

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

We must leave to the kings of science the discussion of the tremendous problem of the plurality of inhabited worlds, but even amateurs may follow with respectful wonder the speculations of Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace in that vast field. His defence, in 'The Fortnightly,' shows that he is not quite as alone as some of his critics imagined. He quotes the great Herschel as at all events somewhat on his side in relation to the limitation of the star stratum; and we suppose he could quote other authorities, as respectable and as venerable, for his contention that 'our earth is the only inhabited planet in the whole Stellar Universe.'

What most interests us, however, at the present moment is Dr. Wallace's beautiful *nuivelé* and frankness. His confessions of haste; his admission that light had only partially arrived when he first wrote, and that he laid himself open to adverse criticism; his pointing out that certain ideas of his had probably no justification, are all very charming, increasing our confidence in him as a loyal and clean truth-seeker. His forthcoming work on the subject in hand will, of course, be welcomed by the scientific world, but we hope the value of it will not be discounted by the fact which he mentions, that light first came to him only in January of last year, and that even when he had arrived at his last chapter he could not complete his book for want of a solution of a problem over which he had to 'puzzle' himself until the solution came. That suggests a despatch from a field of battle rather than a ripe description of a discovery. But we shall see.

The Rev. J. W. Chadwick, in a lately published sermon on 'The persistence of Hell,' presents the dark and tragic side of sin, in a way not usual with preachers of what is called 'The Liberal Faith.' But what he says is profoundly important and profoundly true. Speaking of that strange old prayer of the Hebrew Psalmist, 'Cleanse Thou me from secret faults,' he says:—

You will recall George Eliot's saying, 'Under every guilty secret is hidden a brood of guilty wishes whose unwholesome infecting life is cherished by the darkness. The contaminating effect of deeds often lies less in the commission than in the consequent adjustment of our desires—the enlistment of our self-interest on the side of falsity.' Well may we pray, as did the Psalmist, to be saved from secret faults—they are such mothers of lies, of insincerity, of dishonesty, of faithlessness. There are faults which in their first inception have little power to curse and kill, but which, to preserve their secret, have so walled themselves about with various obstructions that no good influence can penetrate to them, and the man cannot break through into the freedom of a sincere and simple life. It is a tragedy which continually repeats itself. The man who is quite

sure that it has never trailed a baleful shadow over his own life is indeed most fortunate.

Referring to the earthly Hell through which the wrong-doer has to pass, Mr. Chadwick says:—

This ethical sternness of our liberal faith has aspects from which I can hardly bear to lift the veil. They are too horrible. There is, for example, that reactionary influence of a cherished fault upon the memory of our accomplished good. Only to think that our most loving offices of friendship and affection may come to be remembered with irritation and disgust, as something which, if it could be, would be blotted out! Thank Heaven there are those who graciously remember every good thing done by men and women who have fallen into evil ways! Thank Heaven there are those so fallen who can say: 'My good was good. No man, nor God, shall rob me of this confidence.' But for most people an evil present spoils the noblest past, making it seem an unreality, a sham, which very likely it was not; while for the evil-doer his hell of blasted recollection has no sharper pang than that the noble and the good, whom he has served with a good conscience and the purest possible affection, will wish that they had never seen his face.

A truly sad book is 'Shambles of Science,' by Lizzy Lind Af Hageby and Leisa K. Schartau (London: Ernest Bell). Working on the lines of Physiology and Ethics, the writers of it have come to the conclusion that 'to fight against vivisection is to fight against the principal fortress of the foe of idealism and spiritual evolution,' and that 'not until this fortress lies shattered, and even its ruins are removed from the face of this earth, can we justly claim to possess civilisation.' And this they say as students who, in London and elsewhere, have seen with their own eyes what is being done.

The story of what they have seen is, as we say, a sad one. It is worse than that. In truth, not many will be able to read it through to the end. It is as though one got a glimpse into hell: and that would be so even though it could be proved that the knowledge gained was helpful to mankind.

We feel it is our duty to put on record here, their closing words:—

The old investigators, who spoke about the undefinable spirit of life, were much nearer the truth and the sanctuary of lasting and sacred thought than the modern sellers and buyers of theories, based on matter, and matter only, and baptised in the blood of agony.

The experiments which have been described in this little book are only instances of one part of the appallingly extensive system of exposing the sub-human races to torture for the sake of a 'knowledge' that debases the intellect, and a medical science that thinks that the body can be kept alive by killing the soul.

For the sake of the innocently tormented, for the sake of the unborn human race going to receive this cursed heritage, for the sake of the great belief in a life everlasting of mercy and love, this infamous practice must be put an end to.

The Rev. James Neil, M.A., invites us to review his little work, 'Musical Service: Is it right?' (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co.). There is something in it that appeals to us as timely and sensible, believing as we do that the present rage for musical entertainments in Churches and Chapels is a distinct departure from the



truthfulness and seriousness of worship. Mr. Neil gives the following nine reasons for the faith that is in him:—

Musical service is wrong as—I. Unscriptural. II. Unreal. III. Selfish. IV. Sensuous. V. Worldly. VI. Uncongregational. VII. Unprotestant. VIII. Doing evil that good may come. IX. Injurious to the ministry.

This is perhaps somewhat overdone, but still the main contention is, as we have said, timely and sensible. Having said that, we are bound to add that Mr. Neil gives himself away badly in his assault upon Harvest Festivals. He says:—

Is it not a striking fact that since 'harvest festivals' have become general in this country, a curse and not a blessing has fallen upon our agricultural and pastoral interests, reducing the rents of landlords, the profits of farmers, the scanty means of the labouring poor, and the incomes of the clergy, *especially in the country districts*; whilst, alas! much embarrassment and bitterness has arisen in the relations of these four classes who live from the land? Nay, is it not surely a solemn and significant warning of what God thinks of this, which looks very like a wilful return to the rejected worship of Cain? (Gen. iv., 2-7). Can it be possible, if 'harvest festivals' are the outcome of true gratitude for the gifts of the field, and a proper and Divinely-approved expression of such gratitude, that this, the very time of their almost universal revival, would be chosen by God for sending severe and constantly-increasing losses upon all agricultural interests?

Harvest Festivals are too often ridiculous enough, but we can hardly believe that any passable God would punish with agricultural distress, the playing with turnips and carrots and sheaves of wheat in Church.

'The Birthday Book of Destiny,' by Sepharial (London: Nichols and Co.), is presented as a serious work, based on astronomical facts relating to the various degrees of the Zodiac. The author thinks it 'will probably be a source of amusement and instruction.' 'Amusement' perhaps; but we doubt the 'instruction,' though the prognostics are cleverly written. These 'prognostics,' he says, have been 'gathered from ancient Hermetic and Rosicrucian sources.' If so, they have been liberally cooked, and the result is a sort of Blackpool mosaic of arbitrary fortune-telling and character-diagnosis, based on chance. Anybody with sufficient smartness of fancy and facility of pen could do it. Every day's 'prognostic' has, on the opposite page, nicely ruled spaces for the signatures of friendly victims. Not by any means a bad Birthday Book, though.

One of the great truths to which we bear witness is that the unseen world is an all-revealing world. At the great gathering of spirits beyond the veil, all will be seen and known as they are. In passing beyond that veil, all disguises will disappear. There are last who will be first, and first who will be last: and the parts of kings and beggars will be surprisingly recast. Lucy A. Mallory, reminding us of the master's saying, 'All the world's a stage,' once said, 'Men and women are but playing parts in this life. They appear in spirit life in their real characters, after they have doffed their stage garments. The one who played the villain may show a heart full of affection; the leading lady may be a common, every-day sort of gossip.'

Yes; there will be strange surprises and enchanting consolations there.

#### SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many shrines.)

O God of the Himalayas, Thou didst fire my noble ancestors with yoga and inspiration. Wilt Thou not inspire and ennoble the present generation of the Aryan people? Let these hills speak again, and let the light of Thy face shine once more in fire and water, in the heavens above and on the earth below, and let those that have eyes see, and those that have ears hear. Revive in us, a truly fallen race, the burning faith of our forefathers, which saw Thee in every object and heard Thee in every sound. Raise us and sanctify Thy chosen race for Thy name's sake, O Beloved of the Aryans!

#### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

#### PROGRAMME of FORTNIGHTLY MEETINGS

IN THE SALON OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS,

SUFFOLK STREET, PALL MALL, S.W.

(Near the National Gallery.)

1903.

Oct. 23.—*Conversazione*; at 7 p.m. Short Addresses at 8, by MRS. ROSAMOND TEMPLETON (Mrs. Laurence Oliphant) and other friends.

Nov. 6.—MADAME D'ESPÉRANCE, on 'What I know of Materialisations; from Personal Experience.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

Nov. 20.—SIR WYKE BAYLISS, on 'Art, *contra* the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

Dec. 4.—MR. G. R. S. MEAD, on 'The Higher Spiritualism in Earliest Christendom.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

Dec. 18.—MR. GODFREY DYNE, on 'Life in the Inorganic World.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

Tickets of admission are sent by post to all Members and Associates.

In accordance with No. XV. of the Articles of Association, the subscriptions of Members and Associates elected after October 1st will be taken as for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1904.

Article XVIII. provides that 'If any Member or Associate desire to resign, he shall give written notice thereof to the Secretary. He shall, however, be liable for all subscriptions which shall then remain unpaid.'

#### SPECIAL NOTICES.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF CLAIRVOYANCE will be given at the rooms of the Alliance, at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., by Mr. Alfred Peters, on Tuesdays, October 6th and 13th, and by Miss MacCreadie on the 20th and 27th. These *séances* will commence punctually at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. to Members and Associates; to friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—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 Friday, at 3 p.m., prompt, commencing on October 9th. Fee 1s. each, and any Member or Associate may introduce a friend at the same rate of payment. Friends who desire to put questions upon matters connected with Spiritualism—or life here and hereafter—would do well to bring them already written.

PSYCHIC CULTURE.—Mr. Frederic Thurstan has kindly consented to conduct another series of classes for Members and Associates at the Rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for the encouragement and direction of private mediumship and psychical self-culture. The first of these classes will be held on Friday, October 9th, from 4.30 to 5.30 p.m., and visitors are requested to be in their places not later than 4.25. There is no fee or subscription. The subsequent classes will be held on the afternoons of the usual fortnightly meetings.

DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES.—Mr. George Spriggs has kindly placed his valuable services in the diagnosis of diseases at the disposal of the Council, and for that purpose attends at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, Charing Cross, W.C., every Thursday afternoon, between the hours of 1 and 4. Members and Associates who are out of health, and who desire to avail themselves of Mr. Spriggs's offer, should notify their wish in writing to the secretary of the Alliance, Mr. E. W. Wallis, not later than the previous Saturday, stating the time when they propose to attend. 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.



## OUR PSYCHIC FACULTIES AND LATENT TALENTS.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS DELIVERED BY FREDERIC THURSTAN, M.A., BEFORE THE MANCHESTER PSYCHIC RESEARCH SOCIETY, ON SEPTEMBER 16TH; MR. A. W. ORR, PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,—The establishment of a new Psychic Research Society may be fraught with greater results towards the advancement of the status of humanity than is dreamt of by the originators and present members. It means extending the flashlights of science into new realms of Nature, where lie new continents of consciousness, only the mere fringe and strand of which have as yet been explored. It discovers and unfolds a new nature within us. Our ordinary normal physical consciousness is a mere island in the ocean of existence, or rather a simple stratum of vibratory being above which and below which lie other planes or strata of consciousness which new methods of psychology and psychic culture are making accessible to most of us.

This new nature, when more fully developed, will give the race diviner powers. We shall be more recipient of inspiration, have more instinctive and comprehensive understandings, more facile faculties of conception and creation, and even, it seems, a second body of more refined nature to utilise as an organism for impressions and expressions on planes of finer forces to which the bodily organism of the physical senses is comparatively dull and sluggish. We shall be able to transmit our thoughts to one another across space, in flashes more eloquent than words. We shall be able to transcend our earthly circumstances and environments and the thoughts and characters of our comrades will lie open to us until deception be impossible.

The possibility of such an outcome of systematic research has been long ago hinted to us by those sporadic cases of psychic nature which have been called but not explained by the term *Genius*. No one who has read the autobiographies of men of great genius can fail to have been struck by the confession they have made over and over again how some masterpiece, some popular poem or hymn, some song or melody, came to them automatically and spontaneously, as if their dreamy thoughts were listening to words or music uttered by some great creator outside them or within them. Similarly, many an orator has felt words flowing from his lips without effort on his part; to many an inventor has come as a flash in an idle moment the conception he had been toiling in vain to reach by mental effort.

What is the explanation of these mysterious occurrences? Hereditary instinct does not properly explain them. It might explain precocity of talent in a genius like Beethoven, but it does not explain how these great inspirations have come as if from someone within; it does not explain how that great model of a perfected psychic nature, the founder of Christianity, could deliberately instruct his disciples to take no heed what they should say in preaching, for it should be given them by a prompter within.

Is there a new road for the acquisition of great talents? Has humanity made a mistake in supposing that intellectual devotion and absorbing mental labour and conscious effort were the only method of attaining great powers? Every noble heart of us has cherished ambitions which the stern duties of social and domestic life have compelled us for want of time to relinquish. Need we have done so? Is there an easier road, requiring less sacrifice of time and exertion? Have we all been, like Martha, fussing and labouring overmuch, when like Mary we might have discovered the secret that only one thing is necessary to serve the divinity lodged in us, and that that one thing is concentration of inner attention or psychic self-absorption?

The discovery of a new method need not depreciate the old method of intellectual culture. To devote ourselves to one road alone may advance our powers, but for the highest results both roads are necessary; the intellectual to give judgment and training—the psychic to give inspiration and spontaneity.

The answer to these questions has already been decided; the psychic road has already with success been ventured and experimented upon; in the East for thousands of years by a few occult devotees, the results of whose labours have been kept too secret to be of much practical use to us; while in the West, for the last fifty years, an increasing number of students have been exploring the way by systematic daily practice—both alone, and in company with others.

Let me tell you the different ways by which these new practices originated, and enumerate briefly some of the principal psychic gifts which have already resulted. After that it may help your researches if I recount some of the explanations and theories arrived at by previous researchers as to the real nature and origin of that mysterious part of us called the 'psyche,' which gives rise to psychic gifts, and then recommend to you some of the best methods whereby to practically educe your psychic qualities and avoid the dangers awaiting the uninitiated.

The systems of psychic culture which these fifty years of experiment in the West have so far brought into practice may be enumerated broadly in order of their discovery as follows:—

First; by means of mesmeric, magnetic, and hypnotic treatment, whereby the waking physical consciousness of the psychic is sent into deeper and deeper trance until the state of illumination or ecstasy is reached, at which point life on another plane opens out to the view and consciousness of the seer. This method includes that of the 'laying on of hands,' with prayer or intentness of the operator, and passive faith on the part of the recipient.

Secondly; by assembling together for the purpose in circles, with or without the aid of music.

Thirdly; by sitting daily at fixed times by one's self and practising certain habits of mental concentration and breath control, whereby one is enabled to become absent-minded to the outer world, and present-minded to the inner life. It is a process of yoga, or self-hypnotism.

Lastly; the Mental Science or metaphysical method of continually dwelling on the thought of impersonal, universal, cosmical, metaphysical life, and on the negation of the personal, separate, illusory life, so as to absorb and bring back to the intellectual life the common store of ideas and divine impulses of the universal ocean of experience and energy.

Differing only in method, all these systems have this common fundamental similarity inasmuch as they postulate that the psychic mind or conscious state is only reached by means of abstraction and negation, and that the degree of wakefulness and power in the psychic state is in proportion to the degree of sleep and impotence in the physical state. From this it would seem that the psychic world is another hemisphere of our complete being and lies at the antipodes of the physical life hemisphere—or in other words, that the two worlds of psychic and physical life are on the opposite scales of a balance or fulcrum. This balance, fulcrum, bridge, or equator between the two worlds is the dream, trance, and deep-sleep state. Above the waking consciousness of our physical senses and below it there are equally to be encountered, states of hypnotic dream, illusion, abstraction, and deep entrancement, beyond which lie new planes of wakeful consciousness which have been called the supra-liminal and the subliminal worlds respectively.

Bear this in mind, and you have the key to psychic development, which may be summed up in terms of mental control and direction on some focus, concentration, abstraction, trance, wakefulness on new planes, and return through trance, with habits gradually acquired of bringing back to the physical life, over the bridge of trance and forgetfulness, some of the treasures of experience acquired on the further shores of psychic life.

Half a century of psychic development by these systems has already imparted to humanity gifts unique and often transcending those of intellectual culture. Some of you who are strangers to all this movement, which has been going on quietly in your midst, may be surprised to hear how much has already been achieved. What further supernal powers a systematic culture pursued more generally may bring to humanity in another thousand years are beyond our present apprehension.



May it not well be, then, that the foundation of your Psychic Society is of greater moment to the world's progress than you now dream of?

I can but briefly enumerate in empirical 'classes' some of the latent powers developed into activity and proved by trained psychics :—

The first class is that of *cultivated motor automatism*. While the brain is held passive, expansive, recipient, and, it may be, lethargic, the chief motor-centres for expression of ideas are allowed to work and move without any conscious impulse from the normal self. The most important of the motor-centres are connected with the hands and the vocal organs. Among the gifts that arise from manual automatism are automatic writing, automatic drawing, automatic playing of instruments. Stainton Moses is an instance of a writing psychic; Mrs. Alarie Watts, of a drawing psychic; Mr. Jesse Shepard, of a musical psychic. Automatic vocal organs give trance speakers and improvisers. These gifts may come in this way by psychic culture to those who have devoted no time to the intellectual culture of a similar gift. The results are, as yet, not superior to those attained by laborious study, but they are nevertheless surprising, first because of the ease with which they spontaneously come, and secondly because of the subject matter, which often transcends the knowledge of the writer or speaker. This transcendent knowledge is shown sometimes by the intimacy displayed with the past life and friendships of total strangers contacting them for the first time, or, it may be, under assumed names; more rarely by a power of veridical prediction both as to trivial and important events; and more rarely still, but most convincingly, by speaking or writing in tongues never learnt—what was called of old, the gift of tongues.

The second class of psychic gifts comes under the head of *automatic thought creation*, or impressional mediumship, where the psychic sits passively and, emerging in imagination outside of himself, listens to words or suggestions being dictated to him through his brain without conscious effort on his part. This form of automatism is not so striking as the former class to a beginner, as not proving so clearly its independence of himself, but it is a greatly important form to be cultivated, as it is a more normal one, and effected with less expenditure of energy, besides being more handy in every emergency of life.

A third group of psychic gifts, including hypnotic and lethargic clairvoyance and clairaudience and crystal-gazing, may be classified under the head of *cultivated hallucination*.

Hallucination is the state where the objective and subjective modes of consciousness become reversed, and what should be felt as ideas within us become cognised as objects sensed outside of us. Ordinarily the uprush of sensations from the physical world creates ideations within us, and these start reactionary downward currents which create the impressions of external objects. Now if this uprush of sensations from the physical world be cut off by the entrancement of the senses of the physical body sometimes, another uprush of sensations from metaphysical, ethereal, subliminal, or superliminal worlds outside us fills the centres of ideation in the brain, and then the brain automatically projects them into appearances outside us. These Mr. Frederic Myers called 'Veridical Hallucinations,' and this is the term used by the London Society for Psychical Research when they want to speak of apparitions, ghosts and spirits.

To one possessed of this training, strange figures and scenes seem to be in his environment, and he hears words spoken which have never been uttered by mortal lips of those around him. These scenes, faces, and words are often proved to be no mere fancies or creatures of the imagination, but to have come or been seen for some definite object and to be true and veridical.

The above groups comprise the more or less passive gifts. But as the psychic begins to emerge habitually from intermediate spheres of lethargy his psyche, or soul, becomes more active, wakeful and positive, and his psychic senses more exalted and impressional, while self-consciousness emerges again on new planes of being. Two more groups belong here.

(To be continued.)

## REMARKABLE PHENOMENA IN AUSTRALIA.

(Continued from 'LIGHT' of August 22nd, page 404.)

The August number of the 'Harbinger of Light' contains a thoughtful and critical article by 'X.' in reference to the remarkable phenomena reported as having occurred in the presence of the medium, Mr. C. Bailey, accounts of which had appeared in previous issues of that journal and which have been reprinted in 'LIGHT.' As regards the medium, 'X.' says: 'During my experience, as a close investigator for many years into psychical matters, I have never met a sensitive as willing to undergo tests as Mr. Bailey, and I have heard other of our sitters say the same.'

Dealing with the suggestion that the phenomena might have been fraudulent, he points out that during the seven sésances which were held the following articles were brought, viz.: Fourteen ancient coins; one Egyptian scarabeus; twenty precious stones; three live Indian jungle sparrows; one bird's nest; eight clay tablets, the larger one 3½ inches long, 3¼ inches wide, and 5-8 inches deep; one newspaper in Arabic; one sea crab; one shovel-nosed shark, a foot long; one lot of dripping sea-weed; one semi-baked 'Chuppatti' cake, 6 inches in diameter; one lot of alluvial earth; and one terra-cotta cylinder 5½ inches long, 2½ inches wide, and 2lbs. 2ozs. in weight—fifty-four articles in all. The manner of searching was as follows :—

'The medium, when we had all taken our places, was first controlled on each occasion by "Dr. Whitecombe." He then stood in up the presence of the sitters, two of whom, or sometimes three (mostly sceptical individuals) commenced the search there and then, in the light. The coat pockets were searched, the lining was felt all over, then the coat was folded, placed on a chair beside me, and left there during the sitting. The control meanwhile separated the arms, so that the arm-pits could be searched by sight and touch; the hands, including the spaces between the fingers, being also examined by at least two pairs of eyes and hands. Then, while the arms were still extended outwards, the clothes were searched, the pockets turned out, the linings examined, the non-possibility of secret pockets or receptacles noted, and every inch of the body from head to foot felt, pressed hard, and stroked down deliberately and systematically, somewhat after the manner of massage. As one of the more sceptical searchers remarked, when asked if he was satisfied: "Satisfied! Why, not a threepenny bit could have escaped us!" Nor could it, on the person or in the clothes, down to the boots; but the latter were not removed at that and other sittings in the Queen's Hall, though they were removed, as well as the other articles of clothing, at a subsequent sitting at my house. The non-removal of the boots and socks in the Queen's Hall was of no consequence, for two reasons; first, because the sensitive, after each searching process, was enveloped in a bag (made by us) which was not a trick bag, and which was secured beyond the possibility of opening without detection; secondly, because, admitting the possibility of the concealment of small articles in the shoes or socks, or between the toes, it would be absolutely impossible for the larger or medium-size articles produced to be thus concealed; for instance, the clay tablets, the sea-crab, the shovel-nosed shark, or the weighty five and a half inches long terra-cotta cylinder, not to speak of the live birds. Hollow boot heels twice the depth of those of Mr. Bailey's boots would not have accommodated the two of these birds produced at one of the sittings—one of them almost instantaneously. But supposing an impossibility, namely, that they did fit one in each heel of the particular boots worn on that occasion by Mr. Bailey, how could the sensitive, enveloped and closely tied in a sealed bag, have got them out and secured them? If, on the other hand, the birds were concealed on the body or in the clothes, would they not be likely to chirp during the search, as they did when produced at the séance—that is to say, if not already killed by the manner of searching?

'It is plain, therefore, that we have to look for other methods of concealment besides on Mr. Bailey's person or in his clothes. The only remaining means of concealment on his part would be in the séance room, including articles of furniture therein; or else near the séance room, provided he had access during the sitting to the place of concealment outside it. These possibilities were precluded, because the room at Queen's Hall was engaged, with chairs and table (the only furniture employed), and the room searched and locked, and kept locked, before the sensitive was aware of where the sésances were to be held: the only persons having meanwhile access



it, except at the time of each sitting, being Mr. R. and our secretary and myself—three individuals determined to take, and actually taking, every possible precaution against fraud. Again, it was impossible for the sensitive to get outside the séance room during a sitting, for the door was always locked and the key secured. He had no means of getting a duplicate key made, and if he had a duplicate he could not have used it without imminent risk of detection. Moreover, there were also the sittings at my house for physical phenomena, when not alone did we strip and search the sensitive and dress him in clothes of his own (these clothes also having been searched), but we likewise took the precaution of previously covering up and sealing the grate in the séance room, minutely searching the room, locking and sealing the door, and breaking the seals and opening the door when we all went in together with the completely and newly dressed sensitive, of whom we had never lost sight for an instant since the thorough searching he had undergone. He could not have opened the door with a duplicate key without certain and immediate detection, because the circle of chairs on which the sitters were placed went right across the door in such a manner that the sensitive could not get behind them.'

The only other channels of deception, namely, collusion between the sensitive and one or more of the sitters, or with a confederate having some means of conveying articles into the séance room from the outside—or else the independent or conjoint work of some tricksters in the circle—are then carefully considered by 'X.' and shown to be inadmissible, as Mr. Bailey arrived in Sydney from Melbourne unknown personally to any of the sitters, and the stringent conditions that were adopted rendered collusion and trickery by confederates impossible, so that 'as regards the sudden and mysterious importation of articles into the locked séance room, the fraud theory from every standpoint falls to the ground.' Moreover, some of the articles were brought into the séance room on the spur of the moment, at 'X.'s' own request:—

'In the intellectual phases, fraud on the part of the sensitive can only be judged by a comparison between his normal intellectual capabilities and the mental capacity displayed by the alleged controlling intelligence. A mis-statement, or even a deliberate deception on the part of the control, would be no evidence of deception on the part of the hypnotised sensitive. That Mr. Bailey during "control" is in the lucid stage of hypnotism, and absolutely unconscious, I have no doubt, judging by not alone well-marked physical signs of his removal from the normal condition, but also by the complete and striking transformation in his mentality. Reference to the pronouncements, already given, of Mr. R. and my son, supplemented by my own remarks, on specially intellectual treats which we enjoyed at sittings with Mr. Bailey under control, in daylight in my house, will show the opinion we formed of the mental lucidity then shown by the controlling intelligence, and should at once set at rest the question of distinct personality. The evidences of educational culture shown by the control on these occasions were, to say the least, startling, and could not have been the result of any mere smattering of knowledge derived, for instance, from the study of an encyclopædia, but were indicative of that precise, particularised knowledge derived, as my son remarks, "from a long course of specialised study." In fact, the faultless language and perfect method of expression of the controls at these special sittings, transcended Mr. Bailey in his normal capacity in as great a degree as the soaring eagle would eclipse in flight the diminutive wren. As in the physical, so also in the intellectual phenomena obtained through Mr. Bailey, the fraud theory is untenable.'

The writer addresses himself to other questions besides the *bona fides* of the medium and the genuineness of the phenomena—namely, the reliability of the controls and the accuracy of their statements about themselves and in regard to the nature and source of the articles brought occultly to the séances. Very close and persistent investigations are being made, and satisfactory replies have already been received—so far as information has yet been obtainable:—

'The statements of Drs. Whitcombe and Robinson regarding certain phases of their earth-lives, have, as far as I can yet discover, been found correct; and, as regards the nature of the articles brought occultly into the séance room, I have been satisfied, on expert evidence, that the jewels, coins, and scarabeus are unmistakably genuine. I have not yet been able to get expert opinion on the tablets, cylinder, and alleged cuneiform writings and hieroglyphic figurings; nor have I yet had opportunity to test the statements made in regard to the alleged gold mine, but I hope eventually to satisfy myself on

all these points. In regard to the cuneiform lettering, I may mention, however, that two educated Syrian gentlemen to whom I showed the cylinder and tablets, and to whom I gave no hint whatever of their nature, at once pronounced the writing to be in the old Syro-Chaldaic characters. On this point they expressed themselves as positively certain. . . . In regard to statements made in reference to the mummy in my possession, while some of them are impossible to verify, the one statement possible of verification is correct. The mummy was found at Thebes. Mr. Bailey had no means of finding out this fact, except, perhaps, telepathically, but even if in this way it would be a link in proof of his sensitiveness.'

#### SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

I have been for some time an interested student of Spiritualism, and am at present wandering in the mazes of Theosophy. I am, however, somewhat puzzled, as doubtless many others have been before me, at the extremely divergent views entertained by the adherents of these kindred beliefs on the subject of spirit communication.

This question is, of course, the keystone of the spiritualistic faith, and appears to be supported by evidence on all hands. Text-book Theosophy, however, while admitting the spiritual origin of certain inspirational communications, avers that Spiritualists are largely deluded in their belief in the frequency of such messages from the departed.

This school of Theosophy claims that, although some of these phenomena may be ascribed to Egos of the departing, or more immediately departed, the majority are due to the agency of astral bodies or shells, cast off by Egos who have passed beyond the astral plane; that these shells become revived by elementals or by power drawn from the medium or sitters, and are mistaken for the spirit or Ego itself.

Theosophy teaches, however, that those who have left the physical plane exist for a number of years in the astral plane, and it is not plain to me what would prevent such Egos in the astral plane from communicating with their friends on the physical plane according to opportunity or desire.

It seems to me that if more light could be thrown on this point, the principal difference between Spiritualism and Theosophy would disappear. Might I, therefore, ask you to insert this in your valuable paper, with a view to eliciting the views of some of your theosophical readers?

H. T.

#### A TARDY RECOGNITION.

A correspondent writes: 'It has been left to a reviewer of "Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death" to record the indebtedness of Mr. Myers to Mrs. Thompson, as the book itself contains no reference to that lady's mediumship. The acknowledgment occurs in the following passage taken from an able review by Sir Oliver Lodge, which appeared in the last number of "The Quarterly." Comparing the attitude of Mr. Podmore and Mr. Myers towards trance messages or unconscious utterances or writings, Sir Oliver says: "But while the generally confused and sometimes trivial contents of such messages lead Mr. Podmore to suppose them the product solely of subliminal activity, stimulated in some cases by telepathy from persons present, or occasionally from unknown persons absent, or even from documents existing somewhere in the neighbourhood, Myers, on the other hand, considered the contents and manner of some of the utterances to be just what might naturally be expected if they were really messages coming from another state of existence through machinery adapted to communication in our present state. Consequently he became gradually convinced, allowing to the full for subliminal activity, that some of the communications, at any rate, were what they purported to be, and accordingly he felt very grateful to those friends of his, such as Mrs. Thompson, of Hampstead, who, during her temporary access of power, enabled him to get into some sort of communication, as he believed, with those who had gone before."'

GUILDFORD.—A young lady living in Guildford and an earnest Spiritualist (mediumistic) would be glad to meet with, or hear from, other seekers after truth residing in the district, in order to join a circle.—Address, 'Constant Reader,' care of Editor of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.



OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
LONDON, W.C.  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th, 1903.

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### 'THUS SAITH THE LORD.'

There is a phrase in the Old Testament which, to Spiritualists, is perhaps more suggestive than any other in that great spiritualistic book. This phrase is, 'Thus saith the Lord.' It usually occurs in connection with what are known as 'prophetic' utterances, and, very unfortunately, the claim of the ancient 'prophet' has been accepted by the vast majority of modern Bible readers. The 'prophet,' we may take for granted, was perfectly sincere, but, and again very unfortunately, he lived in days when it was the custom to accept too readily messages from the unseen, and to attribute to God or to 'the gods' all such messages, good, indifferent or bad. That is the honest truth, and ancient books of religion can only be rightly read in the light of it.

The ancient 'prophet,' when genuinely moved or controlled by unseen powers, was, of course, what we now know as a medium; but not necessarily a medium for divine or even for desirable communications. Honest reading of the Bible will make this clear. Messages there attributed to God are often obviously anything but divine; and 'Thus saith the Lord' too often introduces an outpouring which must have had an origin very far below the pure and golden streets of the New Jerusalem.

Illustrations on the same plane, and of precisely the same kind, may be found all along the road that men have travelled, since the Isaiahs penned or uttered their glorious forecasts, and since Ezekiel saw his mystic visions or wallowed in his disgusting tests. 'Thus saith the Lord' is not confined to the Bible. It has burned on the lips of seers and fanatics, prophets and babblers, God-moved messengers and moon-struck mountebanks, all through the ages and to this very day: and, all along, the misery has been that people have lacked knowledge and been without discrimination, so that they have greedily swallowed the exciting claim, and followed the drum.

If for no other reason, the world should think well of us for this, that we, as modern Spiritualists, have rationalised and discriminated in this confused melange of angelic communion and demoniacal intrusion, standing our ground firmly, against the foolish receivers of all that came, on the one hand, and the equally foolish deniers of everything, on the other. The modern Spiritualist is a student, not a devotee. In a sense, he is a critic rather than a communicant. He welcomes a 'spirit' more as one who stands in a laboratory than as one who kneels in a church: and he reads a 'message' more as a telegram that needs consideration than as a revelation that wants accepting: and the preliminary 'Thus saith the Lord,' if forthcoming, would rather put him on his guard than send him to his knees.

But let us return to the ancient prophet. At his best, he represented the conscience, the free spirit, the sense of responsibility of the higher type of worshiper; and in this differed from, even as he usually stood out against, the ordinary type of priest. The priest was too often merely the official person for superficial rites and external ceremonies, while he, the forth-speaker for God, bluntly cried:—

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Thus considered, the true prophet of old was a radical reformer, a stern ethical teacher, a fearless and unselfish speaker-out for a righteous God. As often as not, he was ground between the court and the mob as the teller of unpopular truths: but in any case, if he were a true prophet, he was directly or indirectly a messenger from the unseen world. One of these, flinging forth his burning words against the sham prophets who preached to please, said, 'Behold I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that smooth their tongues, and say "He saith it." 'What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord.'

Surely this is a needed lesson for the day: and surely we Spiritualists must push it home. All religious teachers ought to be prophets—speakers-out for God, and therefore for justice, righteousness and pity; and, if they hold no intercourse with the spirit-spheres, and receive no 'airs from heaven,' they might well apply to themselves the familiar words of their own Book of Prayer, 'There is no health in us.' They ought still to be the reprovers of kings, the rebukers of mobs, and the denouncers of selfishness and cruelty everywhere. Many of our prophets are that, and live, we believe, in daily contact (though unconscious of it) with the spirit-world: but the majority appear to play for safety, to bid for large and applauding congregations, and to stand well with people who can pay. The pulpit ought to be the prophet's tribunal, before which impudent folly and brazen fraud should be made to stand for condemnation; and 'Thus saith the Lord' should mean something,—not for the promulgation of a dogma, but for the shielding of the injured, or the sentencing of crime.

But God's prophets are not only in Churches, and His messages are not only for those who preach. We Spiritualists are precisely the people who can sympathise with Moses when he said, 'Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His spirit upon them all!' The days are coming when we shall see that the best part of our Spiritualism is that which claims us as speakers-out for God. We must be true to our own spirit-selves. That is the first practical conviction which follows the reception of our knowledge. 'The word of the Lord' is hidden in the devout and self-denying spirit, and it must prevail. The second is that we must translate thoughts into actions and knowledge into life. 'What is the chaff to the wheat?'

He who thus practically applies his spiritual knowledge, in all sincerity and humility, and with cheerful courage, is likely to be—may we not say, he is sure to be?—a receiver of divine revealings,—one who, in sinking self and speaking only for the just and righteous God, may dare to say: 'Thus saith the Lord.'



## THE SERVIAN MASSACRE PREDICTIONS.

## MR. PIDDINGTON'S DEFENCE.

I have just read Mr. Piddington's elaborate and clever defence of his action *in re* the Servian Massacre predictions. Now I am very much of Mr. Piddington's opinion in regarding Mrs. Burchell's prediction as somewhat vague and not altogether accurately endorsed by subsequent events. At the same time, I think it is unfair to speak of the illegible scrawl supposed to represent King Alexander's name in Servian as though it had been a clearly written English signature.

But the *real* point of Mr. Stead's vigorous attack on the methods of investigation of the Society for Psychical Research, is left severely alone, both by Sir Oliver Lodge in his 'open letter' (which we must all appreciate as a gallant attempt to shield both friend and Society from outside attack), and also by Mr. Piddington himself—presumably because neither Mr. Piddington nor Sir Oliver Lodge had any satisfactory answer to the special charge formulated by Mr. Stead.

As few people—men or women—have strictly logical minds, it is very easy to confuse issues and to sprinkle a little convenient dust in people's eyes by discussing the value and accuracy of the testimony given after the restaurant dinner rather than keep to the one question asked by Mr. Stead and which may be boiled down into the following query: '*Why did not Mr. Piddington take a cab and drive to the house of the Servian Minister BEFORE instructing Miss Johnson to write and tell Mr. Stead that the evidence was not up to the standard of the Society for Psychical Research?*'

I happened to be lunching with Mr. Stead at the identical restaurant either on July 6th or 7th (I left London on July 9th), and can testify that Mr. Stead showed me Miss Johnson's letter at least twenty days before the interview of July 27th between Mr. Piddington and the Servian Minister. The important points in Mr. Piddington's '*Apologia pro Society for Psychical Research*' are founded on this interview.

Now, although the attack upon the methods of the Society for Psychical Research was not published in the '*Review of Reviews*' until August, the letter from Miss Johnson, upon which that attack was based, was, to my certain knowledge, in Mr. Stead's hands by July 7th at latest, and his opinion thereon was freely given to me, and probably to many others.

Moreover, it was specially mentioned in the July number of the '*Review*' (*published July 15th*) that the peculiar methods adopted by the Society for Psychical Research in its present investigations would be discussed in the following month's issue.

This seems to have had the salutary effect of urging Mr. Piddington to pay the belated visit to Palace Gardens-terrace, the omission of which was the only vital point of the attack.

This visit was paid twelve days *after* the publication of the July number of the '*Review of Reviews*.'

There is, however, a subsidiary question to be asked. If Mr. Piddington set out to see Mr. Stead as 'principal witness,' why did he not make a second attempt to find the latter at home, instead of interviewing Mr. Long, whose claims as a satisfactory witness were presumably unknown to Mr. Piddington, and who, upon his own showing, had not sufficient interest in, nor sympathy with, psychic matters in general to remember what did or did not happen? Mr. Piddington suggests very forcibly the malleability of memory displayed by psychics after the event. Whilst not questioning this, I can testify equally strongly to the malleability of the *anti*-psychic in a negative direction. No stone wall is more deadly than the '*non mi ricordo*' of those who, under these circumstances, are not keen to remember!

A lady present at the interview between Mr. Piddington and Mr. Long can testify that the latter mentioned his lack of interest in these matters.

So soon as there was good reason to anticipate a scathing criticism of the methods of the Society for Psychical Research, the secretary was roused to pay the visit which should have been paid *before* condemning the evidence as insufficient.

Mr. Piddington's sifting of the evidence *after* seeing the Servian Minister is critical and will be, to many people, convincing. But his six columns do not touch Mr. Stead's crucial question, which remains unanswered.

Mr. Piddington must excuse my saying that I think his last paragraph but one is rather irrelevant, although to the credit of his somewhat tropical powers of imagination. But we can all play the 'supposing game' and imagine what dexterity and ingenuity *might* have been exercised to twist and turn a prediction into some quite other fulfilment if the more obvious event indicated had not come off—which in this case it did!

E. KATHARINE BATES.

Mr. J. G. Piddington's commentary on what may, or may not, have happened at the Rodesano Gatti séance of March 20th exhibits a confusion of hearsay and inference which, coming as it does from a dissentient meaning to discredit the whole affair, is not judicious nor judicial. The writing contains nothing that ought to make me alter what I published in the '*Daily News*' and in '*LIGHT*,' that Mr. Stead's account of what happened is correct. He was there, so was I, and other witnesses, and though likely enough if we were examined by hostile advocates, what would be called important discrepancies of observation and narrative might be elicited, still that could do no more than seem to make doubtful what really happened. That being so, perhaps it is just as well that the Society refuses to investigate; for if it did, in the temper displayed by Mr. Piddington's writing, the facts might not prevail against the prejudices.

Mr. Piddington mentions 'the newspaper reports.' Some of them I read, and I was amazed at their mistakes. They confused what occurred at Mowbray House in the afternoon with what occurred at the café; and the embroidered dress was written about, though, as I shall show, the prominence assigned to it was altogether wrong. And for Mr. Piddington's information I will say that I was present at Mowbray House when the Servian gentleman, L., unpacked the parcel in which was the dress. This was done when very few people were present, but I was one of them, and I can say that there were not more than six of us looking on, and Mrs. Burchell was not one of them, when the lady who has since become Mrs. L. put on the dress. That anything was said at the dinner about the dress is just an assumption of Mr. Piddington. The dress was dragged into view by Press reports ignorant of anything about it except that a dress had been shown. I doubt if Mrs. Burchell saw or heard of it. At dinner, and afterwards, I did not see the dress, and I heard nothing about it.

I will also tell Mr. Piddington that I was not one of the four witnesses who went to Mowbray House, as he suggests, in order to make the prediction 'fit the crime.' I purposely, without consulting anybody, wrote a letter to the '*Daily News*,' and you published part of it in '*LIGHT*.' I have not that letter by me, but I recollect that I corroborated Mr. Stead's account of Mrs. Burchell's prediction.

The Society has not carefully seized itself of the facts. Sir Oliver Lodge, in his open letter to Mr. Stead, asks 'What would it (Stead's presentation of the case) establish? Simply that vague, semi-conscious anxiety in the Servian Minister's mind on behalf of his Royal Master reflected and focussed itself in the utterance of the sensitive.' But the Servian Minister was not present at the café. And Mrs. Burchell has challenged anyone to prove that either Mr. Stead or anyone else present gave her the slightest information concerning any of the guests. I can quite understand this, because when I was at the dinner I did not know that the Servian Minister had been at Mowbray House in the afternoon; and I do know that he was not at the dinner.

No doubt Sir Oliver Lodge is right in his discrimination as to the weight of testimony by which a case of prevision must be proved. But it is worth while noticing that this insistence ought to be applied as often as possible to cases of the sort where a *prima facie* case for trial has been established; and it seems to me that if the Society had seized itself of the facts, as I for one have done in the case of the affair I am writing



about, they would have acted judicially in the matter, and not treated it with perfunctory sharpness.

There is a wise aphorism that may well commend itself to all of us :—

Seek not to have things happen as you would,  
Seek rather to have them happen as they do.

GILBERT ELLIOT.

Indian Civil Service (retired).

## PRELIMINARY DIFFICULTIES.

By H. A. DALLAS.

### X.

#### What the Communicators Themselves Say.

In this article I purpose making a few quotations to show that the communicators themselves recognise the causes of confusion to which I referred in the last paper.

In the report of Dr. Van Eeden's sittings with Mrs. Thompson there is a paragraph which illustrates the confusion which may result from the employment of spirits as intermediaries on the other side. He was trying to get a name from 'Nelly,' Mrs. Thompson's control :—

'Nelly : "It is like Schovelt. It's difficult. They have to say the word and tell Mrs. Cartwright" (a discarnate spirit who also controls Mrs. Thompson), "and she tells me."' ('Proceedings,' Part XLIV., p. 98.)

In this case the message had to be transmitted through two intermediaries.

In his earlier attempts at communicating through Mrs. Piper, 'George Pelham' refers to this cause of confusion as follows ('Phinuit' was the intermediary) :—

"I could not speak to Dr. Selville" (*i.e.*, 'Phinuit,' who has always given his last name as Selville), "to make him understand what I wanted him to say, so I tried to tell the medium just as she was coming into her body again, and I hope she told you the test you asked for. Please answer me, did she tell you?" ("Yes, she gave us the name.") "That is all you asked me for. I will now explain. I had so many things in my mind about . . . and other things which you had asked me to do for you. The fact is I really had no time or strength to tell you anything about anybody else. . . . I knew Pierce at once but could not make Dr. Selville understand the propriety or good of your wanting me to give his name to him for your benefit. . . . Tell Mr. Pierce I did not want to slight him or shuffle about, but was so busy with other things, and besides talking to Doctor when in the medium's body . . . read it . . . it is more or less confusing, and I cannot give it so clear." ('Proceedings,' Part XXXIII., p. 308.)

The broken sentences show sufficiently plainly the difficulty 'G. P.' found in making his explanation. Again further on he repeats :—

"Do tell Pierce how I tried to tell the medium, but I don't know you got, whether you got it or no." ("We got it.") "Good. You see I saw her spirit just as she was going in and, as I could not tell Doctor, I took that chance."

Having failed to convey his thoughts successfully to 'Phinuit' whilst the latter was in possession of Mrs. Piper's organism, 'G. P.' appears to have attempted thought transference upon Mrs. Piper's spirit before it regained the control of her body.

Another difficulty arises from the fact that mediums and their controls not infrequently receive impressions as pictures, and these pictures are liable to be misinterpreted. Mrs. Verrall writes in her report of her sitting with Mrs. Thompson :—

'Merrifield was said to be the name of a lady in my family. The name was given at first thus : "Merrifield, Merryman, Merrythought, Merrifield ; there is an old lady named one of these who, &c." Later "Nelly" said : "Mrs. Merrythought, that's not quite right, it's like the name of a garden" ; and after in vain trying to give her name exactly, she said, "I will tell you how names come to us. It's like a picture ; I see school children enjoying themselves. You can't say Merryman because that's not a name, or Merrypeople." "Nelly" later on spoke of my mother as Mrs. Happyfield or Mrs. Merryfield with indifference.' ('Proceedings,' Part XLIV., p. 208.)

On one occasion, through a relative of my own, a descrip-

tion was given clairvoyantly of a person whom she had never seen, and who was recognised by someone present. Among other things she mentioned particularly that his hair was parted in the middle. It was quite unknown to her that the person whom she thus described had had a very strong dislike to seeing a man's hair parted in this way. The spirit was possibly trying to impress the medium with the idea of his characteristic aversion, knowing that it would help his friend to identify him, but as the idea was received as a picture, if the friend had not been quick to understand and interpret, the attempt to identify himself in this way would have stultified itself.

Most people have experienced in their dreams something analogous to this picture-method ; it is not uncommon to find an idea or a fact taking shape as a symbol or picture in a dream.

Communicators allude not only to the difficulty of conveying their thought but also to the difficulty experienced, whilst communicating, of receiving clear and true impressions of those with whom they communicate. Dr. Hodgson in his report dwells at length on the partial loss of consciousness caused by the effort to communicate ; and in Professor Hyslop's valuable record of his experiences with Mrs. Piper it is frequently intimated that the communicator was obliged to break off contact with the medium from time to time in order to get his thought clear :—

"I am anxious to speak plainly to you and for you. . . . I know everything so well when I am not speaking to you." ('Proceedings,' Part XII.).

In this connection 'G. P.' says :—

"In order for us to get into communication with you, we have to get into your sphere as one like yourself, asleep. This is why we make mistakes as you call them, and get confused and muddled. . . . You see I am more awake than asleep, yet I cannot come just as I am in reality, independently of the medium." (Part XXXIII., p. 362.)

Mrs. Piper's earlier control, 'Phinuit,' thus describes the difficulty of seeing into our physical condition under these circumstances :—

"It is like looking through a keyhole into a room and trying to find out about the people passing backwards and forwards." (Part XXXIII., p. 309.)

George Pelham, one of the clearest controls, says :—

"Now I can see you, my friends. I can hear you speak. Your voice, Jim, I can distinguish with your accent and articulation, but it sounds like a big brass drum. Mine would sound to you like the faintest whisper." (Part XXXIII., p. 301.)

"I am determined to transfer to you my thought, though it will have to be done in this uncanny way."

"Your material universe is very exacting, and it requires great patience and perseverance to do all I want to say to you." (P. 304.)

Another communicator says in reply to a request to re-write the last words, which were undecipherable ;—

"No, I can't—it is too much work and too weakening. I cannot repeat—you must help me and I will prove myself to you. I cannot recollect my thoughts ; I repeat sentences to you. I am not away from you but right at your side ; welcome me as you would if I were with you in the flesh and blood body. . . . You see I cannot tell myself just how you hear me and it bothers me a little. . . . How do you hear me speak, dear, when we speak by thought only ? But your thoughts do not reach me at all when I am speaking to you, but I hear a strange sound and have to half guess. . . . How strange you look, my dear, yet I do know you and here. . . ." ("Don't you see me at other times ?") "Oh yes, dearest, and much better than I do when I try to speak, dear, consequently have to go by what I hear from ———"

These broken sentences are very suggestive ; they indicate how various are the degrees of clearness with different communicators. 'G. P.' could see and hear, though somewhat abnormally, those whom he addressed through Mrs. Piper ; this lady could not either hear or see distinctly, and was dependent on the assistance of some one on the other side to enable her to understand what was said, this confusion being only due



to the effort to communicate. 'Rector' says of a communicator:—

"He can tell me distinctly only when I am not speaking to thee, friend."

This indicates that the spirit when speaking through an intermediary is *also* brought into conditions which are confusing. Although the contact with the medium is not as close as that of the controlling spirit, it is sufficiently so to produce some disturbing effect. This is intimated in the context of the passage in Professor Hyslop's report from which the last quotation is taken. ('Proceedings,' Part XLI., pp. 393-394.)

Yet another cause of confusion remains to be touched upon. It is one which I freely confess I am loathe to recognise. I should prefer to believe it to be non-existent, for if this factor in the problem could be eliminated the sum could be worked out more easily. I believe, however, that it cannot be excluded and, therefore, it must not be ignored. It must be fairly recognised and truly stated. I refer to what M. Delanne in his book, 'Recherches sur la Mediumnité,' speaks of as the manifestation of 'fictitious personalities.' What Mr. Myers calls 'pseudo-possession' is the same phenomenon at a more advanced stage. (See 'Proceedings,' Part XXXVIII., p. 384.)

M. Delanne devotes some pages of his work to the consideration of the question of 'fictitious personalities' created by auto-suggestion.

We are aware that in dreams fictitious personalities are thus created—personalities which seem so real that some people may be inclined to doubt the applicability of the term 'fictitious' to these dream people. Undoubtedly the personalities of whom we dream are sometimes real entities, and sometimes the veridical character of our dreams proves that we have received a telepathic impact from other minds; and if this is occasionally verifiable it may often be true when it is not possible to verify it; but no one would venture to maintain that all our dream personalities are real beings. During sleep, imagination seems to have free course, and to be fertile in the production of 'fictitious personalities,' who, for the time, seem to the sleeper to be actually existing.

Sometimes the sleeper identifies himself with one or other of these and personates them. Those who have an aptitude for inventing stories are aware that as tales develop in the imagination of the narrator, the personalities become to him almost alive, and the plot as it develops has for him the interest of an independent narrative; his own relation to it at times seems to be rather passive than active, it forms and unfolds in his brain, he knows not how. In the waking state he finds no difficulty, however, in distinguishing between the real and the imaginary; he knows that these personalities are not alive, that events did not so happen; but to distinguish between the real and the imaginary in dreams is not always possible, only occasionally can it be done with confidence.

As already pointed out there is similarity between the dream state and the mediumistic state; and if we would squarely face all the conditions of the mediumistic problem we are bound to recognise that the evolution of fictitious personalities, and personation by the medium of these fictions, sometimes occur in the passive mediumistic condition. To recognise this is no more to discredit the reality of spirit control than to recognise the occurrence of fictitious dreams is to discredit the occurrence of telepathic dreams. But it must be admitted that the existence of this factor increases the complexity and difficulty of the problem. I say the *existence* of the factor increases the difficulty; I do not say that the *recognition* of it does this; for the failure to recognise every factor that really exists will always be a fruitful source of perplexity. We can never gain by ignoring facts; the facts may seem bewildering, but our only hope of ever arriving at an understanding of the true significance of Spiritism lies in the patient effort to fairly and fully recognise all the constituents of the problem it offers. It is not likely that this effort will be entirely successful in the course of one generation or perhaps of many generations. Emerson says:—

"I should not ask for a rash effect from meditations, counsels, and the *hiving of truths*. I should feel it pitiful to

demand a result on this town or country, an overt effect on the instant month and year. The effect is deep and secular as the cause. It works on periods in which mortal life time is lost. . . . There never was a right endeavour but it succeeded. Patience and patience; we shall win at last.'

Some communications are stamped with the characteristics of the personality from whom they purport to come and carry with them satisfactory evidence of their authenticity. But there are many communications which are not thus clearly authenticated and these cannot be claimed as spirit messages with equal assurance.

Others again bear all the tokens of being dream fictions and cannot reasonably be ascribed to any other origin. The first and last class of communications need not cause much perplexity, but with regard to the intermediary class there will always be room for difference of opinion; and concerning their nature and origin Spiritists must agree to differ. Many of those whose spiritistic origin cannot be proved do doubtless emanate from the spirit world. Slight indications and the circumstances under which they come should be weighed carefully when considering their origin. When, however, personal opinion is fairly satisfied on that point, we should still be on our guard against imposing our own conviction on others as valid for them, when the actual evidence of the case is not strong.

Some will accept as actual spirit entities 'controls' which to others will appear to be fictitious. It is of first importance that those who are workers in the cause should be tolerant and patient with each other, and abstain from contemning those whose beliefs in details they cannot entirely share; and on the other hand that they should not undervalue the caution of him who 'guards the purity of his belief with a very fanaticism of jealous care, lest at any time it rest on anything unworthy.'

Let us also bear in mind that recognition is largely effected by intuition, and that the assurance which springs from intuition may be the soul's immediate response to reality. Although this intuitive assurance cannot be appealed to as affording ground for conviction to those who have not experienced it, it may be in itself more satisfying than more circumstantial evidence could be to the person who *has* experienced it.

Having safeguarded myself from appearing to deny the genuinely spiritistic source of many communications whose origin cannot be demonstrated, I wish briefly to consider further the production of 'fictitious personalities'; for it is of serious importance that the claim made upon intelligent people that they should recognise the reality of spirit control should not be weakened by indiscriminately making the same claim for every chimera which may evolve from the mediumistic stratum of consciousness.

An example of a 'fictitious personality' in process of production may be found in Dr. Van Eeden's report of sittings with Mrs. Thompson. As those who have read that report are aware, Dr. Van Eeden is not only convinced of Mrs. Thompson's integrity, but also that he has received messages from discarnate friends through her mediumship; that he also believes that he has recognised the development of fictitious personalities through her, in no degree conflicts with his belief in her, or in the reality of some of the messages that have come through her. On page 83 of his Report ('Proceedings,' Part XLIV.) we find the following paragraph:—

"The Dutch names which are to be found at the beginning of the sitting on June 7th were written by Mrs. Thompson in her sleep while I was absent. These names are very remarkable, as I had never heard them; so my own telepathic influence, at least so far as my ordinary consciousness is concerned, was excluded. But when I asked "Nelly" who was "Notten, Velp," and who was "Zwart," I got very quick and definite answers, purporting to come from the young suicide" (a communicator of whose identity Dr. Van E. had been convinced), "which answers were afterwards found to be absolutely wrong. I even found that the name "Zwart" must have been misread, and that what was really written was "I wait." Nevertheless "Nelly" made out of my mistake a fictitious friend of the deceased called "Zwart," who shot himself in the forehead. . . . We see how easily and imperceptibly the rôle of any spirit is taken up by the medium after the genuine information has ceased.'

Let there be no misunderstanding. Dr. Van Eeden has not the *least* suspicion that this is consciously and intentionally



done. He writes with complete confidence in Mrs. Thompson ; he is simply pointing out a tendency for which the individual, who is a medium, is in no sense responsible, but which is an inherent tendency of the mind not only in the mediumistic condition, but at other times also. In our normal state, as already stated, we recognise the point at which imagination begins to work, whilst in the dream state the two are indistinguishably blended. In the mediumistic state it is *sometimes* possible to the medium to recognise the point at which his own imagination begins to work, but generally it is impossible.

In this instance we see that the misreading by Dr. Van Eeden of 'I wait' for 'Zwart,' acted as an impulse to the inventive faculty in the medium's mind, and out of the suggestion a rudimentary personality with a history of its own was evolved. Under other circumstances, and with a sitter who by further suggestions might have encouraged the development, 'Zwart' might have assumed a more important rôle, and might possibly have become a permanent 'control' of Mrs. Thompson's, emerging into manifestation when the genuine controls were not using her brain ; in other words, her own spirit would have personated this fictitious personality in the trance state.

I once heard a control state through an entranced medium that the medium was 'dreaming, and her dreams get in my way.' The 'fictitious personalities' which counterfeit real controls are of the nature of dramatic dreams. Unfortunately it sometimes happens that these dream personalities embody the weaknesses and flatter the vanities of the dreamer. His natural ambitions and conceits take shape in the assumption that he is in immediate intercourse with celebrities of past days.

Again, I desire to guard myself against misapprehension. There is no inherent impossibility that men and women who in earthly life achieved fame should in spirit life find delight in serving and teaching the lowliest child of God. Greatness in the spirit world is estimated by a different standard from that which prevails on earth. 'Whosoever will be great among you shall be your servant.' This is the standard of the Master. It is, however, true that we should watch with some suspicion the tendency to believe that our controls are kings, queens, great authors, or great statesmen, for the tendency *may* be traceable to an undue sense of our own importance and to latent personal egotisms of which we ourselves are scarcely aware.

The question will arise : How are we to distinguish false from true, fictitious from real ? No infallible criterion can be suggested. If we would learn to distinguish, our faculties must be brought into harmonious exercise : calm reason, judgment, intuition, and moral sense must be brought to bear on our experiences. Of these, moral perceptiveness is perhaps the faculty that is most indispensable, but it must work *with* the faculties of reason and judgment, not by ignoring them.

'Try the spirits whether they be of God,' was the advice of the Apostle. The surest indication of whether an influence is of God or not, will be found in its effects on character. If the influence which purports to come from the spirit world makes us both more loving and more *humble* ; teaches us to think less of ourselves and of our own importance and more of our work and of the interests of others ; if it makes us more lovable in our own homes and more welcome in the society of our fellow men, then, whether we can identify the 'control' or not, we may safely trust the influence that works in us as emanating from a Source which is pure and good and intended to advance our soul's development.

(To be continued.)

#### PORTRAIT OF MRS. ROSAMOND TEMPLETON.

We shall give as a supplement to next week's issue, a portrait of Mrs. Rosamond Templeton (Mrs. Laurence Oliphant), reproduced from a photograph by Messrs. Histed and Co., Baker-street.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

No use can be made of any communication which is not accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

Communications on various topics—including the ever-recurring question of Reincarnation—are necessarily held over for want of space.

#### PALMISTS AND PALMISTRY.

BY M<sup>LL</sup>E. M<sup>AN</sup>CY, AUTHOR OF 'THE LIMITS OF PALMISTRY,' &C.

#### Conclusion.

Kindly allow me to say that, with regard to the prediction of death, I heartily endorse all that Madame Wilcox says. I myself make a point of never dating it for anyone ; for even though people may, and often do, urge it, the chances are that in nine cases out of ten the knowledge of it will be harmful and cause them to worry—perhaps unconsciously—to say nothing of the pain it would give to those who care for them, or, as Madame Wilcox expresses it, 'to raise a murderous hope in those who do not.'

Few persons could view the subject of death so calmly as Sarah Chauncey Woolsey, or with such sublime faith as is indicated by her lovely poem entitled 'When ?' :—

'If I were told that I must die to-morrow,  
That the next sun  
Which sinks should bear me past all pain and sorrow  
For anyone,  
All the fight fought, all the short journey thro',  
What should I do ?  
I do not think that I should shrink or falter,  
But just go on  
Doing my work, nor change, nor seek to alter  
Aught that is gone,  
But rise, and move, and love, and smile, and pray  
For one more day.  
And lying down at night for a last sleeping  
Say in that Ear  
Which hearkens ever, "Lord, within Thy keeping  
How should I fear ?  
And when to-morrow brings Thee nearer still  
Do Thou Thy Will."':

It is well for people who can feel thus regarding their departure from this life, but as most people are human enough to cling to life and prefer to put indefinitely aside the thought of death, it is right that they should be humoured, to enable them to live as happily as possible while they *are* here. 'There is no religion in being unhappy,' and people should be encouraged to make the most of what is at best but a brief existence ; and if it is a troubled one there is always the hope that it will be better later on ; and even if it is not we can often—by doing all the good in our power—promote the happiness of others, and in the end may prove that 'Ours is the greater gain,' to quote from the beautiful poem, 'A Creed,' by the well-known and popular poet-palmist 'Cheiro,' the last few lines of which are *apropos* and form a fitting conclusion :—

'Live for the one true purpose  
That honest hearts may rise ;  
Work through the noon of manhood,  
And when the evening dies  
There need be no forebodings—  
Angels will close thine eyes.'

#### AUTOMATIC DRAWINGS.

At the Council meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, held on Wednesday, September 16th, the President, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, read a letter from Mr. T. Douglas Murray, presenting to the Alliance, with the consent of Miss Watts (executrix and niece of Mr. Alaric Watts), and of his co-trustee, Sir William Crookes, 'a small selection of Mrs. Alaric Watts' beautiful drawings—all of which were carried out, as she believed, "under spirit influence." Mrs. Watts contributed to the 'Psychological Review' and other journals in 1882-3, as well as before and after those dates, and signed her articles 'Mrs. A. M. Howitt-Watts.' She was the daughter of William and Mary Howitt, and was known before her marriage as Anna Mary Howitt. Mr. Murray says, 'As a member for many years of your society, I am especially glad of this opportunity of adding these drawings, of which five are pencil drawings and twelve are coloured, to your collection.' These beautiful automatic productions were examined and much admired. It was unanimously decided that they should be accepted with sincere thanks, and arrangements made to exhibit them in some way in the Library at 110, St. Martin's-lane, for the benefit of Members and Associates and visiting friends.



## 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.*

Laurence Oliphant.

SIR,—May I make the following suggestion in answer to the question appearing over the signature 'S.' in connection with my late husband and the article on the 'Sisters of Thibet'?

If Mr. Oliphant had, in truth, become a 'great Mahatma,' it would have been a sign—would it not?—that he was persuaded of the truth of this teaching; and, being an energetic man, he would have allied himself actively to the society which propagates it. This he never did, either for a short or a long period.

We must conclude, then, that the article was simply a flight of fancy.

His serious conviction in the last years of his life may be stated as follows: As order is best preserved by having a sun to our solar system; a chief at the head of each nation; a father controlling each family; a master directing each business—this being the universal law, Mr. Oliphant applied it to the earth, and came to accept that the greatest result could be obtained, with the least waste of energy, by having a King of the whole world.

He believed this King to be, not a Mahatma, but the most potent figure in history, Jesus Christ. (See 'Scientific Religion,' pp. 322, 327, 329, 334, 343, &c., &c.)

ROSAMOND TEMPLETON  
(Mrs. Laurence Oliphant).

'History—or Romance?'

SIR,—In the preface to a little work by Laurence Oliphant entitled 'Fashionable Philosophy,' which includes 'The Sisters of Thibet,' regarding which your correspondent 'S.' inquires, the author expresses his surprise that the article in question should have been taken by many to have contained any record of his own personal experiences, and goes on to say, 'The satire was suggested by the work of an author whose sincerity I do not doubt, and for whose motives I have the highest respect, in order to point out what appears to me the defective morality, from an altruistic and practical point of view, of a system of which he is the principal exponent in this country, and which, under the name of Esoteric Buddhism, still seems to possess some fascination for a certain class of minds.'

I would refer your correspondent to Solovyoff's 'A Modern Priestess of Isis' and Lillie's 'Madame Blavatsky' for evidence as to the romantic nature of some of the literature of Theosophy.

ARTHUR N. MILNE.

Scientific Psychometry.

SIR,—With reference to the letters which have recently appeared in 'LIGHT' on scientific psychometry, the following may interest your readers as cases in which guess work was entirely eliminated.

I obtained a piece of a mummified body from Beauleigh Abbey. I first gave it to Mrs. Sturgess of this town, who saw a procession of monks, and the performance of certain ceremonies. I next handed it to Mrs. H. Boddington, of Clapham, and here I might mention that it is impossible for anyone looking at the pieces to guess what they are. The most rational guess would be that one piece was some kind of stone, while the other has the appearance of a hardened fibrous material. Mrs. Sturgess saw what I believe to be the most probable associations, namely, monks. Mrs. Boddington saw nothing of these, but proceeded to give a perfect description of the place from which the pieces were obtained; and although they differed in appearance she saw the same scenery with both, and her descriptions were correct. She stated that she seemed to be near a forest. This was right, as the abbey stands on the borders of the New Forest. She also saw water, which, however, she was explicit in stating was not the sea. This would be a correct description of the wide stretch of water near by. On the water she saw a quaint looking vessel unlike any of the ships she had ever seen. This is quite naturally so, as the part from which these remains were brought was where English shipbuilding practically commenced, and, therefore, the vessels would be of an antique type. She concluded by describing the ruins of the abbey, and particularly the remaining tower.

The next reading—that of a small piece of shell brought from the battlefield of Waterloo—will give an even better idea as to how the impressions are received. It must be remem-

bered that in this case the article itself was not examined, and in neither case was any possible suggestion given of the nature of the articles psychometrised. I give her own words on handling the shell: 'I hear an awful noise. It is an explosion. I am deafened by it. Oh! my head! The noise! I see soldiers. It is connected with a battle. The explosions I hear would be caused by the cannon in battle. I see snow and slush. Now I see ships, and there seems to be war connected both with the ships and the soldiers.'

The greater portion of the foregoing is easily understandable, and as these were the first experiments Mrs. Boddington had tried with relics of this kind, the incident opens up possibilities which may induce other psychometrists to try their powers, and by mutual arrangement endeavour to reach the 'soul of things' as recorded by Professor Denton.

13, High-street, Shirley,  
Southampton.

W. CHALK.

Some Questions for Reincarnationists.

SIR,—I see that some of our reincarnationist friends are still anxious that Spiritualists should adopt their favourite theory, but while I am hospitable to every thought or theory which 'covers the ground of the facts observed,' I am unable to adopt the reincarnationist position because, to me, there are many more difficulties in the way of its acceptance than those it is supposed to dispose of—in fact, it raises a whole crop of questions in my mind that I have never been able to satisfactorily answer. As Dr. Peebles puts it in a recent letter in the 'Banner of Light': 'I favour the theory of the spirit's eternal past existence. And those who would confound a past, or pre-existence, with reincarnation, or Ego-rotation, would quite likely confound a horse-chestnut with a chestnut horse. The point involved is this: Are rational human beings passing from earth into the spiritual world, compelled to return, reincarnate into the flesh and be reborn again and again through various mothers, for wider experiences?'

If this point be answered affirmatively the next questions are *When* and *How*? and further, is the individual, who has attained the state of self-consciousness, still conscious and endowed with memory during the whole process prior to birth? and still further, to again quote Dr. Peebles: 'Is there any certain way that the to-be mother can tell whom she is foetically harbouring and feeding with her life forces, whether a saint, or one who, in a previous incarnation, may have been a New Zealand cannibal or a murderer?'

These are a few of my difficulties, and I should like to learn how anyone can logically describe the process, and explain how he *knows* that reincarnation is true!

SEEKER.

'Colds and their Cause.'

SIR,—Of a necessity my letter upon this subject was as concise as I could with any clearness make it, although to have extended my argument to its fuller explanation would have been better, had I dared so to intrude upon your valuable space. I feel it, however, to be my duty now, in answer to Mr. Krisch's objection to my theory as regards salt, to state briefly that, although I am aware that chloride of sodium in its organised form, as supplied, together with all other equally necessary elements, by the vegetable kingdom, is essential to the needs of our physical nature, my contention is that such needs are, and can, only be satisfied through the latter medium.

It is several years since my attention was first called to the experiments and teachings of Mr. Joseph Wallace, which instantly appealed to my mind as coinciding with a natural assumption that the vegetable kingdom alone possessed the power to organise from the mineral world that which our bodies required in the processes of building up and repair; and the practice of such teachings has amply justified my faith in their scientific truth.

As to the imagined necessity for the daily consumption of mineral salt with food, my experience altogether bolies its supposed truth. I must be pardoned for obtruding such matters, but, as evidence thereto, I have to state that—save in accidental and small quantities of salt, and no doubt occasionally the so-called preservatives too generally used in butter, milk, or cream—my children have never partaken of, or had administered to them, any drug or inorganic substance whatsoever since their advent into this world. To that end we have used the most undeviating and intense care, and I have yet to see stronger, more active, or healthier children than they are, save amongst those who believe and live as we do. The only bread they have eaten has been made at home from whole wheat-meal, without yeast or minerals of any kind, and mixed only with boiled water. I need scarcely say that animal food



of any kind has never passed their lips; and boiled milk, or boiled or otherwise purified water, has been their only drink. I myself, during the same period, have lived as nearly as possible in a similar manner, and I perceive quite other than evil effects resulting therefrom. Twenty years ago I had more than a tendency to varicose veins, and sundry other all too common constitutional evils, which, in the absence of mineral salt, have entirely disappeared. As to my bodily and muscular strength, notwithstanding a sedentary profession, I ride the bicycle, handle the bat, circle the bar, swim, &c., with as much freedom and ease as many years ago, when I was a leader in a London gymnastic club; but I do not know a solitary man of my own age, living in the approved orthodox fashion, who can say the same.

Is it reasonable to imagine that such a mode of living as we endeavour to follow could meet with the unqualified approval of the medical faculty? With much regret I am bound to say I think not.

I am very sorry to have to disagree with those whose technical education might reasonably be thought to give them a prior authority; and I only do so in the hope that, as in my case years ago, a word or two from our point of view might perchance help a brother over a mental difficulty in regard to the subject above discussed. I am happy to say there are now hundreds who would willingly from their own experience confirm all I have said. If, however, anyone desires demonstrative evidence from a better known source than mine could be, I should like to refer them to Mrs. Leigh Hunt Wallace and her family, more especially to the demonstration afforded by her over six feet high eldest son, whose total source of nutriment, apart of course from pure water, has been the kingdom in nature to which we of the animal world are naturally and primarily related, namely, the vegetable kingdom in all its branches.

J. F. DARLEY.

[We have other letters in type on the same subject, with which this discussion must terminate.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

#### 'A Question of Ethics.'

SIR,—The most spiritual thought teaches, I believe, that all things, words, and actions, in the universe, are the outward expression of the Godhead (Universal Spirit, the omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent Essence or Energy of the Cosmos), and that the more an individualised Ego, or human being, opens his nature, willingly and gratefully, to this divine influence, the more he reflects and expresses the divine nature.

If this represents the truth, all that is called sin, evil, disease, &c., has no real, permanent existence but is an appearance or shadow to the self-consciousness whilst in a state of separateness or antagonism to the divine; and all the experiences one meets with, through persons and things, are educational.

The effect of this belief—and I do believe it, or rather know it to be true—is to make me feel, in the presence of evil, disease and sorrow, scorn and repulsion, and a sense of impatience, with strangers particularly, rather than sympathy—a very strange and unexpected result of spiritual study. Can any of the readers of your esteemed paper say if this is a normal or common experience?

Continuing the same line of thought, one is frequently reading of someone supposed to be highly developed spiritually but, who, nevertheless, is a constant sufferer in the physical. Is not this very inconsistent? What is the explanation?

It should seem to me that a spiritually unfolded person must necessarily enjoy the finest health and regard life on all planes as one long joy and delight.

A. K. VENNING.

Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

#### Would Like to be a Vegetarian.

SIR,—I should feel extremely thankful to receive advice through your helpful paper, as to the best methods of becoming a vegetarian and the best kind of vegetarian diet to adopt. I am twenty-one years of age, measure five feet two inches, weight six stone ten and a half pounds, and I am engaged as a clerk. I have twice attempted to live as a vegetarian, but each time my health broke down and the doctor advised me to live on a meat diet. But somehow, I feel convinced that the principles of vegetarianism are true and right, being based on love and humaneness. What am I to do? I feel I ought to act up to the light I have and abstain from flesh eating; but how I am to do so without injury to my health is the point I wish settled.

Perhaps some of your correspondents who are more advanced on health, diet, and occult science will help me.  
SEEKER OF TRUTH.

#### 'A Lover of Light.'

SIR,—I was much interested in a letter in 'LIGHT,' for August 29th, in which the writer asks for information about certain *lights* which he is conscious of, of a brilliant blue colour.

I have waited for two or three numbers in the hope that someone would reply to this, for I, too, am conscious of 'lights' such as he describes. I saw one for the first time one day last winter, when for two or three seconds the fire in my grate assumed the appearance of a glorious mass of brilliant blue. I drew the attention of a friend to the phenomenon, but she saw nothing, and there was nothing but ordinary coal burning in the grate at the time. I saw it two or three times in this way, and then afterwards at any time and in any place, both by day and by night. The blue is the colour of electric sparks, but it is of such indescribable loveliness that I can compare it with no colour I have seen on earth, and I have thought it was purely an astral vision. It also gives me such an intense feeling of calm and protection that I have come to look upon it as the advent of some very pure and beautiful spirit.

I have since heard that it is a symbol, to those who are privileged to see it, of a great spiritual advancement and joy, both to the seer and the nation.

'A LOVER OF LIGHT.'

#### SOCIETY WORK.

MANOR PARK.—TEMPERANCE HALL, HIGH-STREET, N.—Speakers on Sunday next, Miss Russell, at 6.30 p.m., and Mr. Hunt, at 8.15 p.m.—P. G.

PORTSMOUTH.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Frank Pearce delivered an eloquent address on 'Man' to an appreciative audience.—E. R. O., Cor. Sec.

WISBECH PUBLIC HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. D. Ward gave a very enlightened and instructive address on 'The Two Powers: Good and Evil,' followed by excellent clairvoyance.

BRIXTON.—SPIRITUAL BROTHERHOOD CHURCH.—On Sunday last Mr. D. J. Davis's earnest address on 'Prove the Spirits' was much enjoyed; a good communion service followed. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. Macdonald.—J. P.

GLASGOW.—2, CARLTON-PLACE.—On Sunday last Mr. Vincent gave us a fine address on 'Some Absurdities which some Spiritualists sometimes Expect.' It was a rebuke to our too often egotistic demands.—D. M.

CATFORD.—24, MEDUSA-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. W. Millard delivered an excellent address on 'Spiritual Power Reigneth.' Meeting each Sunday, at 7 p.m., followed by seance. Developing circle on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.—H.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Miss E. Bixby, one of our officers, gave an admirable address and successful clairvoyance. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Weedmeyer will give clairvoyant descriptions; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 3.30 p.m., meeting in the park.—R. B.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—37, ORCHARD-STREET.—On Wednesday, the 16th inst., Madame Stone gave excellent clairvoyance and psychometry. On Saturday our large room was crowded, many having to sit outside the circle. On Sunday last Mr. Westgarth, of Heaton, gave a splendid address on 'Is it by Faith, or Work?' and there was a good after-meeting.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD.—On Sunday last an address by Mr. Anderson on 'Progress' was much appreciated. Mr. Lock gave illustrations in clairvoyance, the majority of which were recognised. Developing circle on Thursday at 8 p.m. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. Adams; medium, Mrs. Mason.—E. B.

HACKNEY.—MANOR THEATRE, KENMURE-ROAD.—An exceedingly instructive and well thought out address was delivered on Sunday last by Mr. Robert King on 'The Astral Body.' Rounds of applause testified to the appreciation felt by a large and attentive audience. Questions were answered in the same masterly manner before the close. Service as usual on Sunday next, at 7 p.m.—H.J.E.

UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday, October 4th (the anniversary of the Fulham society), the usual monthly visit of the above Union will take place at Colvey Hall, 25, Fernhurst-road, Fulham, and a conference will be held at 3 p.m. Tea will be provided at 5 p.m., and at 7 p.m. an anniversary service will be held and many speakers will address the meeting.—HENRY BROOKS, Hon. Sec.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—The circle on Sunday morning last was well-attended and at night the hall was overcrowded. Mr. Huxley, the leader of a prosperous mission in the neighbourhood, and friends, ably conducted the service. At the after-circle Mr. Huxley was very successful. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., our honorary secretary will deliver an address; and at 8 p.m., Mrs. Ridley will give clairvoyance.—VERAX.