

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A reader of 'LIGHT' tells us a curious story of apparent deception, mild and purposeless, but, apparently, rank hypocrisy.

A passive writer was pained over a certain poem, signed 'A,' which seemed to suggest that sin and responsibility were illusions. A trusted spirit wrote through his hand that the poem *was* wrong and he (the medium) was right, and then declared that he knew the writer, giving his name as (say) Arberton, and ultimately even giving his address—somewhere in Great Britain. A letter sent to that address was returned as 'not known.'

Now the amusing thing is that the 'A' attached to the poem was simply an editor's device for our old friend 'Anon.' Hence, when this was explained, the funny little deception was at once clear: the 'A' serving as an unintended mousetrap to catch a mooning 'spook.'

The passive writer is disgusted, and will possibly sit no more. That is a pity. Romancings and obfuscations like this are common enough, but, instead of repelling, they ought to be taken as admirable tests, and as fresh incentives to dig into the thing.

This writer arrived at a highly interesting problem which ought to have been warmly followed up: and as the writing was carried on by questions and answers (all written) there was, and perhaps still is, a splendid opening for cross-examination. It seems impossible to either escape from or to comprehend this ceaseless trickle of mild mendacity, but the worst thing to do about it is to run away from it.

The fact is that most inquirers begin in the wrong mood or with a wrong idea. They are solemn too soon, and trust too readily. The inquiry is, at the present stage, mainly, or on one side of it, a scientific one, and should be followed up in a scientific spirit. For our own part, we should feel a new and ardent interest in our investigations if a communicating spirit mistook 'A' for the initial letter of a name, when we meant it to stand for 'anonymous'; and if, upon that mistake, it built up a structure of illusion, frivolity or mendacity. That would be something worth following up.

Two trusty friends report concerning a private visit to Mr. Husk that the results were, at all events, exceedingly striking. Under absolutely test conditions they would be regarded as overwhelmingly convincing. But even with the imperfect test conditions, they were quite unable to connect with the medium and Mrs. Husk all

that happened. Identification of any spirit-presence occurred in only one case, and that by inference, but this was of a very tender and subtle kind. The manifestations were all intensely strong,—the voices, the often beautiful playing on a small wired instrument, the winding up and undoubted carrying about of a large musical box, the touching and caressing with a hand, the presentation of faces lit up by a luminous slate, and the intense chanting by two very different voices, in alternation:—but all was done in absolute darkness; the mediums being partially held throughout the séance. A series of half a dozen séances under perfect test conditions, and with well-known, responsible persons, ought to be arranged.

Some of the resolutions passed at the last Convention of the National Association of Spiritualists (U.S.) will interest our readers, as showing how very widely our friends across the Atlantic differ from us in the range of their business. Fancy an English Convention introducing, and actually adopting, resolutions as to Trusts, Vaccination, Tobacco, Intoxicating Drinks, and Woman Suffrage!—

Resolved, That the delegates of this Convention hereby place themselves on record as opposed to any possible condition which may permit the avariciousness of any person, or any combination to put into jeopardy the happiness of their fellows, or by which they may deprive them of their legitimate rights to the products of the earth.

Resolved, That the N. S. A. is opposed to all inroads upon human freedom, and that it is strongly in favour of the abolishment in every State in the Union of capital punishment, compulsory vaccination, arbitrary Sunday laws, and any form of legislation which gives special recognition to any school or schools of medical practice.

Resolved, That as the cause of reform demands the effectual work of woman, and that as woman cannot work effectually without the franchise, suffrage should be granted to all on equal terms.

Resolved, That we discountenance the use of intoxicating liquors, tobacco, opium, and all similar articles that are harmful to human welfare.

We have received a copy of Edith Carrington's sturdy fighting pamphlet on 'Legal and Illegal Cruelty.' It is not a pleasant publication. On the contrary, one can hardly bear to read it; but it is a bitter necessity. What seems most necessary is the exposure of the affectation of innocence by the vivisectors, and the falseness of the official Reports, one of which dared to say that the pain inflicted was not more than a pinprick. Here is the testimony of one who knows, for instance, what happens when a dog is inoculated for hydrophobia:—

In the case of a dog mental anguish is the first symptom. The poor brute appears conscious that it must soon become dangerous, and as if wanting to beg pardon beforehand. . . . Towards the last the dog's thirst increases, but with that comes swelling of the throat. He will then plunge his head into

water, so ravenous is his desire, but not a drop of liquid can he swallow, though its surface is covered with bubbles in consequence of the efforts he makes to gulp the smallest quantity. The throat is enlarged to that extent that it will permit nothing to pass. He is the victim of the most horrible inflammation of the stomach and intense inflammation of the bowels. His state of suffering is most pitiable. He flies at and pulls to pieces everything that is within his reach. One animal in this condition being confined near a fire flew at the burning mass, pulled out the live coals, and in his fury scrunched them.

'The Loves of the flowers: a Spiritual Dream,' by Ernest A. Tietkens (London: Kegan Paul and Co.) is a superbly printed volume of curious snatches of verse clustered about a fanciful centre of which we get a slight glimpse in a very brief preliminary 'Argument.' It is difficult to tell what it is all about, but there is a certain pleasant halo around it all which gives it an appreciable charm. The 'L'Envoi' indicates the spirit of the book, and gives a rather favourable specimen of its grade as poetry:—

Should there be one who, when he reads these lines,
A gleam of hopeful gladness inly thrills,
So that his mournful soul no more repines
With doubting fear, that oft the bosom fills;
Then 'tis enough, some good has been completed,
A truthful outline faint, yet an idea
Of spirit-life; how erring ones are treated
By angels who God's moral laws revere,
Who teach the Truth, to all at Death made clear.
These come with help to weaken chains of clay,
Chase yearnings for all baser thought away.
Not to 'Selected Ones' do these appear,
But the frail sinner, be he whom he may,
Gentile or Jew, alike all will be greeted
If earnestly God's guidance be entreated.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS (From many shrines).

O God, our heavenly Father, teach us to know and understand all Thy loving kindness, that our hearts may be lifted up and won to Thy service. Thy loving kindness is better than life: to know Thee is more than wealth: to serve Thee is beyond all gain, and to love Thee is above all joy. Teach us that they love Thee best who best love one another. Write Thy law of charity upon our hearts, and inspire us to be kind one to another in all the thoughtful friendly offices of a true brotherhood. Wherein we have wronged anyone by selfishness, cruelty, want of heart or want of thought, good Lord forgive us. Help us to bear each other's burdens, and learn to be better brothers, friends and associates in the sight of Him who hath ordained that no one liveth to himself, and no one dieth to himself. Bless this our . . . and make it to be a fountain of good works which shall flow forth to many, and a means of grace to its members. May our fellowship with one another be after the mind of Christ. Amen.

MR. A. PETERS.—The séances conducted by Mr. A. Peters on Tuesday afternoons in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., continue to give much satisfaction and have recently been exceptionally interesting, as Mr. Peters has submitted himself to the control of his spirit friends, who have given psychometric and clairvoyant delineations of a very valuable character. On Tuesday last the spirit relatives of some of the sitters were permitted to control the medium and talk to their friends, the identity of the spirits being clearly established, to the great delight of those who knew them. These personal manifestations are only possible when the conditions are thoroughly harmonious, but we understand that it is the intention of the medium and his guides to permit them as often as possible,

GENIUS—IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

BY MR. E. WAKE COOK.

An Address delivered before the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall, on the evening of Wednesday, February, 4th, 1903; THE PRESIDENT, MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, in the chair.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,—All the old problems have been transformed and illumined by the flood of light thrown on them by that Pentecostal outpouring so well called the 'Spiritual Renaissance,' of which Modern Spiritualism is the head and centre. Think it out and you will see a world of significance in the fact that these spiritual movements have marched step by step with the splendid, but one-sided, advance of physical science. Man proposes, but Nature disposes, and all attempts to confine her exuberant and well-balanced energies to narrow channels are brought to nought. Narrowness is manifest falsity, even when hall-marked by all the respectabilities. This is a lesson which sectarians, whether of science or religion, find it hard to learn; but they may rest assured that the future is with those movements which advance the highest, the deepest, the broadest views of the marvellous Existence of which we form a part. No vital truth can be left behind with impunity, as it will surely arise and check progress by reaction. As science has given the bias to an age now passing, so will Spiritualistic and Mystical Movements give the bias to the coming age. Every physical fact, when followed far enough, lands us in a metaphysical problem from which there is no escape; so it will be impossible for science to follow Nature's forces much further without having to deal with those more recondite problems which she now shirks. Then, perhaps, she will throw off her blinkers and take a broader outlook, and will then see the enormous amount of good work which Spiritualism and kindred movements have accomplished. They have prepared the way for the Spiritual Science of the future.

Of all the problems transfigured by the newer light, that of Genius is one of the most fascinating. Genius hints at the latent possibilities of the race, and is a prophecy of their ultimate realisation. It has thus a perennial interest for us all, as its recognition carries a sense of kinship. Its nature, and its sporadic appearances, present difficulties as baffling as they are alluring, but the new light and a changing mental attitude promise to reveal some of these secrets of the soul. Exact definition of genius is neither possible nor desirable, as such definition would tend to kill reality, and reduce its exuberant life to the rigidity of stained-glass saints with their leaded outlines. Genius is seldom isolated; it is generally the crest of a wave, and no dividing line can be drawn between it and great talent. It has been described as the capacity for taking infinite pains, but that is only the necessary foundation. Dryden's assertion, which echoes Aristotle's, that 'Great wits are sure to madness near allied,' is contradicted by Lamb's declaration of the essential sanity of genius. Doctors Moreau, Lombroso, and Max Nordau, fitly called the 'mad doctors,' and Mr. Nisbet, declare genius to be a branch of the neuropathic tree, a symptom of hereditary degeneration of the epileptoid variety, allied to moral insanity, always morbid, and 'as a rule, the greater the genius, the greater the unsoundness'! On the other hand we have brilliant writers assuring us that true genius is always united to common-sense! No great stress need be laid on the doctors' dicta; they find it easier to label than to explain such things, and I sometimes fancy they show a whimsical delight in taking the conceit out of a genius by placing him below normal and commonplace humanity. A characteristic of genius is its measureless fecundity. Some minds of great capacity seem mere reservoirs, while genius combines the reservoir with a well-spring of living waters, giving us the old freshened by the new in exhaustless abundance.

Familiarity makes dullards of us all. If we could only bring a fresh mind to bear on the wonder of the inflowing

thought we should find miracles tame in comparison. As we cannot draw the line between great talent and genius, neither can we draw a line between genius and mediumship. Louis Stevenson credited his 'Brownies' with the construction of his plots, and nearly all great writers and speakers feel like media of the overflowing fount of inspiration. In moments of nervous exaltation whole vistas of brilliant thoughts will present themselves in orderly array, but a momentary distraction may cause them to vanish beyond recall. Given warmth and moisture, Nature shows abounding eagerness to manifest vegetal beauty, and our brains seem the fecund soil of a like mental florescence. But the physical brain is only the soil; we must look deeper if we would come to close quarters with our problem.

The Theosophists claim to explain Genius satisfactorily by the doctrine of Reincarnation, and that this explanation greatly strengthens the doctrine itself. I was greatly struck by the argument when I first met it in one of Mrs. Besant's brilliant expositions, and thought it was all she claimed. But on thinking it over I found that it did not meet the case. Take the case of Mozart, who, as Mrs. Besant says, was a ready-made musician at the age of five! If this wonderful precocity was the result of Reincarnation then, according to the doctrine, Mozart was one of those who lived on this earth about fifteen hundred years ago. But he was not the only person living at that time, and his contemporaries would all be returning to the earth about the same time; so if Reincarnation was the cause of this precocity of genius we should expect, not one Mozart, but a whole race of Mozarts, or men of equally precocious genius exhibiting itself in other ways. As there were only about the same small number of men of genius at that time as in previous and succeeding generations, the reincarnation theory fails as an explanation. If it be contended that Mozart was a great genius when he was on the earth before, and that his contemporaries were only common men, then he must have been a genius in his previous incarnation; and we get no nearer to an explanation. We are started on a wild-goose chase through the ages only to find the same problem confronting us. The theory of reincarnation would explain the difference between the higher and lower *races*, but not the differences between the man of genius and his contemporaries. So, leaving our friends the Theosophists to go a little deeper into the matter, I must pursue my own line.

Making no attempt at definition, I will take only universally acknowledged genius as the type. As we cannot draw a line between talent and genius, neither can we draw the line between genius and mediumship; but as it is quite possible to have mediumship without genius, so we can treat genius as a thing apart. It is possible that great talent and mediumship combined may constitute genius, and it would be a very good explanation to fall back upon; but I think we can go a little further. It is undesirable to rob Peter to pay Paul, and equally undesirable to impoverish humanity by attributing too much to incarnate man. The more richly you can show man to be endowed, the higher you place him in the scale, the more you increase his dignity, his responsibility, and everything that is valuable. If spirits can show, as they have abundantly shown, that they still exist, can relieve our sense of bereavement, assure us of the glories in store for us all, give us a few hints of the higher views of Existence to serve us as working hypotheses, leaving us to work out the details, then they will have done as much as is good for us. To do more than this would, I think, tend to retard the spirit's upward progress, and to sap man's self-reliance.

My first contention is: That there is a mighty Genius residing, or imprisoned, in each of us; and that we have latent spiritual faculties in touch with a spiritual world.

My second proposition is: That normally we are like instruments played upon by Omniscience; are like imperfect electrical machines on whose wires the whole thought of the Universe is playing, and to which most of us can as yet only respond with a few conscious dots and dashes.

Thirdly: That we are, or may be, media of communications from higher individualised intelligences; and that,

ordinarily, we are in unconscious telepathic communication with sympathetic minds.

These propositions are needed to cover demonstrable facts, and those overlooked facts which are obvious when attention is drawn to them. With such a plethora of rich possibilities, of faculties and powers, latent in us, the question is how they may be evoked and made available, and by what means men of genius have found access to them.

Let us see what evidence there is in support of our first proposition—that there is a mighty Genius in each of us. This fact is obscured by that soul-deadening familiarity which blinds us to the wonders which are too near us to be seen. If we could but bring mature minds and a fresh eye to bear on the things we now take as a matter of course, we should be instantly brought to our knees by the awful mystery of it all; and the more clearly we see, the more overwhelming it all becomes! So we must brush away the cobwebs of familiarity, and try to realise step by step the wonder-worker there is in every human being.

A few years ago I got caught between a cab and a heavy cart and had the skin grazed off the back of my hand. This served to fix my attention on the process of repairing damages, and I will describe in picturesque metaphor what occurred in connection with the injured hand. Telegraphic messages of pain were at once despatched, and a break-down gang promptly arrived with all the materials for repairs. The spot was at once covered with a sort of tarpaulin of serum, which gradually hardened into a protecting roof. Under cover of this the busy atoms, with their accompanying ions or electrons, began to repair the true or under skin, and to build up the outer skin, or epidermis, with its protecting scales, and all the wonderful and intricate structures of nerves, glands, blood-vessels, papillæ, hair, &c. The energetic little builders were probably directed by overseers or mental forces attracted to, and concentrated on, the spot by the danger-signals of pain, which also kept up the forcing-house temperature needed for the healing. In a week or two the work was completed; the protecting covering, no longer needed, scaled off; and the amazing complexus of delicate structures we call 'skin' stood revealed, whole, without a scar. This complicated healing process might be described in strictly scientific language, but no technical terms would carry the connotations of intelligence, design, and disciplined forces needed for a full realisation of what is covered by the words, 'the healing power of Nature.' If all this is involved in a little odd job of repairing, what are we to think of all that is implied in the designing and constructing of that moving miracle the human body? Blinded by familiarity, we take it all as a matter of course, and, like Topsy, we just 'specs I growed,' and we use all our scientific ingenuity to belittle Nature's handiwork. We shelter ourselves behind the terms evolution, natural or sexual selection, survival of the fittest; we reduce life to fermentation, and we scout the ideas of creation and teleology; and we play other learned pranks that a sense of humour would save us from. But just here we are confronted by the profoundest problems, involving Plato's doctrine of Ideas, or Aristotle's doctrine of Forms. But even these luminous suggestions need supplementing, and we cannot stop short of postulating a designing, organising, and constructing individualised mind in each of us, deputy of the Great Positive Mind, and whose function is to build, repair, and sustain the physical body. If we adopt the conception of the Ego as spirit, soul, and body, the soul being a spiritual body, or organisation, which clothes itself with an over-garment of gross matter to enable it to function in this rudimental sphere, my case is still stronger. The more we think of the problem the more wonderful it becomes.

Experimental psychology proves that Plotinus was not far wrong when he said that only part of the soul is let down into the material body. Consciousness does not exhaust its object, and is only a small part of our real selves; there are the super-conscious, the conscious, and the sub-conscious sections of the self, and the range of this triad of 'selves' is proved to be enormous. The subliminal self is probably the body-builder and repairer, and when we realise the marvellous organising power needed to order the myriads of busy atoms to their

appointed functions, to build up an organism of such inconceivable fineness, strength, and complexity, so far beyond the highest conscious human efforts, we see that we have a transcendent Genius, or miracle-worker, within us.

This statement of the case may be only a very rough approximation to the truth; but it cannot be stated in lower terms. God-like powers are shown in the work, and whether we conceive them as organising 'Ideas,' or 'Forms,' or souls, or spirits, we do not lessen the wonder of it all. Attribute the work vaguely to 'Nature,' and you must endow her with the God-like powers, or you must similarly endow the atoms, unless they are ordered by the equivalent of an organising mind. If we adopt the more complex theories of the Theosophists with their seven principles, we rather increase the wonder than lessen it.

Apart from experimental evidence, we are compelled to adopt some such theory as that to which I have referred to account for the normal facts, but those abnormal, or supra-normal, facts that give us glimpses into the deeper depths all tend to prove the theory to be true.

The Mystics have a profound saying to the effect that the night of the senses is the noonday of the soul, and in sleep and analogous states we get glimpses of the transcendent Genius within us. Experiments in psycho-physics show that the operations of the physical brain are relatively slow and measurable, while the mental movements of the transcendental Ego are of inconceivable rapidity. Du Prel, in his admirable 'Philosophy of Mysticism,' has shown that this inner self has a transcendental measure of time and space. This is shown in dreaming, when we move from place to place with the rapidity of thought, and act in stirring dramas of many scenes which actually occupy scarce a second of actual time. When drowning, and the spirit is beginning to release itself from its physical trammels, the panorama of a long life may flash across the mind, not in blurred and smudgy 'impressionism,' but in vivid detail. These things tend to show either that under these circumstances our ordinary faculties are raised to a higher power, or that we have much higher faculties latent within us that begin to manifest themselves as our ordinary faculties are dormant or are thrown out of gear.

The whole range of hypnotic experiments tend to the same conclusion. Take a typical case, that of Madame B., on whom the French professors have made many systematic experiments of great interest and significance. Madame B. in her normal state is a timid, illiterate, elderly peasant woman, stolid and without curiosity. This personality the professors call Léonie. On being hypnotised a very different personality emerges, in many respects the exact complement of the waking self. Léontine, as she is called, is bright and lively, and has a great contempt for Léonie, of whom she always speaks in the third person. This second personality is decidedly higher in the scale and remembers what occurred in previous trances, and also what happens in the waking state. On the trance being deepened a third personality emerges, a profounder stratum of consciousness, which embraces both the others, and seems to be literally the higher self, and possesses the memory of every phase of this complex personality. This higher self they call Léonore. So we have the dull normal self Léonie, the bright lively complement in Léontine, and in Léonore we have a larger self, comprehending and embracing the other two. This suggests that we are all a sort of three-storey persons. It is curious to note that the second person Léontine can sometimes intervene in the waking affairs of the normal Léonie; and that the larger personality Léonore can sometimes control and correct the lively Léontine, the latter being startled by hearing an inner voice. This suggests the dæmon of Socrates. The professors sometimes lose control and get out of communication with this larger personality, who seems to rise to a state of ecstasy, and is evidently in conscious touch with the spiritual realities.

This is a point of great significance, throwing light on a number of things otherwise perplexing. Emerson somewhere remarks on a certain shallowness in grief; and we often see persons of deep feeling and the warmest affections who; theoretically, ought to be quite crushed by the loss of their

loved ones, sturdily refusing to be crushed. They feel a strange buoyancy which makes them ashamed of what they think must be callousness. Strange consolations flow in, mysteriously, and they find themselves laughing when they think they ought to be weeping. May it not be, setting mediumship aside for the moment, that the higher self may be actually in sweet communion with the departed ones, and be whispering to the grieving mortal mind that all is well with it? Then again, this super-conscious self, living in a spiritual world, may so far influence the ordinary conscious mind from within that it believes in many things which cannot be fitted into rational conceptions, which contradict reasoned intellectual convictions, and which ought, therefore, to be rejected as superstitions, and are so rejected by rationalists of the lower type. So we shall be safe in regarding almost every so-called 'superstition' as an index to a larger fact.

But this is a digression, we must return to the imprisoned Genius within us.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS FROM MR. J. J. MORSE.

IV.

December 24th, 1902.

According to the calendar this day is Christmas Eve, otherwise it would require some effort of the imagination to realise the imminence of the historic 'festive' season. As I pen these lines the sky is filled with leaden clouds, a stiff north-west wind is blowing, and a 'dust' storm is in full progress! Occasional splutters of rain drops are falling, and trees, shrubs, and vines are frantically waving in the rushing blast. Yet, bleak and wintry as the weather looks from my windows, the thermometer is calmly registering 76deg. in the shade! Curious to say, nevertheless, the proverbial 'oldest' resident assures me that this weather is quite exceptional for Christmastide; that it is usually fine, bright and cloudless, and the glass at about 160deg. in the sun! He considerably added, 'Wait until to-morrow, and then you may have a scorcher from the north!'

In other respects the season appeals to the spirit of the times, for tradesmen do their best to simulate the usual state of affairs at home. Windows are specially dressed, evergreens are used for decorations, and even holly is to be seen. Toys and fancy goods abound, the customary greeting cards are in the stationers' windows, and trade seems fairly brisk, considering the prevailing hard times. Family gatherings take place, but mostly in the form of country picnics rather than assemblies at home. But, as wanderers afar, our hearts and thoughts turn towards home and our friends, while deep down in our hearts is the feeling that we would prefer dear foggy old London town, grim and frowning though it be at this time of the year, to the smiles of Nature down here under the glitter of the Southern Cross. This, not because we are either unhappy or ungrateful, but because we love our homeland, and our lifelong friends therein. Our prayer is: May none be less happy to-day in merrie England than we are in 'sunny Australia,' as those who dwell in this Commonwealth delight to describe the land in which they live! How true it is that sentiment plays a larger part in our lives than many are, often, willing to acknowledge.

December 25th, 1902.

It is now Christmas Day, and contrary to the prognostications of my previously-mentioned friend, the temperature is not what he foretold, for the glass in my dining-room is only indicating 66deg. The wind is still coming in squalls, clouds are numerous, and the sun is making brave, but not very successful, efforts to favour us with his presence. I am assured the weather is quite exceptional for this time of the year, which is, of course, midsummer here. But so many times have we been told that this or that state of the weather is exceptional, that the conclusion is being forced upon us that the Melbourne climate is every whit as mixed and uncertain as is the climate of our native city.

We are spending a quiet Christmas—our three selves and Miss May Robertson, of Glasgow, constituting our family

gathering. Miss Robertson has been in Australia for almost a year for the benefit of her health, and when she reached us a few days ago we were simply astonished at the very great improvement she manifested since we parted with her at Tilbury Docks in January last.

In response to a pressing desire my work in Melbourne was carried forward an additional Sunday, and did not terminate until the first Sunday of this month. A very numerous audience attended, and the utmost good feeling was manifested. Much regret was expressed that my work was closed, but the announcement of my return for a further course in the autumn was enthusiastically applauded when made by Mr. Terry, the president of the association. On the two succeeding Sundays I lectured in Geelong and Ballarat, respectively. The first-named city is a charming place, and the centre of a very large trade in wool and agricultural produce. It has a population of about 15,000, and is about forty-five miles by rail from this city. By steamer, which is largely used, for the city is on an arm of the bay, the distance is a trifle more. The trip takes about four hours, and is very enjoyable and cheap, three shillings and sixpence for the return, as against eleven shillings by rail. A small circle has been in existence for a considerable time, at which a very promising trance speaker, Mr. H. Hobson, has been developed. The meeting was held in the Hibernian Hall, and we had a most satisfactory attendance. But prejudice runs hard against the subject, and ministers frequently warn their flocks from dealing in any form with so dangerous (?) a topic!

At Ballarat the state of affairs can only be described as deplorable. That city, with East Ballarat, has a population of about 44,000, and at one time (1878) had a flourishing Psychological Society, which body secured the services of Dr. Slade and Mr. Jesse Shepard for a series of sances, the results of which were recorded in a work issued by the late Mr. James Curtis, called 'Rustlings in the Golden City,' an English edition of which was lately issued by the publishers of 'LIGHT'; and, so far as Mr. Shepard's mediumship was concerned, the results were published in a pamphlet compiled by Mr. R. Lorrimer and issued by the society. Mr. Curtis was an old and respected citizen of Ballarat, owning one of the large printing establishments there. His business is now conducted by his niece. The society died, and in place of it an 'Eclectic Association' was formed, the latter body being in reality a Freethought association, and its principles being far too much in advance of the time, it fell into disrepute and soon became defunct. Most of the members were Spiritualists, so they, and the subject, shared in the common odium cast on the Freethought effort, and since then only two or three people have dared to say they are Spiritualists! The Mr. Lorrimer mentioned above was the only person who would undertake to promote my visit. The rest of the few avowed Spiritualists promised to attend the lecture, but emphatically refused to identify themselves openly with my presence, or take any active share therein! As a matter of fact, I was only introduced to three other Spiritualists, the rest being literally afraid to compromise themselves by being seen with a Spiritualist lecturer! The three local papers positively refused to name the matter for fear of being boycotted by their advertisers or supporters; while the advertisements of the meeting said not a word about Spiritualism! In the worst days at home I never encountered such timidity on the part of our people or our local Press. So far as mental freedom goes in regard to religious questions, I regret to say that I find a very different condition of affairs from what I had been led to believe was the case. Sectarian intolerance prevails in no small degree. My meeting was held in the Trades Hall, a neat hall capable of seating some three hundred people, and as there was an audience of nearly two hundred, Mr. Lorrimer said the attendance 'exceeded his most sanguine expectations.'

Ballarat is one of the original gold mining centres, and that industry is still flourishing, but it is all 'scientific' mining now. The pick, pan, and cradle have given place to the shaft, the stamp, and the mercury and cyanide processes. The 'digger' is displaced by the company, the camp by offices. Surface mining is a thing of the past, deep sinking is now the

rule. I was introduced to the president of the Mining Exchange, Mr. W. F. Emery, who is also the manager of the South Star Quartz Mining Company, and by his courtesy was enabled, in his company, to make a descent to the 1,400 feet level. Imagine a North country coal pit, without the dirt and grime, with the usual heading and winding gear, engines and pumping machinery, and you have a modern gold mine. Below ground the tunnels are about six feet high, with plenty of water running down the 'roads,' and at that depth the air is quite warm. One has to quite change one's clothes and put on canvas suits with thick boots, and he emerges into the daylight looking most disreputable, covered with mud, and partially soaked with water. Absolutely no romance is left, and getting gold is as prosaic nowadays as is winning coal. Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York, when on their late visit, visited the mine in question, and the company spent £250 in preparing for their visit, providing expensive decorations, dresses for their use, and so arranging matters that not the least inconvenience should be experienced. The visit was to be to the 2,000 feet level, which is perfectly dry, but the distinguished visitors refused to fulfil their intention of descending, so the money was wasted, and a not pleasant recollection is now retained. It is said, how truly I cannot say, that Lord Hopetoun, who was then Governor-General, laid an embargo on the descent, yet there was not the slightest danger, while naturally every precaution was taken to prevent any mishap. Personally I enjoyed the visit to the mine, but feel no temptation to become a miner!

On the last day of this month I sail in the ss. 'Warrimoo' for New Zealand, my first point being Invercargill, where I give a lantern lecture. The next day I proceed to Dunedin for six Sundays, some few of which will be devoted to Christchurch. Then I go on to Wellington for a month, returning to Melbourne, *via* Sydney, and possibly giving the latter city one or two Sundays. In April I hold my closing meetings here, and then go on to Brisbane for a month. After that we sail for the United States. Miss Morse has just returned from a most successful five weeks' work in Wellington, New Zealand, and will commence work in Melbourne for the association in January. But during my absence she and Mrs. Morse will remain here. I hope in my next to be able to say something regarding a series of very interesting sances I have been attending. But my space is gone, so, for this time, I must lay aside my pen.

66, Wilson-street,
Hawksburn, Melbourne, Australia.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Under the column of 'Notes and Queries' appearing in your issue for February 7th, Mr. E. D. Girdlestone draws an analogy between the 'unvarying and cast-iron laws' of Nature and a schoolboy's watch requiring regulation; this in reference to the momentous question of the efficacy of prayer.

This somewhat irreconcilable comparison in a paragraph dealing with a question of such vital importance, demands, I think—as doubtless do many other of your regular readers—some explanation from the able pen of its author. The difficulty which many thousands of thinking men experience in believing in the necessity for prayer, is, I venture to think, in the fact that an intervention on the part of the Creator in the operation of His laws would negative their unvariableness, and, as it were, cast a reflection on the work of the Almighty, presupposing as it would their ineffectiveness in performing the functions for which they were ordained. This one is very slow to concede. The only alternative open, however, would appear to precipitate one into the belief that prayer is the channel for human beings to glorify their Creator alone, and not one of solicitation as to their own immediate and, too often, dire needs. One would be glad to accept the suggestion of Mr. Girdlestone in the matter, but does it appeal to the reason, in view of the alarming distress and material difficulties which beset humanity on every hand and over which they have absolutely no control and for which they are entirely irresponsible? I feel sure that some further reference to this matter would be as acceptable to many of your readers as to yours truly,

C. F. SLATER.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21st, 1903.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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

THE MYERS' BOOK.

In relation to one matter,—the quality of the book—there will be but one opinion respecting Mr. F. W. H. Myers' long-expected work on 'Human Personality, and its survival of bodily death' (London: Longmans, Green and Co.). It is a great book, great in conception, great in execution, and great in the conclusions arrived at. It is also a book of supremely fine workmanship from every point of view. It is indeed a pleasure to face a book which at once impresses one as a book of perfect orderliness, with everything done that could be done to produce a level road, with every milestone in position and generously marked. The work runs to over 1,400 pages, but nearly 900 of these are given to a valuable Glossary, Syllabuses, Introduction, Appendices and a comprehensive Index.

Much of the matter relates to the early stages of the Psychical Research Society work, but it is all finely fitted into right places. A novel and notable feature is the introduction of Syllabuses for all the chapters. Every stage of the argument or exposition is neatly indicated and numbered, and these progressive numbers are repeated in the chapters where the full argument or exposition occurs. But the whole thing is workmanlike in the highest degree.

The great topics discussed are 'Disintegrations of Personality,' 'Genius,' 'Sleep,' 'Hypnotism,' 'Sensory Automatism,' 'Phantasms of the Dead,' 'Motor Automatism,' 'Trance, Possession and Ecstasy.' Around every one of these subjects, Mr. Myers gathered the results of years of patient and unpraised work. Indeed, looking back upon it all, there is something essentially heroic in the brave and dogged work done by this sturdy pioneer. We were often impatient with him, and not entirely without reason; and the prolonged swing backwards and forwards between hope and doubt grew at times to be very tiresome; but we never failed to recognise that we had to deal with a broad-minded and genuine seeker after truth,—a seeker, too, of supreme courage and honesty who was pulled unceasingly in two directions,—by the attractions of the Promised Land and by the desire to keep in hand the laggards he tried to lead. It was a hard fate, but he bore himself well through it all.

For one thing only we still feel sorry;—that he did not more fully identify himself with the avowed Spiritualists who for so long had borne the heat and burden of the day: and we say this because the present work shows abundantly that long before he deceased he fully shared

our faith. On the other hand we entirely appreciate the need for and the value of the half-way house which, with such singular capacity and success, he built up. And we say that, because he was far and away the most notable figure in, and for many years the one real inspirer of, the Society into which he put so much of his life.

And now, looking through this great work which, we feel sure, will not only live but greatly increase in value as the world awakes to the knowledge of the facts and truths here recorded, we can better see the uses of the writer's extreme carefulness, hesitation and patience. The result was an accumulation of evidence and of ideas which will long furnish material for inquirers now on the way; and another result is that the final conclusion in our favour has value of the highest kind.

A 'final conclusion in our favour' we say deliberately. It is manifest throughout. The most buoyant and emphatic statements are those which affirm the persistence of man after 'death' and the possibility of his return or, rather, of his continued power to influence and manifest here. We had better set that forth at once and, we hope, once for all, for the silencing of the foolish people who are fond of telling us that the Psychical Research Society has effectually quenched Spiritualism, whereas the truth is that it has done the very reverse. However, here is what its one great apostle says:—

The new evidence adduced in this book, while supporting the conception of the composite structure of the Ego, does also bring the strongest proof of its abiding unity, by showing that it withstands the shock of death. (Vol. I., p. xxv.)

In favour of the partisans of the unity of the Ego, the effect of the new evidence is to raise their claim to a far higher ground, and to substantiate it for the first time with the strongest presumptive proof which can be imagined for it;—a proof, namely, that the Ego can and does survive—not only the minor disintegrations which affect it during earth life, but the crowning disintegration of death. (Vol. I., p. 11.)

We can affect each other at a distance, telepathically; and if our incarnate spirits can act thus in at least apparent independence of the fleshly body, the presumption is strong that other spirits may exist independently of the body, and may affect us in similar manner. (Vol. I., p. 16.)

The conception of telepathy is not one that in its nature need be confined to spirits still incarnate; and we shall find evidence (Chapter VII.) that intercourse of similarly direct type can take place between discarnate and incarnate spirits. (Vol. I., p. 19.)

Telepathy looks like a law prevailing in the spiritual as well as in the material world. And that it does so prevail, I now add, is proved by the fact that those who communicated with us telepathically in this world communicate with us telepathically from the other. Man, therefore, is not a planetary or a transitory being; he persists as very man among cosmic and eternal things. (Vol. I., p. 26.)

It seems to me now that the evidence for communication with the spirits of identified deceased persons through the trance utterings and writings of sensitives apparently controlled by those spirits, is established beyond serious attack. (Vol. I., p. 29.)

As to the much derided movement of matter by spirits ('table turning' and the like) Mr. Myers says (Vol. I., p. 32):—

We know that the spirit of a living man controls his own organism, and we shall see reason to think that discarnate spirits may also control, by some form of 'possession,' the organisms of living persons—may affect directly, that is to say, some portions of matter which we call living, namely, the

brain of the entranced sensitive. There seems to me, then, no paradox in the supposition that some effect should be produced by spiritual agency—possibly through the mediation of some kind of energy derived from living human beings—upon inanimate matter as well.

This gives us all we want, to cover passive writing, trance-speaking, 'raps,' 'table-moving,' the passing of matter through matter, and all the rest of the 'superstitious nonsense' or 'impudent fraud' which the Psychical Research Society is said to have dissipated.

Oddly enough, however, on page 6, Mr. Myers says, 'This work of mine is in large measure a critical attack upon the main Spiritist position';—an unfortunate line which seems to be thrust in, and which will probably be much quoted and viciously used. 'The main Spiritist position' turns out to be a mere question of degree. According to Mr. Myers, the 'Spiritist' believes that 'all or almost all supernormal phenomena are due to the action of spirits of the dead,' whereas he held that 'the larger proportion are due to the action of the still embodied spirit of the agent or percipient himself.' That is all! But it is an entire misrepresentation to say that 'the main Spiritist position' is to be found in a question of quantity. Our 'main position' has nothing to do with quantity but is covered and justified if only one has managed, from the spirit-side of the veil, to do what Mr. Myers says many have done. As we have shown, he entirely gives in to what is really our 'main position.' We should like to know the history of that almost vicious line.

One doubt haunts us. We see no mention of one of the most important factors in Mr. Myers' conversion,—his séances with Mrs. Thompson. These came towards the end of his life, were spread over a long period, and very greatly influenced him. We turned to the extremely clever and exhaustive Index and find indeed Mrs. Thompson's name, but only one reference to her (Vol. I., page 29). Turning to the page, we see no mention made of Mrs. Thompson, but we see a reference to Mrs. Piper and to 'more than one other medium.' One is half tempted to think that in a previous incarnation of this book Mrs. Thompson appeared at this spot, got duly entered in the Index, and was then cut out and dismissed as the 'more than one other medium,' while the Index entry was forgotten. We can only hope that this great work was not over revised. But, as it stands, it is more than welcome: it commands our reverence and gratitude; and we believe it will stand as one of the great books of this century.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

In the interest of Members and Associates of the Alliance who find it impracticable or inconvenient to attend the Afternoon Drawing Room Meetings,

A SOCIAL GATHERING

will be held in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall, Regent-street, on the

EVENING OF THURSDAY, MARCH 5TH,

for conversation and the interchange of thoughts upon subjects of mutual interest. *Music at intervals.* The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock. Tea and Coffee will be served at 8.30 p.m. Admission will be by tickets only, which will be forwarded to all Members and Associates; but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

THE HON. ALEXANDER AKSAKOF.

BY ONE OF HIS FRIENDS.

Knowing that Madame E. d'Espérance had enjoyed for many years intimate friendly relations with Mr. Aksakof, we ventured to ask that lady to favour our readers with some of her reminiscences of his devotion to the cause of Spiritualism and his labours on its behalf. Madame d'Espérance has courteously complied with our request by the following very interesting communication:—

It is said that no man's loss is irreparable. It may be so, for we are only short-sighted creatures at the best, but to Spiritualists the loss of such a worker as the Hon. Alexander Aksakof leaves a blank that seems impossible to fill. The greater part of his life was devoted to the work of elucidating the phenomena called spiritual, of sifting the wheat from the tares, the undoubtable from the doubtful, and of placing before the world the conclusions to which he had been led.

As an investigator, he was by nature, temperament, and training eminently fitted for the work. He was keen, thoughtful, observant, the reverse of impulsive, and his actions, conclusions, and words, being always the result of thoughtful consideration, had, therefore, a value which time will but increase.

In his earlier years a follower of Swedenborg and a student of the works of the Great Seer, his thoughts naturally flowed in the same direction. Though admiring and venerating the teacher, he clearly saw the objections that non-students could raise—that it was not easy to draw a line where the opinions or ideas of the Man affected the visions of the Seer, and that errors or misconceptions, without intention to mislead himself or others, were therefore likely to creep into his works.

The advent of Modern Spiritualism opened to Mr. Aksakof a field of research which, as he once remarked to me, was on a level with his own intelligence, whereas the dreams of the Seer were beyond the reach of ordinary minds to prove or disprove. One could only accept or refuse them, but the phenomena which were daily becoming more known were a tangible something, and, if genuine, were not beyond the efforts of careful observers and scientific investigators to establish beyond doubt; and to this work he devoted the greater part of his life, his energy, and his fortune.

In this work he was at the outset given exceptional advantages. The great medium, Mr. D. D. Home, became connected through marriage with the Aksakof family, and Madame Aksakof was herself mediumistic.

A short biography of Mr. Aksakof appeared in the French and German Spiritualist journals in the early nineties, and also in 'LIGHT' in 1894, giving an account of his work up to that time. The account was necessarily meagre, nor did it tell under what circumstances that work was done; how constant weak health, incessant torment from neuralgia of the head, augmented during the last twelve or fifteen years by an affection of the eyes, caused him at times for weeks together to be utterly prostrate. He would at such times express his conviction that his strength was exhausted, that his work had been broken off, and that it must be left unfinished. Yet when there came a time when the pain was less, and he felt a slight return of strength, he would set to work again with renewed energy. If one urged him to rest, not to exhaust himself, he would reply, 'Our lives here on earth are short enough. We ought not to neglect any opportunity to do what is to be done.'

'Thorough' is a word which may well be rightly applied to his work, for whatever he did he did thoroughly, cost what it might. No expense, no labour, no care was spared in order to get at the truth. 'No matter what the truth is,' he would say, 'let us have it if it is to be had.'

So it frequently happened that when some fresh incident or new experience came to his knowledge which could possibly throw a light on some former unexplained circumstance, the particulars of that circumstance—though they may have been lying for many years waiting—would be again examined and thought over in the light of the new experience, with the

result that they would again be pigeon-holed, or a fresh investigation set on foot and pursued indefatigably.

His interest in the cause of Spiritualism overcame his weakness. In a letter dated May, 1891, he wrote :—

‘I have been very ill. I have had a terrible attack of influenza. It holds me in its clutches yet. I have suffered such terrible pain in my chest that I thought many times I was dying. But no! here I am writing to you again! During a whole month I have been in bed; now I am convalescent, but very, very feeble, and always feverish.

‘Now I have received the last information relative to “Strömberg.” What an immense amount of trouble he has given us. Thank God the evidence is now complete, and we have something of real value to give to the world.

‘I shall print the whole case first in my German journal. Mr. Myers, whom I expect shortly in St. Petersburg, wants the case printed in the journal of their society. We must spread it as widely as possible. De Rochas says it is the only case which came under his notice where telepathy is absolutely excluded. Be that as it may, I am glad we persevered and brought the matter to its conclusion. It helps me to be patient in my sufferings. Mr. Fidler has worked hard, indefatigably, and you too, *ma bonne amie*, have been good. Thanks!

‘“The golden lily” case has already been sent to Leipzig with my notes, and “Strömberg” shall follow immediately. Now I can get on with the translation into Russian of my “Animismus und Spiritismus.” Miss P. is acting as amanuensis. I am dictating to her. We are also preparing a translation of Mr. Fidler’s articles with my notes for our Russian journal “Rebus,” as well as the “Strömberg” case. I, of course, must help much. If only my state of health would improve! At present it is miserable. The progress of the cataracts and the feebleness of my sight, and the trouble with my head, are extreme, so that when this work in hand is ready, I pray that the good God will conduct me “upstairs.”’

Later in the same year he writes :—

‘I am enchanted to hear that you are better again, and, above all, to feel the spirit in which you write. Thank God! you have regained Peace and Faith, the two conditions essential to make life tolerable.

‘Your letters make me happy, for this has been a time of trial and perplexity for us both. Thank God it is over!

‘How is the society Mr. Fidler founded progressing? Have you begun to take a renewed interest in it? Do not be discouraged. Work! Hope! Pray! Something good will surely come from all your efforts.

‘My eyes? They are still suffering terribly. I must always keep in darkness to avoid acute pain, and then I am, of course, as if already blind; but I could not resist letting in the light to look at your pictures, which have just arrived. I am so glad to have secured them. How they please me! And to know that you have carried off the prize you strove for delights me greatly.

‘I am glad you can lose your cares in your art. I wish I had such a resource. My sister is helping me to learn to play the piano. If I only could it would help me to bear my blindness better, but I fear I am too old to learn.’

In December, 1892, he wrote :—

‘You will be tired of waiting for news, but I am going now to surprise you. I left Repiofka, as you know, in August, suffering from a renewed attack of the (quotidian) fever, a reminiscence of last year’s influenza—nor was I better when I arrived in St. Petersburg. They treated me there for ten days without result, which vexed me to the end of my patience, and I put myself in a railway carriage *en route* for Paris, in the hope of leaving the fever behind me. I could not stay in Paris, for so much time had already been lost, but left immediately for Milan, where I arrived on September 10th.

‘All had been previously arranged for a series of séances with Eusapia Paladino. She soon arrived from Naples, and a little circle of *savants* assembled, two philosophers, three physicians, one astronomer—the celebrated Schiaparelli; and besides these and ourselves we had visits from time to time from Professor Richet, of Paris, and Professor Lombroso, of Turin. The result of our experiments was greatly beyond our expectations, and produced an enormous sensation in Milan. Altogether we had seventeen séances. We have published our report, signed by us all. The name of Schiaparelli was—particularly in Italy—something unexpected, and, of course, caused a sensation. Wasn’t it shocking?

‘The whole undertaking has been a complete success. It will be my last work for Spiritualism, and it fully compen-

sates me for my trouble—and the trouble was great. Figure to yourself my condition, for though on the long journey I was, comparatively speaking, fairly well, the fever seized me again in Milan, and during the six weeks of my sojourn never left me, making the nights a torment to me. In spite of that I have been constantly at work with both head and hands to carry my enterprise to a successful finish; but I was prevented from attending the last séances. I was too utterly prostrate.

‘I had the hope of leaving the fever behind me, and that really happened, for since my return on October 22nd I have had no fever, and begin slowly to regain my ordinary little strength. Such is my report of myself! Have I surprised you?

‘Now I receive the reports of your work in Norway. How enchanted I am! You in the North, I in the South, have both accomplished something. Continue! Continue! and tell me all your news. It helps to give me courage to endure my pains.’

In May of the year following (1893) he wrote :—

‘I have finished the translation of my Russian “Animismus.” Have published anew the translation (not mine) of the English work “Phantasms of the Living,” and have carried on a long polemic in the newspapers as to my experiences in Milan, &c., &c.

‘Now, thank God! the winter is finished and my work as well. I am terribly fatigued! You have been ill too, but you have worked well. Now rest a little, but your excellent work must be well recorded. Do try to get me all details of the séances in Christiania. You are so careless as to these things, *ma bonne amie*, but such work is lost unless recorded, and it is too precious to lose. Get me the notes; no matter the language, I will arrange it somehow, tired as I am.’

His work, however, was not finished, neither for that year nor for several more to follow. Suffering always more or less intensely, when it was a question of furthering the cause of Spiritualism his mind rose above the ills of his physical body. ‘Why not rest now?’ he was once asked in my hearing. ‘You have done so much, you have satisfied yourself, try to be content to let others do the same. If people *want* to know whether there is a continued existence or whether communication between the two states is a fact, they will find means to satisfy themselves, but if they *do not*, then not all the books you write will make them believe it.’

But such arguments had no effect; he kept at work, striving always, sometimes hopefully, sometimes the reverse; for the investigation of this subject is not always encouraging to the experimenter.

In December of 1893 we met at his home in St. Petersburg. We had much to discuss, many notes to compare, much to relate of what had passed.

‘It is’ (he said) ‘three and a-half years since we met last. We have both passed through a painful time. Our holiest, deepest convictions received a blow which threw us backwards down the ladder which we had climbed with so much difficulty. We have had to begin again with saddened hearts. I feared much for myself, but I feared more for you lest your courage should fail you. But I am happy again now that I have seen you, *ma bonne amie*, and heard from your own lips that all your doubts and fears are gone, and that you *know* that at the bottom of all these things there is truth. That is what we are seeking—Truth. What matters it if the truth does not fit our preconceived ideas of it? That is the fault of our ideas. We form a theory and try to find a truth that will fit it, and are apt to reject it if it does not. Better for us if we could find the truth first and theorise afterwards; it would save us so much trouble and disappointment.’

Speaking once of the many and various theories extant respecting spiritualistic phenomena, after having one day listened to a long and rather tedious speech as to the freaks and vagaries of that much-quoted ‘subliminal consciousness,’ I remarked that it was ‘like a person journeying right round the earth in order to reach a spot that was within sight of his starting point; he arrived all right at last, but at what a cost! What toil, dangers, fatigue, and weariness of spirit! Why could he not accept the Spiritualist theory at once and have done with it?’

‘Every man’ (replied Mr. Aksakof) ‘must reach the goal by the road he is most fitted to travel. One may reach it in a leap. Another must creep slowly, examining the way inch by inch. And there are as many and diverse ways as there is

a diversity of minds. We must not expect all to leap, nor all to travel the same road. If mediums would take a wider view of the subject I fancy it would become acceptable to a greater number.'

'But if a medium is a Spiritualist as well as a medium' (I replied) 'it is only natural that he or she works to further Spiritualism as he or she understands it.'

'Exactly, and if the medium's understanding of the subject is limited, he cannot present it in a form particularly alluring to persons who take such wide views of it as the one we have just been listening to.'

'Then we must educate our mediums.'

'Perhaps so. That is a question for others, after us, to consider. We are as yet only groping after something which we believe to exist; let us first be content to prove clearly to all that its existence is a fact. The rest will follow.'

That was his great aim, to prove clearly to all minds, to be able to show indisputable evidence, which would stand the test of time. In his investigations he neglected no opportunity, spared no pains. He kept himself informed of the progress of the movement and of the work done by mediums in all parts of the world. In his experiments with mediums he exercised the greatest possible care, and while imposing crucial tests he did so with a delicacy and good feeling that they could not offend the most susceptible. During sésances nothing escaped his notice; every incident, however trifling, was noted and afterwards carefully considered as to its bearing on the question.

Many times it was with a sickening disappointment that these notes were put out of sight for the time being, but, whatever his feeling in the matter might be, his attitude towards the medium was always that of a courteous gentleman grateful for his services. Unless some very real reason arose why he should express an unfavourable opinion of a medium or his work, he invariably kept it to himself, or simply said—with such and such a one 'I was not fortunate.'

In his case the power of will over matter was frequently exemplified. Suffering as he did, the knowledge that in some part of the country something was occurring which might elucidate some difficult question would brace him up to exertions almost incredible.

Shortly after my visit to St Petersburg he wrote:—

'I was so immensely happy when I received the news from Helsingfors relative to this memorable sésance, which will make an epoch in Spiritualism, if these good people will only help me. I have received letters concerning it from General T—s, Captain T—s, Professor Seiling, and from two ladies who were present. Of course I have replied, asking, as you may suppose, innumerable questions, filling some nine pages. As yet I have no answer, I suppose because of its being the Christmas holidays. I will give them a little time to answer. I hope I shall get all I want, otherwise I shall go myself to Helsingfors to get all particulars. *I must have them at all costs.*'

He went to Helsingfors and got what he wanted, and more than he had expected, for he won the hearts of all with whom his inquiries brought him in contact. They were enthusiastic in their expressions of admiration for the man whose name they revered, but whose personal acquaintance they had never hoped to make.

Having got the particulars and verified them in minutest detail, he set to work to arrange them for publication. This took a long time as his eyesight failed rapidly and he suffered unspeakably. Eventually 'A Case of Partial Dematerialisation' was published in Paris, in Germany, and later in America. The publication of this book caused an overwhelming amount of correspondence, which exhausted him terribly, and he was for a long time unable to make the smallest exertion. Once he wrote, 'I think neuralgia must have been invented by the old inquisitors. It will not kill, but the torture is diabolical.'

In 1896, he wrote to me:—

'I am yielding, in spite of all, to the solicitations of my friends, and you will be very astonished when I tell you that in three days I am going to Paris! Why, you ask? To consult a celebrated physician, the best in Europe for the diseases of my kind. A last effort, with no hope at all, but *par aqut de conscience*. I have grown much worse since the winter, especially my eyes. You are in Bavaria, among the mountains you love. It would not be so long a journey from there to Paris, fifteen to eighteen hours perhaps, and I want to see *ma bonne amie* once more while my eyes still serve. Will you

come? It will be our last interview unless the unexpected happens, for there is no prospect for me of ever going abroad again and there is so very much of which I want to speak with you.'

We met in Paris a few days later, a little party of us. We had, as Mr. Aksakof said, much to speak of, and the knowledge that it was probably our last meeting on earth saddened the pleasure I felt in meeting my dear friend after the lapse of nearly three years.

'What does the doctor say?' I asked him anxiously.

'About as I supposed,' he replied, 'but we will not speak of that; there are other things of more importance to consider.'

Thus he put aside the matter which had occasioned that long wearisome journey. But I understood that the doctor had given him no hope. After that he seldom referred to his eyes. Before we parted, he said:—

'It is doubtful that I shall ever see you again, but we will always work together somehow. I shall attend you on the other plane and help you from "upstairs," *don't forget that*. It may not be so easy for me to find a way, but in this world I have found that work and patience accomplish everything that is possible. Promise never to give up your part, even under great discouragement, and I promise the same on mine. Even though you may be "downstairs" and I "upstairs," we may, perhaps, go on with the work we have begun. Perhaps more satisfactorily—who knows!'

My friend's goodness, gentleness, and nobility of character, his constant, untiring devotion to our Cause, place him for ever in the highest ranks of those great pioneers of Spiritualism who have striven to make the path straight for those who are to come after us.

He did not relinquish his work even when the worst calamity befell. His right hand became useless, and his eyes almost sightless; but his wonderful brain was clear, and so long as he had strength to dictate a word he did so. Many of his friends passed over to the other side—a member of his family, Mr. Myers, Mr. Fidler, M. Leymarie, and others, within but few weeks of each other—and their loss affected him painfully. Perhaps their passing away spurred him on to a last effort before he, too, must follow them, for within a short time he translated and published in Russia the book of Colonel de Rochas, 'Exteriorisation of Motoricity,' and he also issued the second edition, in Russian, of his own work, 'Animismus und Spiritismus,' and a pamphlet written for the occasion of the one thousandth issue of the Russian Spiritualists' Review.

Some annoyance was caused to him by the work of Dr. Lehmann, of Copenhagen, entitled, 'Histoire des Superstitions et de la Sorcellerie,' the object of which work was to throw discredit on all psychic phenomena, which he denounced as 'vulgar superstition,' and particularly on Swedenborg, founding his calumnies on a Swedish work issued in 1859. The mangling of facts and the false statements which the author unblushingly published, annoyed Mr. Aksakof exceedingly, and he set to work upon a refutation concerning them. Not being able to read the original Swedish book from which the statements were supposed to have been taken, he obtained the English, German, and French translations of it in order the better to denounce what he said was 'the most impudent work against Spiritualism that had been published.' All these things tired him exceedingly.

About Christmas time he had an attack of influenza, under which he sank. Of this a friend says: 'He had been unable to move for some weeks. On Saturday evening, January 17th, his friends were assembled in his sick room. Suddenly they saw Mr. Aksakof, who lay motionless on his bed, with his eyes shut, open them widely, sit up on his cushions as though lifted by someone, look up and around him, with an expression of surprise, pleasure, and felicity. There was a smile on his face, a faint colour appeared on his pale cheek; it lasted one moment, then he sighed, lay down, and was gone.'

The friend who sent me these particulars of his last moments on earth adds; 'Was it not strange? Madame B—f (his sister) says she is sure his spirit friends came to his assistance; probably they also lifted him in his bed, for he could not have done it by himself, weak and paralysed as he was.'

Another member of the family writes: 'He left us,

going to the New Life. At the last moment he suddenly sat up in his bed as if he had a vision. He gazed with an admiring, wondering joy, first at the vision and then on the afflicted relatives, then closed his eyes as if going to sleep, and was gone.'

His last words written to me with his own hand some time ago, are :—

'Adieu ! *ma bonne amie* ! My good friend, Farewell ! My work is done ! I am sorry, but such is fate. Perhaps it is the last time I am speaking to you. Work on ! Work on ! My best wishes will be ever with you.'

These words, almost illegible, difficult to read as they are, are amongst my most valued treasures. After that he could only dictate his letters, till at last even that was beyond his strength.

He has gone 'upstairs' to the *Belle Etage* he so often alluded to—and the world is much poorer for his loss—leaving an aching, questioning void in the hearts of many who loved and honoured him exceedingly.

Good friend ! For you the great question is answered. The mystery you strove to pierce is solved. Your faith is exchanged for knowledge. Do not forget us, nor your promise to help us. We will await its fulfilment as patiently as we may. Till then, good friend, farewell !

F. D'ESPÉRANCE.

P.S.—A friend at my elbow asks me to say on her behalf : 'Whenever Spiritualism and the workers in its cause are mentioned, *his* name will stand out bright and clear as one of its best and most noble-hearted pioneers ! His memory will remain blessed, and the fruits of his work will follow him !'

'THOUGHTS OF A GUILLOTINED HEAD.'

The story of Wiertz and the guillotined head was recently reproduced by Jean Eriam, with details, though *without* dates, in the 'Progrès Spirite.' I fail to see that M. Détré has made good his case in the attempt to disprove it, and I still maintain that it has probably some foundation in fact, though perhaps prior to 1861. The placing of it at that date by the 'Figaro' correspondent may have been an error based on inaccurate approximation.

Though I am quite prepared to believe that the story has obtained a certain amount of picturesque embroidering, it may not be of necessity entirely devoid of all foundation, since it has been so constantly reproduced in various ways. In any case, M. Détré advances nothing more than his bare assertion and certain pure assumptions with no proof whatever. The details he mentions are all interesting in themselves, but they tend rather to confirm, than otherwise, the idea that the painter was probably greatly interested in psychological problems. In any case, his pictures speak for themselves on that point. They are strangely weird, and in some cases morbidly suggestive, as many admit. M. Détré does not find them so ; but that is a mere difference of personal opinion.

Again, M. Détré makes the wholly unwarranted statement that 'an experiment of the kind would be absolutely futile and valueless, because the subject, not being *en rapport* at all with the criminal, could only reflect the personal impressions, &c., of the magnetiser or hypnotiser.' How does he know ? Is it by virtue of his membership of the 'Groupe Indépendant d'Etudes ésotériques de Paris' that he makes such a sweeping and unscientific assertion ? A study of well-authenticated facts would enable M. Détré to use his deductive reasoning powers better and see that a subject, put into a state of lucid somnambulism, could not fail under similar circumstances to reflect and express the thoughts and feelings of a human being undergoing, in close proximity to him, such supreme mental and physical agony as would probably take place before and during decapitation. For M. Détré to say that the subject *could not* is merely to put his personal opinion forward against a mass of evidence concerning the phenomena of higher trance and lucidity. I should have thought enough had been written and proved, by many indefatigable experimentalists, to show that subjects are perfectly capable of reflecting and reproducing

both the thoughts and emotions of another individual when suggested to do so by their operator. These thoughts and feelings they will describe in their own vocabulary, and we need not for a moment suppose that the exact phraseology would be transmitted in the process, for as a matter of fact this is not generally the case.

The gratuitous comment which M. Détré makes on the fact that, because Wiertz was a 'knight of all sorts of Orders,' he would never consent to become the 'hypnotic subject of a doctor,' is superfluous, if, as the story expressly states, Wiertz was especially anxious to obtain some sort of knowledge on a particularly interesting scientific point, viz., how long consciousness would persist in the head after decapitation. The fact that Wiertz was a 'Clericalist' might make him all the more anxious to realise, if possible, something of the after-death condition of a murderer, and is in itself no proof that he could not have been capable of carrying out this particular experiment.

Finally, the value of the story, whether true or not, does not lie in the fact that it concerns Wiertz especially, but rather in the suggestion implied that interesting experiments might be carried out by scientists with subjects in which, apart from thought-transference, very important lines of research might be attempted.

Since writing the above I have had occasion to look over an old work entitled, 'Statuovism,' by Dr. Fahnstock, of Boston, published in 1861, in which are found many extremely interesting accounts of experiences in thought-transference and clairvoyance which he obtained through sensitives, and which have direct bearing on the subject of our argument. As he appears to have been a most industrious experimentalist, his definite conclusions are interesting. He writes ;—

'I can no longer doubt that some subjects have the extraordinary power of reading or knowing the mind of any person at pleasure, and can do so although the persons may be at a distance. This fact, which I at one time very much doubted, I was eventually forced to believe, and the only rational solution of the manner in which it is effected is, that the mind, or the faculties of the brain, reaching out, or being translated to, the mental aura of the individual, there reads, and it may be often unconsciously, the mental image formed either in symbols or in words. That they can do this I am constrained to say I have proved more than a thousand times. . . . Concerning the practice of putting persons into what has been termed *en rapport* communication, correspondence, or sympathy with them, &c., various methods have been adopted to effect this end. . . . I will not enter upon them here. I have always found such proceedings unnecessary, and when such a desideratum is desired by any person, it is only necessary for the instructor, or the person into whose care they have intrusted themselves, to direct their attention to the individual in question, or to make them acquainted with their desires, and they will travel with, or read their minds as well *without contact, passes, &c.*, as with them.'

Again, at the conclusion of his book, after presenting innumerable accounts of experiments carried out with patients and sensitives, he remarks :—

'Of all the phenomena exhibited by persons in this state [the subjective or state of superficial somnambulism, such as might have been produced on Wiertz], I consider their ability to read the mind of another, one of the most extraordinary faculties which they possess. Their physical insensibility, their powers of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling things, &c., at a distance are extraordinary powers ; but to read an idea, a thought, a mental image, a something that is not tangible, or which can neither be seen, heard, tasted, nor felt in a natural state, I conceive is, if possible, still greater than all.'

J. STANNARD.

'THE QUEST OF BEAUTY.'—'Such is the title,' says the 'Daily Express,' 'of Mr. Wake Cook's pictures now on view at the Fine Art Society's Exhibition, Bond-street. He has been to Venice, and found there the beauty he was looking for, and has immortalised the Campanile, which is, alas ! no more. He knows how to render the polished surface of marble and the gleam of mosaic wonderfully well, and his little pictures of dark doorways, from which figures emerge into bright sunlight, are particularly effective. He pursued his quest to Rome and to the Italian lakes in spring, and the exhibition is altogether very attractive.'

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.

Allow me a parting word to 'Perplexed.' His (or her) second letter shows a state of mind which can only be satisfied by practical investigation. If this is undertaken in an honest and earnest spirit your correspondent will find in spirit photography mysteries more profound and more interesting than the comparatively small difficulty in regard to John Lamont's portrait.

In my letter in 'LIGHT,' January 31st, I stated that the reasons given by 'Perplexed' for doubting the genuineness of the portrait obtained by Mr. Robertson apply with equal force to many psychic photographs, obtained under strict test conditions, by other experienced investigators.

'The resources of the photographer' is a neater phrase than the word 'frauds,' but it is an old bogey which now fails to frighten.

If 'Perplexed' decides to investigate, he will be safeguarded against fraud by adopting the precautions he refers to, but he will also most probably find these precautions will prevent the attainment of successful results; in first experiments at all events.

Your correspondent asks, 'Have any of your readers been permitted to conduct the process themselves *throughout*, without the photographer having an opportunity to determine the position of the camera, to touch the plates, or to develop them?' If he refers to Mr. B., I reply, Yes, I have not only been permitted but invited to do so. And I know other persons who can give the same reply. If the question is a general one, including other mediums, I reply—Yes, times without number.

I informed 'Perplexed' that marks which appear on one psychic picture are sometimes seen also on other plates which have the same abnormal images. This has been known for years; but, as if it were something new, he calls the information given to him an 'admission'; the word is misleading, and is improper, if not impertinent. He asks what is he to think. He may think what he likes, but if he publishes insinuations of fraud against a medium on grounds which are entirely insufficient, his position is not far removed from that of a perverter of truth. Attacks of that sort have driven good mediums out of the movement.

Mr. Parkinson is of opinion that the portrait of John Lamont is not a psychic portrait. I am of opinion that it is. That is to say, that it has been produced by occult or spirit agency. And my experience in spirit photography extends over thirty years.

Mr. Horton is mistaken in stating ('LIGHT,' p. 71), 'Invariably heads, and perhaps hands, alone are distinctly shown in spirit photography.' This description applies to some photographs, but certainly not to all. So that Mr. Horton's hypothesis—if applicable to any—is only so to a limited number. Any explanation offered must cover the whole ground, otherwise it cannot be satisfactory.

I do not intend to take further part in this discussion.

A PRACTICAL INVESTIGATOR.

My experience with Mr. Bournsell has convinced me that he is a genuine spirit photographer. When I was going through London to the Paris Exhibition, I attended a materialising séance. A spirit spoke in Latin, and I was told that this one was Cardinal Newman. It seemed to me that if he was desirous of proving a *post-mortem* existence he would be a suitable spirit to be photographed, because, having been such a well-known man when on earth, he could be easily recognised. There is a medium in Birmingham through whom I obtain automatic writing. When I want to get information from the spirit-world or advice from a spirit-doctor, the medium comes to my house and is either controlled or writes automatically. When I asked if Cardinal Newman would try to be photographed, I received a reply in automatic writing that he would do his best to materialise sufficiently to make an impression on the plate. Before going to London I got the plates marked with a Greek sign by a Christian who is an amateur photographer. Now the point that I want especially to emphasise is that Mr. Bournsell was absolutely ignorant of what I

expected. I went to the studio with the intention of having Cardinal Newman photographed and no one else; but several spirits were photographed besides the Cardinal, and some that I never expected. Bishop Fraser was photographed, and also my father-in-law and my sister. If I remember rightly, my sister died in the year 1873 or 1874. She was never in England during her earth-life, and there never was a photograph of her in England, and I do not even remember now if she ever was photographed before she died. It would never have occurred to my mind that my father-in-law would be photographed, because when on earth he was a doctor, was an agnostic, and took no interest in spiritual matters. Now Mr. Bournsell did not know that my father-in-law and sister had ever existed until he photographed them. Mr. Horton's theory is inapplicable so far as my experience is concerned, because I did not know Cardinal Newman and Bishop Fraser when they were on the earth and never saw a physical photograph of them in my life until after I had seen their spirit photographs. I may say, however, that on one occasion I attended a lecture at the Smethwick Institute on photography. During the time it was being delivered reference was made to spirit photography, and the lecturer said that it was a fraud. I told the lecturer twice that that was false. I left the institute before the lecture was ended because I was displeased with the lecturer. I had an appointment that night with a medium who is not connected with public mediumship. When I went to his house a spirit controlled the medium, who pointed with his finger and said: 'Cardinal Newman is just standing here, and it was the Cardinal that roused you to reply to the lecturer.' I know from my experience with Mr. Bournsell that spirit photography is an absolute fact, but as to whether all photographs that are represented to be spirit photographs are genuine, I do not know and have no means of ascertaining.

ARIEL.

[We have received other communications on the subject of Spirit Photography, but the above must suffice for the present issue.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—Mr. Alfred Peters gives illustrations of clairvoyance at the rooms of the Alliance every *Tuesday*, at 3 p.m. No one will be admitted *after three*. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; to friends introduced by them 2s. each.

DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES.—Mr. George Spriggs gives his services in the diagnosis of diseases every *Thursday* from 1 to 4 p.m. No fee is charged, but Mr. Spriggs suggests that every consultant should make a contribution of at least 5s. to the funds of the Alliance.

MEETINGS FOR PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT.—The next meeting (for Members and Associates only) will be held on *Thursday* afternoon, March 5th, conducted by Mr. E. W. Wallis. Hours from 4.30 to 5.30. No person admitted *after 4.30*. There is no fee or subscription.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—Members and Associates of the Alliance who find it difficult to gain access to private séances will be glad to learn that arrangements have been made with Mrs. M. H. Wallis for a series of meetings at the rooms of the Alliance, at which pleasant and instructive talks may be had with one of her intelligent controls. These séances will be held every *Thursday*, and will commence at 3 p.m., prompt. The fee will be one shilling each, and any Member or Associate may introduce a friend at the same rate of payment. Friends who desire to put questions would do well to bring them already written.

TRAGEDY PICTURED IN DREAM REALISED.—'Mrs. Theodore Borcholt, of New York, is a believer in telepathy,' says the 'Light of Truth,' and she recently had a painful test of its truth. She awoke early on the morning of January 16th after a restless night, during which she had dreamed her husband had taken his life. Excited by the realism of the dream, she shook her husband, who until recently was a bookkeeper for the General Electric Company. He did not respond, and she rose and lighted the gas. A doctor was called, who said that Borcholt had been dead several hours, and that he had died from laudanum poisoning.'

MR. WM. HY. EDWARDS writes to say that for the present he is engaged part of the week in Brighton on an important case, and can only undertake cases by letter making appointment. Patients residing at Brighton may utilise this opportunity by writing him at his private address, 247, Ivydale-road, Nunhead.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

'The Christ Life.'

SIR,—I was much struck by Mr. J. C. Kenworthy's lecture delivered at Essex Hall, Strand, in which he tries to apply the 'Christ-life' to practical (modern) life. May I suggest the impossibility of giving lectures in hired halls, joining learned societies, and appearing on platforms in decent attire, if one gave up one's all to those 'worse off than ourselves'? Christ's teachings *spiritually* may be applied to all times, nations, and climates—not so the literal teaching of 'giving all that thou hast to the poor,' &c.' A little thought on *climates* would alone demonstrate the impossibility of any such absolute carrying out of 'the letter.'

LOIS BARRACLOUGH.

Battle-road,
St. Leonards-on-Sea.

'The Witch of Prague.'

SIR,—In reading Mr. Marion Crawford's book 'The Witch of Prague,' I came across the following passage:—

'Now we know with certainty that if upon one arm of a hypnotised patient we impress a letter of the alphabet cut out of wood, telling him that it is red-hot iron, the shape of the letter will on the following day be found as a raw and painful wound, not only in the place we selected but on the other arm, in the exactly corresponding spot, and reversed as though seen in a looking-glass; and we very justly consider that a physician who does not know this and similar facts is dangerously behind the times, since the knowledge is open to all.'

To one who, like myself, has not studied hypnotism at all, this statement came as a surprise. I was under the impression that a sensation like that described could be induced in a subject in hypnotic sleep while he remained so; but I did not know it was possible, and can hardly think it probable, that a 'raw and painful' physical wound would remain after the hypnotic treatment.

Perhaps some of your readers who know more about hypnotism than I do, would kindly throw a little additional light on the subject.

F. C. GARDNER.

'The Song of the Cross.'*

SIR,—May I be allowed to suggest that your Note in a recent issue of 'LIGHT,' referring to Mr. Macbeth's 'Song of the Cross,' fails to do full justice to that remarkable volume? It is not a book on which one ought to practise the histrionic operation of 'damning by faint praise'; and there is little in the book that can stamp it as either Radical or Conservative, or of any political complexion whatever. The author doubtless regards with intense horror the enormous amount of national energy and cost expended in the arts of destruction, and finds a typical illustration of this in the Boer war. But this is rather an expression of philanthropy than of political opinion, and arises naturally from the spirit of unlimited sympathy with all forms of human suffering which seems to be the spring out of which all the 'rhapsody,' and invocation, and infinite yearning for emancipation from evil and suffering, arises. The book is doubtless full of this kind of musing and aspiration, and may, on that account, seem to be lacking in definite practical qualities. But the noblest efforts for human welfare are likely to proceed from those who bring from the Mount of Transfiguration the inspiration and enthusiasm which qualify them for untiring and fundamental practical philanthropic work. I know that the author is not a mere dreamer, but has devoted his life, his powers and possessions to practical work among the poor. His chief aim is to bring all the comfort and illumination of Spiritualism into the lives of those who toil and suffer, and in this I believe he has done much useful work. He is also a healing medium of singular power, and in this is assisted by his equally gifted wife. Some of the poems—and poetical prose—in this volume are exquisitely beautiful, and call to mind the unrhythmical rhapsodies of the Emersonian seer, Walt Whitman. Let some of your readers see if some of these 'Leaves of Grass' may not be equally fragrant as those gathered by the American poet. Your notice of the book is very kindly; I only claim that it is insufficient, and may be supplemented by the additional commendation which I ask you to accept from—Yours, &c.,

R. M. THEOBALD.

Theosophical Publishing Society. Price 3s. 6d. net.

Information Wanted.

SIR,—Will any of your readers kindly tell a mother of any thoroughly conscientious electrician, or electrician and mental healer combined, who uses all the latest methods—also of any who do really perform cures by 'faith healing'? Replies to 'Spero,' office of 'LIGHT.'

Spero.

SOCIETY WORK.

SHEFFIELD PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTITUTE.—The fourteenth annual conversation and ball will be held in Cutlers' Hall, on Monday, March 9th.

CATFORD.—24, MEDUSA-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Millard gave a trance address on 'Duties pertaining to Spirit Life,' which was much appreciated. Meetings every Sunday, at 7 p.m.; séance follows.—H. T. R.

NEWCASTLE PSYCHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY.—On Sunday last we had an excellent address on 'Purity,' by Mr. Seddon; full of deep thought and meaning. A successful circle was conducted at the close.—T. B.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last, Mr. Hough gave a good address to a large audience. On Sunday next, at 3 and 7 p.m., Mrs. Roberts, of Leicester, will give clairvoyance. On Thursday, at 8 p.m., public circle.

WOLVERHAMPTON.—CLEVELAND-STREET.—On Sunday last our old friend Mr. Woollison's morning address, upon a subject from the audience, his replies to written questions in the evening, and his clairvoyance, were all excellent; both Spiritualists and inquirers were delighted.—D.

DUNDEE SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On the 8th inst. Mr. Ken. MacLennan, of Glasgow, a welcome visitor, gave addresses which were much appreciated by good audiences, as also was his short address to the Lyceum children. Mr. MacLennan is doing good work in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee, and we all wish him God speed.—JAS. MURRAY, Sec.

PLYMOUTH.—13, MORLEY-STREET.—On Thursday, the 12th inst., the excellent addresses given by Mrs. Axworthy and Mrs. Freeman were thoroughly appreciated. On Sunday last Mrs. Trueman gave a beautiful discourse on 'Life after Death,' and her clear spirit descriptions and visions were fully recognised by a crowded audience. Mr. Prince presided.—F. TRETHEWEY.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL, S.E.—On Sunday last the morning public circle was largely attended and truly helpful. At the evening service Mr. W. E. Long gave a splendid trance address upon 'Trying the Spirits' to a large and attentive audience. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle, and at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long will give an address upon 'In the Spirit.'—J. C.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey's psychometric delineations were nearly all recognised. Mr. Thomas gave a short inspirational address, and solos were kindly rendered by Mrs. Hodder and Miss Spinke; Mr. Adams presided. On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Checketts. On Tuesday, at 7 p.m., Band of Hope. On Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., social evening.

HACKNEY.—MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD.—On Sunday last a large and attentive audience fully appreciated a very able address by Mr. Robert King on 'Obsession and Possession,' the questions at the close testifying to the interest aroused. On March 22nd Mr. King will speak on 'The Rationale of Mediumship.' Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. H. A. Gatter, on 'Spirit Photography'; discussion to follow.—H. G.

CAVERSHAM.—31, CAVERSHAM-ROAD, N.W.—On Sunday last, Mr. H. Boddington visited our Lyceum and addressed the children, making a deep impression on their young minds. He invited them to take part in the Lyceum competition to be held in London next May. At the evening meeting, Mr. Bishop spoke on 'Science and the After Life,' and Mrs. Bishop gave convincing clairvoyance.—G. E. B.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. G. Cole, in his address on 'Scientific Religion,' pointed out the importance of developing one's spiritual powers, and training the will, in order to get the utmost out of this life and to make suitable preparation for the next. Mr. Darley sang an invocation composed by himself. On Sunday next, Mr. G. Cole will explain 'The Uses of Formulæ and Prayer.'—W.F.L.

FINSBURY PARK.—19, STROUD GREEN-ROAD (FIRST FLOOR).—On Sunday evening last, Mrs. Jones, under spirit influence, delivered a truly spiritual address. Mrs. North clairvoyantly saw and described the spirit who inspired the speaker. Another spirit friend present caused the medium to present a flower to each person and give an interpretation of its magnetic influence. On Sunday next, Mr. Metcalf will speak on 'Why I am a Spiritualist,'—J.