

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,083.—VOL. XXI. [Registered as] SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1901. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Some months ago we received from 'The Sunflower Publishing Company' (Lily Dale, N.Y., U.S.A.) a book by John K. Wilson, 'a member of the Pennsylvania Bar,' on 'Death; the meaning and result.' It extends to 559 pages, and gives a record of spirit-experiences so marvellous that we hesitated to notice the book until we had ascertained something about the writer of it. The following is from one of our most reliable correspondents in America:—

I have yours to hand inquiring as to the standing of J. K. Wilson, author of the book 'Death: The Meaning and Result.' I have known Mr. Wilson for some years as a lawyer in Bradford, Pa. I know nothing of his psychic powers, and did not dream that he was a medium in any sense until his book appeared. . . . I have read a review of the work in the columns of the 'Sunflower,' from the pen of our gifted brother, Moses Hull. He speaks guardedly, yet kindly, of the work, and many others who have read it pronounce it of value to them. The manifestations cannot be avouched for by me. I simply know Mr. Wilson stood high as a citizen and was looked upon as a man of truth by all who knew him in the years of my intimate acquaintance with him at Cassadaga Camp, N.Y. I have known him some ten years or more. It is easier for me to avouch for him than it is for the wonderful phenomena that his book seems to present to the world.

As to the book, we will only say that it is, in every way, intensely arresting: and, certainly, if it is truthful, it goes to the front rank as a demonstration of spirit-communion: though it is not by any means a pleasant revealing of what goes on beyond the veil. The following, from a circular which accompanies the book, indicates the manner of its production:—

A REMARKABLE ACCOUNT OF PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES OCCURRING IN THE OFFICE OF A WELL-KNOWN MEMBER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA BAR.

In the privacy of his own office, with the aid of a few friends, a series of the most remarkable phenomena of modern times took place. Friends, long since mourned as dead, returned and were plainly seen by the clairvoyant members of the party, and by the aid of an ordinary telegraph instrument they gave messages, identifying themselves beyond possible doubt, and proving conclusively that death is only the stepping-stone to a higher life in which all of the faculties are more strongly alert than in this life.

The telegraph instrument through which it came was an ordinary Morse instrument, and Morse characters were used. It was set upon a common table and at all times in plain view of those present. Two gas jets lighted the room in which the manifestations took place.

'The Progressive Thinker' prints a notable Address by Mrs. Cora Richmond on the inner meaning of Spiritualism.

The whole of it is good, but the following may suffice to indicate its drift:—

There never was a better announcement than that which Spiritualism made; there never was a better statement of the ground covered than has been made in the last fifty years; there never was a better philosophy; never a better opportunity for manifesting the truths and facts connected with that philosophy in the higher system of ethics, in the broader range of investigation, in anything that more fully and distinctly declares the great proposition of the immortality of the soul, than in Spiritualism.

Fifty years have passed; many of the first exponents of Spiritualism, who were then in middle life, have passed to the life beyond. Much of their ethics, much of the statements of their investigations, much of the broad philosophy which they inculcated has been allowed to pass out of sight. The whole ground of Spiritualism and its all-inclusiveness has been too much narrowed down to the one point, the communion between the two states of existence, the life on earth and the life beyond death. That one fact at last has come to be what most Spiritualists accept as Spiritualism. While that fact is the keynote to the whole theme, while it is the key that unlocks the door to the whole realm, it is only the key and not the door or the realm itself. If spirits live in a state beyond the change called death, it means unending life, and to a logical mind and an intuitive mind it means immortality, which is before as well as after.

If the open door of communion between the two states means anything, it means that you shall know all that relates to the human spirit here and now, so that human life may be pervaded, strengthened, and uplifted by this knowledge. Not only that you shall receive messages of comfort and possibly some advice from your spirit friends, but that that comfort and advice shall be to the end of unfolding the spiritual nature that is within you, each and all.

Mrs. Richmond then went on to comment upon Dr. A. R. Wallace's Paper given at the International Congress held in London in 1898, describing it as 'one of the broadest and most humanitarian Papers' she ever heard. Opinions varied as to the soundness of that Paper, but we fully agree with Mrs. Richmond's main thought, that our Spiritualism must land us in conclusions respecting life, and influence us in all our judgments concerning our social relations and outlooks.

We have just read, with much profit, a Paper by the Rev. R. W. Corbet, M.A., on 'Redemption. Certain features of experience in the process' (Elliot Stock). Delicate in expression, we yet find it strong in thought, with a good grip upon a subtle central idea.

With Mr. Corbet, 'Redemption' is an entirely spiritual process, or, rather, it is the evolution of the self into its proper spiritual condition of being. The truly human condition, in his judgment, is not the animal condition. 'The animal nature is a lower order of nature through which, and out of the limitations of which, the human being has to pass in order to reach to the human or spiritual order of existence.'

The redeemed man 'has found release from the death of a selfish individuality, and has entered into the vision and experience of the life of the universal unity into which he now longs to be actually and fully embodied.' This is the real New Birth,—the coming into life and power of the true self. To such an one comes 'the gradual disclosure of

self-sacrificing love as the spirit of the universe'; a consciousness of 'the wondrous harmony of inter-relationship which subsists between all the numberless centres of self-sacrificing activity in this ocean of love,' and 'communion with the Spirit of the Life of the universe.'

To him who is aided in this by Christ, and is therefore a Christian, Christ is no longer 'a pattern which, by strenuous effort, we are called upon to imitate and reproduce,' but he is the representative, a specimen, so to speak, of the very selfhood of each one of us. He bears witness to the Christ in us, and 'in his life-history we see the inner life-history of every human being working out its eternal destiny.' So, in redemption, 'we find the life that satisfies the human heart, and we enter into the Home of our Sonship.'

This is a bare indication of the drift of this thoughtful Paper; but every sentence of it will repay close study.

At the close of the great Onset camp meeting in America, Dr. G. A. Fuller gave an Address on 'The things that remain.' In his opinion the things that remain, as creeds and rituals one by one fade away, are the things to which Spiritualism bears witness. He said:—

Spiritualism has stood the test of the ages. It is the oldest religion that stands in the world. All through the history of Egypt you will find this thought of Spiritualism. Spiritualism is the one personal thing of all religions of the world, not on account of its divinity, but its humanity. We have a human side of religion as well as a divine side, and the human is the best side to me. . . . I believe it is better for every man, woman and child to discuss reform than God.

The thought here may have a touch of discomfort in it, but it will repay hospitality. As a matter of fact, it is the human side of Religion which keeps it alive and binds man to it. Even God had to become 'incarnate,' or Christendom had to think so, before there could be a Christendom. The controversy about God has led to little except division and confusion: but the human longing for improvement and for kindness has been the true saviour of the world.

'The Banner of Light,' which reports a summary of Dr. Fuller's Address, says wisely and tenderly:—

Love is the healing power that will cure a sin-sick world. Let us then make Spiritualism stand for the highest and purest love from whose light comfort will be radiated to all who are now groping in sorrow's night. Spiritualists should be the rays of that light to carry consolation to the sorrowing everywhere.

We are doubtful about many things, but this *must* be right;—this *must* be the abiding Gospel.

A late reference, in 'LIGHT' (page 451), to the appearance of fruit at a séance, contained the following:—

QUESTION: Did the spirits steal the fruit?

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

Wouldn't he? We know many an antagonist who would, if he could be persuaded that spirits brought the fruit at all.

But this suggests a truly interesting point which we have never seen better raised than in a quotation from a letter by Mrs. Lynn Linton respecting Bank of England notes to the value of £500 said to have been supplied to Dr. Ashburner 'by the spirits.' 'By the spirits' was, we presume, Dr. Ashburner's explanation, though the story says—a man on a black horse. If they came from the spirits, asks Mrs. Linton, were they forged or stolen? But the question might be asked of many things said to be brought by 'the spirits.' Made or stolen? is a question that is worth asking and pushing home.

Not only did the savants at the late meetings of the British Association go slowly, confessing their ignorance, but the greatest of them actually harked back, to find wisdom in the past. The famous Lord Kelvin, speaking in the Mathematical and Physical Science Section, said, hypothetically:—

We must assume that, to explain the phenomena of light, electricity and magnetism, it follows that if it extended through all space and was outside the law of gravitation, ether was truly imponderable. I remember the contempt and self-complacent compassion with which sixty years ago—I myself, I am afraid—and most of the teachers of that time looked upon the ideas of the elderly people who went before us, who spoke of the imponderabilities. I fear that in this, as in a great many other things in science, we have to hark back to the dark ages of the fifty, sixty, or one hundred years ago, and that we must admit that there is something which we could not refuse to call matter, and which was not subject to the Newtonian law of gravitation.

That is an important statement, but, with all deference, we very much doubt whether we ought to call the hypothetical ether 'matter.' It does not behave like it. It, in fact, behaves a good deal more like 'a disembodied spirit.'

Reviewing the whole of the proceedings of the late Peace Congress, we are disposed to think that M. Arnaud's resolution best hit the mark. It is truly *multum in parvo*:—

Considering that morality is one and universal, and that it forbids all hate, all violence, and all injustice between man and man, and that it enjoins or commands fraternity and love, the Congress believes that persistent efforts should be made to induce Governments and citizens of all States to conform with the great moral law, and therefore declare themselves against war and militarism; and the Congress appeals to all the educators of all countries, and all races, and all beliefs.

We have just come across the following, quoted from the Akron (O.) 'Democrat' (U.S.). It is, of course, only a story on the wing, but it is worth noting:—

Joseph Pine, of Bellefontaine, Ohio, has a clock which has not been running for three years. On Saturday afternoon it struck one, and that evening word came that a relative of Mrs. Pine died on Saturday afternoon at one o'clock, in Pennsylvania. The family was much impressed by the unusual happening.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A CONVERSAZIONE

Of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the Banqueting Room, St. James's Hall, Regent-street, on Thursday evening, October 24th, at 7 p.m.

At Eight o'clock precisely an Address will be given by

DR. WASHINGTON SULLIVAN

ON

'A SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF NATURE.'

Music, Social Intercourse, and Refreshments
DURING THE EVENING.

Admission will be by ticket only. Two tickets will be sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 2s. each.

Applications for extra tickets must be accompanied by remittance (Postal Order preferred), addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

In accordance with Rule XV. of the Articles of Association, the subscriptions of Members and Associates elected after October 1st will be taken as for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1902.

OLD MEMORIES.

SERJEANT COX AND PSYCHIC FORCE.

BY JAMES ROBERTSON.

I recently came across a large bundle of old tracts and magazines, which had passed out of my sight for several years, and which, on my again perusing them, gave me a feeling like that of visiting some old spot dear to memory. They recalled to mind, with great force, the red-letter period in my life's history, when, out from the previous darkness, spiritual phenomena burst upon me, transforming much of my mental furniture, and setting aflame within me a light which is never likely to fade. Spiritualism reaches some by easy and quiet stages; to me it came with almost the force of an earthquake. The one day, I felt assured there never had been, nor ever would be given, any proof of a future life, and the next day I knew for all time that indeed there was an open door, through which those gone on could return and convey sweet messages of consolation and instruction. The joy that came to me, after the first few days of sudden shock, has not lessened with time; I felt then as I do now, after some twenty-five years' close contact, that one day Spiritualism will fill the world's soul, and guide the world's helm. When I look at the difficulties some people have had to get hold of satisfactory evidences of the continuity of life, I feel that I was amongst the fortunate ones. Close friends thought I was too easily convinced, but to call myself a doubter after I had been literally flooded with evidences of spirit companionship would have been no proof of strong mental capacity. Whether it was that there was more of objective phenomena twenty-five years ago than now, I can scarcely say, but I seemed to meet it at every step. Much of it came from my own family and from psychics of great force, whose quality I rarely meet with nowadays. The purport of my present writing, however, is not to enter on my early psychical experiences, but to talk of the men and incidents of a past time which have been recalled by the bringing to light of this old collection of spiritual literature.

Many of the names and incidents have sunk out of sight and their story is unknown to the present generation. I had brought to my mind again the fierce warfare which was carried on between Dr. Carpenter with his 'unconscious cerebration and unconscious muscular action' theory, and Alfred Russel Wallace, in the pages of 'Fraser's Magazine.' Dr. Carpenter has long gone to the realm where he will have had opportunity to estimate the value of his ideas, while the doughty and much loved champion, Alfred Russel Wallace, is still with us, as full of devotion and love for the cause as ever. Stainton Moses, with his able pen, also wrote some slashing criticism on Dr. Carpenter, in the pages of 'Human Nature,' and which was afterwards published separately. This contains some of his ablest writing, and I hope to cull from it in future papers. The 'Slade' case he also dealt with in similar strong fashion. There is much real wealth scattered up and down this old spiritual literature. Many things were set down which may have seemed of little value at the time, but which have turned out to be of the greatest importance; good seed capable of blessing mankind. Much valuable work, too, was done by John Page Hopps in a little paper 'The Daybreak,' of which a few copies were in my bundle. In these are many fragrant flowers which should be better known, and many pearls which have been trampled under foot, but which one day the human race will gather up, even the dust of them, and wear as ornaments. What luminous thought, too, there was in some of the writings of J. W. Jackson, and in Dr. Peebles' 'Boston Lectures,' which many years since the doctor told me were bits of real inspiration and which he considered contained the best things he had ever been privileged to say. There is much which has been laid at the feet of humanity, of sweet and blessed influence, about which the present generation of Spiritualists knows little, and it has struck me that it might be servicable to set down again in a few chapters some of the incidents or some of the brilliant thoughts which I have run across in association with the earlier stages of the movement.

Twenty-five years ago no name was more prominent in connection with Spiritualism than that of Serjeant Cox, an eloquent lawyer, an Assistant Judge of Middlesex, and the proprietor of several newspapers, but whose thoughts were chiefly devoted to psychological matters. He was one of the Committee of the Dialectical Society, and did good work in vouching for the reality of spiritual phenomena, without calling himself a Spiritualist. He sat often with Home, with Stainton Moses, with Mrs. Everitt, and all the notable instruments, and invariably got striking manifestations of psychic power. He wrote and published much, but he did not follow the more modest methods of Sir William Crookes, and never reached the settled convictions of Alfred Russel Wallace, from which that eminent man has never faltered; but though he admitted as boldly as these the reality of the phenomena, all were to him but the manifestations of a force which dwelt in the organism of the individual and which he called 'psychic force.' To attest the validity of the phenomena was something; it did more to help the 'good time coming' than to stave it off. Amongst the very first things I read, within a few days after I had touched the subject, were his two volumes, 'What am I?' I was surprised that Serjeant Cox, after the striking experiences he had enjoyed, through his friend W. Stainton Moses, and others, was contented with his theory of 'psychic force' as being a satisfactory explanation of their origin. Few of his readers could rest where he did, and many of them, no doubt, were led by his clear setting forth of the facts to accept the spiritual explanation of them. He said that Mr. J. J. Morse when in the trance condition was as wise as Plato and could converse on the profoundest of topics with wondrous insight, while the normal man had only very moderate intellectual power. But the assertions of the controlling spirit whom we have known for so long, made no impression, so far as his published statements are concerned; the words 'psychic force' would account for it all! The Spiritualists, he said, had exercised considerable ingenuity in moulding their theory to fit the facts! In his 'Spiritualism Answered by Science,' written after years of experience, the same dominating idea controlled him, and it seemed impossible, in spite of all the wonderful phenomena of D. D. Home, or the slate writing of Dr. Slade, to move him from his position. It is difficult to doubt his sincerity, though it has been said by those who knew him that he spoke at sittings to the 'dear spirits,' but when he got the pen in his hand it all resolved itself into the product of the psychic force which was resident in the medium, and that the more astounding the manifestations the greater the abundance of psychic force. He claimed that the recognition of his theory was sufficient in itself to shake the foundations of materialism, and would restore the faith in the existence of the soul which science had shaken. He admitted, however, that there was nothing impossible in the claims of Spiritualism, that it might be, as Milton said, that:—

'Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
Unseen, both when we sleep and when we wake.'

But for him the facts presented no such evidences as Spiritualists claimed. What gave to other minds of equal intelligence the evidence of spirit return, brought to him no such conclusion. Like Sir David Brewster, spirit was the last thing he would give into. But our pyramid has stood, however, and all the assaults of Psychic Force, Psychical Research, and Theosophy have not cracked a single stone; every block is sound and the foundations are secure. Many of the assertions made by Serjeant Cox are out of harmony with what experience has given us. He asserted that the ideas conveyed were those of the psychic; that for instance in the presence of Methodist psychics the communications were always Methodist; so with Roman Catholic, Unitarian, &c. Again, if the psychic was ill-informed on matters of fact or science, the alleged spirit messages exhibited the same errors. The seed of truth does not come up very quickly at times, but it comes up at last. If it does not grow very swiftly at first, it grows strong, and all investigators into the subject must have come across evidences which entirely upset the assertions of the learned Serjeant. Were similar statements made to-day they would be rebutted from many quarters. I have sat with mediums who held the most positive convic-

tions on certain theological questions, and whom no amount of argument could affect, but who on becoming controlled by spirit friends have given utterance to sentiments entirely foreign to their normal thought.

It has been my misfortune to lose the help of many promising psychics who have withdrawn from the subject with fear when I have placed before them the ideas they gave forth in the trance state, believing that the origin of such teachings must be Satanic. The records of Spiritualism are filled with similar statements. That marvellous literary phenomenon, Andrew Jackson Davis, had no information, true or false, regarding the matters set forth in 'Nature's Divine Revelation,' and a study of his life's story as given in the 'Magic Staff' is a complete answer to such statements. Of all mediums, I know David Duguid as closely as anyone can, and I know few men of less literary taste; he never was a reader of books, and yet there is set down in those published volumes, 'Hafed' and 'Hermes,' ideas which the normal man could not have given though he had whole libraries at his disposal. All bear evidence of an intelligence far removed from that of the normal man. Stainton Moses, a man quite the reverse of David Duguid in education and culture, pointedly says, in the introduction to 'Spirit Teachings,' that the bulk of the ideas which came through his pen were alien to his own opinions; were in the main opposed to his settled convictions; and that on several occasions, information, clear, precise, and definite in form, susceptible of verification, and always exact, was conveyed to him. The experiences of Madame d'Esperance tell a similar story to those of David Duguid. The psychic knew nothing of science, and yet her hand wrote out, under the influence of one who claimed to have been a student in earth life, discourses on light, heat, electricity, acoustics, music, harmonics, and other scholarly subjects. Alderman Barkas, himself a man of wide culture, took delight in showing those writings, which were marvellous not only for their lucid setting but for their masterly treatment of the questions under consideration. To Madame d'Esperance the words had no more meaning than if they had been couched in Hebrew. Our evidence regarding this aspect of the subject has been considerably enlarged since the days of Serjeant Cox. Hudson Tuttle, the American farmer and philosopher, has given to the world many sublime ideas. 'The Arcana of Nature' has been applauded by the highest intellects and he has been quoted as an authority in many quarters by those who would laugh at Spiritualism. And yet this man, who knows something of himself surely, calls himself an amanuensis, and avers that his sole claim to authorship is that he has carefully and conscientiously given the impressions as they were given to him by his teachers, the invisible spirits.

With such evidences as Spiritualism has placed before the world we can be sure that our thought will triumph. As the sun struggles with the darkness of the dawn, and triumphs over the clouds, so shall the spiritual sun triumph over the darkness and ignorance of man, and the spirits here below will co-work with the angels above, and bring forth many treasures. Had Spiritualism been so easily explained by the psychic force theory as Serjeant Cox imagined, it would long ago have fallen from man's mind and been placed in the limbo of forgetfulness. But all the time the voices keep sounding and the ear becomes tuned to the heavenly harmonies. We have done with theory and doubt; we know that the sojourners in that other state who creep close to our hearts and pour upon us continuous blessings, are working with us and through us, transforming the thought of the age, and showing a nobler revelation than we ever had of the workings of the Master Spirit of life. The stricken heart has found a balm; the cord which we thought had been sundered still holds us to those we loved; so that we walk with patience and hope in the valley, knowing for a certainty that amongst the things which have ceased to be doubtful, is the good providence of God and the reality of the future life.

'The spirits of the loved and the departed
Are with us, and they tell us of the sky—
A rest for the bereaved and broken-hearted—
A house not made with hands, a home on high.'

—LONGFELLOW.

SPIRITISTIC PHENOMENA AND HUMAN SPEECH.

An interesting paper, so headed, by Dr. Mikulcie, of Agram, appears in 'Psychische Studien.' It commences with a mention of the experiments of Sir William Crookes, who, says the writer: 'From a *Crookes-Saul* became a *Crookes-Paul*.' He was, however, never able to establish the identity of any communicating intelligence, and although he was quite convinced of the existence of strange invisible intelligences, who communicate with mortals through mediums, he did not consider that we actually know the origin or nature of these beings.

The object of the writer is to prove, from the evidence of their speech and writing, that these 'intelligences' are the spirits of human beings, who have formerly lived on this planet—as they assert themselves to be; and a few quotations from this rational and sensible article will, I hope, not be out of place or unacceptable:—

'In any case, these intelligences must be well versed in thought-reading, since they can give appropriate answers to questions put mentally. If they wish to interpret the medium's thoughts they can do so directly, and it is clear that in this case they do not require the knowledge of human language; but when they wish to speak their own thoughts through a medium it is quite another thing; it all depends on how the intercourse between the intelligence and the medium is conducted.'

The Doctor then speaks of the case in which, either by trance-speaking or writing, the thoughts of the intelligence are produced by the medium in his own words or writing, when, he says, it is not necessary for the strange intelligence to be acquainted with earthly languages:—

'But in practice things do not usually go so smoothly. It often happens that the medium writes in a handwriting quite different from his own, or speaks in a different voice; or, when the handwriting and voice are those of the medium, the substance of the communication is unknown to either the medium or the sitters; and in this case we must own that the unknown intelligence takes possession of the medium's powers of speech or writing.'

'In the second case, when the communications are in an unknown language, although given in the handwriting or voice of the medium, it is not possible to imagine that the intelligences should have transferred its thoughts to the spirit of the medium, to be reproduced by the latter in an unknown language; we must rather imagine that the possession of the vocal organs or writing power of the medium is not so complete as in the first instance. . . . One thing is certain—that the intelligence is acquainted with earthly human language both in speaking and writing. . . . From what source, then, has the intelligence acquired his knowledge? for, "what one has not learnt, one does not know"—otherwise these intelligences would be omniscient; and that they are not so will soon be apparent.'

The writer then gives several examples of various methods of communication. The first is that of a medium of Professor Flournoy, of Geneva, when the intelligence spoke in a perfectly unknown language, interspersed with a little Sanscrit and Arabic.

The second is an account (from 'Psychische Studien') of a Polish medium, whose control spoke only in Russian. The three next cases are taken from Mr. A. Aksakoff's work, 'Animism and Spiritism,' the first of which speaks of an intelligence who was acquainted with no human language, and could only explain himself through the medium by the deaf and dumb signs. Another is that of a medium who once wrote in a language (French) with which he was quite unacquainted; while the concluding example is that of a Mr. Turner, who fell into a trance state in which he begged in *broken English* to speak with a French person, with whom he then talked in *fluent French*, though he had little knowledge of this language in his waking state:—

'These phenomena are nothing new. In American circles, intelligences often manifest who entertain sitters with the most shockingly bad English.'

'In the first and second of these cases the operating intelligence pays no attention to the language in general use by the circle. In the third the intelligence can make use of no earthly language. In the fourth the handwriting is altered, and the language used a foreign one; and in the last, the intelligence speaks broken English.'

'To what conclusion can we come in considering these cases? Evidently that these strange intelligences, in their

present state, are not in a position to acquire human languages either in speaking or writing; otherwise, in the first and second cases the intelligence would have taken the trouble to acquire the language understood by the sitters. In the third case, the intelligence would certainly have learnt some earthly language to avoid the trouble of expressing himself through the medium's gestures. In the fourth case, it would surely have been easier for him to express his thoughts in a language which the medium understood; while in the final case the intelligence might have taken pains to perfect himself in English.

'From the above cited examples it is evident that the intelligences are acquainted with earthly languages, as they make use of them to express their thoughts; since, however, they cannot learn these languages in their present state, we cannot do otherwise than believe that they have learnt them while in a former condition, and this condition can be no other than the earthly one.'

'It follows from this that in cases where the medium writes in a handwriting differing from his own, or speaks in a different voice, as well as in those when, although the handwriting and voice are his own, the language written or spoken—although an earthly one—is unknown to either himself or the sitters, we are justified in believing that the manifesting intelligence was formerly an inhabitant of the planet earth, and lived upon it in bodily form just as we do ourselves.'

M. T.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE.

I desire cordially to thank you for inserting my recent letters, and also for the many kind references you have made to my work in Australia, and to the prospect of my speedy return to London. In justice to my friends at the Antipodes I must request you to correct a partial error in your kindly mention of the presentation made to me in Sydney in your issue dated July 13th, 1901. A handsome gold chain and double triangle were presented to me in Adelaide, and an opal scarf-pin and kangaroo sleeve buttons in Sydney. The friends in Adelaide have been almost extravagantly generous, and they are very much disturbed because I cannot return to them for a three or six months' steady engagement prior to my departure from Australia. I feel strongly that my work now lies again in England, and it is a historic fact that my first really public appearance on the lecture platform was in London, and took place on March 4th, 1877, under the presidency of Mr. James Burns, in Doughty Hall, which was the scene of so much spiritual activity in the days of my childhood.

Several remarkable prophecies concerning my career have been fulfilled during the past twenty-five years. When I first appeared before the public at sixteen years of age, predictions were made through my own lips that I should travel very extensively, and that the beginning of the twentieth century would find me in the Southern Hemisphere. The prophecy was also made that on the twenty-fifth anniversary of my lecture in London, I should again be speaking in the British metropolis, after having almost completed the circuit of the globe. It is always a mystery how future events can be accurately foretold; all I know is that events have often been shown to me in very precise detail, and whenever I have questioned my unseen teachers they have invariably responded to the effect that a scroll of destiny was being unwound, and that the unwinding was in the psychic realm prior to physical ultimatum. I have questioned them concerning the influence of our own conduct on our destiny, and they have assured me that health and happiness can be secured by our own wise compliance with the requirements of universal order, so that no matter where our path through life may lead us our own condition is the result of the wisdom or folly of our transactions. I could write volumes on my experiences, illustrating the above great general teaching, but I must reserve all such effusions for occasions when I am importuned to give to the world some record of my life. At present, I am bidding farewell to many kind and true friends in Australia, from whom I am sorry to part, even though I feel distinctly called back to England, especially to London, where I always feel more thoroughly at home than anywhere else. I expect a brief but very successful season in Brisbane, where the gentleman who is managing my lectures is a highly enterprising young fellow, who has only just reached his twenty-first birthday. I was detained in Sydney and Melbourne a month longer than I expected, as

the Victorian Association of Spiritualists and the Lyceum in Melbourne insisted upon my returning there for a farewell visit, and the Unitarians in Sydney importuned me to take their vacant pulpit.

There is no lack of opportunity for work in Australia, and were it not for my very strong impulse to return to London I should certainly resign myself for at least two more years to work in the Southern Hemisphere. I do not think any workers will find the path entirely a smooth road in these rapidly growing Colonies, but there is a wide field for successful effort, and many warm friends are sure to welcome and sustain a faithful worker.

I read with much interest your highly suggestive comments upon the somewhat doleful utterances of the Boston 'Banner of Light' upon the decline of societies in America. My own experience has always been that discords and limitations have hampered successful organised effort, but as people come to see a better way of working together, I am convinced that these bickerings will cease. I have been most kindly and generously treated by numerous societies in different parts of the world, but in places where disunion and apathy have sapped the vitality of existing organisations, I have found that well-conducted meetings under non-partisan auspices have drawn by far the largest audiences, and afforded opportunity for reaching an influential section of the general public, who may have their own local reasons for standing aloof from certain fellowships where their convictions are not fully represented. I am in full sympathy with societary work, but I maintain that there is outside work to be done also. The next great step will be the unification of the central truth of Spiritualism with all the reasonable claims of Mental Science. Thus, if the work of societies on the old plan is practically over, it is only because new light is streaming in from the ever-opening heavens, and the new century is calling for a broader platform and a higher view of life than could be taken in the days departed. I am thoroughly optimistic, and in all my travels see abundant reason for encouraging the brightest hopes for days to come.

As I have already been permitted through your courtesy to state, I hope to be in London not later than Sunday, December 15th. All engagements made for me through Mrs. Bell-Lewis, at whose house, 99, Gower-street, W.C., I again expect to establish my headquarters, I shall consider myself in honour pledged to fulfil.

W. J. COLVILLE.

4, Norwich-chambers,
Hunter-street, Sydney,
September 4th, 1901.

A PREMONITION.

'The Naval and Military Record' publishes the following:—

'Among the stokers of the *Cobra* was a son of Sergeant Bridges, of the Bristol Police Force. He was a first-class stoker, and had served on the *Brilliant*, the *Vulture*, and the *Calliope*. On September 14th ult., he wrote from the Marlborough to his parents, and the following remarkable passage occurs in the letter: "I am in the best of health, and am writing to let you know I am leaving the depot on Monday morning at a quarter past six, and going to Newcastle-on-Tyne to bring the torpedo boat destroyer round to Portsmouth, and I expect it will take us about three days. Of course, we are going to Newcastle by train and steam the boat back. And this is where we are chancing our lives in a new boat. *I should not be surprised if we went up with a smash.*" Anyhow, if I don't get over it, I will do the other thing.'

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Several communications already in type are necessarily held over for another issue.

'INQUIRER.'—Please do not use this pseudonym again; so many correspondents employ it that it is difficult to avoid confusion.

'T.D.H.'—The present is a favourable opportunity to join the London Spiritualist Alliance, as your subscription would now be taken as for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1902, and the meetings for the coming season will commence on the 24th inst. See announcement on page 482.

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

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12th, 1901.

Light,

A Journal of Psychological, 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.'

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GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE'S CASE.

We greatly admire and respect Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, and commend to our readers 'The Review of Reviews' notice of him. He has been a faithful pioneer in many good causes: he has had no axe of his own to grind: he has held on his way undaunted. In his time he has rapped at many doors, and tried many paths, but one door he has never cared to approach, and one path he has never tried: and it is indeed strange that a man with so much curiosity and courage should, in regard to these, so utterly have failed.

The remarkable result appears in his odd Paper in 'The Sun,' with its puzzling combination of sense and nonsense, knowledge and ignorance, insight and almost childish flippancy. The Paper is entitled 'The disquieting activity of the dead': but that is only chaff, for he does not believe in any 'activity of the dead,' and he is not at all 'disquieted.' He simply looks over his palings and grins. Quoting Milton:—

Millions of spiritual creatures walk this earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep,

he says:—

The poet knew it or he would not have said it—for Milton was a veracious man. Seeing that since Milton's day countless millions of men have 'walked this earth,' and their multitudinous spirits are all added to those of whom Milton had cognisance, the air must be pretty thick with them now.

And then he goes on grinning. He surmises that Milton's spirits 'must have had fair average dimensions,' and certainly, he says, the more modern spirits 'must have measurable stature and good knuckles, or they could not knock with audibility on the tables they frequent. . . This implies muscular power in spirits.' What folly! Does the lifting of a bar of steel by a magnet imply muscular strength? Does the telegraph rapping imply muscular strength?—especially when the raps are produced through thirty miles of sea, without even a connecting wire. The truth is, we suppose, that Mr. Holyoake is so swathed in his precious old-fashioned Materialism that he cannot apply his new knowledge to his old Aunt Sally: so he shies the stick in the same old way.

But this is not the worst. Trotting out Professor Dewar's experiments in the compression of air, he says:—

It is plain that the spirits in the air must be condensed also, and we might buy Madame Blavatsky in a half-crown jar, and other of her astral acquaintances who may be thronging around her. . . It is not likely that Professor Dewar knows who (whom?) he has condensed. No doubt, if a Spiritualist expert bought a jar he would be able to dis-

tinguish them. Nor is there any doubt that spirits are being condensed, if the rumour be true that spirits who go out rapping are on the decrease in the neighbourhood of Professor Dewar's condensing works. The compression of spirits may be regarded as scientifically proved. There is the air, and the spirits are in it. The air is condensed, and the spirits must be condensed. Q.E.D., as the logicians write.

This undoubtedly gave pleasure to the jaunty gents in the coffee houses and the whisky shops about Fleet-street, but it is melancholy fooling. Need we tell Mr. Holyoake what it is that Professor Dewar compresses? Need we tell him what, even in the surrounding atmosphere, is utterly beyond his power to influence? Mr. Holyoake might as well talk about the compression of the 'rumours' that are 'in the air.' But we will not pursue this folly.

Strange to say, Mr. Holyoake reserves his fooling for the end of his Paper: and that makes it all the more odd, because he begins seriously. He even asks for 'evidence,' and complains of 'the silence of the expositor where he could profitably speak.' But we never remember seeing Mr. Holyoake at any one of our scores of expositions; and, so far as we know, he has never been at a séance, or applied for one of our books. This is strange, because, after all, Mr. Holyoake is not only a good seeker but is also a serious thinker, and sometimes not far from our lines of thought. In this very Paper, he says:—

Nature itself is a mystery, and is full of mysteries, infinite in magnitude as well as infinitesimal in degree, so that if 'The Sun' lasts as many ages as its prototype in solar space, an expert in the inexplicable will be able to fill its columns. No truth-seeker is against the study of mystery. It is a great pursuit. Honest, clear-headed professors of mystery are very useful. All our progress comes through unregarded investigators, who have explained a mystery or reduced it to a process which becomes manageable and fruitful. This is the great way of science. He who has not an open mind for mystery is shut up in darkness. His soul, if he has one, dwells in a cellar. To deride a discovery because it is new, or unexpected, has been the foolishness of all ages.

Our readers, in perusing this, will at once be reminded of our own teaching. In fact, this might have been written by ourselves: and it puzzles us to understand how anyone could write it, and then go off to the nonsense we have quoted. The study of mystery, he says, is 'a great pursuit': 'all our progress comes through unregarded (and derided) investigators'; and 'he who has not an open mind for mystery is shut up in darkness'; 'his soul, if he has one, dwells in a cellar'; and 'the foolishness of all ages' is the deriding of the unexpected or the new. Precisely, Mr. Holyoake! but why go on to earn the darkness, the cellar, and the charge of folly? It is a fact, anyway, that belief in spiritual beings is as old as human history; that this belief has inspired aspiration and action in every age and clime; that it is held to-day, in every civilised country, by tens of thousands of intelligent persons of every rank and creed. These facts demand at least respect, and call for great seriousness and carefulness on the part of those who touch the subject, especially when uninitiated and uninstructed: and, with all respect to our old friend, we tell him honestly that his persiflage about the compression of spiritual beings into jars is not worthy of him. It may please the tenants of the 'Sun's' penny gaff, but that is an audience to which he of all men should not play.

As is usual in these cases, where serious thoughts jostle flimsy trifles, the mind and the emotions find their revenge in inconsistency. Towards the end of his Paper, Mr. Holyoake tells how Dr. Ferguson (who 'traded' the Davenport Brothers) asked him whether it would not give him pleasure to hear from his deceased daughter; to whom he replied, 'It would pain me inexpressibly': and it appears that the pain turned upon the possibility of her 'making incoherent taps on a table leg.' But why say 'table leg'? And why say 'incoherent'? Would his pain have been less if she had made intelligible signals upon a beautiful

specimen of Venetian glass? Mr. Holyoake tells us that it would pain him to have his lost child occupy herself with anything so 'feeble and ignominious.' Why 'feeble'? and why 'ignominious'? If his daughter were in America, and she could signal, through the telegraph, that she was perfectly cured and had met with dear friends, would the little clicks (raps) be 'feeble and ignominious'? And would they give inexpressible pain?

The odd thing here is that, nearer the beginning of his Paper, he says: 'If a mystery be unpleasant or disquieting, as is the conception of people going about the world after their death, it is much better to know the truth than to remain in the peril of ignorance.' That is sensibly said: but what about his inexpressible pain? The real truth is that Mr. Holyoake is only nervously skirmishing with this great subject. He has never faced it, and we are sorry to think that he never will.

SUCCESSFUL MATERIALISATIONS.

I hope you will favour me by reporting in your next issue the result of one of two sêances held at my home on September 22nd and 24th—the other report to follow in a subsequent issue.

The medium was Mrs. Barker, of 30, Nelson-street, Rotherham—an excellent medium considering the short time she has been sitting. As we were not disposed to lay any stringent conditions upon her, she entered the cabinet in her ordinary attire. While we sang an opening hymn and offered an invocation, she passed into the trance condition, and in a very short space of time a 'form' made its appearance by opening the curtain and standing in full view of all the sitters, and then stepping forward was identified by Mrs. Durham as her mother. The second 'form' was Elizabeth, daughter of Mrs. J. Rudge; she had passed on nineteen years ago, being then thirty-three years of age. The third 'form' was a five-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Belk. This 'form' was very strongly developed, and came well into the room and danced to our singing. The fourth was a baby boy of eighteen months, child of the last-named parents. It was charming to see so small a form walking on the floor towards its parents, who readily recognised them as their children. The fifth 'form' was recognised as the sister of Mr. Rushforth; she was the most beautiful form of the evening—a sight we shall never forget. We shall have to refer to this sister in our next letter, as at the following sêance she gave us extra phenomena, proving not only the fact of spirit return, but also of the undoubted materiality of the forms thus presented. The light was sufficient to allow all the sitters to distinguish each other and observe every movement of the cabinet, and the sêance was so regulated by the controls that all the forms materialised were relatives of the sitters, so that the seventeen sitters were completely satisfied by what they saw and heard during the sêance. In a subsequent issue I will give full details of an even more successful sêance, with the signatures of those present.

JOHN DUNN.

17, Park-street,
Wombwell, Barnsley.

Confirmed by RICHARD RUDGE.

TOLSTOY'S THOUGHTS ON DEATH.—'I am feeling better,' said Tolstoy to a recent interviewer at Moscow, says the 'Light of Truth.' 'Between you and me, I would not like to get well again. If I do I promise you to write down the thoughts on life and death—if there is such a thing as death—that have crystallised in my brain during the past weeks while I lay here prostrate, undisturbed, happy. Their upshot is that death is but an incident, an episode in our present existence, while life itself never terminates. Hence death has nothing terrible; it portends only an intermezzo in eternal life. As the slave looks for the liberator so I look for death—look for it any moment, would welcome it under all circumstances. And when it does come, a shout of joy shall arise from my breast like that escaping the mouth of a new-born babe entering upon the phase of life which you and I are now enduring.'

ABOUT HYPNOTISM.

(Continued from page 473.)

VI

For a long time the old method of magnetising remained mixed up with the new. The laying on of hands, in the shape of pressures and of kneadings with the fingers, and the touchings and pointings of a rod of iron or glass were alternated with the passes. The fixation of the eyes was used at first as a convenient way of concentrating the attention of both operator and subject while the passes were being made, and was afterwards found to have a powerful and characteristic effect of its own. The 'chain' and even the *baquet* were not discarded for many years after the discovery of the passes. We find full instructions how to make a *baquet* in Gauthier's elaborate treatise, published in 1845; but as soon as the change of theory was universally accepted, the *baquet* and the chain finally disappeared.

That change of theory was *from the belief* that the crisis and the curative effects were produced by an influx of cosmic magnetism, or the universal agent, mediated by a magnetiser, whose function was to induce, direct, and equilibrate that influx, *to a belief* that the magnetiser himself produced the curative effects, by making changes in the magnetic condition of the patient by his own power, and by imparting to him some of his own 'nervous fluid.' The latter conception made a much more realistic thing of the 'fluid.' The Animal Magnetism of which Mesmer spoke was a variety of the universal magnetism, which acquired characteristic properties when manifesting in, or flowing through, an animal organism, just as the same universal magnetism acquired different properties by manifesting in, or flowing through, a mineral medium; and it is not Mesmer, but the science of his day, that is responsible for the idea that this magnetism is a 'fluid.' It is pretty certain that had the conception of vibrations held possession of the scientific mind in Mesmer's time as completely as it does of the scientific mind of to-day, Mesmer and his school would have attributed the phenomena to *magnetic vibrations* in the universal ether, instead of referring them to a *magnetic fluid*. The idea of a 'fluid,' however, was confirmed, and made more materialistic, when it was found that new and very surprising phenomena were produced by the passes; for the passes suggested an explanation founded on the analogy of the behaviour of liquids, the magnetic fluid being imagined as pouring out of the fingers of the magnetiser, and being absorbed by the subject; and the flame-like appearances that were seen by clairvoyants to proceed from the hands of the operator, and invade the body of the subject, seemed a conclusive confirmation of the fluid theory. We do not, however, hear of Mesmer or his disciples becoming fatigued or depleted by magnetising trees and *baquets*, or by operating on a large number of persons at the same time; whereas, according to the later school, even a powerful magnetiser cannot operate on more than a limited number of subjects in a day without his magnetism becoming exhausted. This newer view of the 'fluid' is as if it were supposed that a magnet, when used to magnetise another piece of iron, imparts its own magnetic fluid to it, and loses its virtue by the operation; or as if a candle which is used to light a number of others, gives away its own flame in the process, and goes out, or nearly so. I shall have occasion to return to this subject, and shall merely say now that *flames are not fluids*; and that the delightfully simple 'fluid theory' leaves a large part of the phenomena unaccounted for. It was that unlucky word 'fluid' that took the Royal Commissioners off the scent; and it still acts as a red herring drawn across our path.

De Puységur soon enlarged his formula of 'Believe and will' into 'Actively will to do good; firmly believe in your own power; and have entire confidence in its use.' This accorded with Deleuse's idea, for Deleuse reversed the order of De Puységur's words, and put it 'Will and believe,' for he thought that if you wish to do good to someone, a belief in your power to do so will follow. Neither De Puységur, who was a pupil of Mesmer, nor Deleuse, who first learned Mesmer's method, ever abandoned the employment of pressures and touchings. Dupotet, who layed more stress

on will, and less on benevolent intentions, relied far more than either De Puységur or Deleuse on the fixation of the eye and the passes; and the method of Lafontaine for inducing the magnetic condition was entirely confined to those 'manœuvres,' except that he established contact with the hands while looking into the eyes of his subject. Deleuse's introduction to Mesmerism was through a magnetic 'chain.' A friend of his had been to visit De Puységur at Busancy, and he went to ask this friend about his experiences. Deleuse took part in a chain at his friend's house and soon fell asleep, and during his sleep he 'talked a great deal, and acted strangely'; and he was much surprised when he woke up to find all the others laughing at him, for he had no recollection of having said or done anything. After that experience, Deleuse could not doubt the reality of Animal Magnetism, and he set about to study and practise it.

The following are Deleuse's instructions for throwing a subject into the mesmeric condition, and they still form the basis of the procedure of most magnetisers, although they are now generally regarded as needlessly complicated and fussy, and are much simplified in practice:—

'Seat your patient as conveniently as possible, and place yourself opposite him, on a seat rather more elevated than his, so as to hold his knees between yours, and to touch his feet with your own. Request him to give himself up, to think of nothing, and not to distract his attention by examining the effects he may experience; to be full of hope and not to be uneasy or alarmed, should the magnetic influence produce in him momentary pains. After having composed yourself, hold his thumbs between your fingers, so that the inside of your thumbs may touch the inside of his, and fix your eyes upon him. You must remain from two to five minutes in this position, or until you feel that your thumbs and his are at the same temperature. This being done, you must withdraw your hands, by moving them outwardly right and left, so that the inward surface be turned outwards, and raise them as high as the head; you must then lay them on both shoulders, and leave them there for about one minute; then bring them down along the arms to the extremity of the fingers, touching slightly all the way. You will repeat this manipulation five or six times, keeping your hands off the body when you raise them. You will then hold your hands above the head for a moment, and draw them down before the face, at a distance of about two inches, as low as the pit of the stomach. Here you will stop again for about two minutes, laying your thumbs on the pit of the stomach, and your fingers under the ribs. You will then slowly come down the body as low as the knees. These manipulations should be repeated during the greater part of the sitting. You will also occasionally come nearer to the patient, so as to lay your hands behind his shoulders, and bring them slowly down the spine, and thence over the hips and along the thighs, down to the knees or to the feet. When you wish to bring the sitting to a close, you must take care to draw the magnetic fluid to the extremities of the hands and feet, by lengthening your line of motion beyond these extremities, each time shaking your fingers. Lastly, you will make before the face, and even before the breast, a few transverse manipulations at a distance of three or four inches.'

During the years from 1815 to 1820, the Governments of several European countries had sent accredited representatives to France to study the new method of curing disease, and as a consequence, Animal Magnetism had been introduced into some of the hospitals of Germany, Austria, Russia, Belgium, Holland and Switzerland: and laws had been passed in all those countries making the practice of Mesmerism a monopoly of medical men. But the magnetisers of the new school threw everything into confusion by decrying the crises, and doing away with the *baquets*, the chains, and the pressures and pointings, on which the old school relied. A crisis, and the cure that followed it, had to be recognised as real things the moment they ceased to be ignored; and all over Europe at that time, the crises brought on by the magnetisers, and the resulting cures, were becoming more and more fully accepted as actualities. The disciples of Mesmer maintained that the best proof of the reality of Animal Magnetism was the cure of disease; but a new kind of proof was now offered by the 'Experimentalists,' namely, the production of anesthesia, clairvoyance and trance, which, after all, were merely the symptoms that showed themselves during the process of cure, not the really important thing, the cure itself. A patient in coma or in

convulsions was not an attractive object except to medical experts; but a clairvoyant, who told what people were saying or doing a mile away, had an interest for everyone. So the doctors found that people would no longer contentedly accept their off-hand verdict that the whole thing was nothing but 'imagination,' and they had to wake up, and to meet this new curiosity on the part of the public. This the doctors did by declaring the new phenomena to be all simulation, and by setting to work to expose the 'fraud.' The means they adopted to this end was the infliction of pain, too severe to be endured without some sign of suffering by a person who was shamming. Mesmer spoke of 'the fanaticism of incredulity' with which he had met, but these new 'tests' look more like the fanaticism of imbecility and brutality—rather startling in members of a profession which seeks credit for more than the average intelligence and benevolence. It was the habit to embody the account of these 'tests' in a *procès verbal*, and here are a few instances, which are quoted by Dupotet; who, indeed, thought it his duty to his science to be himself the operator in several similar cases:—

'I, the undersigned, certify that on January 8th, 1821, at the request of Dr. Récamier, I put into magnetic sleep the woman Lise Leroi, lying in bed No. 22, in the ward St. Agnes. M. Récamier had previously threatened that he would apply a moxa to her person if she allowed herself to fall asleep. I, Robouam, then, much against her will, caused the patient to fall into magnetic sleep, during which M. Gilbert burned agaric under her nostrils, and this nauseous smell produced no perceptible effect; that afterwards M. Récamier himself applied moxa on the epigastric region (pit of the stomach), which produced an eschar of fifteen lines in length and nine in breadth; that during the operation the patient did not show the least symptom of suffering, either by cries, gestures, or variation of pulse; that she remained in a state of perfect insensibility, and that on awakening from the magnetic sleep she showed signs of suffering great pain. MM. Gilbert Créqui, &c., were present at this séance.

'(Signed) ROBOUAM, Docteur-Médecin.'

By 'moxa' is meant the direct application of fire to the flesh, a 'test' frequently applied, and which is thus described:—

'The down of the mugwort (*artemesia chinensis*), hemp, flax, or any combustible substance, being rolled into a cylindrical form, is lighted, and the point of the flame, by means of a small canula or blow-pipe, directed on the part.'

In another *procès verbal*, the doctors say that they all shouted at the same moment in the ears of Catherine Samson, 'a girl of much natural timidity,' and as this did not startle her, they 'plucked out the hair of her head by the roots, but could detect no sign of sensation.' In another case, someone fired off a pistol so close to the patient's ear that her skin was burned, but she did not notice it, although the sudden noise caused some ladies who were present to faint. In another case, the operating doctor requested everyone to provide himself with a pin, all of which (fifty or sixty) were thrust into various parts of the patient's body at the same moment, without effect. In the 'Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences,' a Dr. Sauvage-de-la-Croix (appropriate name!) relates how he tortured a sleeping girl; not that he doubted the genuineness of the sleep himself, but, as he says, 'considering that I could never venture to affirm it unless I applied myself to some experimental tests.' He relates:—

'As the girl had her eyes open, I thought that simulation, if there were any, could not withstand a violent slap in the face; but this experiment, and a repetition of it, did not make her move a single muscle of her face, it did not even interrupt the thread of her discourse. I tried another experiment, which was to dart my finger right against her eyeballs, and to hold a lighted candle so close against her eyelids as to burn the eyelashes, but she did not so much as wink. . . . lastly, I put into her eyes and mouth some brandy and spirits of sal-ammoniac; I applied to the eye—the cornea itself—first the tip of a feather, then my own finger, without any result. Snuff blown into her nostrils, pins thrust into her flesh, the forcible contortion of her fingers, had no more effect on her than on a machine—she never gave the slightest sign of sensation.'

In the tenth volume of the 'Bibliothèque de Médecine,' there is an account of a magnetised subject whom the doctors caused to be whipped on her bare shoulders; and as this had no effect, they smeared her back with honey, 'and in this

state she was exposed to the stinging of bees, under a scorching sun ; yet, although severely blistered, she did not manifest any sign of pain until she was awakened, when she suffered acute agony, and complained grievously of the cruel treatment she had received.* Sometimes these 'tests' were applied by sceptical doctors ; sometimes by doctors who were themselves convinced, but who wished to impress their more obstinate brethren.

EXPERTO CREDE.

(To be continued.)

FRAU ROTHE'S FLOWERS—'A PROBLEM.'

Among the vast amount of correspondence in connection with the 'Rothe Case,' none is to me so extraordinary as a paper contributed to the 'Spiritistische Rundschau,' of September, by Professor Sellin, and headed 'A Problem.' I will give the facts without comment—only remarking that it is now evident that, at least on one occasion, the flowers given to the sitters at a séance with Frau Rothe were purchased at a flower shop.

The facts as given by Professor Sellin are, as briefly as I can give them consistently with strict accuracy, as follows :—

Early in the month of August Frau Rothe and Herr Jentsch, after a trip in the Swiss Alps, went to Zürich on the invitation of Herr President Sulzer, an old friend of Frau Rothe, to give three séances there. Professor Sellin stayed at Herr Sulzer's residence, while Frau Rothe and Herr Jentsch put up at the Hotel Falkenstein. Professor Sellin made the necessary arrangements on Thursday, August 8th, for the séance to take place at Herr Sulzer's on the following day. Now for the events of that day.

In the morning Professor Sellin went by steamer to visit a friend at Küsnacht. On his way to the boat he encountered Frau Rothe and Herr Jentsch, who were tempted by the beauty of the day to accompany him on board a little before eleven o'clock. They returned to Zürich by the next boat, while Professor Sellin did not leave Küsnacht till half past three.

Frau Rothe and Herr Jentsch (according to their own account) reached their hotel at 12.15 p.m., had their mid-day meal, and retired to their respective rooms *a little after one o'clock*.* Frau Rothe says she removed some of her clothing on account of the heat, and lay down and went to sleep ; she was awakened by Herr Jentsch knocking at her door at two o'clock, when he told her that he was going out for half an hour to fetch letters from the post.

Herr Sulzer called to conduct them to the place where the séance was to take place, and by four o'clock most of the party were assembled. At five o'clock the séance was to begin. At Frau Rothe's request she was searched by two 'old ladies,' who took off her garments, except her chemise and drawers. Herr Jentsch was likewise searched by young Herr Sulzer, and afterwards took his position in an adjoining room, with the door open, where he took down the 'protocol' in shorthand.

At the séance, which began at 5.25 p.m., the usual phenomena of trance speaking and *apports* of flowers—gladiolas, roses, cornflowers, &c.—took place ; the dewy freshness of the flowers being especially remarked on by Professor Sellin.† In short, the séance was quite successful.

But now we come to the 'Problem,' and, for obvious reasons, it is best I should give this in Professor Sellin's own words :—

'So far, all was as usual. In the meantime something had occurred which somewhat changed the "behind the scenes." At thirty-three minutes past one—the time was exactly noted—at the time, therefore, when Frau Rothe had been for a quarter of an hour resting in her room, and was presumably asleep, she was seen by a Herr W. (with whom she was acquainted, and who had invited her to lunch two days before) at a spot about four minutes' walk from the hotel,

with a paper bag in her hand, which apparently contained flowers. Why Herr W., who was only a few steps distant from her, did not greet her, he is not able to say. . . . Instead, however, of doing so, he crossed over the way, and a few seconds later looked across to the other side, but Frau Rothe had disappeared. Here I must observe that I accompanied Herr W. to the exact spot, and am convinced, from the situation, that for even a quick-walking person to get out of sight so rapidly would be an impossibility.

'Herr W. communicated these facts to some of the persons who had been invited to a second séance on Sunday, August 11th, and this created so great an atmosphere of mistrust that the séance was—and must have been—an unsuccessful one.

'Neither Herr M. nor myself had been informed of the occurrence, and it was only on the day of the séance I heard something of it, and on the Tuesday that I had a letter informing me that the flowers produced at the séance at Herr Sulzer's had been bought at a shop in the neighbourhood, and that suspicion of fraud had thereby arisen.'

Professor Sellin goes on to give his reasons why the flowers could not possibly have been *brought* to the séance, although he acknowledges that there is no doubt whatever that the flowers were the same as those purchased at this obscure shop. He conducted Frau Rothe there himself, and the shopwoman immediately recognised her as the person who had bought the flowers of her at the time specified. Frau Rothe said she had never seen the shop before. One of the reasons given by Professor Sellin why it could not have been Frau Rothe 'in flesh and blood' who bought the flowers, is 'the assertion made by Herr W. that Frau Rothe wore a dress *which I know* she had not with her.'

The solution of the problem which Professor Sellin arrives at is that it was Frau Rothe's double, or astral body, which went to the shop and purchased the flowers, and he writes :—

'I have expressed my doubts about it being Frau Rothe in flesh and blood who bought the basket of flowers at Ham-burg' (when she was seen coming from a shop with a basket of flowers before a séance). 'Now, in the light of this recent event, the matter becomes quite clear. I had previously imagined the possibility of an astral wandering ; my own experience now almost forces me to accept it. . . . For my part, I see no other solution of the question than to accept the fact of the actual action of the astral body, with the assistance of the Intelligences.'

I must not further dwell on this part of the article, but will devote a few words to the account of the third séance and the extraordinary events preceding it. This séance was arranged to take place on August 14th, at Zollicon, near Zürich. On account of the suspicion excited by the aforementioned incident, Professor Sellin took up his abode at the Hotel Falkenstein to keep watch over Frau Rothe. He says he locked her into her room at night after supper, and fetched her himself to breakfast the next morning ; then he took her with him to give some invitations for the afternoon séance. They returned to the hotel about eleven :—

'While I attended to my correspondence in Herr Jentsch's room, Frau Rothe, who was sitting on the bed, fell into a cataleptic state. In a few minutes this was broken by a trance communication from her principal control, who said that this state had been induced by them in order that her astral body might go and make preparations for the séance, that is, fetch the flowers and set them free. At 11.30, Frau Rothe awoke, fresh and cheerful, out of this condition, which had not lasted more than a quarter of an hour. . . . After our dinner together, Frau Rothe lay down on her bed at one o'clock and went to sleep. I rested on the sofa at the same time but did not sleep. Afterwards we drove together to Zollicon.

'Before the séance, Frau Rothe was searched by four ladies, who undressed and re-dressed her entirely. Herr Jentsch was likewise searched by three gentlemen. . . . The séance was one of the most brilliant and successful I ever witnessed. . . . Over two hundred flowers of various kinds were seized by the medium mostly high over the table. . . . In one word, it was a test séance with such indubitable phenomena as must have satisfied the severest critic. This is shown even more clearly by the detailed protocol. I here close my hurried account, though I could willingly add a list of a dozen events which took place in the presence of myself and others, not at the Zürich séance—*apports*, direct writing, proofs of identity, &c. But *sapienti sat*. The facts have spoken, let men do the thinking.—C. W. SELLIN, Zürich. August 21st, 1901.'

M. T.

* Italics in all instances are mine.—M. T.

† The manner in which—as the disbelievers in Frau Rothe think—the flowers are made wet, as well as the way they are concealed on the medium's person, is described plainly in Dr. Bohn's book.

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.

Savants and Mesmerism.

SIR,—Your remarks, in 'Notes by the Way,' in 'LIGHT' of September 28th, on the presidential address at the recent British Association's meetings, are very interesting. It seems to me that hitherto the fault of the genuine and militant pioneers of psychic and other occult subjects, struggling into existence, has been in paying too much attention to the supposed authorities or 'savants,' who, with few exceptions, in past ages, have unconsciously, if not wilfully, opposed most of the great truths that have benefited mankind, and alas! in many cases, persecuted 'even unto death' those fearless votaries of Truth who have dared to proclaim the 'Word of God.'

Believers in spirit-intercourse need no longer seek for the patronage of the so-called orthodox 'savants,' because time has practically demonstrated that to put entire trust in their opinions, especially when connected with psychical subjects, is to lean for support on a broken reed.

The series of articles by 'Experto Crede' appearing on the subject of Hypnotism are highly interesting, edifying, and of great value, as historical evidence in favour of Dr. Anthony Mesmer's profound discovery; and to immortalise his name, henceforth I shall stick to the name of 'Mesmerism,' or 'Animal Magnetism,' in preference to the ambiguous term of Hypnotism, which I have practically demonstrated for over thirty years or more. Like Mr. Arthur Lovell, whose opinions on many current topics I entirely agree with (see 'LIGHT,' of September 28th), I also was pleased to read in 'Experto Crede's' article the summary of the doctrine by Mesmer, and although I agree with most of Mr. Lovell's remarks, I must differ from him where he depreciates 'Experto Crede,' and says 'that Mesmer knew far more about the matter than "Experto Crede."' Certainly Dr. Mesmer did, but if my intuitive impressions, after reading 'Experto Crede's' remarks, are correct, then I think Mr. Arthur Lovell has put the wrong construction on your erudite correspondent's exceedingly instructive articles now appearing in 'LIGHT'; and it is, if I am correct, a pity to throw 'cold water' on anyone whose writings are interesting, instructive, and of great historical value. I hope my friend, Mr. Arthur Lovell, will not take umbrage at my remarks, which are meant to be palliative rather than caustic. Mr. Lovell, like myself, is or may be considered a militant occultist, or psychic researcher, and loves to defend the honour and reputation of a great 'figure-head' in psychic science, whose name, like the names of Doctors Elliotson, Gregory, Braid, and other votaries and pioneers of mesmeric and mental science, will be handed down to posterity.

(DR.) BERKS HUTCHINSON.
(Of Capetown.)

Home Circles.

SIR,—In a recent issue of 'LIGHT' your correspondent, Mrs. L. G. Banister, puts a plain fact before Spiritualists, viz., that centres are needed to disseminate the truths of our teaching. I have for several years on Sunday evenings held services in my home, and they have been the means of giving help and pleasure to many inquirers, as well as to those present blessed with our knowledge of Spiritualism. My aim has been to give a free access to beginners in a home circle, affording them help on the higher teaching of the subject, and plain facts with phenomena after the address. I sincerely hope others will start on the lines suggested by your correspondent. Home circles do their work silently but surely, giving help to the inquirer, and happiness and pleasure to those still seeking more light.

1, Milton-villas,
Featherstone-road, Southall.

W. MILLARD.

'The Living Universe.'

SIR,—It will give me pleasure to send to any of your readers a copy of Mr. Wood's new pamphlet entitled, 'The Living Universe; a synthetic generalisation of the significance of recent scientific discovery regarding the ether, matter, evolution, and the oneness of life.' It is usually sold at sixpence, but I will send out a copy to a hundred of your readers on receipt of two stamps to pay postage. The book is designed for those who think, and will be much appreciated by those who have not yet come into the region of the new thought for food for the mind. I may say that Mr. Wood is one of the best metaphysical writers in the world and all his works have quickly run through many editions.

Scientor House,
Devonport, Devon.

G. OSBOND.

Clairvoyance.

SIR,—I think the following little incident may be of interest to your readers. I may say that it is only during the past three or four months that I have been investigating Spiritualism, wanting to find out for my own satisfaction the truth of it.

I have one little girl, aged eleven years, who has undoubtedly very unusual mediumistic powers. She can now at almost any time cover her eyes with her hands and see and describe to us pictures of many things, and frequently bands of spirits come and take her away to beautiful spheres. She says when she returns how dull and dark this world is and how lovely it is up there, where they take her. She meets and talks with her little sister, two years younger than herself, who passed on when a baby. One day, about a fortnight ago, she was sitting at tea and covered her eyes to try if she could see any pictures, when she saw a soldier come, dressed in khaki. His head was bandaged, and she experienced terrible pain in her temple and right across her forehead; also in her hip. She said as she held her head she seemed to feel blood trickling through her fingers. She described what the man was like and our maid said she knew him. I then asked my daughter if she could identify him if she saw his photograph. She said 'Yes.' Lucy, the maid, said she had one of him in her box, which she fetched, together with several other photos of men, and handed them to the child all together. She immediately picked out the photograph of the soldier she had seen, although in the picture he was in private dress. Lucy said: 'It is Will Etheridge—he has gone to South Africa, I know.' I asked her if she had heard whether he was killed; she said 'No, but she would find out.' The following week she went down to Sutton (three miles from here), where she used to live when she knew him. She met a man there who she knew had known Will Etheridge, and asked if he had heard anything about him lately. He answered: 'Well, I have heard that he was killed in South Africa, but I don't know whether it's true.' Lucy said, 'Can you give me the address of his mother at Bromsgrove and I will write and inquire?' He replied that he did not know, but he thought his wife did. Lucy had not time then to go to the wife, but thought she would do so the next week when she went out.

On the next Thursday evening she again went to Sutton, and as she was walking down a road a young girl, who was a stranger to her, came up to her and said, 'Excuse me, but is your name Lucy?' 'Yes.' 'Did you live in Park-road here about three or four years ago?' 'Yes?' 'Did you know a young fellow named Will Etheridge?' 'Yes, I did.' 'Did you know that he was dead?' 'No, but I had heard something of the sort and wanted to find out.'

She then explained to Lucy that she had once seen her in the distance with Will Etheridge, and that was how she recognised her; that she lived at Bromsgrove, and knew his family well; that a friend of his had just returned from South Africa, who was with him when he passed on, and how he died of wounds in his head and hip, the chief of these being a deep terrible wound in the temple, just as my daughter had said. He had talked constantly of Lucy and of his mother before passing, and told his friend to find her and tell her to take care of herself, and said, 'I shall meet her again.' This friend from South Africa spoke of Lucy being so much in the thoughts of Will Etheridge that his people, who do not know her, are anxious to meet her for their son's sake. I asked her whether she knew him very well, and she said 'Yes'; and she 'kept company' with him for some months.

The young girl who met and gave Lucy this information had just gone to Sutton for the day to see if she could hear anything of Lucy, if she still lived there; and, strange to say, met her during the two or three hours she was out for the evening.

I think this is a very convincing proof of clairvoyance, and have given you the facts exactly as they occurred.

E. HARRISON.

Grasmere,
Chester-road, Erdington,
Birmingham.

Comfort for Weary Eyes.

SIR,—I have by chance discovered a means of refreshing and cleansing weary eyes, cooling them and improving the sight. If any of your readers care to defray the expense of postage (1d.) I would send a powder which, when dissolved in half a wine-glassful of water, and dropped into the eye with an artist's sable paint brush, gives the most delightful results. It is perfectly harmless, and if the brush is softly passed round the inside of the eyelids, will clean away the almost invisible mucus which so often dims the sight.

(MRS.) C. S. BURTON.

Longner Hall, Shrewsbury.

The Objects of Theosophy.

SIR,—In a book by Walter R. Old, F.T.S., entitled 'What is Theosophy?' I find that 'On the evening of November 17th, 1875, the Theosophical Society was founded by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel H. S. Olcott, in the presence of persons of known ability and good standing, whose disinterested love of truth, &c. A declaration was therefore made upon three primary objects, viz: 1. To form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, *without regard to race, creed, sex, caste or colour.* 2. To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, philosophies, and sciences: and to demonstrate the importance of that study. 3. To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychic powers latent in man.'

The late Edward Maitland in his 'Life of Anna Kingsford' (Vol. II., p. 81,) says: The Theosophical Society's 'original prospectus committed the glaring inconsistency of declaring the absolute tolerance of the Society of all forms of religion and then of stating that a main object was the destruction of Christianity. Its founders had committed it also to the rejection of the idea of a God, *personal or impersonal*; and this while calling it Theosophical.'

How is it Mr. Old has omitted from the primary objects of the Theosophical Society a main object which Maitland says is the destruction of Christianity? Nor is any mention made of the rejection of God, personal or impersonal! What is truth?

MI-KA-EL.

'The Ethics of Suicide.'

SIR,—For assurance and dogmatism pure and simple commend me to 'D. G.!' The facts I stated are incontestable and there is nothing to differ about.

(1). Our mortal lives *are* our own since they were unconditionally given us. (2). Suicide (as Mr. Reading says) is a misnomer, for our souls are indestructible and we cannot kill *them*; we merely destroy the casket. (3). This being so, when this life becomes unbearable (as it often does), suicide, so-called, merely changes our conditions of existence (as 'G. W. R.' says), and as we sincerely hope, for the better. Can any *rational* being dispute these points?

By the way, *what* a contrast to the letter of 'D. G.' was the clever and telling letter of G. W. Reading. What 'D. G.' says about our choice of birth being impossible is surely puerile; for is not *everything* possible to *Omniscience*? I do not subscribe to his solidarity theory either; pushed to that extent we could hardly think the smallest thought or do the smallest act with impunity. Finally, I have the courage to sign my real name.

F. B. DOVETON.

Torquay.

P.S.—'D. G.' will probably say that my name conveys nothing to him. He will, however, find it in 'Who's Who?'

SIR,—I think that Mr. G. W. Blythe is wrong in his reasoning about 'the right of a person to leave this world when he likes'; seeing that he has not been asked if he would come into it. A man is cast into prison against his will; but that does not give him the right to leave it when he likes, or can; he must abide there the specified time, or suffer the consequences.

One can reasonably infer that, as a man is not asked if he will come into the world, he must wait for the order to leave it, in obedience to a superior power, the coming and going of a man being for some beneficial purpose. 'The liberty of the individual,' of which 'G. W. B.' speaks, is a very circumscribed liberty, limited by the individual himself; and circumscribed for the benefit of that individual by his acts. We are *slaves to a tyranny* of our own making, when we make evil for ourselves and others. If, after sowing an evil surrounding in this, or a past, life, we have not the courage to bear the consequences, then we are *cowards*; either presuming upon the (so-called) mercy of God, or trusting in non-existence after death. If a man has a disagreeable mission to perform, or a disagreeable lesson to learn, in this world for his own or another one's benefit, and shirks his duty by suicide, he is a coward; nay more, a foolish man. Nature, or God, will not allow a man to escape his duty; if he runs away from it he will have to return to it at some future time, with the disagreeableness accentuated. You cannot cheat God or Nature.

'G. W. B.' says that 'it is very cool to accuse one of sin for acting according to his ideas of liberty in such cases. My reply is 'that a man can do more mischief by his folly than by his sin.' A foolish man is often worse to society than a bad man.

Spiritualism teaches me that he who commits suicide has a very disagreeable portion on the 'other side.' Theosophy teaches me that such a man has accentuated his future troubles, which he must reap; while a recent number of 'LIGHT' illustrates this by the following recital: 'Mrs. A., while under ether for a surgical operation, had a vision, in

which she met her higher soul, or self. During a conversation Mrs. A. was told that her intention of seeking relief from her troubles by suicide was wrong and foolish—that she would have had to meet those troubles, eventually, in a stronger form; and that wisdom told her to bear them in earth life; that there was no escape from one's troubles.'

Now these words may have no weight with 'G. W. B.,' but they have with me. My philosophy teaches me that my life has a purpose for my own benefit, and that of others; that my troubles are either of my own making, or are for my educational benefit; that to cut off my life is cowardly—nay worse, foolish—useless; and that real wisdom says, 'Bear your troubles, and wade the water at the shallowest, doing your best. 'Our light afflictions, which endure but a moment, &c.'

I do not speak of the sin of suicide; I speak of the utter folly of it; seeing that we shall be brought back to bear the troubles we have run away from. If we could, by suicide, escape our trials, 'G. W. B.' might have reason in advocating it—but we cannot; we cannot escape the destiny we have ourselves made.

JOSEPH CLAYTON.

59, Manchester-road,
Bradford.

A New Society Effort.

SIR,—After steady propaganda work, the desire is always manifested for the formation of a local habitation where the work may be consolidated. Converts who have accepted the truth require facilities for meeting with kindred souls in order that experiences may be compared and association ripen the fruits of our labour. After six months' work in Battersea Park, the Battersea Spiritualist Church was started. At the end of five years it has now a membership of nearly one hundred; also a Lyceum and Band of Hope, each with a membership of over one hundred. It also owns a complete equipment for church work from a piano to library, hymn-books, &c. It even possesses its own appurtenances for tea meetings and social gatherings. It is, therefore, well able to run alone. It has been suggested that we, viz., Mr. Adams and Mr. and Mrs. Boddington, should now do for Clapham what we have been able to do for Battersea. But we are unwilling to incur further financial and general responsibilities. If, however, we receive thirty guarantors of 1s. weekly for three months, we are willing to run a missionary effort at the Lavender Hill or Clapham Town Halls during the winter. At the end of that time, if the people of the district desire to form a new society, we will give them the initial start. Our own services, mediumistic or as speakers, will be gratuitous as heretofore. Thirty shillings weekly would clear rent and general expenses. The collections would be devoted to advertising in the local papers by means of a report of each Sunday's address. This would have the double effect of advertising the meetings, and also of checking erroneous ideas as to what Spiritualists really teach. Those who desire to assist the new effort financially or by work should write:—

ANNIE BODDINGTON,
(President, Battersea Spiritualist Church.)99, Bridge-road,
Battersea.

Obsession.

SIR,—'Out of Darkness into Light' gives a supremely interesting account of how he was relieved from obsession by the ministry of high spirits in the 'Christ-sphere,' through the mediumship of Mr. Clement Harding. But will he kindly tell us if the previous 'all kinds of treatment' did or did not include *fervent prayer* to those same Christ-spheres? If it did, how does your correspondent explain the entire absence of response?

The question is not merely academic, because it bears on the vital problem of the efficiency of prayer, which we know was guaranteed by Christ when on earth.

Can your correspondent also give us any idea of the causes of his becoming obsessed?

G. W.

'Fate.'

SIR,—Some little time back, during the course of one of the many able addresses which it has been my privilege to hear from the lips of Mr. J. J. Morse, a remark was made which it now appears to me might be of value to your readers, when considering the subject of 'Fate.' I therefore venture to quote it: 'The limits of a person's fate are the limits of his ability to conquer that fate.'

The thoughts which such a concise sentence is productive of seem to me to make it specially worth recording.

LEIGH HUNT.

Mesmerism—Food and Health.

SIR,—I have two thoughts which I should like to offer to 'LIGHT,' with your approval.

1. *Mesmerism.* Mr. Arthur Lovell's admirable letter on 'Mesmer and His Methods' is a sound defence of that eminent and much misunderstood man. It is not the theory but the practice that lives—the 'laying-on of hands' and all that results from it. In private, great relief may be obtained for a sick patient without belief in particular ways of making passes, or arresting attention, or the efficacy of any special hypothesis.

The paper of 'Experto Crede' is also an excellent account of Mesmer's work and position. Hypnotism, or whatever is good in it, is contained in Mesmerism. The additions of medical practitioners in imposing the will upon a patient in sleep is quite a different thing, and is often mischievous, or may become so. Nobody was ever the worse for Mesmerism with or without *hypnos* as we formerly understood, and still harmlessly practise, it.

2. *Food and Health.* 'Verax' has not told us what supper he takes and how late. For years I have not had my breakfast meal at home before eleven or twelve o'clock. The cup of coffee with tartine carries one on from an early hour, and I do not eat later than 6 p.m. Consequently it is only when social custom or necessity overrules one's habit that sound health forsakes one for a time. The thing is a matter of common-sense and personal experience. There is no 'cure' but 'don't do it again.'

September 30th.

J. F. C.

'Planchette.'

SIR,—Some time ago I was led to interest myself in Spiritualism and became a subscriber to 'LIGHT,' which I now read regularly.

At the house of a friend I found the 'planchette' used as a means of communicating with departed friends, and I procured one for myself. I soon found, however, that it was very limited in its scope, though, through its aid, undoubted evidence was given of intelligence behind it. As an aid to further intelligence I constructed an alphabet in semi-circular form, about twenty inches wide, the letters being about three-quarters of an inch in size, and inserted a needle in front of the 'planchette' to act as a pointer. This I have found much more satisfactory than the 'planchette' alone. At first a considerable time elapsed before the 'planchette' moved, but now it moves almost immediately we begin. Several spirit friends have come to us, and have proved their identity most conclusively. For instance, the mother of my wife came, and a few questions and answers proved identity.

Before parting—i.e., saying 'Good night,' to each one separately—my wife asked if her mother could leave a message for us. 'Love one another' was immediately spelt out to us on the alphabet. In the case of other friends, however, when the same question was asked, the 'planchette' pointed to a number of letters, out of which we could make nothing, generally ending with the first and last letters of the alphabet: A Z, A Z, A Z, repeated several times.

My object in writing this letter is to ask if any of your readers could help us to the meaning of the letters.

W. A.

MR. AND MRS. EVERITT IN STALYBRIDGE.

On Sunday, September 29th, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, of London, visited the Stalybridge children's Lyceum, and Mr. Everitt addressed the adult class respecting the 'Basis of Spiritualism.' In the evening he gave an earnest address to a large and deeply interested audience, relating many incidents in his unique experiences. He also exhibited specimens of 'direct' writing which had been given by the spirits through Mrs. Everitt's mediumship. We very much appreciate the honour of this visit, and trust that our friends may be long spared to continue their good work. On Monday, September 30th, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt gave a séance to a number of our workers, to encourage them in their labours on behalf of Spiritualism, and the phenomena usually associated with Mrs. Everitt's mediumship were produced, including rappings, lights, and touches, and interesting conversation was carried on with the 'direct' voices. The séance closed with many expressions of gratitude and good wishes to our kind visiting friends.

—COR.

MR. VANGO'S SÉANCES.—We are requested to state that Mr. J. J. Vango's séances for the National Fund of Benevolence will be held on the last Sunday evening in each month, not in the morning, as stated in our last issue.

SOCIETY WORK.

GROVE-LANE PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTITUTE, 36, VICARAGE-ROAD, CAMBERWELL, S.E.—On Sunday evening last, Mrs. Checketts gave an excellent inspirational address on 'Our Inheritance.' Clairvoyance was given at the after-circle by Mrs. Miller and Mr. Hodgson, all the descriptions being recognised.—A. MILLER, Hon. Secretary.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. George Cole delivered an excellent address to a large audience. Questions being asked afterwards led to an interesting discussion. After-circle, Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion class; 6.30 p.m., Miss Porter.—C.

EAST DULWICH—5, CLAUDE-VILLAS, GROVE VALE.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. Richmond gave an earnest address on 'Human Nature,' and Mrs. Macaulay sang 'Within the Veil.' The after-circle was much appreciated. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Feilder will give an address on 'Swedenborg a Spiritual Columbus.'—B.M.

THE SPIRIT FELLOWSHIP, ATHENÆUM HALL, 73, TOTTENHAM COURT-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. John C. Kenworthy gave a very interesting and lucid lecture on 'Economics,' in which he emphasised the need of the reorganising of society for the equal welfare of all the members.—GEORGE COLE, Organising Secretary, 21, Cheapside, E.C.

LEICESTER SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, LIBERAL CLUB, LECTURE HALL.—Last Sunday evening, being 'Citizen' Sunday in this town, our president, Councillor Chaplin, made a few appropriate remarks upon the 'Duty of a Citizen to his City.' Mrs. Place Veary gave an able address on 'If a man dies shall he live again?' followed by clairvoyant descriptions, which were nearly all recognised. Our hall was filled to overflowing. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., addresses will be delivered by Mr. J. J. Morse.—O.W.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday evening last, the president opened with a reading from the Bible, and Mr. J. Alfred White delivered a trance address upon 'Reincarnation,' the trend of the discourse being distinctly opposed to the theory. Several clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mr. White, all of which were recognised, and constituted, in many cases, remarkable tests of identity. On Sunday next, we hope to have Mr. J. C. Kenworthy upon the platform.—O.H.

BIRMINGHAM SPIRITUALIST UNION, MASONIC HALL, NEW-STREET.—On Sunday, September 29th, Mr. A. Peters gave short addresses morning and evening, followed by clairvoyance, and also on Monday evening, at our new room in Corporation-street. Both evening meetings were crowded, and many strangers were content to stand and listen with respectful attention. Mr. Peters made many telling points in the course of his addresses, and gave quite a number of clairvoyant descriptions that were fully recognised. We are pleased to render this testimony to his excellent work.—J. H.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON, N.—On Sunday evening last, Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave an eloquent address on 'The Realm of the Real—in the Light of Spiritualism.' In an eloquent and forcible manner the speaker drew the distinction between the present world or shadow-land, and the spirit world or summerland. The ignorance of man leads to a distorted vision and misconception of his surroundings, and these in many cases being uncongenial he rebels, whereas the right course would be to seek to understand, and in understanding to improve the conditions. Mrs. Wallis afterwards gave some interesting and convincing clairvoyant descriptions, and with one exception all were fully recognised. Will friends please note that Mrs. Boddington will be with us on Sunday next instead of Mr. Peters, as previously announced.—A. J. C., Cor. Sec.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday evening last, a good audience assembled, many coming from Clapham Common, to hear addresses by the local workers. Mr. Adams showed that it was necessary to clear the ground of creedal misconceptions before the superstructure could be reared. Mr. Imison explained that our basis was fact. Mr. H. Boddington said that the service resembled a class on 'Building Construction.' As the ground had been cleared and the foundations put in, he would endeavour to lay a few spiritual bricks upon the site. He proceeded to show that Spiritualism was constructive and included everything, from the infinitely small to the infinitely great. A pleasant after-circle was also held. On Saturday next, at 8 p.m., a 'Cinderella,' admission 6d. On Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Cole will speak. On Sunday, October 20th, at 11.30 p.m., we commence our debating class with a paper on 'Food Reform,' by Mr. Frost.—H.B.