

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,080.—VOL. XXI. [Registered as] SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1901. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way.....	445	Medium Passed through a Wire	
Mrs. Mellon's Séances.....	446	Cage	453
Fate	448	Suicide and Fatalism	453
Strange Effects of Lightning	449	Hypnotism and Suicide	453
Reciprocal Influence in Hypno-		Reincarnation	454
tism	450	Subjugation of the Passions.....	455
Spiritualism and Evolution	451	Bootee Lyceums and President	
About Hypnotism. By 'Experto		McKinley.....	455
Crede'	451	Society Work	456

NOTES BY THE WAY.

The vision and prediction as to the tragic ending of Mr. McKinley, lately noted by us, may or may not connect that grievous event with causes working from unseen planes, but we find great consolation, for all such events, in the belief that they are all related, not to a chaos, but to a profound harmony. The familiar phrase, 'The Will of God,' is a symbol which sufficiently well indicates this faith: but the real causes go deeper down than a personal arbitrary will. The crucifixion of Christ, we can now see, had its place in the world-order, and, probably, not one of the world's martyrdoms could have been either averted or spared. It is a tremendous mystery, but it is the standing mystery of the price the world has to pay for its education and salvation.

This does not lessen—indeed it increases—the pathos of such a sorrow as this. Perhaps they who best understand feel the sorrow the most. The civilised world has united in sympathy, sorrow, and the bitter cry of shame that such things can be, but perhaps this blending of nations in sorrow and shame may help on the happier day, when the causes of shame and sorrow shall be known no more.

We gave, at the time, sufficient attention to Dean Pigou's furious Easter Day attack upon Spiritualism, in the Bristol Cathedral: but the reception now of a specially marked copy, for which we are perhaps indebted to the Dean, induced us to look, at all events, at the places marked. Two of them are unusually curious. One asserts that we never appeal to the Bible, whereas the fact is that we are always vexing our opponents by quoting the Bible as the best spiritualistic book in the world;—full of it from beginning to end.

Another marked place asserts that Spiritualism is 'one of the greatest impostures of our age'; but, on the same page, the Dean puts on the black cap and passes sentence on us for our sin. What sin? If Spiritualism is an imposture, and we are taken in, there is no question of sin on our part:—we are rather to be pitied than punished. But the Dean quotes Scripture. He says:—

It is denounced as an '*abomination*.' Listen to this, 'When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of the nations. There shall not be found among you anyone that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer, for all that do these things are an *abomination unto the Lord*.' Could language be stronger or more denunciatory than this? Wherein

does modern Spiritualism differ from what is thus declared to be an '*abomination*' unto the Lord, and which is not only severely rebuked, but explicitly forbidden?

Precisely, Mr. Dean: but do you not see that the '*abomination*' denounced was a *reality*, not an '*imposture*'? There actually *was* consultation with familiar spirits, and dealings with the so-called dead: and it was this tremendous reality that was denounced: and we agree that in one sense Spiritualism does not differ from that. That is to say, Spiritualism is a reality, as that was, and not an imposture. In his calm moments, the Dean will see there is no escape from that.

As for spirit-communion being an '*abomination*' and condemned, that is an entirely different question. Jehovah-worship was itself very much of a spirit-communion, and the spirit or spirits worshiped may have been jealous of the spirits in the newly inhabited land: or there may have been special circumstances in the heathenish spirit-communion which made it abominable. In any case, it is impossible to maintain the contention that everything commanded or forbidden to the Jews is commanded or forbidden to us.

'Universal Religion' (U.S.A.), itself somewhat of a Spiritualist, laughs at the anxious folk who, in the United States, are bemoaning the decline of Spiritualism—'sectarian and organised Spiritualism,' 'Universal Religion' calls it:—and flatly asks whether it is to be regretted. It thinks that 'Spiritism has degraded Spiritualism': and, if we have gathered the exact meaning of a rather flighty Paper, it wants us to get rid of personal spirits and to go for 'the universal.' This is 'all very fine and large,' as the London boys used to say, but we are plain and homely people, and like something definite and simple, and are not a bit tired of or afraid of old-fashioned spirit-communion. 'The universal' is all very well, but we like our own little parlour, our own slippers, our own boys and girls, and our own old spirit-friends. Any way, 'the universal' can be reached only through the personal.

The following sentences are very vague when we persistently ask their meaning: 'To universalise spirit and not personalise it is the object and end of the Spiritual movement.' 'The medium has become a vicar and not a seer, a trader and not a Messiah.' 'Spiritualism has ceased to be a movement and has become a dogma.' There is a touch of truth in all this, but it is too sweeping where it is not too pert.

'Universal Religion' thinks the spirits are becoming too authoritative, and says: 'The mischief of such vicarious leading is so patent and widespread that it has produced a horrible nightmare in human life.' What is the good of exaggerating like that? The truth is, so far as England is concerned, that there never was a time when Spiritualists were more on their guard, more discriminating, more quietly resolved to 'try the spirits.'

Our breezy critic assails with vigour 'the carping critics' of some other camp; and, identifying these with a certain current of 'the Spiritual movement' and its societies, it concludes with the remark that 'as these local societies go down, the better cause of truth, the cause of love, the cause of universal science and religion, will triumph.' Let us hope so, and let us hope that 'Universal Religion' will go on teaching us all how to behave.

Mr. A. P. Sinnett is discriminating as well as vehement in his 'Sun' references to Palmistry. His remarks indicate real knowledge:—

No doubt, in connection with practical fortune-telling there is an enormous volume of imposture, and I do not say that free scope for misleading their dupes should be granted to all who are disposed to pick up a dishonest living that way, but it is beyond the range of the most resolute scepticism, for all who study the subject, to doubt that there is a connection between the lines of the hand and the conditions of life. Imperfectly as the indications may be understood, the broad facts of people's lives, their health conditions, their wealth and poverty conditions (relatively always to the station in life from which they start), and the general outline of their emotional experiences are to be read, even by those who merely follow recognised rules, in the markings of the palm. Fools who deny what they do not understand must be left to their folly.

All who will read and experiment in a truly impartial spirit will arrive at the conclusions I have just defined. And, indeed, at conclusions that go much further, for some palmists will go accurately into very minute details of destiny, and be proved right by experience; but when that is done one must be careful to discriminate between palmistry, pure and simple, and clairvoyance, which is sometimes almost unconsciously combined by fortune-tellers, especially of the gipsy order, with the science, such as it is, of hand-reading. Anyhow, the present attitude of the magisterial mind on the subject of palmistry is a disgrace to modern civilisation. The law is idiotic, of course, but it is no less idiotically interpreted.

We have just received from one of our oldest and truest friends, the following story, which was written down for him by 'a young clergyman of Dresden, a son of the Dr. G. mentioned in it':—

The Rev. Dr. G. was sitting in his porch one summer evening. Thinking it must be growing late, he took out his watch. Looking at the dial he was startled to see the picture of a burning steamer. In a moment he saw a man, whom he recognised as his father-in-law, jump from the steamer into the water. The picture then faded away. Dr. G. noted that the hour was 12.10 (midnight). Early in the morning he received a telegram—'Saved.' Mrs. G. asked what it meant. Her husband replied: 'Last night the Stonington boat burned. Your father, who was on board, jumped into the water, and, as this telegram assures us, was saved.' When Mr. F. arrived at his daughter's home he stated that he jumped overboard at 12.10, as shown by his watch, which had stopped at that moment. Neither Dr. G. nor Mr. F. had ever had anything to do with Spiritualism, and could offer no explanation of the vision in the watch-dial.

It will be good for us to soften towards the Agnostics. The best of them are Agnostics through humility; and the not best are, as a rule, Agnostics through a sort of rebellious honesty. Yet we can be humble believers, and honest worshipers. Let us admit that the Agnostic is partly right. He is. We do not understand God: we are only putting this and that together, and getting, as best we can, a working theory, 'good for this trip only.' It becomes us to be very humble before the all-veiling mystery. We may even agree with Charles T. Gorham, that 'The nature of the Deity is beyond the powers of the human intellect to solve. The universe is anonymous; it is published under secondary laws. These, at least, we are able to investigate; and in these, perhaps, we may find a partial solution of the great problem.' But no one ought to be glad he is an Agnostic, or to be content to make that his last stage.

MRS. MELLON'S SEANCES.

I should like to add a few words to 'D. J. W.'s' account of Mrs. Mellon's séances at Liverpool, which appeared in 'LIGHT,' September 7th. He says there was much dissatisfaction with the séances, and as I am one of those who were thoroughly dissatisfied, I should like to state the reasons that induced in me that frame of mind.

1. The entire absence of test conditions. I understand this was because Mrs. Mellon had said she had been subjected to so many tests and tapes and tyings-up that test conditions were now no longer necessary.

2. The light was very dim; in fact it was next door to total darkness. At one point Mrs. Mellon asked to have the light reduced but this was not done, because to reduce it would have been to put it out altogether.

3. The indistinctness of the forms. With the exception of 'Geordie,' who exhibited a black patch, said to be a beard, not a single manifestation had the slightest attempt at features. Each form was simply a streak of drapery, and whether it was man, woman, or child was only determined by the height and by the voice accompanying it. It is absurd to say that a single form was recognised, because there was nothing to recognise. Clairvoyants (including my daughter, in whom I have the fullest confidence) describe spirits with form and feature distinct and natural as in earth life; why spirits should materialise as mere formless drapery I do not understand.

4. The forms never came clear of the cabinet. Not a single form came away from the curtains; most of them just seemed to push partly through the spot where the two curtains hung together. One form was asked to come forward and smack a lady on the outstretched hand (the lady sat at the end of the sitters and so had her left hand free). We should have been able to both see and hear if this had been done, but the form merely gave a slight rap on the back of a vacant chair that stood beside the curtain.

5. The voices were most unnatural, uncanny in fact; there was a decided similarity of intonation amongst them all, and to my mind they were just the strained, exaggerated voices one hears at a ventriloquial entertainment.

6. The medium was not entranced. She appeared to be quite normal, and spoke at intervals during the whole time the manifestations were taking place.

7. Mr. George Spriggs told us when he was in Liverpool, as other materialising mediums have done, what a great strain and loss of power the medium is subjected to during a séance, but I can positively say that Mrs. Mellon showed no sign of strain or excitement after the séance I attended. Indeed, I thought she seemed more calm and self-possessed after the séance than before it.

8. One of the forms was asked to bite a piece out of an apple; I examined the apple afterwards and there were no marks of teeth upon it. A small piece seemed to have been nipped out with the finger and thumb nails, and moreover, the form took the apple inside the cabinet to bite, and then threw it out to the circle, so that none of us saw how it was done.

9. I was much struck with the similarity of the manifestations at all the séances. The experiences at each circle were almost exactly identical; each séance seemed to go off like a pre-arranged performance, and it really looked, as 'D. J. W.' says, as if the spirits were manufactured to order for a fixed charge.

In conclusion, nothing occurred that could in any measure convince a sceptic or strengthen the convictions of a Spiritualist; and in view of the fact that there are in Liverpool and district so many people who have been longing and hoping for years to see a genuine materialisation, I think the séances can only be looked upon as unsatisfactory and regrettable in the extreme.

R. BOLTON.

Being a subscriber, and always a deeply interested reader of 'LIGHT,' it was with extreme regret that I read the article bearing the initials of 'D. J. W.' and with your kind indulgence I should like to say a few words

in response. I am sorry 'D. J. W.' does not give us his full name and address, for I do not, and never did, care for *nom-de-plumes*.

Before Mrs. Mellon's visit to Liverpool, and since, I have attended several of her séances, and was glad to read Mrs. Kate Taylor-Robinson's article referred to by 'D. J. W.,' because I was present, and can bear testimony to the fair and impartial account given by that hard-working lady.

'D. J. W.' refers to several figures being seen, and the insinuation is that they could be produced by Mrs. Mellon. I beg to differ most warmly on this point. I believe that lady to be thoroughly honest and most sincere for the welfare and progress of Spiritualism. Her face attracts you by its openness, and her genial nature and general bearing create confidence.

Personally, I think, 'D. J. W.' and friends are alone responsible for not having better success. If friends go with a biased mind, and are not sympathetic, and do not give that support needed by the medium, how can they expect good results?

I do not know why we should be astonished at spirit return. Is it more surprising than many other wonders in Nature occurring night and day, and which as yet are unexplainable?

Now, I should like to give a few details of my experience, because I have been at several of Mrs. Mellon's séances before the slightest preparation has been made, and what little has been required I have assisted at, and I can truthfully say up to the present I have not seen the slightest thing in or out of the so-called cabinet to arouse my suspicion.

Certainly I know Mrs. Mellon has selected from the visitors friends to form the front row, and to hold hands. And why? That she might get the support and sympathy required for our spirit friends to materialise, and become visible to the human eye. For we are not all clairvoyants.

Mrs. Mellon takes her seat outside the cabinet, and places her handkerchief about her shoulders to make herself more visible in the coloured semi-darkness. Under these conditions, and after some stirring singing, I have seen a form materialise at her side; thus the medium and spirit form were visible together before Mrs. Mellon passed through the curtains into the cabinet.

The brown-faced little 'Cissie' appeared on each occasion, dancing with her feet, which could be heard, and her arms, head and body going to time in response to the whistling of a gentleman present.

I have seen a fine tall form of a gentleman who appeared to be an Indian, and have had, I fully believe, 'for various reasons,' my little daughter Elsie, and on each appearance her sweet little figure has looked more beautiful. Only last Thursday night, with her fingers she tapped the hand of one of our friends, and also in her girlish voice spoke to us, and yet at the same time Mrs. Mellon was encouraging her to come out still more amongst us. Now I have heard good ventriloquists, but never one to speak in two voices at once.

Only a few minutes before this 'Cissie' had been seen very clearly, and she, on dematerialising, seemed to keep her head perfect until it reached the floor, and then the round head looked much as a cup does on a saucer, and a few moments after it vanished.

Several forms of different sizes have dematerialised outside of the curtains, simply passing or vanishing away.

Now, as to 'Geordie,' he is a fine specimen of a Scotchman, a much finer man than Mrs. Mellon is a woman, and his accent, kind words, good advice, and earnestness, to my mind, and also to other friends, dispel all idea of deception.

We have seen quite a dozen forms in one evening, and some of them have spoken to try to be recognised, and have been, and in more than one instance spirit lights were shown.

Through 'D. J. W.'s' letter, one of my sons was very anxious to be present at a séance, not having witnessed one, and by the kindness of Mrs. Mellon and Mrs. Robinson, he had that pleasure on September 9th, and was most lucky

in seeing 'Geordie' and the medium together, and came home fully satisfied.

I know that Mrs. Mellon's séances have given much happiness and satisfaction to many friends in Manchester. True, I have heard some complaints, but only that there were too many persons present for the size of the room, and that those at the back were thus prevented from fully enjoying the manifestations.

I am sorry to say Mrs. Mellon is not as well and strong as her many well-wishers desire.

S. SEARLE.

Hyde, Cheshire.

It was with sincere regret I read 'D. J. W.'s' letter in reference to Mrs. Mellon's séance in Liverpool, in a recent issue of 'LIGHT,' as it seems likely to prejudice people's minds against our dear sister, and many Manchester friends have expressed their regret that it should ever have been penned. Of course a person would have to be more than an angel to please and satisfy everyone. To-night, in my own house, with every possible good condition given, we had 'Cissie' dancing before us, dressed in white, and quite a yard high, if not more. So much for 'hands patting the floor.' 'Geordie' picked up a luminous slate and showed it at each side of the cabinet and in the centre, and then showed himself and the medium at the same time. I have waited for years for this test and I thank God I have received it. I may add that one gentleman who has been earnestly seeking proof for two years, and spared neither time, labour nor expense, has confessed himself more satisfied than ever before, and another friend who was an atheist up to last Saturday's séance, told me he was completely satisfied now and delighted beyond all words of mine to describe, as a little daughter of his made her presence known to him. So much for *our* experience of Mrs. Mellon's mediumship, but lest my truthful description of it should cause her to receive a number of applications I had better say at once that she cannot make any more engagements at present, having more on hand than she can possibly fulfil; and we are eager to re-engage her services, but she is overdone and intends having a good rest.

After that I hope God will give her health and strength to go on with the great work she is doing in proving that death (so-called) is only the beginning of a higher and nobler life.

KATE TAYLOR-ROBINSON.

Tweed Green,
Whalley Range.

I read the letter from your Liverpool correspondent, 'D. J. W.,' with much interest, as I had just received an invitation to take part in a séance of the same nature and with the same medium, to be held in Whalley Range, Manchester, on the following Monday. I betook myself, therefore, to the house where the meeting was to take place with a determination to observe the proceedings as closely as possible, so that I might satisfy myself and be able to answer 'D. J. W.' at the same time. I may say at once that I was fully satisfied within a very short time after Mrs. Mellon had entered the cabinet.

'Geordie' rather disappointed us at first by referring to the exhausted condition of the medium, and he feared that the results would not be very good. However, we had not waited long before 'Geordie' appeared between the curtains and holding them apart with both hands asked the medium to come forward. Mrs. Mellon answered from the spot where we knew her to be seated, to the effect that she felt very tired. Nevertheless, she came out, and to the great delight of the whole circle '*Geordie*' and *his medium stood side by side before the curtains!* The sitters near the curtains drew the attention of all to the fact that 'Geordie' was much taller than Mrs. Mellon. I ask the simple question, is it possible to doubt such evidence as was accorded to us at this sitting?

I will only briefly refer to the other forms that appeared. There were altogether about eight, 'Geordie' coming again and showing himself by the aid of a glowing phosphorescent light on a large luminous card. 'Cissie' delighted and satisfied the company, and one tall form, that of a lady,

built itself up before our eyes. I was fortunate enough to have one form for myself, that of an aunt who passed on some years ago. She had promised to materialise several times, through different mediums. When the form appeared (which would about correspond with her height in earth life—she was of small stature), and the name of ‘Minnie’ was given, I knew that it was for me before my turn to ask came round.

It was altogether a most successful séance, and I doubt whether one of the circle, which numbered nearly thirty, was dissatisfied. The forms were all clear and gave one the *impression* of their materiality. At any rate, for my own part, I am entirely satisfied. It was my first experience of genuine phenomena of this kind, although I had been previously present at two gatherings with another materialising medium, the first of which had been rather disappointing to me as I had no clear view from the back of the room, and the second was a complete fiasco; so I am able to say that I went to Mrs. Mellon's séance in an impartial state of mind. If ‘D. J. W.’ was present at a ‘mixed’ meeting, or had only a view from the back of a crowded room, I can quite understand his feelings as expressed in his letter. I sat in the second row and came away satisfied.

‘SATISFIED.’

FATE.

Man may be said to be confronted at the outset of life by two roads. The one is Good, the other Not-Good. Were he to obey the mandate of his own soul he would inevitably choose the Good; the soul is, however, overlaid by the deep shadow of a finite existence, so that in the gloom he is unable clearly to distinguish between the two roads. He is also confused through his intelligence—partly by hereditary influences, for it is a vain teaching that he is not subject to them, though he can free himself from them; and partly by his surroundings and training. A third factor is that of spiritual influences both for good and evil.

In a book that has had a very large sale in America,* and that has brought its writer many hundreds of letters, it is very emphatically stated by certain ‘Voices,’ which, on other subjects, give a great deal of instructive information, that man was not made to be the unconscious prey of beings more powerful than himself, and that his Maker could not subject him to such an insult to his moral nature; that it is only those who seek to excuse vile passions who put forward such a theory, and that they are liars and hypocrites. Another American work,† however, written in a vein of lofty spirituality, every page of which bears the impress of truth, and the teachings of which cannot readily be surpassed, says that the most powerful enemies man is called upon to meet are they of the invisible realm, whose attacks are all arranged and planned without our knowledge; that men are directly controlled from the unseen; and that through them spirits drink in and revel in their old delights, both holy and unholy, these being mostly those who have recently thrown aside the body, but whose habits, by the law of consequences, still cling to them. ‘Spirit Teachings,’ that standard English work, also makes unmistakable and constant allusion to such malign influences.

Man is both individually and collectively the arbiter of his own Fate. Let him, however, choose the Good road; he will at first be beset by all sorts of thwarting influences, and for many years, both in and beyond physical life, he walks through a perfect tangle of cross-attacks, composed of mind-currents good and bad, thoughts created wittingly and unwittingly, and the karmic shadows of deeds and motives of all grades of purity and the reverse. In one sense this is Fate.

Man's destiny, summed up, is that of a God-man becoming a Man-God, and Jesus of Nazareth was the typical God-man.

As regards the Good and the Not-Good, in this world of illusion it is not possible to raise a standard, for what is

good to one is evil to another, and *vice versa*. The Ego alone knows absolute Good, and that is thickly veiled to enable it to pass through the physical plane necessary to its individualised existence, which can only stand forth after each layer of the veil has been successively laid aside during long æons of progress.

It is impossible to discuss Fate with fatalists, for they argue in a zig-zag and illogical fashion.

Man, then, has a noble destiny, and the influences, here shortly referred to, have their place in his Fate. By knowing himself, and by cultivating his spiritual powers, he may discover and avoid the evil; yet even the best and purest are at times perplexed and annoyed by the adversaries—a discipline necessary to development. A most useful law, and one that explains much, is that of Hiram Butler. ‘Use determines all qualities, whether of Good or Evil.’

H. W. T.

SIR,—In answer to your correspondent, under the heading of ‘Fate,’ in ‘LIGHT,’ of September 7th, permit me to say that he is confusing the oft-disputed questions of free-will and predestination. The obedience of Nature to inviolable law comes under the latter head; while free-will, though modified by environment, we believe to be the birth-right of every man. The Divine consciousness beholds all things past, present, and future as an eternal Now: the future being as immediately and clearly acted in that vision, as the past can be shown to us by means of the cinematograph. The astral, called by some people the sidereal, light enveloping the earth is a true photosphere, by means of which those who can see can not only faithfully reproduce a man's past, but can also delineate his future; and that without affecting his will-power in the least, since all events originate in thoughts, which cause their images to form in the astral light, and these can be read as causes of future events. If I have made myself clear, this will show you that man is the hourly weaver and creator of his own future, moulding it by his thoughts, and destiny has little or nothing to do with it.

MABON.

SIR,—Will you allow me to reply to ‘G. L.,’ of September 7th, 1901, p. 428, in response to his ‘Fate’?

A difficulty in answering his request lies in this point: ‘What does he mean by destiny or fate?’ One view of destiny is when any person *A* is controlled by an autocratic power, which determines, or marks out, the actions, life, and future condition of *A*, so that his will is not free according to his powers. In fact *A* is a mere automaton. Let us call that scheme No. 1.

Another view is when *A* can exercise his will freely, according to his powers, and when he must reap what he sows; so that his future life depends upon his present life, and when every present moment he is writing his future destiny. Call this No. 2.

Now No. 1. is just what Paul means when he talks about a potter having power to make his clay into a vessel of honour or dishonour; while No. 2 is what Paul speaks about when he says that ‘we must work out our own salvation.’

Those who believe in No. 1 and who believe that it is God who so destines a man's life, believe in an unjust God. There is no justice in determining a man's life, and holding him responsible for that life. A man, subject to a superior force, must act according to that force. He who believes in No. 2 believes in what is seen to be true every day. We are every moment destining our future life. If I act foolishly to-day, can I expect to reap wisely? If I sow tares, can I expect to reap grapes? No. 2 is the teaching of Spiritualism and Theosophy.

Theosophy teaches that every grain of matter has a destiny impressed on it by the One, to evolve into a higher grade of being. It *must* evolve according to that destiny or fate, and it cannot stand still. When it has evolved it must again evolve to the end. Its evolution means a higher life, to which ultimately is attached a free will; its free will varying with its increased intelligence and in direct ratio.

The higher the evolution, the higher the free will and

* ‘As it is to be.’ By Corn Linn Daniels.

† ‘Wisdom of the Ages.’ Automatically transcribed by George A. Fuller.

responsibility. When we reach humanity we find the highest freedom of will to act according to power possessed ; a consequent responsibility for deeds done, and the greatest power, also, to destine the future.

Man, therefore, can, and does, make his own destiny or fate, but not in one single earthly life.

I cannot hold with 'G. L.' if he thinks that man's destiny is determined by someone other than himself. It would not be fair.

He certainly sees that man cannot always do as he would, and that he is the victim of outside circumstances. That, however, agrees with my assertion, that man has made his own destiny. We see every day that men suffer innocently (apparently), but Theosophy says this is only *effect* following *cause*. And whether Theosophy is right or wrong in this assertion, it is the only cult which attempts, and gives, a plausible explanation of these social evils. We are destined beings—destined by our own past deeds. God has given to man freewill ; man uses his freewill at this moment to circumscribe his powers in the future ; that is, he weaves his fate. As a theosophical Spiritualist, I believe that man is destined to become an angel ; that on his journey to that goal he is continually weaving his own destiny, and will do so until he learns to weave no more.

JOSEPH CLAYTON.

59, Manchester-road, Bradford.

The writer who signs himself 'G. L.' under the paragraph touching the question of Fate, raises a subject which has long baffled the scientist, troubled the heart of the weary, and alike perplexed the thinker of old and our most capable scholars of to-day. 'Solved,' as it has been, over and over again, it still constitutes a theme for ever-increasing discussion and interesting debate. But surely the matter is capable of demonstration affirmatively or negatively. Surely our future is either predetermined or moulded and regulated by our own willing and doings. It would be interesting were it possible to discover the origin of the word 'fate' and to learn something of the ideas upon which it was originally founded. What have we in history to record in its favour, *i.e.*, substantiating the belief of many that we are the result of some supernatural order in which we *continue* to live, move and have our being ; toiling or weary in not working, succeeding or failing, overcoming difficulties, or becoming victims of ill-fortune and bad luck ? Look out into the world, and we see humanity—active indolent, agitated, calm, bold, reticent, daring, fearsome—in all its complex and varied life. And what do we behold ?

Disorganised automatics ? No, rather do we realise a varied conglomeration of beings with minds directed at *will* in different degrees of decisiveness and laxity. Freedom of will could not possibly be more accurately exemplified than in our ordinary, ever-day life. We have only to observe the lethargic school-boy reposing in the confines of 'private' pastures, when, at the approach of the man in blue, he migrates with all the vivacity possible, to convince us of the truth of this assertion ; or, again, we have but to remember with what hesitancy or readiness we would answer questions on history or geography in our colleges or schools ; and how, on the approach of the 'gaf,' we would ostentatiously concentrate our attention to the performance of our duties, thus demonstrating that our doings, whether in matters of detail or affairs of supreme importance, are actuated and controlled at our own pleasure or displeasure. But in all this—in these differently natured individuals—one recognises a great diversity of gifts, qualities and powers. Here is one, poet-like, writing volumes of verses with perfect facility ; another comes forward with marked forensic ability ; a third gains publicity as a talented actor, while others become engineers, inventors, astronomers, musicians, sculptors, painters, journalists, &c. ; each following a career peculiarly suitable to his quality and bent of mind. We see the youth of a small farmer rise to be an eminent lawyer, a factory lad to be an eloquent and learned divine, and the child from out of the gutter of the street reach the topmost round of the ladder of fame ; and then while this proceeds we observe fortune and misfortune, popularity and

unpopularity, rising and falling respectively upon the persons making their way through life. Whatsoever we may think, we are cognisant of this much, that each person is born with an inclination of a peculiar and characteristic trend ; for this reason a father questions his son as to what profession or trade he desires to earn a livelihood in ; and it is because of this, also, that the youth manifests his individual desires at an early age.

It is, of course, impossible to do justice to the subject under discussion in this necessarily limited space ; but I am strongly of opinion, regarding life in its manifold typicalities, that we are born interdependent of, and with some order over which we are powerless to interfere ; that we are moulded for a certain sphere in life, in which sphere, nevertheless, we have freedom of will exercised in accordance with our peculiar inclination and propensity, and savouring largely of the quality of principle, moral or unprincipled, adopted openly or secretly as the basis of our mental or physical operation. Thus it is, in conclusion (strictly in relation to our individual calling), that we make or mar our future ; thus do *we* regulate *our career* in our predetermined channel, and so mould and shape our *destiny*, faring ill or well through all the changing years until our span of life is ended.

Liverpool.

A. CHARLES NORRIS.

Under the above heading in 'LIGHT,' September 7th, 'G. L.' invites from your readers opinions in reply. I submit the following from Swedenborg's 'Arcana Coelestia,' 6,494, which I think applies in some measure to 'G. L.'s' request, especially to the latter part where he infers that man cannot do anything of himself as apart from his own destiny :—

'During several years I have attentively observed whether fortune was anything, and I have discovered that it was, and that in such a case prudence availed nothing. All those likewise who have long reflected on the subject know and confess this, but they do not know whence it is : scarcely any know that it is from the spiritual world, when, nevertheless, it has its origin from that world. On a time when I was playing in company at a common game of chance with dice, the spirits attendant upon me discoursed with me concerning fortune in games, and said that what is fortunate was represented to them by a bright cloud, and what is unfortunate by a dusky cloud : and when a dusky cloud appeared to attend me, that it was impossible for me to win ; and also from that mark they predicted to me the turns of fortune in that game. Hence it was given me to know that what is attributed to fortune, even in games, is from the spiritual world. Much more what befalls man as to the vicissitudes in the course of his life, and that what is called fortune is from the influx of Providence in the ultimates of order, where it so exists ; thus that Providence is in the most single things of all, according to the Lord's words, that not even a hair falls from the head without the will of God.'

M. LE FANU.

STRANGE EFFECTS OF LIGHTNING.

In 'LIGHT,' May 19th, 1900, was recorded a case of death from lightning, in which the body 'fell to cinders' on being touched. I commented on this, pointing out that the assertion of T. L. Harris, that when Internal Respiration is given to the whole world, the bodies of those who fail to survive will crumble to dust, is thus shown not to be contrary to science.

The statement was impugned, on the ground that such effects of lightning were contrary to the laws of Nature.

I replied that we did not yet know all the laws of Nature, and that one fact had more value than any number of theories.

The 'Daily Mail,' of to-day (September 10th), records a severe thunderstorm in Paris yesterday, and adds : 'At St. Denis a woman was struck by lightning and literally carbonised.'

Parisian readers of 'LIGHT' may be able to give further particulars.

E. W. BERRIDGE, M.D.

48, Sussex-gardens, Hyde Park, W.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st, 1901.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Office of 'LIGHT,' and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. E. W. Wallis, and should invariably be crossed '——— & Co.'

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—'LIGHT' may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance. To United States, 2dol. 70c. To France, 13 francs 86 centimes.

'LIGHT' may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and through all Newsagents and Booksellers.

APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library, should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

RECIPROCAL INFLUENCE IN HYPNOTISM.

An article in 'Harper's Magazine,' on 'Reciprocal influence in Hypnotism,' deepens a line of thought which will require increased attention, as the practice of Hypnotism increases, and especially as the area covered by its practice multiplies the problems it will have to solve. Amongst these problems, the influence upon the operator and the significance of that influence will probably be as important as any,—and not only for the operator's sake. The operator may be regarded as taking his chance, just as the doctor does; and, in any case, he may without much remark be regarded as, if necessary, a vicarious sacrifice: but the important question may be; What does the influence of Hypnotism upon the operator teach us with reference to the subject as a whole?

The Article we refer to, written by a practitioner, Mr. J. D. Quackenbos, is highly suggestive here. Being asked how it was that it was possible for him to engage, without injury to his physical and mental health, so unremittingly in his work as a suggestionist, he replied; 'Because I get something back from my patients; otherwise I should be a nervous bankrupt.' He holds that the patient is as active subliminally as is the operator objectively; and that the operator, where genuine *rapport* is established, realises this activity. The work, the wear and tear, of the continuous practice of Hypnotism, are 'certainly out of the ordinary,' but 'the rapid recovery therefrom is phenomenal.' But 'there are grades of depression,' and grades of loss; concerning which the following passage has in it much that is very informing: 'Some patients are more exhausting than others; some mysteriously exalt; many are seemingly negative; all who in sincerity and faith seek moral or intellectual aid through hypnotic channels, in some way, immediately or remotely, stimulate the mind that offers it. There is a more marked return in ethico-spiritual than in intellectual inspiration: little reciprocal benefit attends the treatment of mere physical conditions.'

For many reasons, this is a noticeable passage. How instructive it is to notice that wherever we turn it is 'the spirit that giveth life'! All the strong things are the unseen things, even on the physical plane. The forces that are coming in to work the world are these unseen things. So is it on the plane of intellect and spirit. The physical makes but little response or gives but little back to the healer by suggestion, but faith and longing and aspiration become as 'a well of water springing up into everlasting life.'

But the reverse process may occur. In some cases, says this practitioner, it seems as though the sufferer secured relief by transferring to the operator his burden of misery and fear; and it may take hours or days to win relief from it. A successful attempt to hypnotise a thief resulted in an attack of nervous depression so acute as to necessitate a week's abstention from the work. A lady who was the victim of a harassing delusion automatically exchanged mental conditions with the operator, who had to turn to other employment. 'At the second treatment, after improvement had begun, no such effect was perceptible.'

The spiritual law at work here surely applies far beyond what we know as hypnotic practice. Is there not a hypnotism of our daily common life, unconscious and unsuspected? The very people who laugh at it may be the subjects, perhaps the victims, of it. But what if it is universal? What if to live is to suggest, to inspire, to influence, to hypnotise:—call it what we will? What are our sympathies and antipathies, our likes and dislikes, our confidences and our fears, our lovings and our loathings? And, in a way, may not all sensitives be, at times, vicarious sacrifices? But how exhilarating are the compensations! 'Coarse natures,' says this writer, 'are especially trying, while refined minds ennoble and exalt from the earliest moment of contact. The more spiritual the work, the more conspicuous the ascent, and the greater the consequent indifference of the operator to all worldly or purely material considerations. One seems sustained upon a higher plane of undisturbed serenity.'

Part of the explanation of this may be found in the practitioner's own belief in what this writer calls 'the potential energy of the human soul.' He says: 'My attitude of unmistakable sympathy and my belief in this potential energy of the human soul have, in my view, not a little to do with the substantial physical and mental uplift I receive in return from my patients.' Part of it, again, may be the result of that simple desire to help which does undoubtedly open strange doors of blessing, as all the saviours, healers and true poets know. Witness the mercy which is 'twice blest,' and the countless illustrations of the ancient saying that 'he who waters others shall be watered himself.' On the other hand:—

Who works not for his fellows, starves his soul;
His thoughts grow poor and dwindle, and his heart
Grudges each beat as misers do a dole.

It is an open question whether these explanations do not land us, after all, at the fountain head, whence flow unceasingly the spirit-powers which respond to aspiration and sympathy as to nothing else. This writer seems to go no farther than the subliminal self for his response, but, in the end, he surpasses us just where he appeared to halt short of us. In an unfortunate passage,—'unfortunate' because it contains the conventional fling at us,—he nevertheless expresses the opinion that if there is impression by disembodied souls, that impression is direct; and he strongly suggests that, in ordinary sleep, such impressions may be imparted. This suggestion he states (as a fact established), in a paragraph to which he gives the emphasis of italics: *A rational and dignified way is open for such spiritual communication every time we lose ourselves in slumber, for there is no difference as regards suggestibility between natural sleep and the so-called hypnotic trance.*

If this is so, unexpected vistas open before us: and the proposal for regulating Hypnotism by law will be outflanked by the infinitely larger possibility. But we have our doubts as to the last few lines, though we are far from denying the possibility of some degree of suggestibility during sleep; and we lately read with some sympathy and assent the result of experiments by an anxious mother who, during the sleep of her little child, especially on its first falling asleep, suggested restfulness and amiability during its coming

waking hours. It is worth trying: if only for its reciprocal effect upon the practitioner.

We are deeply interested in this writer's concluding paragraph in which he draws a helpful inference, thus: 'The soul that exalts the operator in the hypnotic procedure is the same soul that is freed permanently at the moment of death. Why should it cease to project aspirations, modify attitudes, communicate ideas, uplift human natures, simply because it is forever done with the perishable body as an instrument of expression?'

SPIRITUALISM AND EVOLUTION.

If anyone has taken the trouble to look at the pamphlet I mentioned after my signature, on p. 417 of 'LIGHT' (written under the *nom-de-plume* 'Capys,' and sold for the benefit of a religious society), he will have discovered that on p. 18, to account for creation I had *then* adopted Mivart's suggestion, 'that the species might have been produced by a natural process—not evolution.' It is one of the strangest occurrences in my life that through writing the above treatise I was quite accidentally brought face to face with Spiritualism, when one single case, that of the haunted house in Kent, convinced me. But of that another time.

I had no sooner turned Spiritualist than I discarded Mivart's suggestion, and returning to the long-forgotten and despised legends of childhood, I fully embraced the doctrine of a miraculous creation.

I will now refer the reader to a séance given by Miss Nicholl (later Mrs. Guppy), described by Miss Houghton before the London Dialectical Society, on May 11th, 1869 (See, 'Report of the London Dialectical Society,' pp. 163, 164), in which a mass of twenty-three different fruits, asked for by eighteen sitters, among them an onion and a potato, and a number of figs and dates, were produced on the table by the spirits.

Question: Did the spirits steal the fruit?

Nobody, not even an antagonist, would dare to assert such an opinion.

How then did the fruit come there?

I have chosen the above as a single example selected from among a host of similar manifestations. I may add, however, Mr. T. Adolphus Trollope's testimony, who, by his own statement, was *not* a Spiritualist, and, therefore, a most valuable witness—who in a letter to the Dialectical Society (p. 277), said that he had a séance in his own house with Mrs. Guppy as medium, and added that she had been carefully searched by his wife, when on a sudden there dropped on the table 'a large quantity of jonquils, which filled the whole room with their odour.' In another séance with the same medium an extraordinary lump of 'beautiful ice fell on the table with a crash, and such a force that it was broken. This was more than an hour after the beginning of the séance, in which time the ice would have melted had it been in the room.' ('Report of the Dialectical Society,' p. 371.)

If subordinate spirits can work such miracles, it cannot be assumed that the Great Spirit is unable to do the same. To Him, evolution would have been a most ludicrous device for producing in countless millenniums what ordinary spirits can accomplish in the twinkling of a moment.

E. SCHINZEL.

117, Allison-road,
Harrington, N.

A HUMOROUS American writer satirises the 'Eddyites,' and tells a story of how a great mental healer successfully 'treated' a clock, and made it go beautifully. This he follows up with the following amusing reflections: Come to think about that Eddyite clock, we don't know that the healer did any great things in mending it. What does the average watchmaker do to your watch when it don't go? He looks wise, and, after you go, he shakes it, blows into it, and drops a little oil into its works, and hangs it up with a ticket attached—'collect two dollars.' Another exhibition of the influence of mind over matter. The Eddyite looked at the clock, shook it and blew some 'hot air' into it—'charges two dollars.' 'All is Mind; Mind is All,' 'Matter is Nothing'; Nothing was the Matter with the clock; the two dollars was Matter; Matter is Nothing; therefore the healer charged Nothing for Nothing. Well, no Matter. It is Nothing to us.

ABOUT HYPNOTISM.

(Continued from page 440.)

III.

The Hypnotism of to-day evolved out of the Magnetism of Mesmer, and we may regard it either as the last step in a continuous development, or as the descendant in the fourth generation from the founder of the family. In theory, in method, and in result, Mesmer's successors, the 'great magnetisers,' differed from Mesmer himself. Braid and his school differed quite as much from 'the great magnetisers' as those did from Mesmer; and our present 'suggestionists' in their turn differ very materially from Braid and his disciples. We may look upon Mesmer as the first occupier of an estate, a small part of which he cleared for cultivation, and his heirs have successively developed other parts of the estate, each allowing the parts formerly cultivated to go to waste, under the impression that they were not worthy of attention. To estimate the value of the estate, we must estimate all its parts; to judge of Hypnotism, we must know its heredity—its 'family history.'

Now Mesmer's life was one long battle with official science for the recognition of his 'discovery.' *What was that 'discovery'?* His detractors speak of him as selling a 'secret,' because he charged a fee for practical instructions, which he said were necessary for the proper comprehension of his system; and it is true that he did not publish any description of his process which would have saved the necessity of taking personal lessons from himself. Moreover, he seems to have pledged his pupils not to set themselves up as teachers of his system; but that was only the exercise of a kind of patent right then recognised as legitimate. He made no mystery of his 'discovery,' however, and his methods were a very 'open secret,' for he furnished his hundreds of pupils with written instructions, in the shape of a catechism. To appreciate what Mesmer called his discovery, it must be remembered that he was imbued with the 'mystical' idea that the heavenly bodies act and react on each other through the medium of a subtle and all-pervading 'ether.' But, like many of the philosophers in the centuries immediately preceding, he believed this universal ether to be not only the vehicle for the manifestation of the physical forces, but also the means which God employs to carry out His intentions and purposes. Mesmer denied that gravity or gravitation is a force, or entity, or cause—declaring it to be merely one of the effects of the attraction and repulsion to be found everywhere in Nature. He also believed in a constant circulation of the ether, which keeps the universe in health, and produces, with attraction, the phenomenon of tides; for he thought that there are tides in the intellectual and moral world as well as in the material—actual 'tides in the affairs of men.'

Mesmer thought that the currents and tides in the universal ether are regulated by the attractions and repulsions, the equilibrium in which is health; and he thought that he perceived in everything a natural tendency to get back into its proper condition or motion when by any cause it is deflected or injured. He regarded this tendency as the manifestation of a divine force; and he illustrated its action by the magnetic needle, which, when disturbed, always returns of its own accord to its normal position. He thought that Nature, by the same law, always endeavours, by its *vis medicatrix*, to bring back the diseased body to a state of health; but that frequently this divine force is not strong enough to overcome the 'obstruction,' whatever it may be, to the regular action of the life forces; and he insisted that the whole art of the physician consisted in removing the obstruction, and that this could be done only by helping Nature. He denied that drugs can do this, for, as he said, 'We know that in all ages diseases have been aggravated, or cured, with or without the aid of medicine, according to various systems and methods, in direct opposition to each other.' All that—the universal agent, the *vis medicatrix nature*, the vital currents and obstructions—Mesmer tells us that he 'admits.' They do not constitute his 'discovery'; they were old ideas, as also was the belief that, in endeavouring to break down the 'obstruction,' Nature brings on a 'crisis' which violently shakes up a patient's

organs and forces, and temporarily increases their action. Even yet, doctors speak of a 'crisis' in some diseases, and anxiously await its result. Mesmer's 'discovery,' which he for so many years endeavoured to persuade the faculty to examine and verify for themselves, *consisted in a method of bringing on the crisis*, and of assisting and controlling it, so that it should be a 'beneficent' crisis, and should attain the end that Nature intended, namely, the recovery of the patient. He thought that the crisis of any disease could be brought on and controlled by directing into the patient an additional amount of the 'universal agent,' or life-giving magnetic fluid; and this he at first claimed to accomplish by means of the magnet, which had long been believed to have some 'occult' influence upon the human body; but he soon discarded the magnet, and made use of the hand instead. When Mesmer found that even more powerful effects could be produced in that way, he concluded that the bodies of animals, especially human bodies, were endowed with a power of acting on each other, as a magnet acts on iron, and he adopted the name of 'animal magnetism' for that form of the action of the universal agent or essence, which he pictured to himself very much as Van Helmont imagined his 'Magnale Magnum.'

Mesmer's instructions for producing the crisis were these:—

'You must place yourself opposite to him (the patient), with your back towards the North, and your feet close to his; you must place, without pressure, both your thumbs on the plexus of nerves of the epigastrium, and stretch your fingers towards the hypochondrium. It is beneficial occasionally to move your fingers on the sides, and especially in the region of the spleen. After having continued this exercise for about a quarter of an hour, you should change your mode of operating, according to the condition of your patient. You must endeavour to put the magnetic fluid in equilibrium in every part of the body. This may be done by presenting the index finger of the right hand at the summit of the head on the left side, and then drawing it down the face to the breast, and over the lower extremities. In this manœuvre an iron rod may be used instead of the finger.'

Thouret, a contemporary and adverse critic of Mesmer, says:—

'When M. Mesmer touches a patient for the first time, he lays his hands on the most important points where the nerves unite. In general, the patient experiences a kind of electric commotion. After which the operator recedes, and extending his finger he conceives between himself and his subject a kind of fluid by which the established communication is preserved. The influence of M. Mesmer lasts several days; and during that time, if the person is susceptible, he can produce at will perceptible effects on him, not only without resorting again to touch, but at a considerable distance, and even through a wall.'

Mesmer says again:—

'The power of magnetism is augmented by establishing a direct communication between several persons. This can be done in two ways; the more simple is to form a chain, with a certain number of persons made to hold each other's hands; it can also be done by means of the *baquet*.'

Mesmer does not seem to have troubled himself about 'demagnetising.' According to Thouret's description, his patients must have remained in a mildly magnetised state for days. His principal object was to produce the crisis, and when this came on, it wore itself out; when it did not come on, no bad after-effect seems to have followed the operation. The *baquet* was a curious contrivance. Mesmer believed that a person could draw the 'fluid,' or universal magnetism, from objects; and could impart to objects the power of giving it out. He and his disciples, for instance, used to magnetise trees by holding them for a few minutes in their embrace, and those who touched those trees were found to experience the same effects as when operated upon by a magnetiser. The *baquet* was believed to act in that way, as a 'battery'; it was a large oaken tub, filled with magnetised water, in which were laid two circular rows of bottles, with ends reversed, also powdered glass and iron filings, which were fancifully supposed to generate or accumulate the universal magnetism. From the lid of the tub a number of movable iron rods projected, which were grasped by the circle of patients sitting round the tub, and applied, as need might

be, to various parts of their bodies; while a long rope encircled their waists to make the necessary connection. Soft music from an unseen source filled the air, and Mesmer, gorgeously arrayed in coloured silks, went about touching the patients here and there with an iron rod or wand. It will be remarked that there was no will power employed, no passes, no fixation of the eye, no verbal suggestion, not even any mechanical monotony; nothing, apparently but the ridiculously simple, or simply ridiculous, process of sitting round a big wooden tub, holding an iron rod, and waiting for developments.

And those developments were sufficiently startling. First of all came strange sensations in various parts of the body, perspiration, palpitations, and sometimes difficulty of breathing. This was followed in some cases by mental exaltation, and a sense of extreme comfort; in other cases by ringing in the ears, vertigo, and a strange somnolency. As the operation continued, a veritable 'nervous crisis' was developed; the patients were seized with fits of laughter, or of sobbing, or of screaming, or else they became cataleptic, or fell into convulsions resembling epilepsy; and then they were carried by attendants into the adjoining 'salle des crises,' and laid on couches, or otherwise attended; and there they generally soon subsided into a deep sleep, from which they awoke after a time, declaring themselves greatly refreshed and benefited. These convulsions sometimes lasted for hours, but we do not read of any harm being ever done by them, any more than in the case of the violent convulsions so often seen during epidemics of religious emotion; and Mesmer had the power of instantly arresting the most terrible *crise* by a word, by a wave of his hand, by a touch of his 'wand,' or even by a look. The patients who sat round the *baquet* seem to have got into *raptur* not only with Mesmer, but also with one another; for a prominent symptom was their curious emotional sympathy with each other. That, at least, is what the Royal Commissioners reported; but Monsieur d'Eslon, at whose house most of their séances were held, says that, as a rule, only about one patient in ten got convulsions; and that many were cured without experiencing any unusual sensations.

It is chiefly the *baquet*, the 'wand,' and the gorgeous costume that have earned for Mesmer the reputation of charlatan, for he was a duly qualified physician, and a member of the Academy of Bavaria. The applicability of the epithet depends upon whether he himself believed in the efficacy of his procedure, and no doubt he believed in it firmly. The idea that Mesmer was a charlatan is of comparatively late growth; his contemporaries did not question his sincerity, and made no attempt to deny the reality of the effects he produced; indeed, these were too notorious to be denied. He had many friends, among whom were some members of the Academy of Medicine, and men in high position. During the eighteen months following his arrival in Paris upwards of five hundred controversial pamphlets were published; and when he determined to leave Paris he refused a large annuity which he was offered by the King if he would stay in France, and teach his system. Mesmer was a curious blend of the practical and the mystical, of the material and the spiritual, to understand whom it is necessary to remember that he lived in an age of twilight, when the ancient wisdom (such as it was) was fading out, and the light of modern science (such as it is) was beginning to shine forth. An enthusiast he undoubtedly was, or he could not have so bravely stood up against the treatment he received from his professional brethren, about which, for the due comprehension of the subject, I shall have something to say in my next article.

EXPERTO CREDE

(To be continued.)

BE TEMPERATE.—'It is right to meditate often and profoundly upon things spiritual. But it is dangerous to keep your mind concentrated upon any subject so steadily and so protractedly that "you cannot think of anything else."—DR. ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

MADAME MONTAGUE.—Under the heading 'She reads you like an open book' a very interesting interview with Madame Montague appeared in 'Woman's Life,' for September 7th. The 'Daily News,' on Monday, the 16th inst., gave a very favourable notice of Madame Montague's meeting in Steinway Hall on Sunday last.

MEDIUM PASSED THROUGH A WIRE CAGE.

In 'Psychische Studien' is appearing, from month to month, a German translation of Dr. Gibier's account of his experiments with Mrs. Salmon in New York, in 1898. This account was originally published in French in the 'Annales des Sciences Psychiques,' and an excellent notice of it was given in 'LIGHT,' of March 23rd last; but one incident was not mentioned, which strikes me, in reading the German translation, as being one of the most remarkable phenomena ever recorded, and I will therefore translate the passage in which it is described, referring your readers to the account before mentioned for details as to the cage, &c.

I may just mention—in case some readers may not have the number of 'LIGHT' to refer to—that Dr. Gibier had experimented during ten years with Mrs. Salmon, in New York and at his home in the country, where she was a frequent visitor, staying on one occasion for a month; and that it was at his laboratory in New York that the séance took place at which this remarkable phenomenon occurred. The séance, with the medium in the wire cage, had lasted two hours, during which time many manifestations, including materialisations, had taken place. These are described with the greatest minuteness. Dr. Paul Gibier then says:—

'The séance had lasted about two hours, when the voice of 'Maudy' was heard from the cage; she said the medium's power was exhausted and the manifestations must now cease. Scarcely had she spoken, when the bass voice of 'Ellan' addressed me in these words: "Receive our medium, who is coming out and needs your care." I thought it was time to open the door of the cage and release the medium, who since the experiments began had been shut up in this confined space, and was about to light the gas, when the bass voice said: "Don't light up till the medium is outside." As I was not in the least prepared for what was going to happen, I stepped forward to open the door, the wire grating of which I could feel through the thick curtain hanging over it. At this moment I felt my hand gently but resolutely pushed back and the curtain swelled out as though some form were pushing against it. I seized the protruding mass, and was greatly astonished at finding a fainting woman in my arms. I lifted up the curtain, which covered her, and Mrs. Salmon—for she it was—would have fallen to the ground had I not supported her. I placed her at once on a chair and the ladies present came to her assistance with restoratives. Without losing a minute, while one of my assistants lighted the gas, I felt the cage through the curtain and especially the door of it, without discovering anything remarkable. As soon as all the lamps were lighted, we searched the curtains of the cabinet, which we found exactly as they were at the beginning of the séance. The covering was then removed, and we carefully examined the door of the cage, as well as the top and floor, and the wire setting. Everything was intact, including the three postage stamps across the crack of the door, and the padlock. The padlock was in its place on the ring and locked. I took the key out of my right hand waistcoat pocket, where I had placed it, and unlocked it. The wards went quite freely and I was convinced had not been tampered with. Besides this, during the whole examination of the door I had not been more than a yard distant and must have heard any sound coming from the cage. Not the slightest noise or suspicious movement had attracted my attention, and especially when the medium was being pushed through the door of the cage, I heard nothing. Those present made the same assertion.

'This is the most extraordinary occurrence which I witnessed during two séances which took place at a short interval in my laboratory, and a third at another place. Mrs. Salmon, however, would not agree to any further experiments with the wire cage, as it appeared to produce spitting of blood; and her guides or controls likewise forbade the use of the cage for test experiments and only allowed the wooden cabinet already described to be made use of.'

M. T.

MAGIC.—Referring to the article by Mr. Yeats in 'The Monthly Review' on 'Magic,' the 'Echo' says: 'One of the funniest of his stories relates that on one occasion, when dining with friends in Paris, he had gone out before breakfast, passing the servant as she was laying the table. As he passed through the room he was thinking to himself of a narrow escape of hurting his arm. On returning he was accosted by his hosts with the words, "Why, the servant has just told us you had your arm in a sling." It does not require the gift of prophecy to foretell that in fifty years psychic problems will form the main occupation of a large portion of science.'

SUICIDE AND FATALISM.

In regard to suicide, permit me to say that I have strong opinions. *Imprimis*: I regard it, if it is an offence at all, as one against God, and not *man*. No human tribunal has jurisdiction here, and the punishment of the would-be suicide is a blot on our penal laws. But I cannot regard it as an offence against God either. Our life is our own; it was given us against our will (an important point this), and it is certainly at our own disposal. In the immense amount of undeserved misery in this life the occasional temptation to cut the thread of life with our own hands is too often irresistible.

The subject of Fatalism is a large order, and I suppose whole libraries have been written on it. Of course, if we assign the attribute of prescience to the Deity, as we are bound to do if we believe in an Omnipotent Being, every event, however small, *must* be known to Him beforehand. But foreknowledge does not necessarily imply interference with our wills, and we are undoubtedly free agents within an indeterminate area.

For instance, an intimate friend may know for a certainty how I shall act at a certain juncture, but the fact of his knowing still leaves me a free agent, since (unless he hypnotises me) he does not influence me in the least. Of course his knowledge is *conditioned*, and God's is *absolute*, but the example will serve.

The root of the matter seems to me to be that, though the end of every issue is known to Omniscience, *we* do not know it; so we are *virtually*, at any rate, free agents within a limited area.

Then comes, in opposition to this Libertarian theory, what is called in ethics the Necessitarian or Determinist phase of the subject. For, that the aforesaid area of our free will is hemmed in by the iron girdle of necessity, there can be no manner of doubt. Heredity and external circumstances undoubtedly limit our sphere of free action to a large extent. I do not believe in chance—I believe *all* is fore-ordained—but things often turn out so *differently from what we expect* that we seem to discern *caprice*, and so call it *chance*. *Absolute fatalism* reduces us to puppets merely, the wires being pulled by Deity.

H. B. DOVETON.

Karsfield, Torquay.

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.

Hypnotism and Suicide.

SIR,—I can contradict the assertion, made in a recent issue of 'LIGHT,' that the 'fluid' theory was exploded, in reference to animal magnetism, from my own personal experience, as I have been the subject, when in a conscious trance in bed, of spirit-mesmerism, and on more than one occasion have seen, clairvoyantly, the spirit throwing the magnetic fluid from the tips of his fingers, and I felt it like rain on my head; only it did not give a 'wet' feeling at all, though a very violent shock at times. In appearance it seemed precisely similar to those transparent waves of heat that are seen to issue out of the mouth of a kettle in certain lights; and if a spirit mesmerist throws forth such a 'fluid,' I do not see why an earthly mesmerist should not do the same. May there not be more than one method of inducing the hypnotic state, so that both theories (the 'fluid' and the 'suggestion') may be equally correct?

As regards 'suicide,' it seems very strange that the religiously inclined even cannot see that any being, brought into a state before he was able to decide whether he would enter it or not, has a right to leave it if he will; and it is only wrong, from a logical point of view, when he, by committing suicide, leaves a loved one in distress; otherwise, in defence of the 'liberty of the individual,' he has a perfect right to remain here or depart into another sphere—else we are slaves to a tyranny; and it is very cool for any person or spirit to presume to say that one is sinful for acting according to his ideas of liberty in such cases. One should 'judge not, lest he be judged'; but the religionist and moralist are too fond of 'judging' others. One should only do so in the case of wrong acting towards others.

G. W. BLYTHE.

organs and forces, and temporarily increases their action. Even yet, doctors speak of a 'crisis' in some diseases, and anxiously await its result. Mesmer's 'discovery,' which he for so many years endeavoured to persuade the faculty to examine and verify for themselves, consisted in a method of bringing on the crisis, and of assisting and controlling it, so that it should be a 'beneficent' crisis, and should attain the end that Nature intended, namely, the recovery of the patient. He thought that the crisis of any disease could be brought on and controlled by directing into the patient an additional amount of the 'universal agent,' or life-giving magnetic fluid; and this he at first claimed to accomplish by means of the magnet, which had long been believed to have some 'occult' influence upon the human body; but he soon discarded the magnet, and made use of the hand instead. When Mesmer found that even more powerful effects could be produced in that way, he concluded that the bodies of animals, especially human bodies, were endowed with a power of acting on each other, as a magnet acts on iron, and he adopted the name of 'animal magnetism' for that form of the action of the universal agent or essence, which he pictured to himself very much as Van Helmont imagined his 'Magnale Magnum.'

Mesmer's instructions for producing the crisis were these:—

'You must place yourself opposite to him (the patient), with your back towards the North, and your feet close to his; you must place, without pressure, both your thumbs on the plexus of nerves of the epigastrium, and stretch your fingers towards the hypochondrium. It is beneficial occasionally to move your fingers on the sides, and especially in the region of the spleen. After having continued this exercise for about a quarter of an hour, you should change your mode of operating, according to the condition of your patient. You must endeavour to put the magnetic fluid in equilibrium in every part of the body. This may be done by presenting the index finger of the right hand at the summit of the head on the left side, and then drawing it down the face to the breast, and over the lower extremities. In this manœuvre an iron rod may be used instead of the finger.'

Thouret, a contemporary and adverse critic of Mesmer, says:—

'When M. Mesmer touches a patient for the first time, he lays his hands on the most important points where the nerves unite. In general, the patient experiences a kind of electric commotion. After which the operator recedes, and extending his finger he conceives between himself and his subject a kind of fluid by which the established communication is preserved. The influence of M. Mesmer lasts several days; and during that time, if the person is susceptible, he can produce at will perceptible effects on him, not only without resorting again to touch, but at a considerable distance, and even through a wall.'

Mesmer says again:—

'The power of magnetism is augmented by establishing a direct communication between several persons. This can be done in two ways; the more simple is to form a chain, with a certain number of persons made to hold each other's hands; it can also be done by means of the *baquet*.'

Mesmer does not seem to have troubled himself about 'demagnetising.' According to Thouret's description, his patients must have remained in a mildly magnetised state for days. His principal object was to produce the crisis, and when this came on, it wore itself out; when it did not come on, no bad after-effect seems to have followed the operation. The *baquet* was a curious contrivance. Mesmer believed that a person could draw the 'fluid,' or universal magnetism, from objects; and could impart to objects the power of giving it out. He and his disciples, for instance, used to magnetise trees by holding them for a few minutes in their embrace, and those who touched those trees were found to experience the same effects as when operated upon by a magnetiser. The *baquet* was believed to act in that way, as a 'battery'; it was a large oaken tub, filled with magnetised water, in which were laid two circular rows of bottles, with ends reversed, also powdered glass and iron filings, which were fancifully supposed to generate or accumulate the universal magnetism. From the lid of the tub a number of movable iron rods projected, which were grasped by the circle of patients sitting round the tub, and applied, as need might

be, to various parts of their bodies; while a long rope encircled their waists to make the necessary connection. Soft music from an unseen source filled the air, and Mesmer, gorgeously arrayed in coloured silks, went about touching the patients here and there with an iron rod or wand. It will be remarked that there was no will power employed, no passes, no fixation of the eye, no verbal suggestion, not even any mechanical monotony; nothing, apparently but the ridiculously simple, or simply ridiculous, process of sitting round a big wooden tub, holding an iron rod, and waiting for developments.

And those developments were sufficiently startling. First of all came strange sensations in various parts of the body, perspiration, palpitations, and sometimes difficulty of breathing. This was followed in some cases by mental exaltation, and a sense of extreme comfort; in other cases by ringing in the ears, vertigo, and a strange somnolency. As the operation continued, a veritable 'nervous crisis' was developed; the patients were seized with fits of laughter, or of sobbing, or of screaming, or else they became cataleptic, or fell into convulsions resembling epilepsy; and then they were carried by attendants into the adjoining 'salle des crises,' and laid on couches, or otherwise attended; and there they generally soon subsided into a deep sleep, from which they awoke after a time, declaring themselves greatly refreshed and benefited. These convulsions sometimes lasted for hours, but we do not read of any harm being ever done by them, any more than in the case of the violent convulsions so often seen during epidemics of religious emotion; and Mesmer had the power of instantly arresting the most terrible *crise* by a word, by a wave of his hand, by a touch of his 'wand,' or even by a look. The patients who sat round the *baquet* seem to have got into *rapport* not only with Mesmer, but also with one another; for a prominent symptom was their curious emotional sympathy with each other. That, at least, is what the Royal Commissioners reported; but Monsieur d'Eslon, at whose house most of their séances were held, says that, as a rule, only about one patient in ten got convulsions; and that many were cured without experiencing any unusual sensations.

It is chiefly the *baquet*, the 'wand,' and the gorgeous costume that have earned for Mesmer the reputation of charlatan, for he was a duly qualified physician, and a member of the Academy of Bavaria. The applicability of the epithet depends upon whether he himself believed in the efficacy of his procedure, and no doubt he believed in it firmly. The idea that Mesmer was a charlatan is of comparatively late growth; his contemporaries did not question his sincerity, and made no attempt to deny the reality of the effects he produced; indeed, these were too notorious to be denied. He had many friends, among whom were some members of the Academy of Medicine, and men in high position. During the eighteen months following his arrival in Paris upwards of five hundred controversial pamphlets were published; and when he determined to leave Paris he refused a large annuity which he was offered by the King if he would stay in France, and teach his system. Mesmer was a curious blend of the practical and the mystical, of the material and the spiritual, to understand whom it is necessary to remember that he lived in an age of twilight, when the ancient wisdom (such as it was) was fading out, and the light of modern science (such as it is) was beginning to shine forth. An enthusiast he undoubtedly was, or he could not have so bravely stood up against the treatment he received from his professional brethren, about which, for the due comprehension of the subject, I shall have something to say in my next article.

EXPERTO CREDE.

(To be continued.)

BE TEMPERATE.—'It is right to meditate often and profoundly upon things spiritual. But it is dangerous to keep your mind concentrated upon any subject so steadily and so protractedly that "you cannot think of anything else"'—DR. ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

MADAME MONTAGUE.—Under the heading 'She reads you like an open book' a very interesting interview with Madame Montague appeared in 'Woman's Life,' for September 7th. The 'Daily News,' on Monday, the 16th inst., gave a very favourable notice of Madame Montague's meeting in Steinway Hall on Sunday last.

MEDIUM PASSED THROUGH A WIRE CAGE.

SUICIDE AND FATALISM.

In 'Psychische Studien' is appearing, from month to month, a German translation of Dr. Gibier's account of his experiments with Mrs. Salmon in New York, in 1898. This account was originally published in French in the 'Annales des Sciences Psychiques,' and an excellent notice of it was given in 'LIGHT,' of March 23rd last; but one incident was not mentioned, which strikes me, in reading the German translation, as being one of the most remarkable phenomena ever recorded, and I will therefore translate the passage in which it is described, referring your readers to the account before mentioned for details as to the cage, &c.

I may just mention—in case some readers may not have the number of 'LIGHT' to refer to—that Dr. Gibier had experimented during ten years with Mrs. Salmon, in New York and at his home in the country, where she was a frequent visitor, staying on one occasion for a month; and that it was at his laboratory in New York that the séance took place at which this remarkable phenomenon occurred.

The séance, with the medium in the wire cage, had lasted two hours, during which time many manifestations, including materialisations, had taken place. These are described with the greatest minuteness. Dr. Paul Gibier then says:—

'The séance had lasted about two hours, when the voice of "Maudy" was heard from the cage; she said the medium's power was exhausted and the manifestations must now cease. Scarcely had she spoken, when the bass voice of "Ellan" addressed me in these words: "Receive our medium, who is coming out and needs your care." I thought it was time to open the door of the cage and release the medium, who since the experiments began had been shut up in this confined space, and was about to light the gas, when the bass voice said: "Don't light up till the medium is outside." As I was not in the least prepared for what was going to happen, I stepped forward to open the door, the wire grating of which I could feel through the thick curtain hanging over it. At this moment I felt my hand gently but resolutely pushed back and the curtain swelled out as though some form were pushing against it. I seized the protruding mass, and was greatly astonished at finding a fainting woman in my arms. I lifted up the curtain, which covered her, and Mrs. Salmon—for she it was—would have fallen to the ground had I not supported her. I placed her at once on a chair and the ladies present came to her assistance with restoratives. Without losing a minute, while one of my assistants lighted the gas, I felt the cage through the curtain and especially the door of it, without discovering anything remarkable. As soon as all the lamps were lighted, we searched the curtains of the cabinet, which we found exactly as they were at the beginning of the séance. The covering was then removed, and we carefully examined the door of the cage, as well as the top and floor, and the wire netting. Everything was intact, including the three postage stamps across the crack of the door, and the padlock. The padlock was in its place on the ring and locked. I took the key out of my right hand waistcoat pocket, where I had placed it, and unlocked it. The wards went quite freely and I was convinced had not been tampered with. Besides this, during the whole examination of the door I had not been more than a yard distant and must have heard any sound coming from the cage. Not the slightest noise or suspicious movement had attracted my attention, and especially when the medium was being pushed through the door of the cage, I heard nothing. Those present made the same assertion.

'This is the most extraordinary occurrence which I witnessed during two séances which took place at a short interval in my laboratory, and a third at another place. Mrs. Salmon, however, would not agree to any further experiments with the wire cage, as it appeared to produce spitting of blood; and her guides or controls likewise forbade the use of the cage for test experiments and only allowed the wooden cabinet already described to be made use of.'

M. T.

MAGIC.—Referring to the article by Mr. Yeats in 'The Monthly Review' on 'Magic,' the 'Echo' says: 'One of the weirdest of his stories relates that on one occasion, when staying with friends in Paris, he had gone out before breakfast, passing the servant as she was laying the table. As he passed through the room he was thinking to himself of a narrow escape of hurting his arm. On returning he was accosted by his hosts with the words, "Why, the servant has just told us you had your arm in a sling." It does not require the gift of prophecy to foretell that in fifty years psychic problems will form the main occupation of men of science.'

In regard to suicide, permit me to say that I have strong opinions. *Imprimis*: I regard it, if it is an offence at all, as one against God, and not *man*. No human tribunal has jurisdiction here, and the punishment of the would-be suicide is a blot on our penal laws. But I cannot regard it as an offence against God either. Our life is our own; it was given us against our will (an important point this), and it is certainly at our own disposal. In the immense amount of undeserved misery in this life the occasional temptation to cut the thread of life with our own hands is too often irresistible.

The subject of Fatalism is a large order, and I suppose whole libraries have been written on it. Of course, if we assign the attribute of prescience to the Deity, as we are bound to do if we believe in an Omnipotent Being, every event, however small, must be known to Him beforehand. But foreknowledge does not necessarily imply interference with our wills, and we are undoubtedly free agents within an indeterminate area.

For instance, an intimate friend may know for a certainty how I shall act at a certain juncture, but the fact of his knowing still leaves me a free agent, since (unless he hypnotises me) he does not influence me in the least. Of course his knowledge is *conditioned*, and God's is *absolute*, but the example will serve.

The root of the matter seems to me to be that, though the end of every issue is known to Omniscience, we do not know it; so we are *virtually*, at any rate, free agents within a limited area.

Then comes, in opposition to this Libertarian theory, what is called in ethics the Necessitarian or Determinist phase of the subject. For, that the aforesaid area of our free will is hemmed in by the iron girdle of necessity, there can be no manner of doubt. Heredity and external circumstances undoubtedly limit our sphere of free action to a large extent. I do not believe in chance—I believe *all* is fore-ordained—but things often turn out so differently from what we expect that we seem to discern *caprice*, and so call it *chance*. *Absolute fatalism* reduces us to puppets merely, the wires being pulled by Deity.

H. B. DOVETON.

Karsfield, Torquay.

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.

Hypnotism and Suicide.

SIR,—I can contradict the assertion, made in a recent issue of 'LIGHT,' that the 'fluid' theory was exploded, in reference to animal magnetism, from my own personal experience, as I have been the subject, when in a conscious trance in bed, of spirit-mesmerism, and on more than one occasion have seen, clairvoyantly, the spirit throwing the magnetic fluid from the tips of his fingers, and I felt it like rain on my head; only it did not give a 'wet' feeling at all, though a very violent shock at times. In appearance it seemed precisely similar to those transparent waves of heat that are seen to issue out of the mouth of a kettle in certain lights; and if a spirit mesmerist throws forth such a 'fluid,' I do not see why an earthly mesmerist should not do the same. May there not be more than one method of inducing the hypnotic state, so that both theories (the 'fluid' and the 'suggestion') may be equally correct?

As regards 'suicide,' it seems very strange that the religiously inclined even cannot see that any being, brought into a state before he was able to decide whether he would enter it or not, has a right to leave it if he will; and it is only wrong, from a logical point of view, when he, by committing suicide, leaves a loved one in distress; otherwise, in defence of the 'liberty of the individual,' he has a perfect right to remain here or depart into another sphere—else we are slaves to a tyranny; and it is very cool for any person or spirit to presume to say that one is sinful for acting according to his ideas of liberty in such cases. One should 'judge not, lest he be judged'; but the religionist and moralist are too fond of 'judging' others. One should only do so in the case of wrong acting towards others.

G. W. BLYTHE.

Reincarnation.

SIR,—I should like to say, in reply to the closing remark of 'J.M.' in 'LIGHT' of August 3rd, viz.: 'I have been looking very carefully, week by week, to see if any other explanation of the inequality of things in this life is offered by the people who so strongly oppose reincarnation, but I have so far looked in vain,' that he is likely to look in vain, for the simple reason that no explanation is necessary. The fact that everyone born is different from everyone else, the potent influences of heredity and environment as referred to by Franklin Smith in the same issue, are, in my opinion, explanation enough. Taking these facts into consideration, if everyone had the same experiences an explanation would be indeed required. We do not want far-fetched theories, but the simple truth, and truth is always simple.

A perfect answer to the reincarnationists is to be found on the very page of your journal facing 'J.M.'s' communication, in the charming article upon 'The Blessedness of Suffering,' by 'W., Ilfracombe.' Those in favour of reincarnation simply look at the subject from the wrong standpoint. They think we are here to enjoy ourselves instead of to build up a character that will endure. The inequalities of life that they make so much of are only so conspicuous when regarded from this erroneous point of view. The individual living in indigence or suffering has certainly a better chance of forming a strong, good character than one living in affluence and self-indulgence. Looked at spiritually, the former is to be envied rather than the latter.

Taking the correspondence that has appeared in your columns during the last few months as a fair sample of the arguments for and against reincarnation, I can only say that if I were umpire my decision would be overwhelmingly in favour of the 'antis.' The 'pros' have not a leg to stand upon.

In your issue of June 15th G. W. Guyenette attributes to me a sentiment which, if he had read my letter a little more attentively, he would have seen was a quotation, and in no way essential to the argument I was quoting.

He also advises Spiritualists to learn the value of an open mind. Is one to go through eternity then without an opinion on any subject? I have studied the question of reincarnation, and have reached the conclusion that there is not a tittle of evidence in its favour that is worthy a second thought. It is all mere assumption and assertion without a particle of proof.

Let me remind your correspondent that this question of an open mind is a sword that cuts both ways. Perhaps if he opened his mind a little wider the weakness of the theory he supports would become apparent to him.

For instance, in 'LIGHT' of August 3rd, A. S. Major cites the theosophical doctrine that an ordinary good or holy person would not reincarnate under 1,000 or 1,500 years, which I presume Theosophists accept because they are told so by Mahatmas or Adepts; but like all common-sense Spiritualists, I consider Mahatmas simply discarnate spirits, and decline to accept their statements without proof or some evidence of their reliability.

Look at the progress some people make in spirituality in a few years even on the earth plane, and then imagine the position of a good or holy person after 1,000 or 1,500 years spent in the higher spheres in congenial society and surroundings, but it is all of no avail, he has to return to earth. The wretched little span of seventy or eighty years at most for which he returns would be a retrogression and arrest of all development.

I have thought for some time that all that is true in Theosophy (I refer, of course, to modern Theosophy, as stated by Madame Blavatsky) is borrowed from Spiritualism, and what remains is of little account. Most of the theories propounded by Theosophists are very shallow when critically examined.

I can only say in conclusion that not only my reason repudiates reincarnation, but my intuitional nature also strongly rebels against it, and I prefer to trust that in preference to wild, unsupported theories.

A. K. VENNING.

The 'Test Seances' Padlock.

SIR,—I have been re-reading 'Merlin's' report of the 'test seances,' and have been struck with one important omission, in regard to which I should be pleased to have more light, if 'Merlin' or some member of the committee will kindly respond. It is in reference to the unlocking of the padlock and the phrase employed in the report regarding it. 'It was *practically* demonstrated that it could be opened with the point of a scarfpin.' I wonder what that 'practically' means. Was the padlock *opened* by one of the committee with a scarfpin? Then again, 'Merlin' says: It 'would have implied a considerable ingenuity to get at it without the aid of the long hairpin': but, even *with* the aid of a long hairpin, and in the light, and with both hands free, has 'Merlin,' or any other committeeman, succeeded in opening the padlock? It seems to me that, in justice to the medium, upon this point we need more

LIGHT.

Suicide.

SIR,—It may be taken as a certainty that did man at a rightly understand the laws of his human nature, he would not so readily fall a victim to the temptation to end his present phase of existence by violence. He would then know that the unpleasant or unhappy conditions from which he desires to flee were first psychical before becoming physical; and that, consequently, the errors which are their original cause must be sought out and rectified, either in this life or the next, before an amelioration can take place. This fact applies equally to diseases, be their nature what soever they may. Disobedience, wilful, or as is more generally the case, merely innocently ignorant, is the cause, but the penalty has to be borne until the required correction is effected.

When we ask the question, 'How can we, in our innocent ignorance, learn the nature of our disobedience?' the answer is: Such knowledge will assuredly come to us either from without or by the divine intuitions, when we have determined to rectify our lives, so soon as we shall have learned the nature of our faults. In this way we shall save ourselves from the punishment which forms the chief concomitant of evolution, and thus learn to progress by involution.

We have frequently heard from either one quarter or another of the 'unpardonable sin.' I myself have yet to know that there is, or could be, any sin which is not fundamentally merely an error of ignorance, be it as wilfully awful or abhorrent as it may; and as such its punishment, psychical or physical, must eventually prove its cure. I may be said that it is a constant occurrence for diseases to be cured without any recognisable change in the person's character or mode of life. For answer it has to be said: We know all too certainly of apparent cures by the driving back into the system of outcoming ills; and that the after-effects of such mistaken cures are infinitely worse than the original disease. There is no need to quote illustrations; but in any case a persistence of causes would infallibly produce recurrences.

J. F. DARLEY.

'About Hypnotism.'

SIR,—Your correspondent 'Experto Crede' appears to have rightly chosen his title, for a stronger brief for Hypnotism could not well be penned. He says, in 'LIGHT' of September 14th, 'the name of "Animal Magnetism" is an impossible one now,' practically, because 'the Hypnotists immensely outnumber the Mesmerists'; 'that the "fluid" theory is repudiated by the Hypnotists,' and that 'Hypnotism should be the proper name until a more appropriate one is in possession of the greater part of the field.'

If 'Experto Crede' is writing in the interests of medical men who, while being easily able to 'suggest' (which they generally affirm to be the basis of Hypnotism), are not able to transmit vital force, which is in reality the fluid alluded to, it is easy to understand why the majority desire to enlist under a name which can cover all their experiments and at the same time form a golden bridge to explain the non-effectiveness of the operation. That 'Experto Crede' should say that the name of 'Animal Magnetism' is impossible, after all the experiments made by scientific men proving to demonstration the existence of this fluid, by photography and otherwise, is only to be explained by his ignorance of the facts of Animal Magnetism, either of the experiments, or of personal experience. Another very sound reason why the term 'magnetism,' whether animal or otherwise, should be retained is that *all spirits* say the force used to heal with is magnetism; and Mesmer was undoubtedly spiritually impressed when he termed the force he used 'Animal Magnetism,' as he explained, 'to differentiate it from Mineral or Terrestrial Magnetism.'

It is clear that the majority of medical men, not having the spiritual gift of magnetic healing, desire to participate in a science which is too well established for their denial to have further weight, and so desire to have the contrasted term Hypnotism employed, because it is so easy to say, 'Oh, "Hypnos" is a Greek word meaning sleep; nothing more'; and thus add one more to the many-meaning words of the medical lexicon. The magnetiser can readily use the methods of the hypnotiser, but for the mere hypnotiser to pretend to the advanced work of the magnetiser is as impossible as it is for the lesser to contain the greater.

W. H. EDWARDS
(Professor of Animal Magnetism)

Hypnotism: Information Wanted.

SIR,—Can any of your readers inform me if it is possible to witness practical experiments in hypnotism or mesmerism anywhere in the neighbourhood of London? I believe a society for psycho-therapeutics was formed some months ago is that still in existence, and if so, does it provide anything of that nature?

B. C.

Subjugation of the Passions.

SIR,—May I be permitted to refer to a passage in Mr. Sampson's letter in 'LIGHT' of the 17th inst.? He remarks that there are 'spirits of darkness' who impose on certain psychics a *régime* of perpetual strictness regarding food, &c.; and he also further remarks that only at certain times should psychics abstain from common indulgences, and that by special spirit guidance.

Now I may perhaps be forgiven if I consider the above as somewhat mixed and confusing.

Lust, I believe, is the pandering to any of the five senses or even the psychic gifts, for the sake of pleasure, rather than the proper fulfilment of a natural function. If, then, persons so conquer their desires as to take food which alone is wholesome and good and abstain from foods which tend to act against mental effort, as alcohol, flesh meat, dainties, &c., and in fact only use the bodily functions for their definite purposes, I beg to think that they are becoming stronger and purer, mentally, psychically, and physically.

If that is so, then a regular *régime* must essentially place the investigator in better condition than an irregular or erratic system. Thus it seems that if the subjugation of bodily appetites is good at one time, it is always good and necessary. We grow by efforts made to conquer the evil in us; and so the persons who are continually suppressing the tendencies to evil, must grow stronger and larger than those who only make occasional efforts.

Again, how can evil spirits obtain power—i.e., evil power, I suppose—over psychics by requesting them to follow a routine which must develop them to higher things?

The self-denial required must make persons higher and nobler, whoever issues the injunction. It is, one is apt to think, a case of Satan acting against himself.

The doctrine of utter subjugation of passion seems to be the basis of true development. Buddha taught it and Jesus taught it by precept and example. If meat be unnecessary to physical life, it must be wrong to kill animals for food. If it excite the passions, it must not be taken.

Purity of life, I believe, begins chiefly from this basis of self-culture, and it is a culture which is sadly neglected in our lives and omitted from our teachings.

T. W. WIDGERY.

Craig-y-don,
Rugby-street, Wolverhampton.

Mr. Husk's Mediumship.

SIR,—In reply to 'G. H. L.,' I would like to say it was not my intention to cast a stone at Mr. Husk regarding his mediumship. I am one of those who believe in supporting all honest mediums.

My sole wish was to call attention to the conditions under which materialisation seances seem to be generally held, viz., total darkness, as being the same for the past twenty years, and that as a visitor to England, I see no progress being made towards eliminating all possible chance of raud, and closing the mouths of so many people who imply laugh at one when they are told that the manifestations occur in the dark.

Sitting in one's own home with only the members of the family to witness the phenomena, is quite a different matter from being in a circle of twenty or thirty people more or less strangers to each other. Under the latter circumstances, conditions ought to be more favourable and light of a yellow kind, which would not be destructive of manifestations, could be used.

My opinion is that Spiritualism will never make much headway until it is called a religion and is practised as such. We want a large hall of our own, where services can be held and the people can see that it teaches something besides a lot of conjuring tricks.

W. L. C.

From South Africa.

Spiritualism in Dulwich.

SIR,—I notice in 'LIGHT' of September 14th, a letter headed 'Spiritualism in Dulwich.' It states: 'There are many meetings in this neighbourhood.' This is contrary to fact, as there are two meetings in Dulwich, and several others within walking distance. The meetings which I attend at 5, Claude-villas, Grove Vale, are highly spiritual and successful, and your correspondent, Mrs. Banister, longed to our fraternity for some months, until a slight difference of opinion arose. The other meetings are held at Melbourne-grove.

I am sure all Spiritualists will join in wishing Mrs. Banister success in helping to spread our truths, but I think the facts should be correctly stated.

JAMES G. HUXLEY.

63, Bellenden-road,
East Dulwich, S.E.

THE BOOTLE LYCEUMS AND PRESIDENT MCKINLEY.

The following resolution was unanimously passed at a joint session of the 'Bootle' and 'John Lamont' Spiritualist Children's Progressive Lyceums, Stanley Hall, Bootle, on Sunday, the 8th inst., meeting together on this occasion specially, to accord a loving welcome to their highly esteemed friends and visitors, Mrs. Cadwallader and her revered father, Mr. B. B. Hill, both of Philadelphia, United States, America:—

'We, the officers, leaders, and members of the "John Lamont" and "Bootle" Spiritualist Children's Progressive Lyceums, have heard with consternation of the dire calamity which has befallen the American nation in the dastardly attempt made upon the valuable life of its world-wide esteemed and popular President, Mr. William H. McKinley, and desire to express to his beloved and devoted wife by loving message, our heartfelt sympathy and condolence in her great trouble, coupled with the sincere prayer that it may be the will of the "Great Oversoul of the Universe" to spare to herself and the nation the life of, and grant early and complete recovery to, the stricken one, that his good work for his country and people may be long continued.'

Signed on behalf of the above Lyceums,

S. S. CHISWELL,

Conductor, 'John Lamont' S.C.P. Lyceum.

J. J. PARR,

Conductor, 'Bootle' S.C.P. Lyceum.

The following cable message was sent to Mrs. William H. McKinley, Buffalo, United States America, Sunday, September 8th, 1901:—'Accept loving sympathy Bootle and Liverpool Spiritualist Lyceums. Resolutions mailed.'

At the evening meeting of the parent society (Bootle Society of Spiritualists), the above resolution was read and unanimously acquiesced in. At the same meeting, Mr. G. H. Bibbings, the resident speaker for the society, gave a masterly dissertation upon 'The Eternal City,' and Mrs. Cadwallader and Mr. B. B. Hill were both present specially to hear Mr. Bibbings' discourse. A Building Fund was inaugurated at the conclusion of the meeting, resulting in £25 being immediately subscribed.

J. NORTON,

President.

The resolution was forwarded to Mrs. McKinley on the following day, together with the subjoined letter:—

DEAR MADAME,

As secretary of the Bootle Spiritualist Children's Progressive Lyceum, at whose session yesterday (Sunday) the enclosed resolution was unanimously passed, it is my respectful and honourable duty to confirm the cable message of sympathy to yourself from the combined Lyceums; meeting together on this occasion specially to accord a loving welcome to our highly esteemed friends and visitors, Mrs. Cadwallader and her father, Mr. B. B. Hill, both of Philadelphia, U.S.A.

I earnestly beg to assure you, dear Madame, that all present—over a hundred children and friends—desired most sincerely to convey to yourself, and to President McKinley through you, not only our heartfelt sympathy, but also our heartfelt sorrow that such a dastardly outrage could occur in any part of any civilised nation in this twentieth century; and we further feel that in the suffering entailed you are each bearing a burden for the future good of the whole world, calling for the heartfelt sympathy of all right-thinking people.

And we further feel that it will be a great consolation to all concerned, enabling yourself, the President, and the American nation to rejoice somewhat even in your greatest anguish, that, first, Divine protection has granted escape to President McKinley from immediate fatal consequences; and second, that the world-wide sympathy spontaneously evidenced by communications from all classes of people everywhere, proves how much all nations and peoples are in reality akin, when great sorrows strike the right chord and call forth all that is best in us.

Assuring your good husband, President McKinley, your good self and the American people generally, of the heartfelt sorrow and deepest sympathy of British Spiritualist children for you all in the hours of your great trial and suffering, praying that all good influences may be with you and surround you, until the time comes for this mortal to put on immortality, and further earnestly praying that

Reincarnation.

SIR,—I should like to say, in reply to the closing remark of 'J.M.' in 'LIGHT' of August 3rd, viz.: 'I have been looking very carefully, week by week, to see if any other explanation of the inequality of things in this life is offered by the people who so strongly oppose reincarnation, but I have so far looked in vain, that he is likely to look in vain, for the simple reason that no explanation is necessary. The fact that everyone born is different from everyone else, the potent influences of heredity and environment as referred to by Franklin Smith in the same issue, are, in my opinion, explanation enough. Taking these facts into consideration, if everyone had the same experiences an explanation would be indeed required. We do not want far-fetched theories, but the simple truth, and truth is always simple.

A perfect answer to the reincarnationists is to be found on the very page of your journal facing 'J.M.'s communication, in the charming article upon 'The Blessedness of Suffering,' by 'W. Ilfracombe.' Those in favour of reincarnation simply look at the subject from the wrong standpoint. They think we are here to enjoy ourselves instead of to build up a character that will endure. The inequalities of life that they make so much of are only so conspicuous when regarded from this erroneous point of view. The individual living in indigence or suffering has certainly a better chance of forming a strong, good character than one living in affluence and self-indulgence. Looked at spiritually, the former is to be envied rather than the latter.

Taking the correspondence that has appeared in your columns during the last few months as a fair sample of the arguments for and against reincarnation, I can only say that if I were umpire my decision would be overwhelmingly in favour of the 'antis.' The 'pros' have not a leg to stand upon.

In your issue of June 15th G. W. Guyenette attributes to me a sentiment which, if he had read my letter a little more attentively, he would have seen was a quotation, and in no way essential to the argument I was quoting.

He also advises Spiritualists to learn the value of an open mind. Is one to go through eternity then without an opinion on any subject? I have studied the question of reincarnation, and have reached the conclusion that there is not a tittle of evidence in its favour that is worthy a second thought. It is all mere assumption and assertion without a particle of proof.

Let me remind your correspondent that this question of an open mind is a sword that cuts both ways. Perhaps if he opened his mind a little wider the weakness of the theory he supports would become apparent to him.

For instance, in 'LIGHT,' of August 3rd, A. S. Major cites the theosophical doctrine that an ordinary good or holy person would not reincarnate under 1,000 or 1,500 years, which I presume Theosophists accept because they are told so by Mahatmas or Adepts; but like all common-sense Spiritualists, I consider Mahatmas simply discarnate spirits, and decline to accept their statements without proof or some evidence of their reliability.

Look at the progress some people make in spirituality in a few years even on the earth plane, and then imagine the position of a good or holy person after 1,000 or 1,500 years spent in the higher spheres in congenial society and surroundings, but it is all of no avail, he has to return to earth. The wretched little span of seventy or eighty years at most for which he returns would be a retrogression and arrest of all development.

I have thought for some time that all that is true in Theosophy (I refer, of course, to modern Theosophy, as stated by Madame Blavatsky) is borrowed from Spiritualism, and what remains is of little account. Most of the theories propounded by Theosophists are very shallow when critically examined.

I can only say in conclusion that not only my reason repudiates reincarnation, but my intuitional nature also strongly rebels against it, and I prefer to trust that in preference to wild, unsupported theories.

A. K. VENNING.

The 'Test Seances' Padlock.

SIR,—I have been re-reading 'Merlin's' report of the 'test seances,' and have been struck with one important omission, in regard to which I should be pleased to have more light, if 'Merlin' or some member of the committee will kindly respond. It is in reference to the unlocking of the padlock and the phrase employed in the report regarding it. 'It was practically demonstrated that it could be opened with the point of a scarfpin.' I wonder what that 'practically' means. Was the padlock opened by one of the committee with a scarfpin? Then again, 'Merlin' says: 'It would have implied a considerable ingenuity to get at it without the aid of the long hairpin': but, even with the aid of a long hairpin, and in the light, and with both hands free, has 'Merlin,' or any other committeeman, succeeded in opening the padlock? It seems to me that, in justice to the medium, upon this point we need more

LIGHT.

Suicide.

SIR,—It may be taken as a certainty that did man at all rightly understand the laws of his human nature, he would not so readily fall a victim to the temptation to end his present phase of existence by violence. He would then know that the unpleasant or unhappy conditions from which he desires to flee were first psychical before becoming physical; and that, consequently, the errors which are their original cause must be sought out and rectified, either in this life or the next, before an amelioration can take place. This fact applies equally to diseases, be their nature whatsoever they may. Disobedience, wilful, or as is more generally the case, merely innocently ignorant, is the cause, but the penalty has to be borne until the required correction is effected.

When we ask the question, 'How can we, in our innocent ignorance, learn the nature of our disobedience?' the answer is: Such knowledge will assuredly come to us either from without or by the divine intuitions, when we have determined to rectify our lives, so soon as we shall have learned the nature of our faults. In this way we shall save ourselves from the punishment which forms the chief concomitant of evolution, and thus learn to progress by involution.

We have frequently heard from either one quarter or another of the 'unpardonable sin.' I myself have yet to know that there is, or could be, any sin which is not fundamentally merely an error of ignorance, be it as wilfully awful or abhorrent as it may; and as such its punishment, psychical or physical, must eventually prove its cure. It may be said that it is a constant occurrence for diseases to be cured without any recognisable change in the person's character or mode of life. For answer it has to be said: We know all too certainly of apparent cures by the driving back into the system of outcoming ills; and that the after-effects of such mistaken cures are infinitely worse than the original disease. There is no need to quote illustrations; but in any case a persistence of causes would infallibly produce recurrences.

J. F. DARLEY.

'About Hypnotism.'

SIR,—Your correspondent 'Experto Crede' appears to have rightly chosen his title, for a stronger brief for Hypnotism could not well be penned. He says, in 'LIGHT,' September 14th, 'the name of "Animal Magnetism" is an impossible one now,' practically, because 'the Hypnotists immensely outnumber the Mesmerists'; 'that the "fluid" theory is repudiated by the Hypnotists,' and that 'Hypnotism should be the proper name until a more appropriate one is in possession of the greater part of the field.'

If 'Experto Crede' is writing in the interests of medical men who, while being easily able to 'suggest' (which they generally affirm to be the basis of Hypnotism), are not able to transmit vital force, which is in reality the fluid alluded to, it is easy to understand why the majority desire to enlist under a name which can cover all their experiments and at the same time form a golden bridge to explain the non-effectiveness of the operation. That 'Experto Crede' should say that the name of 'Animal Magnetism' is impossible, after all the experiments made by scientific men proving to demonstration the existence of this fluid, by photography and otherwise, is only to be explained by his ignorance of the facts of Animal Magnetism, either of the experiments, or of personal experience. Another very sound reason why the term 'magnetism,' whether animal or otherwise, should be retained is that *all spirits* say the force used to heal with is magnetism; and Mesmer was undoubtedly spiritually impressed when he termed the force he used 'Animal Magnetism,' as he explained, 'to differentiate it from Mineral or Terrestrial Magnetism.'

It is clear that the majority of medical men, not having the spiritual gift of magnetic healing, desire to participate in a science which is too well established for their denials to have further weight, and so desire to have the contrasted term Hypnotism employed, because it is so easy to say, 'Oh! "Hypnos" is a Greek word meaning sleep; nothing more!' and thus add one more to the many-meaning words of the medical lexicon. The magnetiser can readily use the methods of the hypnotiser, but for the mere hypnotiser to pretend to the advanced work of the magnetiser is as impossible as it is for the lesser to contain the greater.

W. H. EDWARDS
(Professor of Animal Magnetism).

Hypnotism: Information Wanted.

SIR,—Can any of your readers inform me if it is possible to witness practical experiments in hypnotism or mesmerism anywhere in the neighbourhood of London? I believe a society for psycho-therapeutics was formed some months ago; is that still in existence, and if so, does it provide anything of that nature?

B. C.

Subjugation of the Passions.

SIR,—May I be permitted to refer to a passage in Mr. Sampson's letter in 'LIGHT' of the 17th inst.? He remarks that there are 'spirits of darkness' who impose on certain psychics a régime of perpetual strictness regarding food, &c.; and he also further remarks that only at certain times should psychics abstain from common indulgences, and that by special spirit guidance.

Now I may perhaps be forgiven if I consider the above as somewhat mixed and confusing.

Lust, I believe, is the pandering to any of the five senses or even the psychic gifts, for the sake of pleasure, rather than the proper fulfilment of a natural function. If, then, persons so conquer their desires as to take food which alone is wholesome and good and abstain from foods which tend to act against mental effort, as alcohol, flesh meat, dainties, &c., and in fact only use the bodily functions for their definite purposes, I beg to think that they are becoming stronger and purer, mentally, psychically, and physically.

If that is so, then a regular régime must essentially place the investigator in better condition than an irregular or erratic system. Thus it seems that if the subjugation of bodily appetites is good at one time, it is always good and necessary. We grow by efforts made to conquer the evil in us; and so the persons who are continually suppressing the tendencies to evil, must grow stronger and larger than those who only make occasional efforts.

Again, how can evil spirits obtain power—i.e., evil power, I suppose—over psychics by requesting them to follow a routine which must develop them to higher things?

The self-denial required must make persons higher and nobler, whoever issues the injunction. It is, one is apt to think, a case of Satan acting against himself.

The doctrine of utter subjugation of passion seems to be the basis of true development. Buddha taught it and Jesus taught it by precept and example. If meat be unnecessary to physical life, it must be wrong to kill animals for food. If it excite the passions, it must not be taken.

Purity of life, I believe, begins chiefly from this basis of self-culture, and it is a culture which is sadly neglected in our lives and omitted from our teachings.

T. W. WIDGERY.

Craig-y-don,
Rugby-street, Wolverhampton.

Mr. Husk's Mediumship.

SIR,—In reply to 'G. H. L.,' I would like to say it was not my intention to cast a stone at Mr. Husk regarding his mediumship. I am one of those who believe in supporting all honest mediums.

My sole wish was to call attention to the conditions under which materialisation séances seem to be generally held, viz., total darkness, as being the same for the past twenty years, and that as a visitor to England, I see no progress being made towards eliminating all possible chance of fraud, and closing the mouths of so many people who simply laugh at one when they are told that the manifestations occur in the dark.

Sitting in one's own home with only the members of the family to witness the phenomena, is quite a different matter from being in a circle of twenty or thirty people more or less strangers to each other. Under the latter circumstances, conditions ought to be more favourable and light of a yellow kind, which would not be destructive of manifestations, should be used.

My opinion is that Spiritualism will never make much headway until it is called a religion and is practised as such. We want a large hall of our own, where services can be held and the people can see that it teaches something besides a lot of conjuring tricks.

W. L. C.

From South Africa.

Spiritualism in Dulwich.

SIR,—I notice in 'LIGHT,' of September 14th, a letter headed 'Spiritualism in Dulwich.' It states: 'There are not any meetings in this neighbourhood.' This is contrary to fact, as there are two meetings in Dulwich, and several others within walking distance. The meetings which I attend at 5, Claude-villas, Grove Vale, are highly spiritual and successful, and your correspondent, Mrs. Banister, belonged to our fraternity for some months, until a slight difference of opinion arose. The other meetings are held at 81, Melbourne-grove.

I am sure all Spiritualists will join in wishing Mrs. Banister success in helping to spread our truths, but I think the facts should be correctly stated.

JAMES G. HUXLEY.

63, Bellenden-road,
East Dulwich, S.E.

THE BOOTLE LYCEUMS AND PRESIDENT MCKINLEY.

The following resolution was unanimously passed at a joint session of the 'Bootle' and 'John Lamont' Spiritualist Children's Progressive Lyceums, Stanley Hall, Bootle, on Sunday, the 8th inst., meeting together on this occasion specially, to accord a loving welcome to their highly esteemed friends and visitors, Mrs. Cadwallader and her revered father, Mr. B. B. Hill, both of Philadelphia, United States, America:—

'We, the officers, leaders, and members of the "John Lamont" and "Bootle" Spiritualist Children's Progressive Lyceums, have heard with consternation of the dire calamity which has befallen the American nation in the dastardly attempt made upon the valuable life of its world-wide esteemed and popular President, Mr. William H. McKinley, and desire to express to his beloved and devoted wife by loving message, our heartfelt sympathy and condolence in her great trouble, coupled with the sincere prayer that it may be the will of the "Great Oversoul of the Universe" to spare to herself and the nation the life of, and grant early and complete recovery to, the stricken one, that his good work for his country and people may be long continued.'

Signed on behalf of the above Lyceums,

S. S. CHISWELL,

Conductor, 'John Lamont' S.C.P. Lyceum.

J. J. PARR,

Conductor, 'Bootle' S.C.P. Lyceum.

The following cable message was sent to Mrs. William H. McKinley, Buffalo, United States America, Sunday, September 8th, 1901:—'Accept loving sympathy Bootle and Liverpool Spiritualist Lyceums. Resolutions mailed.'

At the evening meeting of the parent society (Bootle Society of Spiritualists), the above resolution was read and unanimously acquiesced in. At the same meeting, Mr. G. H. Bibbings, the resident speaker for the society, gave a masterly dissertation upon 'The Eternal City,' and Mrs. Cadwallader and Mr. B. B. Hill were both present specially to hear Mr. Bibbings' discourse. A Building Fund was inaugurated at the conclusion of the meeting, resulting in £25 being immediately subscribed.

J. NORTON,
President.

The resolution was forwarded to Mrs. McKinley on the following day, together with the subjoined letter:—

DEAR MADAME,

As secretary of the Bootle Spiritualist Children's Progressive Lyceum, at whose session yesterday (Sunday) the enclosed resolution was unanimously passed, it is my respectful and honourable duty to confirm the cable message of sympathy to yourself from the combined Lyceums; meeting together on this occasion specially to accord a loving welcome to our highly esteemed friends and visitors, Mrs. Cadwallader and her father, Mr. B. B. Hill, both of Philadelphia, U.S.A.

I earnestly beg to assure you, dear Madame, that all present—over a hundred children and friends—desired most sincerely to convey to yourself, and to President McKinley through you, not only our heartfelt sympathy, but also our heartfelt sorrow that such a dastardly outrage could occur in any part of any civilised nation in this twentieth century; and we further feel that in the suffering entailed you are each bearing a burden for the future good of the whole world, calling for the heartfelt sympathy of all right-thinking people.

And we further feel that it will be a great consolation to all concerned, enabling yourself, the President, and the American nation to rejoice somewhat even in your greatest anguish, that, first, Divine protection has granted escape to President McKinley from immediate fatal consequences; and second, that the world-wide sympathy spontaneously evidenced by communications from all classes of people everywhere, proves how much all nations and peoples are in reality akin, when great sorrows strike the right chord and call forth all that is best in us.

Assuring your good husband, President McKinley, your good self and the American people generally, of the heartfelt sorrow and deepest sympathy of British Spiritualist children for you all in the hours of your great trial and suffering, praying that all good influences may be with you and surround you, until the time comes for this mortal to put on immortality, and further earnestly praying that

a speedy and complete recovery may be granted to the President,

I have the honour to subscribe myself, dear Madame,

Yours respectfully and fraternally,

EMMA F. NORTON,

Secretary.

Bootle Spiritualist Children's Progressive Lyceum.

[The above communications from Mr. and Miss Norton did not reach us in time for insertion in our last issue, and the passing on of Mr. McKinley on Saturday last makes them seem out-of-date now; but the feelings of horror at the outrage and of sympathy with Mrs. McKinley will be shared by our readers in all parts of the world, who will also regret that the hope expressed by our Bootle friends that the sufferer might be restored has not been realised.—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

SOCIETY WORK.

SOUTHALL.—1, MILTON-VILLAS, FEATHERSTONE-ROAD.—On Sunday last a subject chosen by the audience was ably dealt with by Mr. Millard, viz., 'The Eternal God is our Refuge and underneath us are the Everlasting Arms.' A hearty welcome will be given to all friends of religion and reverent free-thought.—E.B.

MERTHYR SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MERTHYR TYDFIL, WALES.—Special services were held on Sunday afternoon and evening last, at the Drill Hall, when Mrs. Clarke, of Nottingham, delivered addresses entitled 'The Great Physician,' and 'The Mariner's Beacon,' in pleasing style. Her clairvoyant descriptions were very minute and instantly recognised. The meetings were well attended.—H.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. John Kinsman, the society's late president, addressed the meeting in his usual thorough manner upon 'The Problem of Existence.' He thought Spiritualism was not an *easy* religion; that the teachings demanded a life of unselfishness and good works here as essential to happiness in the hereafter. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. Ronald Brailey. Mr. J. Neander, of Egypt, will preside.—O. H.

LEICESTER SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, LIBERAL CLUB, LECTURE HALL.—Mrs. M. H. Wallis delivered two excellent discourses upon 'The Creative Power of Thought,' and 'Spiritualism a Force for Good,' to large and appreciative audiences. Mr. H. Clark, in appropriate terms, referred to the sudden passing on of the Mayor, Alderman S. Lennard. A resolution was unanimously passed that a letter of condolence and sympathy should be sent to the bereaved family. On Sunday next, Mr. G. H. Bibbings will deliver addresses at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.—A.O.W.

EAST DULWICH—5, CLAUDE-VILLAS, GROVE VALE.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Fielder delivered a deeply interesting address upon 'Anarchy: Its Cause and Spiritual Cure,' which was much appreciated by his audience, and provided food for thoughtful minds. A solo, 'Not a Sparrow Falleth,' was ably rendered by Mrs. Macaulay. At the after-circle Mrs. Fairclough Smith's ministrations were spiritual and uplifting. Very impressive prayers were given for the late President and his sorrowing family, the poor misguided criminal not being forgotten. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Ray will deliver an address.—A. H. S.

THE SPIRIT FELLOWSHIP, ATHENÆUM HALL, 73, TOTTENHAM COURT-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. John C. Kenworthy delivered the first of a series of lectures dealing with social and religious questions in the light of Spiritualism; it was entitled, 'The Christian Religion and the Churches.' The speaker emphasised the attitude of the great founder of that religion towards social questions, and the revelations of the spirit world, as compared with that of the churches to-day. There was a good attendance. On Sunday next the subject will be, 'The Need of To-day.'—GEORGE COLE, 27, Cheap-side, E.C.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Roberts gave an excellent address on 'Spirit Life Here and Hereafter,' claiming that what will elevate us must proceed from us; and upon the fidelity with which we do our duty here will depend the quality of our garment in spirit life, and she pleaded for more love to brighten life here. Mr. Boddington also made a few remarks. Mr. Roberts presided. On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 3.30 p.m., meetings in Battersea Park and on Clapham Common; at 7 p.m., Special Harvest Thanksgiving Service; speakers, Mrs. Boddington and Mr. Adams. Special hymns by the choir. On Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope; and on Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., a public séance will be held.—YULE.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, DR. FLOOD'S SCHOOL, HIGH-ROAD, SOUTH TOTTENHAM (NEAR SEVEN SISTERS CORNER).—On Sunday last Mr. E. Whyte delivered an address on 'Spiritualism: What Good is it?' in his usual eloquent style. His demonstrations of the good effect that the knowledge of Spiritualism has on man, were well-chosen and forcibly put. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. Whyte will speak on 'The Religion of the Twentieth Century.'—W. KNAUN, Assistant Secretary.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last there was a crowded audience to listen to Mrs. H. Boddington, of the Battersea Society. She read one of Gerald Massey's poems, and delivered an eloquent address on 'Our Gifts Spiritual,' namely, trance and inspirational speaking, healing, and clairvoyance, and their blessing to mankind if used aright, which called forth much approval. A large after-circle was also held. On Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Roberts, of Manor Park, 'LIGHT' sold.—W. C.

DUNDEE SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday, September 8th, the audience attending our evening meeting was the largest we have yet had. The medium was Mrs. Stevenson, of Glasgow, and the address delivered by her in the forenoon on 'Blessed are the Pure in Heart' was as fine a homily on those words as anyone could desire. In the evening an admirable discourse was eloquently delivered on 'Jesus and Thomas'; it was especially suited for propaganda work. In her clairvoyant visions and delineations Mrs. Stevenson was very interesting and successful. She is one of the most welcome of our visitors, and a warm tribute of appreciation of her services to our society was expressed, and also of that done by means of the Pioneer Mediums' Fund.—JAS. MURRAY, Secretary.

• **THE LONDON PSYCHIC SOCIETY, STEINWAY HALL, LOWER SEYMOUR-STREET, PORTMAN-SQUARE, W.**—The inauguration of this society took place last Sunday evening before a large and appreciative audience. The choir, under the direction of Mr. C. W. Johnson, rendered some effective music. Madame Antoinette Sterling kindly volunteered, in memory of President McKinley, to sing 'The Lord is my Shepherd,' which she rendered grandly. Before delivering the opening address, Madame Florence Montague referred most touchingly and beautifully to the life and death of the late President of the United States, after which she set forth the aims and objects of the London Psychic Society. Her discourse was upon 'Law and its Fulfilment,' which she treated in a masterly manner, and many in the audience were deeply and visibly affected. On Sunday next Mr. George Spriggs will occupy the platform, in conjunction with Madame Florence Montague, at 7 for 7.30 p.m.—E. M. JACKSON, Hon. Sec.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last seventeen questions concerning Spiritualism were ably and lucidly answered by Mr. E. W. Wallis at these rooms. The large audience keenly appreciated the intellectual treat provided, which was preceded by the reading of a poem 'Nearer to Thee' (Lizzie Doten), by Mr. Wallis, and a solo, 'The Promise of Life,' sung very effectively by Miss Laws Caney, whose kindly musical assistance was highly valued. A resolution expressing deepest sympathy with Mrs. McKinley was proposed by Mr. Wallis and seconded by the chairman, Mr. J. Edwards, vice-president. It was an impressive sight when the audience rose *en masse*, and in sorrowing silence registered their heartfelt sympathy with Mrs. McKinley, and their sincere regard for her illustrious husband, 'deploring the dastardly deed which has robbed America of one of her ablest sons, and the world of a true nobleman.' On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. A. Peters will give clairvoyance; doors open at 6.30 p.m.—S. J. WATTS, 2c, Hyde Park-mansions, W.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON, N.—On Sunday last Mr. A. V. Peters gave a good address and successful clairvoyance as usual. A very full attendance was presided over by Mr. H. Belstead, who made sympathetic reference to the recent loss sustained by America. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis will speak on 'Spiritualism—an Aid to the Religious Life.' Our social on the 11th inst. was a real success. All our visitors, including Mr. J. J. Morse, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, Mr. William Beasley (President, Tottenham), Mr. John Kinsman (Editor of 'Psyche'), Mr. S. J. Watts (Marylebone), and Mr. O. Hudson (Hackney Society), seemed to enjoy themselves. Songs were given by Madame Nellie Cope, Mr. Wallis, Mr. G. B. Bunn, and other friends; recitations by Miss K. M. Tempest (always ready and always welcome). Miss L. M. Firth contributed a sparkling pianoforte solo, and Mr. Davehaw a banjo selection. Much amusement was caused by Mr. Hawksby (a visitor), who rendered several songs of the humorously pathetic order. The M.C. was Mr. Chris. Wiseman. Please note—Mr. J. J. Morse, September 29th.—A. J. CASH, Corresponding Secretary.

a speedy and complete recovery may be granted to the President,

I have the honour to subscribe myself, dear Madame,

Yours respectfully and fraternally,

EMMA F. NORTON,
Secretary.

Bootle Spiritualist Children's Progressive Lyceum.

[The above communications from Mr. and Miss Norton did not reach us in time for insertion in our last issue, and the passing on of Mr. McKinley on Saturday last makes them seem out-of-date now; but the feelings of horror at the outrage and of sympathy with Mrs. McKinley will be shared by our readers in all parts of the world, who will also regret that the hope expressed by our Bootle friends that the sufferer might be restored has not been realised.—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

SOCIETY WORK.

SOUTHALL.—1, MILTON-VILLAS, FEATHERSTONE-ROAD.—On Sunday last a subject chosen by the audience was ably dealt with by Mr. Millard, viz., 'The Eternal God is our Refuge and underneath us are the Everlasting Arms.' A hearty welcome will be given to all friends of religion and reverent free-thought.—E.B.

MERTHYR SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MERTHYR TYDFIL, WALES.—Special services were held on Sunday afternoon and evening last, at the Drill Hall, when Mrs. Clarke, of Nottingham, delivered addresses entitled 'The Great Physician,' and 'The Mariner's Beacon,' in pleasing style. Her clairvoyant descriptions were very minute and instantly recognised. The meetings were well attended.—H.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. John Kinsman, the society's late president, addressed the meeting in his usual thorough manner upon 'The Problem of Existence.' He thought Spiritualism was not an *easy* religion; that the teachings demanded a life of unselfishness and good works here as essential to happiness in the hereafter. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. Ronald Brailey. Mr. J. Neander, of Egypt, will preside.—O. H.

LEICESTER SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, LIBERAL CLUB, LECTURE HALL.—Mrs. M. H. Wallis delivered two excellent discourses upon 'The Creative Power of Thought,' and 'Spiritualism a Force for Good,' to large and appreciative audiences. Mr. H. Clark, in appropriate terms, referred to the sudden passing on of the Mayor, Alderman S. Lennard. A resolution was unanimously passed that a letter of condolence and sympathy should be sent to the bereaved family. On Sunday next, Mr. G. H. Bibbings will deliver addresses at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.—A.O.W.

EAST DULWICH.—5, CLAUDE-VILLAS, GROVE VALE.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Fielder delivered a deeply interesting address upon 'Anarchy: Its Cause and Spiritual Cure,' which was much appreciated by the audience, and provided food for thoughtful minds. A solo, 'Not a Sparrow Falleth,' was ably rendered by Mrs. Macaulay. At the after-circle Mrs. Fairclough Smith's ministrations were spiritual and uplifting. Very impressive prayers were given for the late President and his sorrowing family, the poor misguided criminal not being forgotten. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Ray will deliver an address.—A. H. S.

THE SPIRIT FELLOWSHIP, ATHENÆUM HALL, 73, TOTTENHAM COURT-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. John C. Kenworthy delivered the first of a series of lectures dealing with social and religious questions in the light of Spiritualism; it was entitled, 'The Christian Religion and the Churches.' The speaker emphasised the attitude of the great founder of that religion towards social questions, and the revealings of the spirit world, as compared with that of the churches to-day. There was a good attendance. On Sunday next the subject will be, 'The Need of To-day.'—GEORGE COLE, 27, Cheap-side, E.C.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Roberts gave an excellent address on 'Spirit Life Here and Hereafter,' claiming that what will elevate us must proceed from us; and upon the fidelity with which we do our duty here will depend the quality of our garment in spirit life, and she pleaded for more love to brighten life here. Mr. Boddington also made a few remarks. Mr. Roberts presided. On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 3.30 p.m., meetings in Battersea Park and on Clapham Common; at 7 p.m., Special Harvest Thanksgiving Service; speakers, Mrs. Boddington and Mr. Adams. Special hymns by the choir. On Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope; and on Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., a public séance will be held.—YULE.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, DR. FLOOD'S SCHOOL, HIGH-ROAD, SOUTH TOTTENHAM (NEAR SEVEN SISTERS CORNER).—On Sunday last Mr. E. Whyte delivered an address on 'Spiritualism: What Good is it?' in his usual eloquent style. His demonstrations of the good effect that the knowledge of Spiritualism has on man, were well-chosen and forcibly put. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. Whyte will speak on 'The Religion of the Twentieth Century.'—V. KNAUN, Assistant Secretary.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW ROAD, W.—On Sunday last there was a crowded audience to listen to Mrs. H. Boddington, of the Battersea Society. She read one of Gerald Massey's poems, and delivered an eloquent address on 'Our Gifts Spiritual,' namely, trance and inspirational speaking, healing, and clairvoyance, and the blessing to mankind if used aright, which called forth much approval. A large after-circle was also held. On Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Roberts, of Manor Park, 'LIGHT' sold.—W. C.

DUNDEE SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday, September 8th, the audience attending our evening meeting was the largest we have yet had. The medium was Mrs. Stevenson, of Glasgow, and the address delivered by her in the forenoon on 'Blessed are the Pure in Heart' was as fine homily on those words as anyone could desire. In the evening an admirable discourse was eloquently delivered on 'Jesus and Thomas'; it was especially suited for propagandist work. In her clairvoyant visions and delineations Mrs. Stevenson was very interesting and successful. She is one of the most welcome of our visitors, and a warm tribute of appreciation of her services to our society was expressed, and also of that done by means of the Pioneer Medium Fund.—JAS. MURRAY, Secretary.

THE LONDON PSYCHIC SOCIETY, STEINWAY HALL, LOWE SEYMOUR-STREET, PORTMAN-SQUARE, W.—The inauguration of this society took place last Sunday evening before a large and appreciative audience. The choir, under the direction of Mr. C. W. Johnson, rendered some effective music. Madame Antoinette Sterling kindly volunteered, in memory of President McKinley, to sing 'The Lord is my Shepherd,' which she rendered grandly. Before delivering the opening address, Madame Florence Montague referred most touchingly and beautifully to the life and death of the late President of the United States, after which she set forth the aims and objects of the London Psychic Society. Her discourse was upon 'Law and its Fulfilment,' which she treated in a masterly manner, and many in the audience were deeply and visibly affected. On Sunday next Mr. George Spriggs will occupy the platform, in conjunction with Madame Florence Montague, at 7 for 7.30 p.m.—E. M. JACKSON, Hon. Sec.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last seventeen questions concerning Spiritualism were ably and lucidly answered by Mr. E. W. Wallis at the rooms. The large audience keenly appreciated the intellectual treat provided, which was preceded by the reading of a poem 'Nearer to Thee' (Lizzie Doten), by Mr. Wallis, and a solo, 'The Promise of Life,' sung very effectively by Miss Laws Caney, whose kindly musical assistance was highly valued. A resolution expressing deepest sympathy with Mrs. McKinley was proposed by Mr. Wallis and seconded by the chairman, Mr. J. Edwards, vice-president. It was an impressive sight when the audience rose *en masse*, and in sorrowful silence registered their heartfelt sympathy with Mrs. McKinley, and their sincere regard for her illustrious husband, 'deploring the dastardly deed which has robbed America of one of her ablest sons, and the world of a true nobleman.' On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. A. Peters will give clairvoyance; doors open at 6.30 p.m.—S. J. WATTS, 20, Hyde Park-mansions, W.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON, N.—On Sunday last Mr. A. V. Peters gave a good address and successful clairvoyance as usual. A very full attendance was presided over by Mr. H. Belstead, who made sympathetic reference to the recent loss sustained by America. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis will speak on 'Spiritualism—an Aid to the Religious Life.' Our social on the 11th inst. was a real success. All our visitors, including Mr. J. J. Morse, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, Mr. William Beasley (President of Tottenham), Mr. John Kinsman (Editor of 'Psyche'), Mr. S. J. Watts (Marylebone), and Mr. O. Hudson (Hackney Society), seemed to enjoy themselves. Songs were given by Madame Nellie Cope, Mr. Wallis, Mr. G. B. Bunn, and other friends; recitations by Miss K. M. Tempest (always read, and always welcome). Miss L. M. Firth contributed sparkling pianoforte solo, and Mr. Davehaw a banjo selection. Much amusement was caused by Mr. Hawksbush (a visitor), who rendered several songs of the humorous pathetic order. The M.C. was Mr. Chris. Wiseman. Please note.—Mr. J. J. Morse, September 29th.—A. J. CASN, Corresponding Secretary.