly Home,' I came across a passage in which he rises to his highest level of prophetic intuition, and which suggests that here at last is the germ of the idea of that much vexed subject of reincarnation. One feels there must have been among the early Oriental mystics those who could rise to what Davis calls 'the superior condition,' and that they must have had the same prophetic intuitions of our future life in the heavenly home; but as the idea of this mystic law of progress, not in an unbroken line but like the ebb and flow of the tide, was a difficult idea to describe clearly, it was most likely only adumbrated under a symbolism which in the course of ages and in the transmission from one mind to another must, according to universal experience, have deteriorated and shrunk from its initial sublimity and from the almost unattainable clear conception of the idea, to what is now the Oriental belief attached to the word.

To those who think that in the lapse of eternal ages man must at last come to the attainment and end, and all wisdom and love, and therefore to a weariness of feeling that there was nothing more to be conquered, this intuition of Jackson Davis opens up an idea so wonderful as to the eternal renewing of youthful feeling; and in the pursuit and enjoyment of one range of our faculties, the eclipse of another range till its time of enjoyment emerges from the temporary oblivion, seems to me, fundamentally but much more sublimely, to suggest this doctrine of reincarnation.

This word, however, would need to be changed to re-spiritualisation (or some word less clumsy). The strong point lies in this, that it is in harmony with the law of the universe, action and reaction. The planet goes forth in its orbit in one direction till it reaches its aphelion, and then returns on its course, but in everchanging surroundings, because the solar centre itself is perpetually moving; so, changing this into the analogy of thought, there can be no weariness attending a sense of perfect attainment, for a perpetual freshness shall always attend our spiral progression nearer and nearer to the central fountain of love and wisdom.

I subjoin the passages to which I refer:—

'After this climax is attained in the progress of forms, then begins energetically, yet silently, the operation of the progressive law in essences, attributes, properties, combinations, powers, forces; and thus, henceforth, throughout all degrees and gradations of individual and communal life, through all the phases of the adjoining summerland, and onward and inward, with endless ebbings and flowings, from the outer sphere to the inmost, and from the inmost back again through the new Heavenly Home of another reconstruction of the universe forever and forever; yet never altogether satisfied, because never altogether perfect, growing old in some things, and growing equally infantile in others; then reversing the use and exercise of your faculties, and thus becoming a child again in that wherein you had grown golden and distinguished, with the amplitude of your wisdom; and learning and enjoying the spontaneity of love where for ages your affections had seemingly vanished out of your heart, changing from a man or a woman with a thousand millions of years crystallised into your personal history, to a glad some youth or a joyous and graceful maiden; forgetting what is called "time," and unconscious of what is termed "space"; oppressed by no weight in accumulative experiences, guided by no religious institutes of a prior universe; but once more in the aphelion of your orbit, which you cannot travel once around in less than what you would call "one whole eternity." Again in your youth, among the highest mysteries of your ever loving and wise mother and father, "who are in harmony" with a memory filled with the indistinguishable dreams of the past eternities through which you have steadily travelled, in accordance with the principles of spiral progression; with new ambitions, new impulses, new aspirations, new hunger, new thirst, new appetites, new life, with "a new heaven" loaded with stars over your youthful head, and beneath your feet a new summerland teeming with inexhaustible resources, surrounding you on every side like a boundless universe newly unfolded; with what was once to you only relative now become absolute, and esteeming what was once entirely familiar to you as the now altogether unapproachable and unknowable; looking with amazement and delight out upon the new life, because not dwelling much in the dark depositories of memory, the same as a bright-minded child gazes wonderingly upon the horizon

and the sunset, at the moon, and clouds, and stars in the evening sky; forming new associations among your peers and incidental neighbours; and thus you commence to perform *another* revolution in your immeasurable orbit, unconsciously tending every moment *inwardly* towards the inmost summerland nearest to the Deific Sun, which will be the perihelion of your orbital pilgrimage, involving a period beyond the powers of the highest angel to imagine, and developing an individual experience which only infinity is large enough to contain, but which, because it is obtained and appropriated in wholesome instalments, passes delightfully and beneficially through the faculties as days slip through the hours, and years through the weeks of our present rudimental life, leaving behind them only a general impression of the thousands and millions of events, great, less, and little, which those days and weeks and years brought into your private consciousness and memory!—(From 'Views of Our Heavenly Home,' Chapter XII.)

J.A.

Haslemere.

## THE GERMAN PSYCHICAL JOURNALS.

The 'Spiritistische Rundschau,' for August, contains many interesting papers, a few of which may be briefly noticed. Among these is an account by Herr Wittig of the decease of Herr Matthew Fidler, already reported in 'LIGHT,' and of the recent illness of the Russian Councillor, Alexander Aksakoff. Those who made the acquaintance of this kind-hearted gentleman and indefatigable inquirer into occultism, during his visit to London some years ago, will be interested in the following details.

HERR AKSAKOFF.

Herr Wittig writes that the latest news he had from Herr Aksakoff himself was in the form of a letter received on July 9th last from his country seat, having been dictated to an amanuensis. After some purely personal matter, the letter runs:—

'You know, perhaps, that I have again been ill. The most unpleasant part of it is that I cannot speak—that is, only very indistinctly—and it is therefore a matter of difficulty to me to dictate this letter. . . My feet also are very lame and my right hand is not able to write. . . My secretary is the wife of my nephew, M. B., whom you have perhaps seen. With best wishes, &c.,

'ALEXANDER AKSAKOFF.'

Another nephew of his (continues Herr Wittig) 'writes to me from St. Petersburg that his uncle still continues very weak, but fortunately no further paralytic seizure is apprehended. He possesses his former excellent memory, and the doctor attending him is of opinion that he will fully regain his health and strength.'

I sincerely hope this prediction may be realised.

## AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM.

An American letter from William Danmar, of New York, deserves attention. It is headed 'On the Character of the American Spiritistic Movement,' and is a vindication of his countrymen in regard to some very uncomplimentary remarks on American Spiritism made by a German occultist.\* This gentleman, who does not understand English, undertook, after a very short visit to America, during which time he had eight sittings with five professional mediums, to deliver his opinions on American Spiritism and Spiritists in 'Psychische Studien.' According to his views the 'Spiritists' in America take up the subject mostly as an amusement or for excitement; caring only for the phenomena and naught for the philosophical side of the question. Mr. Danmar, who says that he is the only American advocate of what he calls the 'naturalistic theory of Spiritism,' who in some measure is a master of the German language, intends, in some later articles, to explain to the readers of the 'Spiritistische Rundschau' the cardinal points of what he calls the only scientific theory. This short letter may therefore be looked upon as merely introductory to a longer series of articles. The writer does not deny the fact that American Spiritism confines itself mainly to facts or phenomena, and writes: 'There is little here to be found of what in Germany is called "speculative philosophy."' This he does not think a subject of regret.

\* Herr Dankmar. See article on 'The German Psychical Journals,' in 'LIGHT' of January 19th, 1901.

Americans are before all, in his view, practical people, and he quotes several popular sayings in proof of this; such as 'facts before everything,' 'let us come down to facts,' &c. True philosophy, he says, consists in the explanation of facts, and not in speculative, quasi-philosophical theories, such as are so popular at present among German occultists. To him 'Spiritism' is neither a religion nor a philosophy; its value is purely scientific and ethical; 'and indeed,' he adds, 'I personally am inclined to relegate its ethical value to a later period, and for the present only to study it from its scientific side, as we are not yet sufficiently advanced to draw ethical conclusions from it. . . The aim of our present researches is the scientific inquiry into the spirit world; and to find the answer to the questions: "What are the spirits, and what is their place in nature?"'

#### DISEASES OF THE SPIRIT.

A thoughtful and suggestive article by Rud. Liers is headed, 'Do Diseases of the Spirit Exist?':—

'The question whether spirit diseases—that is, diseases of the spirit residing in the mortal body—exist, is generally answered in the negative, with the assertion that the spirit itself cannot become diseased, but only its organ, the brain. . . This answer does not appear to me to be the right one, and I will endeavour to prove that there are diseases of the spirit itself.'

The writer gives many examples, which seem in some measure to corroborate this theory; one of the shortest, though not the most forcible, is the following:—

'In another instance, related by Aksakoff (in his work on 'Animism and Spiritism'), a communication was received at a circle through a writing medium from a spirit giving the name of Napoleon. At first it was thought that the spirit was lying in making himself out to be Napoleon; but the spirit-leader of the circle explained that the supposed Napoleon in his lifetime was out of his mind, and in his madness imagined himself to be Napoleon. Generally, he went on to say, the mentally deranged continued in their delusions for some time after their death. . . Of course there are cases of madness which are due to the body, while the spirit is quite sound, but usually the defect is attributed to bodily causes, when it really is due to some defect in the spirit. . . In regard to moral qualities, many persons—in fact, most—make the mistake of attributing the fault to the body, when it really is due to the spirit. We say generally: "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Frequently, however, it is just the reverse, and it is the spirit which is weak and which endeavours to excuse itself by this unworthy subterfuge.'

#### TALKS WITH SPIRITS.

Then we have a trance address through the medium H. K. Müller, followed by a letter from 'the other side,' contributed by the Editor, W. Kuhaupt, with some instructive comments; and this is again followed by a very large instalment of 'Talks with Spirits,' taken down at the time in shorthand, and consisting of a series of questions and answers at a circle presided over by Herr Emil Kolbe. The members of this circle evidently meet regularly, and the questions are put by Herr Kolbe, junior, while his wife is the medium, through whom they are answered in trance. The communicating spirit or intelligence calls himself 'Michel,' and is evidently of a somewhat facetious and sarcastic turn, as well as very long-winded. It is amusing sometimes to see how adroitly he parries straightforward and puzzling questions; but among a good deal of 'chaff,' in more senses than one, there are some grains of wheat; and somewhat is to be learnt by the perusal of these 'talks'; among other things, that it is as foolish to expect spirits to be able to tell us all about their world and the conditions governing it as it would be for mortals to pretend to know all about their own mode of existence.

In answer to some question on this subject 'Michel' asks:—'Do you know how you yourself came into the world?' Kolbe jr. (meditatively): 'No, not in the ultimate causes (in letzter Konsequenz).' Michel: 'And yet you are here! Neither do I comprehend the matter clearly, and yet it is a fact that I am here! Therefore I am justified in saying "Don't trouble, except about yourself and your equals." First be clear on the questions: How, whence, and why you exist in this world.'

Many and abstruse metaphysical topics are discussed as well as practical ones. 'Michel,' evidently, is well versed in

such matters, and enjoys giving his opinions on all subjects. With regard to the question concerning reincarnation, he says that he has never missed any of his friends in the spirit world, nor heard of any being missed, and he therefore looks upon the whole thing as nonsense (Blödsinn).

#### THE FRAU ROTHE SÉANCES.

In 'Psychische Studien,' Dr. Maier, the Editor, in fulfilment of a promise made to his readers, gives an account of the Rothe séances in Paris. This account is taken from letters sent him by persons who were present or reports in the journals, and includes a 'protocol' of that which took place at Madame Noeggerath's when the Princess Karadja was present, but not of those which were described in 'LIGHT' by Mrs. F.

Dr. Maier has always been very sceptical about the genuineness of Frau Rothe's mediumship, and joins with others—quotations from whose writings on the subject are given—in regretting that it is impossible to persuade Frau Rothe, or her manager, to consent to give a séance or series of séances in the presence of a committee of scientific experts. He does not consider those at which the circle consists of convinced Spiritists and partial admirers as having any scientific or evidential value whatever; but it is doubtful whether, with such a circle as he proposes, which would be composed entirely of sceptical experts, on the lookout for fraud, any results or manifestations would take place at all; for the mental or psychical conditions of confidence and harmony would be entirely absent in such a circle, and one cannot blame Frau Rothe for declining to expose herself to such an ordeal.

#### HAUNTINGS IN TURIN.

Dr. Maier also gives an account of some very remarkable hauntings in Turin, in January last, copied from 'Le Messenger.' These occurred at a wine shop belonging to a Signor Fumero, and were after the most violent manner, the furniture and bottles of wine being thrown about and broken in every direction; in fact for some days the shop and dwelling rooms were the scene of a veritable pandemonium. First a priest was called in, but neither his exorcisms nor the efforts of the police, who afterwards came upon the scene, had the effect of getting rid of the destructive ghost. The accounts in the journals excited the interest of the celebrated Turin Professor of Psychiatry, Cesare Lombroso, who as an expert inquirer into mysterious occurrences, went himself to the haunted dwelling (Spukhaus), and what he there witnessed is described by him in the scientific journal, 'Archives of Psychiatry.'

Briefly, he says that he went into the cellar, where the bottles of wine were stored in five compartments or bins. At first he was in the dark, when he heard sounds as of bottles being smashed and rolling at his feet; then he made a grand illumination of six candles, placed on a table in the middle of the room, thinking the light would scare away the ghost. No such thing, however!—

'First two, then four, then again two bottles slid out from the second and third bins and fell softly on to the floor, as though they were being taken out by someone; and after falling in this gentle way, six of them were broken before my eyes on the ground, already saturated with wine; two remained unbroken. A quarter of an hour later three more bottles were taken from the last bin and were broken on the floor. As I left the cellar I heard another bottle smash. . .'

The article concludes with a few remarks on the frequency with which these hauntings now take place in Italy. One would like to know whether this visit of Signor Lombroso put an end to the disturbances, but no further information is given.

M. T.

ILLNESS OF MR. HUSK.—We regret to announce that, owing to serious illness, Mr. Cecil Husk will be unable to hold any séances for some time. Will friends kindly note this?

MRS. J. STANNARD IN NEWCASTLE.—Heaton and Byker Spiritual and Investigation Society, Assembly Rooms, Bridge End.—On Sunday, September 15th, 1901, Mrs. J. Stannard, of London, will lecture at 6.30 p.m., subject: 'The Ethics of Therapeutic Healing.' Questions will be answered at the close. All are cordially invited.—D. PINKNEY.



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

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### THE EMANCIPATION OF GOD.

In one of Mr. G. K. Chesterton's brilliantly original sketches in 'The Daily News,' we note the phrase 'The Emancipation of God.' We hardly know whether it is original, as it occurs in a description of an awakening book by one Charles Ferguson, an American; but it is, any way, an arresting phrase, or, to use Mr. Chesterton's own phrase, applied to the book, it is 'a bold and full-blooded one.'

Describing one of the ideas or streams of ideas in the book, the phrase means something like this;—The world stands in need of a larger idea of freedom. We have made too much of 'laws of nature,' regarded as iron rings around life and aspiration. The chains of logical necessity are fully as degrading and absurd as the chains of material. We drive too many things into a corner, God included; whereas all true life, in its motive and action, is free and spontaneous. Man is the victim of his own syllogisms and surmises. He first invents a strait jacket and then gets into it—only to lament, through all the generations, that he is bound. 'There have been many daring developments of the idea of liberty,' says 'The Daily News,' 'and one by one the wildest and least human classes of men have been emancipated by it. But certainly the most extraordinary development of it is this idea of the Emancipation of God, whom the author clearly regards as the last slave left in our theory of things; the slave who turns the wheel of the stars.'

We confess to a certain fascination in this courageous facing of a time-honoured truism. In days gone by, the ancient poets, seers and adorers pictured or took for granted a much more independent God. The laws of Nature, in fact, occupied a second and much inferior place. The will of Jehovah, or Brahm, or Zeus, or Allah, or God, was supreme. He did as He pleased. He handled the rain-fall as a gardener handles a watering-pot: He flung abroad His thunderbolts and His lightnings: He punished or rewarded at His will, with blight or fruitfulness, war or peace; and let the victory fall as He pleased: and it might be argued that we must go back if we wish to have an emancipated God. But closer scrutiny will land us in a different conclusion, or on another point of view. God really needed emancipating from the sharp distinction between miracle and natural law. It was that which more than anything else fettered Him. The real emancipation will come when exceptional miracle disappears, when arbitrary interference is no longer admissible as the method of Divine activity;

but when everything in Nature is accepted as a manifestation of God, down to the minutest thrill of life.

A truly spiritual conception of God leads inevitably to this. It is the old anthropomorphic notion of God that enabled the old poets, seers and adorers to see God in magical interventions, as a sort of wonder-working magician or Czar. The newer and, as we say, the more truly spiritual, conception of God, helps us to discern the flow of His life within all things. We lose the old material miracles only because all things are, in a spiritual sense, miraculous, inasmuch as all things exist as expressions of that power we call 'God': and, in this way, we can see that our firm modern reliance upon Natural Law may become absolutely the fullest imaginable emancipation of God.

Very closely connected with that is the old limiting distinction between sacred and secular things, the counterpart of the old distinction between miracle and natural law. Here again it is only a seeming that the old view brought God nearer to us, or gave Him larger scope. That view only imprisoned God,—'cornered Him,' to use the homely phrase of Mr. Ferguson. It put Him into churches and sacraments, and restricted Him to various holy places and holy days. All the rest was bare of Him, or, worse still, given over to the devil. But this view, though ostensibly and honestly put forward as a religious and spiritual one, was grossly the reverse. God sadly needed emancipating and bringing over into life's 'common things'; and it was a true instinct which led the rational spiritualist to ignore the distinction between sacred and secular things. The religion of the future will entirely endorse that—shall we say?—Declaration of Independence in God's favour. It will see as much of Him in the honestly earned loaf on the table of the farm labourer as in the bread and wine on the cathedral altar. It will discern divine intentions in the homely words 'husband and wife,' 'parent and child,' at least as truly as in the words 'clergyman' and 'priest.' It will emancipate God for the exchange and the shop, the market and the concert-hall, the laboratory and the court of law. It will find Him in the meadow, the corn field, the hedge-row. It will see the meaning of the saying of Christ, that the angels of little children behold the face of the Father who is in Heaven.

Then, penetrating still farther into the great truth hidden in this apparently bizarre phrase, 'the emancipation of God,' we shall see its vivid application to the profound idea of Incarnation: for here the need of emancipation is indeed great. Hitherto, the idea of Incarnation has been limited to one instance; a glorious instance, indeed, but disastrously misused; for a manifestation which was intended as a 'specimen' (to use Archdeacon Wilberforce's expressive word) has been used as a solitary instance, never to be repeated, in spite of the clearest affirmations of 'Holy Writ.' What is needed is that we should take The Lord's Prayer at its word, and universalise that which has been made exclusive and particular. We must say 'Our Father,' and mean it: and dare to affirm with 'the beloved disciple' that 'now are we the sons of God.' This would indeed be a signal emancipation of God,—and a glorious restoration of Him to the human race.

One other case in point is noteworthy. Nothing is more common in Christendom than to put forth 'plans of salvation' turning upon means by which the pardon of God may be secured. Here it is belief in a series of doctrines, and there the partaking of a sacrament or even taking refuge in a particular Church: and thus God is again 'cornered' and kept within bounds, and limited in His operations, and impoverished in His mercy. It has been a fatal error, and urgent is the need of enlightened Spiritualists to dissipate it. We must emancipate at least

the Divine goodness, and make uplifting and cleansing grace from God the common property of the race. We must face the startling truth that 'there are first who will be last, and last who will be first,' and that the citizens of heaven will come 'from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.'

Profound indeed, and strangely suggestive, is this quaint but most penetrating affirmation that we need to emancipate God.

## ABOUT HYPNOTISM.

(Continued from page 429.)

### II.

What is Hypnotism? One person will tell you that it is Mesmerism under a new name; another that it is a branch of Animal Magnetism which has for the time being eclipsed the others; another will declare that Hypnotism differs entirely from Mesmerism, since Mesmerism is founded on the idea of a 'fluid' which the operator generates in himself, and throws into his subject, whereas Hypnotism rejects that theory, and declares that the subject's own sub-conscious self is the efficient cause of all the phenomena; while some people go so far as to say that the difference between the two things is that Mesmerism is charlatanism, and Hypnotism is science.

This simply means that the name Hypnotism has at present no definite and 'established' signification. The subject being a new one, the investigation of which requires no apparatus, no preparation, and no special qualification, every experimenter is an explorer, and may perchance be a discoverer; and if he publishes his experiences and opinions, he at once becomes an authority, whose name is used in controversial battles as a missile by one party, and as a shield by the other.

Among other matters about which every investigator is as yet his own authority, is the extent of the field or domain of Hypnotism, and as many of the phenomena are common property of both Hypnotists and Mesmerists, any line of demarcation between the two must necessarily be an arbitrary one, and a cause of 'frontier' disputes. The tendency of the professed Hypnotists is to narrow the field of Hypnotism to certain physical and mental phenomena, everything outside of that field being ignored either as being charlatanism, or mysticism, or a breach of veracity. The tendency of the professed Mesmerists (and there are still many such) is to belittle the new and extraordinary phenomena which the Hypnotists have brought to light. Neither Mesmerists nor Hypnotists show much knowledge of each other's facts and theories, without a recognition of which the 'science' of each is very fragmentary.

The characteristic of the Hypnotist is that he tends to be more and more of a specialist, examining a very limited field, and proceeding inductively from the small facts he there observes to some narrow theory; the characteristic of the Mesmerist is that he tends to be a theorist, proceeding deductively from broad generalisations to equally sweeping inferences. The Mesmerist, as it were, uses a telescope and speculates about cosmic forces; the Hypnotist, as it were, employs a microscope and observes the changes in the 'cortical layer' of the brain. Now both the microscope and the telescope, as well as both the deductive and the inductive methods, are necessary to science; and any reliable theory must necessarily be based upon the whole of the facts; but in every branch of knowledge what invariably happens is that theories are constructed as soon as a few obvious facts have been observed, and new facts, together with more accurate observation of the old ones, always necessitate a reconstruction or modification of theory, and this leads to new and more correct inferences; and in that way fact and theory become alternate steps in the ladder up which we are slowly climbing towards a knowledge of the world we live in.

The reasons why this natural process did not occur as usual in the case of the psycho-physical science, for which we still have no comprehensive name, are somewhat compli-

cated; but the chief of those reasons is that for the first time in history the practical and the speculative minds were brought into direct contact, and could no more understand and appreciate each other than oil and water can mix. Wide cosmic speculations, such as Mesmer indulged in, had previously been confined to philosophy, and a philosopher always claimed to be judged by his peers. Mesmer appealed to the practical man, begging him to test his theory for himself, and pronounce upon it by reason of the tests he proposed; and the practical man was utterly incompetent to do so, and resented the imposition of a task which was distasteful to him. But since Mesmer's time the practical man has had many lessons from Science, which have taught him the folly of measuring the possibilities of Nature by the thumb-rule of his own limited experiences; and what with wireless telegraphy, 'X-rays,' photography in the dark, and other wonders, the practical man is becoming ready to believe many things which but a few decades ago he would have scouted as 'impossible,' and instead of resenting an appeal to his judgment, he now feels rather flattered by it, and is even inclined to expect too much in the way of new wonders, and to be too ready to accept them as true.

At all events, the fact in regard to the differences between the Mesmerists and the Hypnotists is that both sides now show some disposition to try to understand each other, and if not exactly to coalesce, at all events to bring their theories under a larger generalisation. Nominally they are still distinct, but as many of the most accredited experimenters and authorities on Hypnotism openly use acknowledged mesmeric methods, and include the characteristically mesmeric results they thus obtain under 'Hypnotism,' the two 'sciences' may be considered to be practically one. No better proof of this need be adduced than the fact that Dr. Albert Moll, the author of the very valuable treatise on Hypnotism which forms one of the 'Contemporary Scientific Series,' and a high authority on Hypnotism, includes among his experimental ways of producing hypnosis a method which, as far as it goes, is nothing more nor less than pure Mesmerism. Moreover, he very pointedly says that 'Hypnotism is not the name of the state itself, but of the whole science which deals with the phenomena of this state.' That Moll himself does not include among 'the phenomena of this state' what are known as 'the higher phenomena of Mesmerism,' seems to be because he does not carry out the mesmeric process as fully as the Mesmerists, or even as fully as some other Hypnotists do; but what he does, and what he says, tend to obliterate the old line of demarcation as much as if he went as far in the direction of the old Mesmerism as some other well-known Hypnotists do.

Now, it may be asked what right have the Hypnotists to annex Mesmerism in that cool way? Have not the Mesmerists a better right, the right of priority, to swallow up Hypnotism? It is not a question of abstract right, however, but of necessity; it is inevitable that the name should be 'Hypnotism,' not 'Mesmerism,' because the Hypnotists immensely outnumber the Mesmerists, and therefore their will in the matter must be done. The name of 'Animal Magnetism' is an impossible one now, for not only is the 'fluid' theory repudiated by the Hypnotists, and by some operators who produced the phenomena of Mesmerism under various other names and theories, but it is known that Mesmer himself held a different view of the nature of the 'Magnetism' which he attributed to human beings from that adopted by his disciples, the 'animal magnetisers.' The name Mesmerism now denotes even less than the name 'Braidism,' which was at first given to Hypnotism, because both the theories and the practices of the modern Mesmerisers have differentiated even more from those of Mesmer than the theories and practices of our present hypnotisers have differentiated from those of Braid. The chief objection to the name 'Mesmerism' is that it connotes more honour to Mesmer as a discoverer than even his warmest admirers now recognise that he deserves. But the tendency of all names given to a subject before its nature and scope are fully understood is to become less and less appropriate as the field of that subject extends, until at last the name becomes equivalent merely to an arbitrary sign for a large class of ideas or phenomena; and the name 'Hypnotism' has almost

reached that stage, for it now covers a much wider field than is implied in its derivation (from 'hupnos,' sleep). It is undisputed that the mesmeric phenomena belong to the same group or family as the hypnotic, and there does not seem to be any valid reason why they should not be included under the same general name, or why Hypnotism should not be that name until a more appropriate one is proposed—more especially as the name Hypnotism is in possession of the greater part of the field, and with some hypnotisers 'the mesmeric method of hypnotising' means nothing else than mesmerising.

The importance of the name we use for the science and art of producing these psycho-physical effects may not seem at first sight of much importance, but experience proves that not only in this matter, but in every other, most people are apt to be greatly influenced, and often sadly misled, by names—in the language of Hypnotism, names are powerful 'suggestives,'—in this case, suggestive of misunderstanding and antagonism. For one reason in particular it is advisable that all branches of Psycho-physics should be as soon as possible included under some one non-committal name; and that reason is that already Psycho-physics has come to be recognised by so many people as of vital importance in other fields than therapeutics. That the extraordinary power which is known as Animal Magnetism, Mesmerism, and Hypnotism, had a very wide application, both in theory and practice, was seen from the first, but the healing of disease was the only point in the armour of human prejudice that seemed to Mesmer to be penetrable, and he and his disciples expended almost all their energies in that direction. Year after year, the mesmerisers discovered, presented, and demonstrated; the medical faculty denied, refused, and ignored; and while both sides were thus occupied in controversial warfare, Psycho-physics overflowed into other departments of human life and thought than the cure of disease, until now there is no event in our lives in which suggestion does not seem to be in some way concerned. All our thoughts and all our actions now appear to be not only influenced, but, as some think, even governed, by the same psycho-physical laws that are operative in one direction in the mesmeric trance, and in another in hypnotic suggestion.

For that reason, I shall include under Hypnotism not only Mesmerism, Animal Magnetism, and 'Braidism' (a very different thing from the Hypnotism of to-day), but also Statuvolism, Psychodunamy, Pathetism, and Neurology, all of which are peculiar forms of 'Mesmerism,' as well as Electro-biology, and other 'poor relations' of Hypnotism.

EXPERTO CREDE.

(To be continued.)

#### DECEASE OF DR. NICHOLS.

Some years ago the name of Thomas Low Nichols, M.D., was familiar to all Spiritualists, because of his steady devotion to psychical investigations, and his persistent interest in the welfare of the mediums who at that time were most prominent amongst us. Some of the best tests ever recorded were obtained at his residence, the most notable, perhaps, being with Mr. W. Eglinton, then at the zenith of his power, particulars of which were given in Farmer's valuable work entitled 'Twixt Two Worlds.' At last, however, he left London, and we lost all trace of him, and inquiries regarding him were without result. We have just learned, however, that he passed away on July 8th last, at Chaumont-en-Vezin, France, at the age of eighty-five. Outside spiritualistic circles the Doctor was probably best known by his books: 'Human Physiology,' 'Esoteric Anthropology,' 'Forty Years of American Life,' 'Woman's Work in the Water Cure,' 'How to Live on Sixpence a Day,' &c.

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#### 'THE PSYCHIC IN HISTORY.'

BY ALBERT GRESSWELL, M.D.

*'Ye are the salt of the earth.'*

All periods of history prove conclusively that there are no men so eminently and practically prominent in their several vocations in the world, as those possessed of psychic culture combined with intellectual strength. History also shows, beyond the shadow of any doubt, that men endowed with corresponding intellectual capacity, yet lacking psychic experience and help, have never, under any circumstances, been leaders in the very highest ranks. And they never can and never will be among the world's foremost pioneers in the evolution of the race of mankind towards its goal. In passing, we may by way of example mention in our own English history the names of Alfred the Great and Oliver Cromwell as rulers, and among the greatest men in other branches we may point to Sir Isaac Newton, Shakespeare, Milton, John Bunyan, John Hunter, and many more equally prominent, through the possession of that gift which the world, as yet, does not recognise as the pearl of great price. In the lives of these heroes we read of their knowledge of the possession of this gift. True, not all spoke of it as Socrates of old, but nevertheless a knowledge of their private lives shows the acquisition and the utilisation of their possession.

The truth of what is here maintained has been brought to the notice of the world of progress more especially, however, in the case of the history of the Jewish nation. For it was from this people that the European world and its colonies learned the importance, and in some measure recognised the value, of the truths still for the most part practically neglected as being unworthy of the struggle for acquisition. Now a great portion of the Holy Writ, besides giving general instruction in moral conduct, illustrates, again and again, one very great principle in particular, and this is the calling of the people who have already gained some or full measure of obedience to the moral precepts (witness the example of the rich young man), to a higher sense of their duty to mankind in general as involving a still higher sense of their duty towards God. We read of Adam's disobedience, of Eve's, of Cain's, of Ahab's, of that of the young prophets, of Moses', of Saul's, of David's, of Solomon's, of Jonah's, with its allegorical sequel; and all these defections resulted in disaster. Even Balaam, who was allowed to put his own will before God's, was reproved and finally was found slain among the enemies of the Lord.

Now, this lack of obedience was not necessarily any offence against a moral law, but against the advice and command of the truth as plainly indicated beforehand by the Spirit. The whole Bible illustrates the consequences of disobedience, partial or complete, to the higher call; for, though many be called, but few can be chosen to show forth God's will in their lives as witnesses to the world, the world of enlightenment and evolution towards the goal of joyful happiness. It is to the disobedience of the Jews that their fall is traceable. On the other hand, we read of the reward of obedience in the cases of Elijah, Elisha, Jesus Christ, and Paul, and their influence for good was of the highest.

At one time in history it seemed as though the Greeks would possess and retain Europe, and fortunate, indeed, for us it is that this did not take place, for from their fickle and quarrelsome disposition and their warped spiritual insight they were quite unfitted as pioneers in the true evolution of the world of thought and power.

It will be readily seen that from the number of people to-day who are called and who do make some forward advance, very few are chosen to carry out a distinct work in the world of thought and action on the highest lines. For as they do not attain a more highly evolved condition themselves, their teaching is incomplete and devolves—producing a false philosophy; witness that of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

Max Nordau would tell us that the happy Highland peasant or the farm labourer in his peaceful life, had all any one need really wish for. He would not concede, therefore



reached that stage, for it now covers a much wider field than is implied in its derivation (from 'hupnos,' sleep). It is undisputed that the mesmeric phenomena belong to the same group or family as the hypnotic, and there does not seem to be any valid reason why they should not be included under the same general name, or why Hypnotism should not be that name until a more appropriate one is proposed—more especially as the name Hypnotism is in possession of the greater part of the field, and with some hypnotisers 'the mesmeric method of hypnotising' means nothing else than mesmerising.

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#### 'THE PSYCHIC IN HISTORY.'

BY ALBERT GRESSWELL, M.D.

*'Ye are the salt of the earth.'*

All periods of history prove conclusively that there are no men so eminently and practically prominent in their several vocations in the world, as those possessed of psychic culture combined with intellectual strength. History also shows, beyond the shadow of any doubt, that men endowed with corresponding intellectual capacity, yet lacking psychic experience and help, have never, under any circumstances, been leaders in the very highest ranks. And they never can and never will be among the world's foremost pioneers in the evolution of the race of mankind towards its goal. In passing, we may by way of example mention in our own English history the names of Alfred the Great and Oliver Cromwell as rulers, and among the greatest men in other branches we may point to Sir Isaac Newton, Shakespeare, Milton, John Bunyan, John Hunter, and many more equally prominent, through the possession of that gift which the world, as yet, does not recognise as the pearl of great price. In the lives of these heroes we read of their knowledge of the possession of this gift. True, not all spoke of it as Socrates of old, but nevertheless a knowledge of their private lives shows the acquisition and the utilisation of their possession.

The truth of what is here maintained has been brought to the notice of the world of progress more especially, however, in the case of the history of the Jewish nation. For it was from this people that the European world and its colonies learned the importance, and in some measure recognised the value, of the truths still for the most part practically neglected as being unworthy of the struggle for acquisition. Now a great portion of the Holy Writ, besides giving general instruction in moral conduct, illustrates, again and again, one very great principle in particular, and this is the calling of the people who have already gained some or full measure of obedience to the moral precepts (witness the example of the rich young man), to a higher sense of their duty to mankind in general as involving a still higher sense of their duty towards God. We read of Adam's disobedience, of Eve's, of Cain's, of Ahab's, of that of the young prophets, of Moses', of Saul's, of David's, of Solomon's, of Jonah's, with its allegorical sequel; and all these defiances resulted in disaster. Even Balaam, who was allowed to put his own will before God's, was reprov'd and finally was found slain among the enemies of the Lord.

Now, this lack of obedience was not necessarily any offence against a moral law, but against the advice and command of the truth as plainly indicated beforehand by the Spirit. The whole Bible illustrates the consequences of disobedience, partial or complete, to the higher call; for, though many be called, but few can be chosen to show forth God's will in their lives as witnesses to the world, the world of enlightenment and evolution towards the goal of joyful happiness. It is to the disobedience of the Jews that their fall is traceable. On the other hand, we read of the reward of obedience in the cases of Elijah, Elisha, Jesus Christ, and Paul, and their influence for good was of the highest.

At one time in history it seemed as though the Greeks would possess and retain Europe, and fortunate, indeed, for us it is that this did not take place, for from their fickle and quarrelsome disposition and their warped spiritual insight they were quite unfitted as pioneers in the true evolution of the world of thought and power.

It will be readily seen that from the number of people to-day who are called and who do make some forward advance, very few are chosen to carry out a distinct work in the world of thought and action on the highest lines. For as they do not attain a more highly evolved condition themselves, their teaching is incomplete and devolves—producing a false philosophy; witness that of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

Max Nordau would tell us that the happy Highland peasant or the farm labourer in his peaceful life, had all any one need really wish for. He would not concede, therefore

that intellectual capacity and wealth would necessarily increase happiness. We recognise the value of wealth as much as the world does, but we differ in our estimate of the use to which it should be put. The world moves slowly but surely, and man is destined to become far more highly differentiated as a living soul than Max Nordau would think reasonable. And such advances, though cruelly and bitterly opposed by the bigoted, are only possible when the world is shown the work and teaching of leaders of the highest culture. History gives us all the examples we need as proofs of these statements. Take, for instance, the unification of the German race. Bismarck was unmistakably psychic, having admitted this, and having stated that his plan of life was shapen by a dream which was plainly an allegorical epitome of the path in life he was directed to tread. It is almost invidious to mention names when we cannot hope in so short an article to allude to many. We are far from conceding that these masters of thought and action are infallible; we are alive both to their excellencies and their lack of full radiance of the light.

At this stage of our remarks we should say that nearly every great leader has had his Gethsemane, but not necessarily has he paid the penalty of a cruel death. In the case of Christ, we are distinctly told that there was an object to be fulfilled by his crucifixion. It was this, that only through his death could the world be brought to understand and to know that a spirit can return to earth after physical death, and therefore that man is immortal; and still further there was shown the necessity for our spiritual culture in our everyday life; 'Ye are the salt of the earth,' but if ye lose your faculty through disobedience, of what value has been your possession of so great a gem?

It is a question of fighting to the end every great danger in our path, of being obedient and humble in the sight of the Divine; and the reward is certain both here and hereafter. All ideas asserting the permanent power of evil are insane in the extreme. Evil has no power against a true follower of Christ's teaching or a genuinely progressive Spiritualist. And as for being willing to be led by evil agencies, such an attitude is despicable in the extreme and suicidal to happiness. 'I will never leave you nor forsake you,' Christ said, and the Divine will is the very will which alone ensures our never being left. The Divine desires us to conform to his will for the evolution of the best in us and for the good of all.

Lastly, to turn to another point, what is the meaning of all these terrible tragedies which have been enacted in the name of religion? What is the meaning of religious persecution and inquisitory methods, the records of which fill the world with horror? It is this: The psychic faculty is the highest, and that to which all must tend, and those who understand it not, even though they profess this religion or that, are zealous lest their partial truth should be brushed aside; and those who also possess a little of this power are not humble but jealous, not being willing to own that anyone else could possibly receive and acquire a greater measure of God's greatest gift than themselves. And to this day few Christians understand their Master. Only those understand him who do his works; the others see him naked and they clothe him not; they see him hungry and they feed him not; they see him in trouble and help him not. And yet they say they believe in him. They do not believe in him, they merely accept him, but place themselves first, and to-day he may starve in our streets and alleys and slums. They are like Jacob of old, who bargained with God for profit. 'I have food ye know not of,' said Christ, and further promised that he would give to all of this food, but Christians do not appreciate the offer. They would rather have what they consider more tangible gifts. Christ was practical. His followers are often unpractical.

It is those led by the Spirit who are the true practical followers of his leading. They are not, however, dreamers. Christ said he did not complete the revelation of his truths to mankind, but that this would be continued by the Spirit afterwards, and we are directed to watch, because unless we do we may miss the opportunity of achieving a life's work really worth the doing. It will entail trouble, say many, and they won't have it. Yet the other path may be more arduous. 'Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you.'

## THE DUKHOBORS AND THE 'FRIENDS.'

Tolstoy is reported to have said, on the subject of the Dukhobor movement: 'It is a wonderful work—a wonderful work. . . . It is the only attempt to realise Christianity that I can see.'

The Friends also have been interested in the Dukhobors on account of their belief in the sinfulness of all war, as well as some similarity to the Friends in other respects. It is only of late years, however, that their name has become generally known outside Russia; but as early as 1818, two Friends visiting Russia attended one, if not more, of their meetings. An account of this visit appeared in 'The Friend,' of December 29th, 1899, which, as it contains a prophecy, has an interest for readers of 'LIGHT.' It is as follows:—

'Eliza H. Varney, in describing her visit to the Dukhoborts in Canada, mentions the following remarkable incident: "At the close of one of our meetings a man stepped into the open area, around which the Dukhoborts were standing, and made a remarkable communication. When he was a young man, he said, he remembered that in the year 1818, two of my friends (Stephen Grellet and William Allen) came to their meeting in Russia, and one of them said if they, the Dukhoborts, continued faithful to their religious and peace principles, the time would come when they would have to endure persecutions, and many would have to lay down their lives in prison, and in various ways; and their property would be taken from them, and they would be driven from their homes and exiled; and when all this was done God would hear their cry and answer their petitions, and would make a way for them—take them out of that land and to another nation, another people, and another language-speaking people, where they would make their homes; and when they were settled in that land God would send them of our people (Friends) to visit them. 'And I have lived,' he said, 'to see *all that fulfilled this day!*' And he bowed his aged head to the earth in thankfulness to God. His name was Evan Marshintoff. He was a remarkably smart old man of ninety-seven years of age."

Speaking of their condition in Canada, Tolstoy said 'they were terribly hampered for want of ready money, and were also disappointed with Canada as a place of settlement, for they found they could not grow fruit there as they had been accustomed to do in Russia.' Recent reports, however, state that when funds were sent to one section of the Dukhobors they requested that for the present no more should be sent, but that it should, instead, be forwarded to others who were in a worse plight, and so in greater need; thus proving the truth of their religion by the spirit of self-denial.

And that these 'Russian Quakers,' as some have named them, are grateful for what they receive is shown by another little incident, published in the Ontario 'Daily Whig,' in giving an account of the work of Elizabeth Varney and Nellie Baker among the Dukhobor children. The latter, in her report of her summer school, said:—

'When entering on her work she found herself confronted by a tentful of boys and girls, with none of whom had she a single known word in common. "By signs and motions," she said, "I got them seated in rows on the prairie-grass of the tent floor, and holding up a pencil, said 'One.' I could not detect any apparent comprehension. Then taking up another pencil, I said 'Two,' and, adding a third, 'Three.' Still no response, and my heart sank somewhat. However, I decided to repeat the method, and as I said 'One,' I noticed a look on a boy's face that told me he knew I was counting; and I saw him turn and speak to others. Almost instantly they understood, and some, repeating after me, counted up to ten."

'From this beginning the course of teaching proceeded. Some of the pupils walked five miles to school and five miles back every day. N. Baker carried on this school for six and a-half hours a day, and for five and a-half days a week; and as almost the entire time was occupied with oral teaching, some idea may be formed of the arduous character of her work. She was naturally tired when the hour of closing came, but the children were never tired. The favourite method was object teaching. They learned the divisions of time from a watch, to count money from coins, and so on. The children had a natural taste for figures, and at the end of two months during which the school was opened the older children had succeeded in getting through one half of the multiplication table, and some of the more advanced pupils were in the "Second Reader" (Canadian). In writing N. Baker declared that some of them equalled or surpassed their teacher. The children were anxious to

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have tasks set them to prepare at home, and were never satisfied with the amount of such tasks; they always wanted more. Of their needlework and embroidery, done at their homes by the girls of this school, N. Baker says: "Their handiwork is simply wonderful. For this purpose my handkerchiefs were taken and soon returned worked. . . ."

'When the Dukhobors discovered that the teaching was purely voluntary work, they sent a committee to N. Baker to offer her some remuneration, although their own circumstances were straitened. On this being declined, they told her they thanked her "all the day and all the night."'

W., Ilfracombe.

### THE 'REFEREE' FIASCO.

The result of the late experiments with a medium conducted under the supervision and practical direction of a committee of investigators, and which was formed in consequence of the recent correspondence in the columns of the 'Referee,' has been no surprise to anyone having long experience in psychic phenomena. Two reasons may safely be given for the recent failure in demonstration: (1) The mental attitude of the committee under whose direction the séances were conducted; and (2) the difficult conditions always accompanying the production of physical phenomena which (I presume) were expected to be produced at these séances. As regards this second head, I may say that long experience in every class of psychical activity has taught me that the action of spirit over matter is very fitful and uncertain, more especially where a portion of those present in the séance room are either very sceptical or hostile towards all forms of spiritual action. The only possible attitude towards success in psychic demonstration is an 'open mind' and 'passivity'; expecting nothing specific, but taking what comes and judging of it in the light of reason and common-sense. During a long series of years I have sat many times with all 'sorts and conditions' of public and private mediums, in mixed circles, select and sympathetic gatherings, and best of all in the home-circle, and it has been most clearly demonstrated to me, and many of my friends interested in the occult, that given a sympathetic and earnest circle, good results *will follow, if patiently and reverently waited for*. As regards the 'Referee' fiasco, one may put it shortly thus:— 'Searcher after Truth,' having been an earnest and successful investigator with a reliable medium under 'good conditions,' imagined that he could get the same results through the same psychic, even though he was sitting with her along with some spiritualistic friends who on this occasion were acting under the direction of a committee of investigators appointed through a correspondence carried on in a newspaper, and which committee was largely, if not entirely, composed of sceptics or unbelievers in the possibility of the production of any kind of psychic phenomena, and who actually began their proceedings by taking the most elaborate precautions against fraud, on the part, either of the medium, or of those 'spiritually minded persons' who sat in her immediate proximity; and this too with a psychic whose 'record' apparently has been thoroughly trustworthy and satisfactory. Can it be wondered at that the 'people on the other side' refrained from doing 'their part,' simply because of the composition of the meeting and the mental attitude of the committee of direction towards this class of phenomena? No doubt, sometimes results are got in the worst circles, such as in the case of Mrs. Mellon, who has obtained materialisations though enclosed in a cage, a bag, or other similar receptacle, but that has simply been because of the marvellous power of the medium, and the strength of her controls, who 'prevailed' over the adverse influences present in the circle on certain occasions. Taking the ordinary case of a circle and committee formed in the way and manner and for the purpose above indicated, I say the only possible result was failure. Unless there is an 'open door' the spirits rarely 'look in,' and here undoubtedly the minds and hearts of the committee were 'shut.'

Well do I remember my first sitting in a mixed circle for materialisations some twelve or thirteen years ago, with two well-known mediums, in the house of a friend. Previous to this event I had been reading a good deal about 'conditions,' and imagined the séance would be

conducted on the best possible lines. Judge of my astonishment when on entering the dining-room of the house in question I found assembled about twenty-five persons of both sexes, many of whom were agnostics, some materialists, and some regarded the whole thing as 'good fun,' and all, with perhaps half-a-dozen exceptions, were grossly ignorant of the most elementary principles of our 'new philosophy.' I spoke to one of the mediums, and said, 'How can you expect anything with this crowd?' and his reply was, 'Well, I am not responsible for the largeness and composition of the meeting, and we can only do our best.'

We then went to the drawing-room and sat, and it came to this, that the result of the first two sittings, which were held in different private houses on two successive nights, was eminently unsatisfactory. On the third and fourth occasions we divided the party into two sections, sitting alternately, in other private dwelling-houses, and the results were better, certainly, but nothing to what I have had since in circles of my own selection.

After these séances were over I learned from a gentleman in the confidence of three of the sceptics who were among the company, that they had intended, as the results had been uniformly disappointing, to seize the mediums as soon as anything very abnormal occurred, and turn up the gas. This was, in my view, very *bad*, and showed gross ignorance on their part, because there was no cabinet used, and the two mediums had sat throughout in the circle, apart from each other, while their hands had been held by various thoroughly reliable persons, who were changed each night. Fortunately for the health, and possibly for the reputation of both psychics, this utterly bad intent was frustrated by the controls, on the occasion of the final séance, suddenly levitating the younger of the two mediums, who was sitting at the end of the long table, while his colleague had been placed at the other, and while both their hands were being firmly held by members of the circle. This was done by the controls lifting up the medium from the chair in which he was sitting, right on to the top of the table, where he was found squatted, on the gas being at once turned up. After this very abnormal occurrence there was no thought of seizure or anything else on the part of the 'unbelievers' and 'Philistines' in the circle. But, then, it has to be observed, it is not often that such a salutary lesson is given to the intending perpetrators of an outrage of the kind indicated; as it is well-known how many disastrous seizures of mediums have occurred where the controls could do nothing to protect the psychic at the 'psychological moment' when phenomena were being produced of a delicate and difficult character.

It need hardly be added that after the above experience my sittings in mixed circles terminated, and I have had no reason to regret the change; but I merely mention this experience to show how difficult it is to get satisfactory or convincing results with a circle composed and directed like the one which 'Searcher after Truth' had undertaken to convince. But spiritual demonstrations can usually be satisfactorily produced with a circle composed of persons reverential, earnest, and receptive.

'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

### MR. AND MRS. EVERITT IN SHEFFIELD.

Sheffield has again been honoured by a visit from those highly-esteemed veterans in the cause, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt. On Saturday evening a séance was given at my house to a few workers, and we could truly say with the Apostle that to us it was none other than the House of God and the very gate of Heaven to our waiting souls. Passages of Scripture were rapped out bearing upon spiritual matters, showing that our spirit friends are as familiar, or more so, with the Bible as we are. Beautiful lights floated all over the room, several sitters were touched, and the most remarkable phenomenon of all was the direct voice. First came the voice of a youth who spoke to his father. Then the Indian control of one of the sitters greeted his medium. Then came 'Zippy,' Mrs. Everitt's control, who conversed in a voice far louder than either Mr. or Mrs. Everitt's, for over fifteen minutes, giving encouragement and advice. The séance will live long in the memory of those privileged to be present. On Sunday Mr. Everitt opened the new Upperthorpe Spiritual Temple, Cross Addy-street, Sheffield, the chair being taken by Mr. Walter Appleyard. Mr. Everitt kept the audience spell-bound for over an hour with a very interesting address, which proved the certainty of human existence and showed that there is no death in the popular sense of the word.

Sheffield.

S. W. JOHNSON.

## SPIRITUALIST WEDDING AT WALSALL.

The Central Hall, Walsall, was the scene of a notable and interesting event to the Spiritualists of the town and district on Thursday, the 5th inst., when Miss Gertrude Venables, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Venables, the leading Spiritualists of the town, was united in marriage to Mr. Edward J. Aldridge, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Aldridge, the leading Spiritualists of Wolverhampton. The hall had been beautifully decorated by the father of the bridegroom, the tasteful arrangement of flowers and shrubs turning the platform literally into a bower of beauty. The entrance to the building and the aisles were richly covered with crimson carpeting, while the steps to the desk were approached by a handsome floral arch of exquisite design. The spacious edifice was simply crowded to suffocation with the wedding guests and the hosts of friends who had assembled to witness the ceremony.

The marriage service was conducted by Mr. J. J. Morse, of London, at the special request of the united families and the contracting parties. The service had been specially compiled by the officiating speaker, and was pronounced one of the best that has been so far used for such functions. The bride was arrayed in the traditional costume, with a beautiful lace veil, surmounted by a wreath of orange blossoms, making a most charming picture. The bridegroom was, in all respects, a companion presentation, and the happy pair went through the ceremony with a due and full appreciation of the serious nature of their act. The bride was given away by her father, and the brother of the groom acted as best man. The bridesmaids were Miss Amy Aldridge, Miss E. S. Venables, and Miss Florrie Sheekleton, while Master A. E. Brown acted as page, wearing a handsome page's suit of white silk. The ceremony concluded, the newly-married pair signed the registers, and were literally overwhelmed with the hearty congratulations of their parents and friends, and deluged with confetti as they left the building.

On returning to the late home of the bride, 'Hydesville,' a reception was held on the lawn, and a sumptuous collation was served in a large marquee. A towering bride's cake was a noticeable feature on the central table, which having been duly cut in time-honoured fashion, Mr. Morse, in a neat and happy little speech, proposed the health of the bride and bridegroom, which was drunk with the utmost enthusiasm. Mr. S. S. Chiswell then, in neatly-turned and felicitous phrases, proposed the health of the host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. John Venables, which was duly honoured with the utmost heartiness, and shortly afterwards the happy couple departed on their wedding tour, which will be spent at Penzance. The inevitable photographs of bride and bridegroom, and of the bridesmaids, were taken by Mr. Albert Wilkinson, and will prove interesting souvenirs of a memorable event.

In the evening another excellent repast was served to the house party and the intimate friends of the families. Mr. Morse was called upon for some remarks, which evidently greatly interested the company, and in closing he asked Mr. S. S. Chiswell to propose the health of Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Aldridge, the parents of the bridegroom, which was done in an admirable little speech, to which Mr. Aldridge made a feeling and eloquent response. On retiring to the drawing-room the remainder of the evening was spent with music and song, the company finally separating at a late hour. The admirable arrangements for the comfort of the guests, and the bountiful hospitality displayed on their behalf, by the host and hostess, were beyond praise, for they were simply perfect, not a single hitch occurring at any point of the day's proceedings. The wedding presents numbered some two hundred articles, many of them costly, and all of them in excellent taste. The event was, in every sense, a credit to the cause, and will long be remembered by all who witnessed it.

The house party included, among others, the following members of the families, and guests: Mr. and Mrs. John Venables, Mr. J. Venables, jun., Miss E. S. Venables; Mr. J. J. Bennett; Mrs. S. B. Brown, and Master A. E. Brown; Mrs. Dunn; Mr. and Mrs. Harry Sheekleton, and Miss Florrie Sheekleton; Mrs. B. C. Wallis, Mrs. and Miss Sheekleton; Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Aldridge, Miss Aldridge, Miss E. Aldridge, Mr. Bert Aldridge, Mr. Fred Aldridge; Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader; Mr. and Mrs. S. S. Chiswell, Miss Chiswell, and Miss Ethel Chiswell; Mrs. Jessie Greenwood; Mr. J. J. Morse and Miss Florence Morse; Mrs. Groom; Mrs. E. Green; Mr. and Mrs. Albert Wilkinson; Nurse F. Austin; Mr. and Mrs. Jonah Clarke; Dr. Martland; Miss Clews; Rev. Peter Dean; Mr. T. and Mrs. Timson; making, with others, some forty guests, in all. The reception was attended by over two hundred invited friends.

THE handsomest woman on earth is the woman who is truly good in soul. The woman with a beautiful face and form may be too ugly in soul to describe in words.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

## The No-Breakfast Plan.

SIR,—I should like if space permits, to thank your correspondent 'Verax,' for his elaborate summary of Dr. Dewey's book. Speaking for myself, I may say that, after a two weeks' trial of a light meal at 7 p.m., followed by a good night's rest and no breakfast or meal until noon of the next day, except a small cup of tea or coffee on rising, I have every reason to know that it is just the regimen at sixty-five to give me a fresh lease of energy and spirit, and a great deal more moderation in my dallies with 'my Lady Nicotine,' monotony and want of means notwithstanding, so common to many of us in these days.

As to eating too much, both the 'Referee' and the 'Leader' have lately touched on that subject, and no doubt excess, or what some would even call moderation, is responsible for a fearful amount of ill-health and ill-thinking. The fasts of former times, as well as the pilgrimages and change of scene, were, may be, prompted from hygienic motives in part. It is a pity the 'No-Breakfast Plan' is not issued in a cheaper edition—or on loan.

J. C. D.

Willesden.

## The Union of London Spiritualists.

SIR,—I am glad to hear that our friends had a pleasant outing at High Beech, and feel sure that if the affair had only been worked on a more co-operative system the gathering would have been more numerous and representative.

It would be an easy matter for a committee—one member from each society—to meet and arrange for such outings in future, and this I consider should be done in the interests of the cause generally.

Such a committee need not necessarily confine itself to the matter of arranging a country outing, but might be of mutual advantage in other ways in assisting the work of the London societies.

It is increasingly evident that we require more consolidation of a character that will mean mutual help and better understanding, not to say feeling, between the various spiritualist centres in London and district.

In such a committee as that to which I refer, there would be no bar to a vote so long as the friend was accepted as representing a society.

I hope that we may hear of such a meeting before long, and that we may have some expression on the matter from other quarters.

A. J. CASH.

Stoke Newington.

## In Reply to Madame de Steiger.

SIR,—Though a Theosophist as well as a Spiritist, I take decided objection to such statements as those made by Madame de Steiger, F.T.S., in reference to the punishment in Avitchi, or hell, being the disintegration of the 'Ego.' It seems illogical to imagine that any being could feel consciousness at all unless the 'Ego' existed as a whole. The Ego, or life-principle, according to many exalted ones in the other world, is indestructible, and they at least know as much about the other side as any one on *this* side does. As long as feeling exists, or is capable of being made manifest in the object, there is the Ego, a thing that feels; otherwise life is annihilated. There is no half-and-half. The *kama rupas*, therefore, are true spirits, though in the sphere of *kama loka*, and when their 'desire bodies' shall have disintegrated, and they progress to Devachan, they are the same spirits still, though more etherealised. They have only cast off their 'bodies of desire,' as before they did their earthly frames. As to there being two 'Egos,' one higher and the other lower, that seems to me illogical and unproved. The following *may* happen, however, and probably has given rise to the idea. The 'desire bodies' cast off by the 'spirits' entering the higher state, may not always at once disintegrate, in which case these *kama loka* shells, now mere wreaths, 'spooks,' or unconscious astrals, may be taken possession of by elementary spirits, or elementals, or by other kinds of spirits, and thus make the task of identifying the spirit difficult.

In conclusion, if Madame de Steiger—as from her concluding remarks one may infer—believes in the goodness of the Deity and His 'love,' I do not see how she can reconcile it with the fact of even *one* of His creatures being annihilated.

GEO. WM. BLYTHE.



## The Ethics of Suicide.

SIR,—In considering this question, the first point to remember is that on the other side judgment is passed, not on the action but on the intention. Now what is the intention in such cases as your correspondent 'F. P.' mentions? Surely it is simply cowardice in some form or another, a sentry deserting his post? If so, it will surely be punished as cowardice. For one thing, the soul will have to remain in the earth-sphere for a period corresponding to the natural length of the earth life it has deprived itself of. On no subject are spirit messages more unanimous than on this, that no excuse, whether it be poverty or remorse or incurable disease, will justify the soul in leaving the body before the time appointed for it.

The following is an extract from a spirit-message on the subject of 'Death,' in which the body is spoken of as the 'dress' of the soul:—

'You cannot throw aside the dress when you will; though there are many, very many, who are tired and sick of it and would willingly throw it aside, but they must not do that until their spiritual dresses are ready to wear—until the white robes of immortality are woven for them, and when they are ready they will be told, but until then they must wait.

'Some few, alas! too many indeed, who will not wait, throw off their dress when they think it is done for. Alas! they forget. They have no covering ready for their souls, and they forget that the smirch of honour lost may be washed clean by their tears and amendment; they forget that the rents may be mended and the dirt be cleansed; and in their despair, instead of trying to remedy it, they cast away their dresses, or in other words, they call for Death, but finding that Death does not answer they go to him, instead of waiting for him to come to them.'

Much more might be said on this subject, which really involves the whole question of man's pre-existence and future destiny, but this must suffice.

5, Cliff-terrace, Lowestoft.

L. J. J.

SIR,—No mortal can yet decide on the question of suicide. I have read of two cases of suicide said to be excusable, but only so after death. I mean that their spirit friends told them so after their physical decease.

There is a point, too, where human responsibility for sin ends, but that point cannot, of course, be discovered. It is possible to commit suicide by willing to cease to live (*not* desiring to die), yet that does not seem to be of the same moral grade as pistol or poison.

I take violent suicide to be immoral, as it is a shock to the universe. In any case it has inevitable, and to us unknown, consequences.

H. W. THATCHER.

## Reincarnation.

SIR,—Some of your correspondents seem to assume that a spirit, who reincarnated after only a lapse of some twenty years, must needs be a *Mahatma* or 'Saviour'; but I should fancy it would rather be the other way round about. It stands to reason and common-sense that a spirit who has dwelt in higher spheres for one thousand five hundred years or thereabouts, is more suited to be a guide, philosopher, and friend to the denizens of earth than one whose experiences of higher planes extends only to twenty years—if they reckon by years in those realms.

I should think, if reincarnation be a fact (and there can be no doubt of the antiquity and universality of the belief), the time ranges over all periods, from a day to a thousand years or more, and we must remember that to the Almighty, 'One day is as a thousand years in His sight and a thousand years as one day.'

The Tibetans believe that the reincarnation of their Grand Llama takes place at once, without any undue loss of time.

CHARLES BROWNE.

Seven Kings, Ilford.

## Spiritualism in Dulwich.

SIR,—I am anxious to start Sunday evening meetings during winter for those interested in the higher truths of Spiritualism. I cannot arrange to hold them in my own rooms, and think that through the medium of your paper I may hear of some Spiritualist who would lend a room weekly for that purpose, or we might rent one if it cannot be otherwise arranged. There are not any meetings in this neighbourhood, though doubtless many are near who are wishing to hear more of the subject, and would probably attend if we had a centre. I should be very pleased to hear from anyone on the subject.

I am associated with a lady who is a medium for true spiritual development apart from phenomena, and she would

conduct the sittings. I should feel obliged if you would kindly insert this in your journal, that I may hear from any who are in sympathy with our proposed plans, and who would join us.

(MRS.) LUCY G. BANISTER.

243, Barry-road, East Dulwich, S.E.

## 'For Love of the Children.'

SIR,—In hurrying to leave home for a holiday, I omitted thanking you and our other friends for their kind assistance in providing our Band of Hope children a delightful day in the country. We managed to take two brakes full of children and workers to Hooley Farm, where a plentiful tea was provided, and a very happy day was spent. We sincerely thank all friends who contributed towards the expense. Mr. W. Turner, of Fulham, very kindly collected £1 3s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. from 'W. M. S.,' duly received with thanks. Mr. Turner has also promised the children a magic lantern entertainment on October 8th, which we heartily appreciate.

Faithfully yours in the Cause,

ANNIE BODDINGTON.

99, Bridge-road,  
Battersea.

September 9th, 1901.

## SOCIETY WORK.

SEVEN KINGS PSYCHICAL SOCIETY, ILFORD.—On Sunday last an enjoyable spiritual service was conducted by Mr. Brooks, assisted by Mr. Thompson, of Manor Park, and Mr. and Mrs. Jones, of Stroud Green. Everything promises well for the success of this mission. Sunday next, at 7 p.m.—B.

GROVE-LANE PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTITUTE, 36, VICARAGE-ROAD, CAMBERWELL, S.E.—On Sunday last, Mr. Swatridge gave an address on 'Spiritualism' and Mrs. Miller was successful in giving psychometry. Mrs. Dumbelton kindly presided at the organ. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Adams will lecture, and a public after-circle will be conducted by Mrs. Miller.—S. OSBORNE.

THE LONDON PSYCHIC SOCIETY, STEINWAY HALL, LOWER SEYMOUR-STREET, PORTMAN-SQUARE, W., will hold its first meeting this season on Sunday evening, September 16th. A special choir, under the direction of Mr. C. W. Johnson, has been engaged. The invocation will be delivered by Madame Antoinette Sterling, vice-president, and the opening address by Madame Florence Montague. Doors open 7 for 7.30 p.m.

LEICESTER SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, LIBERAL CLUB, LECTURE HALL.—On Sunday last, Mr. W. J. Leeder (who has returned to the Midlands, after an absence of nearly three years) delivered two good addresses on 'Spirit Messages: Their Value and Use,' and 'A Plea for Belief in a Life beyond the Tomb.' The addresses were much appreciated by large audiences for their clearness and logic. On Sunday next, Mrs. M. H. Wallis will deliver addresses at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.—W.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last our old friend Mr. Drake dealt with a subject from the audience as to continuing our work on the other side. He showed clearly the necessity of our being thoroughly in earnest and that our halls should be the places to educate ourselves and friends to fit us to continue our work. Much interest was evoked by Mr. Drake's earnest address. Good after-circle. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Boddington. 'LIGHT' sold.—C.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday evening last the meeting was opened with a reading from the New Testament. Mr. J. C. Kenworthy delivered a fine address upon 'The Rise of Christianity,' to which the audience listened with manifest interest and approval. The teachings of this gifted worker and reformer are essentially spiritual, and his writings should be read by all Spiritualists. Madame Nellie Cope kindly sang a solo, and Mr. Henry Brooks, the society's treasurer, officiated as chairman. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., an address will be given by Mr. John Kinsman, late president at Hackney.—O. H.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Miss MacCreadie gave twenty clairvoyant descriptions, fifteen of which were clearly recognised remarkable details were given, which were of great interest to the audience. Prior to the clairvoyance Miss MacCreadie made a few introductory remarks explaining clairvoyance. The chairman, Mr. George Spriggs, added to the interest of the audience by a few cheery and appropriate words. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis will answer written questions from the audience. Doors open at 6.30 p.m.—S. J. WATTS, Hon. Secretary, 2c, Hyde Park mansions.