

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

One of the foremost preachers in Chicago (the Rev. J. L. Jones) lately grappled with the terrific problem of 'Crimes and Criminals' in that amazing city. It appears that the subject is very deeply stirring the hearts of multitudes of extremely anxious observers who hold with this preacher that Chicago is a city of lawlessness. 'We are a criminal community,' said the preacher:—

The degenerate sons of worthy parents, the flippant, giddy, and money-spending daughters of the rich, the ever-thickening layer of froth that constitutes the social scum of our city, more than the dirty rabble that may well be called the 'dregs of society,' testify against us when as a city we are summoned into court. It would be a waste of time and an insult to the intelligent for me to try to prove the widespread indifference to law, the far-reaching neglect of ordinance and statute, the mountainous pile of regulative requirement and law that are daily disposed of with a smile, from the Executive of the State to the humblest patrol on his beat, on the score that they are 'a dead letter,' that nobody expects them to be enforced.

We are profoundly sorry to hear it, but we are not entirely surprised. We do not learn for the first time the lesson taught by the fury of party politics, the mad struggle for money, the artificiality of so-called Christian teaching in conventional Christian churches, and the disappearance of the beautiful old humanities of home-life. All these are cited by the preacher as the 'roots of bitterness' from which the social miseries and perils of Chicago grow.

We put these things on record here, for our 'instruction in righteousness,' as Paul said. London is evidently not as far gone in devilry as Chicago, but evil signs are abroad, and we need to keep on guard. 'There is no mild remedy for the crimes and criminals in Chicago,' said the preacher:—

They are rooted in civic perplexities; we go up or down together, and we must work together. We cannot cure the plague with rosewater. We cannot smile away the grinnings of this black country by a few kindergarten songs, a picture book now and then, an occasional fairy story, and a little benignant advice to those who are under. It is a case for heroic work. It calls for a stalwart application of the profoundest principles in sociology, ethics, and religion, as interpreted by the bravest thinkers and the most heroic lovers of humanity.

We agree; and yet we are impressed with the idea that a remedy might be found in the same direction.

We notice, with pleasure and admiration, Mr. Hudson Tuttle's most useful work as 'Editor at large.' The notion is sensible in the extreme. In a late number of 'The Banner of Light' we find an excellent fighting review of one of the unlovely and unsavoury attacks upon Spiritualism of which we know something in this country. It might be just as well to leave these things alone,—and we are sure that no one grapples with them for pleasure; but duty seems to point the other way.

In the book in question a story is told, in good faith, by a preacher who had worked himself up into a frenzy of rage against a friend of his who had turned Spiritualist and had opened his house for meetings. He shall tell the remainder of the story himself:—

One Sunday I went and filled my appointment as usual, but with a sad heart, because of the evil effects of Spiritualism I saw upon the people. That afternoon, in company with two other devoted Christians, I entreated the Lord to break the power and influence of Spiritualism in that community and surrounding country, also asking for the salvation of this man and his family. But I could not get any answer that the man would be saved; and, while praying to the throne of grace, I became so much in earnest about it that I finally said: 'Lord, break Spiritualism here at any cost, even to the removing of this man out of the way, and the scattering of his family to the four corners of the earth; even so be it, Lord, Amen.'

We arose from our knees and departed, leaving the matter in God's hands, perfectly resigned to His will. In just two weeks from that day this man was dead and buried. In less than three months his family was broken up and scattered never to come together again. But, thank God, Spiritualism was rooted out of that community, root and branch.

Mr. Hudson Tuttle is fully warranted in firing this red hot shot in reply:—

What are we to think of a minister of the gospel of love who could entreat his God to kill his 'old friend,' and 'scatter his family,' and then exult over the terrible fulfilment of his prayer? Who was the murderer, God or this preacher? The preacher believes that he was the most important agent, as God was not interfering in the least and this 'old friend' was going on successfully. It was the preacher's prayer that accomplished the fell purpose. He had murder in his heart, and there is no difference between striking this 'old friend' with a dagger and killing him by prayer.

These wild people are fond of telling us that Spiritualism is of the devil: but surely, if there is any devil in the matter, he is not on our side of the way.

'The Race-Builder' (London: Elliot Stock) is a new Monthly of a strenuous and advanced kind,—a good deal socialistic and altogether for 'The Human Brotherhood.' It does not 'mince matters,' as may be gathered from the following scoff at the fetish, called 'liberty,' which is not a bad specimen of its spirit and tone:—

Revolutionary municipal bodies like those of Liverpool and Battersea may imagine that they are doing good by establishing

parish pump and the Urban Water Company, and to the purveyor of that milk-preservative-poison known as boracic acid, besides inflicting indirect hardships upon undertakers, doctors, nurses, and all who wait upon infant mortality. In fact, it is an unjustifiable interference with the cosmic scheme which has ordained that one part of the community shall profit by the ills of the other. Let the mother feed her babe on crusts and gin, on herrings and beer, on tea and potatoes, let her give it one meal a day or twenty—the next generation may be rickety but it must be free.

From this it may be gathered that 'The Race-BUILDER' very much believes in State interference with the liberty to do as you please: and there is a great deal to be said in favour of its belief. There is only one place where the people are fit for perfect freedom:—Heaven.

Very soon, we trust, and, sooner or later we know, that the first half of the following, by Stopford A. Brooke, will be true. The second half, thank Heaven, is always true:—

A little sun, a little rain,
A soft wind blowing from the west,
And woods and fields are sweet again,
And warmth within the mountain's breast.

So simple is the earth we tread,
So quick with love and life her frame,
Ten thousand years have dawned and fled,
And still her magic is the same.

A little love, a little trust,
A soft impulse, a sudden dream—
And life as dry as desert dust
Is fresher than a mountain stream.

So simple is the heart of man,
So ready for new hope and joy;
Ten thousand years since it began
Have left it younger than a boy.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PSYCHOMETRY AND CLAIRVOYANCE will be given at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., by Mr. W. Ronald Brailey on Tuesday next, March 8th, and by Mrs. Fairclough Smith on March 15th and 22nd. These séances commence punctually at 3 p.m., and no one is 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 further series of meetings at the rooms of the Alliance, at which pleasant and instructive talks may be had with one of her intelligent controls. The next séance will be held on *Friday next*, March 11th, at 3 p.m., prompt. Fee 1s. each, and any Member or Associate may introduce a friend at the same rate of payment. *Visitors should come prepared with written questions, on subjects of general interest relating to life here and hereafter.*

PSYCHIC CULTURE.—Mr. Frederic Thurstan, M.A., kindly conducts 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 next meeting will be held on the afternoon of *Friday*, April 8th. Time, from 5 o'clock to 6 p.m., and visitors are requested to be in their places not later than 4.55. There is no fee or subscription.

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 will attend at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, Charing Cross, W.C., on Thursday afternoons, between the hours of 1 and 3. Members, Associates, and friends 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 day, 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.

REMARKABLE MESMERIC SÉANCE WITH ALEXIS DIDIER.

BY ERNESTO BOZZANO, GENOA.

Sir Oliver Lodge, in his recent Presidential Address to the Society for Psychical Research, referred so pointedly to the great theoretic importance of clairvoyance phenomena in general, insisting on the necessity of gathering facts on the subject, that I feel induced to send you an account of a remarkable but scarcely noticed séance of animal mesmerism with the renowned Alexis Didier. The séance took place in an aristocratic salon of Paris, in the year 1847, but I think it cannot fail to be interesting even now to the readers of 'LIGHT'; and at the same time I should be desirous to learn Mr. Podmore's opinion on the matter, the more so since in his recent book, 'Modern Spiritualism,' he fell into a good many mistakes in regard to this percipient, which led him to very erroneous and unfair conclusions.

Besides the usual phenomena of clairvoyance, possibly attributable, more or less, to the transmission of thought, at this séance, as the reader will observe, a circumstance occurred which clearly attests the positive existence of 'travelling clairvoyance'; while another, which took place the same evening, equally establishes by unquestionable evidence the clairvoyance of the future.

I report the account of this séance from 'The Mysteries of Modern Spiritualism,' published in 1867 (Editor, Bettoni Milan), by Professor Francis Guidi, the well-known magnetist who actually intended thereby to give a complete refutation of Spiritualism, endeavouring to oppose to spiritualistic theories and phenomena other phenomena and principles drawn from experimental mesmerism, with the view of demonstrating that so-called spiritualistic phenomena are, after all, but mesmeristic phenomena.

To strengthen the examples and the teachings derived from his own experience he picked out from brother authors many other facts, among which he reported the account of a very interesting séance with Alexis, which appeared in the 'Museo Scientifico, Letterario ed Artistico' of Turin, No. 24, 1847, by C. A. Vecchi, a well-known publisher and scholar; and I must draw the particular attention of the reader to the above-mentioned dates—1847, Mr. Vecchi's account of the séance, and 1867, Mr. Guidi's publication—as they constitute an element of great importance in the evidence as to clairvoyance of the future. I may also observe that Mr. Vecchi, a first quite indifferent and sceptical in regard to mesmerism was so struck by this séance that he was induced to devote himself to the study of mesmerism, in which branch he became a great authority.

The séance in question was held, as I have said, in an aristocratic salon in Paris, in the presence of personages of high distinction, including the English Ambassador, Lord Normanby, Lady Peel, and an old English admiral, a glorious survivor of the Battle of Aboukir. And now I must leave Mr. C. A. Vecchi to introduce to the reader the operator, Dr. Marcillet, and the percipient, the famous Alexis. Mr. Vecchi says:—

'At ten o'clock in the evening Dr. Marcillet and Mr. Alexis made their entrance into the sitting-room, where they were anxiously expected. The Doctor had a frank, open, and happy countenance and a genial temper, which made upon everybody an exceedingly favourable impression, and led them to feel as if he were already a favourite old acquaintance.

'Young Alexis has black hair, black moustaches, kind, eager black eyes, and a pale, sad countenance. He is of ordinary size, nimble and graceful. His head is often reclining and his posture modest and collected. He is frequently troubled by a nervous motion of the mouth and of the arms, as if the nerves were afflicted by an organic disorder. He seldom smiles, and if he ever does, it looks rather like a sneer than anything else. His voice is mild and penetrating. He speaks little during his normal state as though he experienced some difficulty in uttering the words. On the whole, he is an agreeable and serious man. Dr. Marcillet asked Alexis to sit down in an arm chair, stared at him for a while, and easily sent him asleep. Smitten by his glance, Alexis wearily writhed and closing his eyes, stood still like a statue.

"I shall now loosen his tongue," interrupted Dr. Marcillet, "and clear from his chest the excessive (magnetic) fluid lying on it, after which he will be able to entertain you on whatever subject you may choose."

"The old English admiral was the first to approach the percipient, and having taken him by the hand, asked him if he could tell him which was the most remarkable event of his life."

"Forty-nine years ago, in the month of July, you were on board a seventy-four gun man-of-war, named—allow me to read her name written in gold letters—'Cul-lo-den.' How many other ships? Thirteen of them hoist the English flag, no, they are fifteen. Seventeen others have hoisted the Republican ensign of France. Oh! the uproar of artillery! the cries of the wounded! the crash of vessels! The sea is red with blood! The waves furiously dash against each other the bodies of the wounded, and the corpses! The 'Guillaume Tell' is boarding your ship; her artillery is thundering upon you; your men recoil at the shock of the French sailors. The commander of the 'Culloden' falls severely wounded and is replaced by another officer, who is shot in the breast and dies on the spot. You succeed him in the command. Oh! what slaughter on the deck! I see you bounding on fire embers, and broken bits of all sorts. A cloud of smoke hides you for a while from my sight. I hear a very heavy, rumbling noise like the discharge of a thousand guns: it is the bursting of the French admiral's ship 'L'Orient.' As you are endeavouring to get your vessel clear of the burning ship, which is threatening to set other vessels on fire, you are wounded in your left arm and fall overboard. Many boats hasten to the rescue of the shipwrecked, some sailors lay hold of you by the arms and . . . you are saved."

"During the relation of this episode of the Battle of Aboukir the old English admiral mumbled with surprise: 'Yes! Yes! it was really so!'" and as an English lady, when the speech was over, questioned him whether the whole account agreed or not, the admiral replied: "Yes, very well! I am very glad."

"One of the hostesses, who had a little love affair beyond the Alps and was tortured on account of the stubborn silence and fickleness of her idol, placed in a book an old letter she had received from him some months before, wrapped the book in a Cashmere shawl and put everything into the hands of him whom she had chosen as the confidant of her hidden pains and her smarting fears. Alexis thereupon whispered into her ears:—

"I know what you want—that I should speak of him to you. I do not know the contents of the letter, which is written in a language that is neither mine nor your own. But I shall go and find him, I shall see him, penetrate into his soul, and bring you his news."

"Could you meanwhile tell me his name?"

"It is not difficult, since I can read it at the end of the page." In fact he told her the name, but of the surname only half, as the remaining letters crossed with the others in the fold and could not, therefore, be read out. But he exclaimed: "Strange, how at Milan the house numbers run so high! Yet 'Via del Cappello' is not so very long! Our Rue Saint Honoré, which is not a short one, does not go over three hundred."

"Now, since you know the street and the number of his dwelling-house, go to Milan and tell me, if you can, all about his doings and thoughts."

"I enter the vestibule, go up a staircase, get across an entrance room and a parlour. I follow up a light at the end of the apartment. It is with pleasure that I can compliment you as far as the young man's beauty is concerned. He is bedecking himself; he is as elegant as a Paris dandy can be. He has a black beard and turned-up moustaches. What a compound of conceit, ambition, and haughtiness! What a void in his mind! He sings the final air of the opera 'Lucia.' His thoughts are fixed in Milan. Poor lady!"

"Go on, if you please."

"He fills a purse with gold coins, lights a cigar, and rings the bell. A servant appears at the door. He addresses him in dialect . . . yes, his words have not the same sound as those of Mario, of Gardoni, and of Madame Grisi. The servant shows him out, and they come downstairs; there is a cab at the door. Do you want me to follow him?"

"Do you not guess how nervously anxious I am?"

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"Is there no hope left?"

"None whatever. Honest men, between my age and his, are easily to be met, and a well-to-do young man, for example, will on no account steal others' property, but he will not act up to the same principle with a woman. To deceive a poor heart, to become its idol, to boast of it, to break a betrothal, to rob a deceived heart of the peace and ease of life, is a trifle to him. I know that he always esteems you, that is all. The great comfort for you, his esteem!"

Hearing these words the English lady bowed her head down and said no more. She had insisted on examining Pandora's box to the very bottom; but not even the slightest hope was left her. Poor little wight!

At this moment a renowned preacher, who only a few days before had stated that he gave little credit to such droll mesmeric quackeries, stepped into the hall. Having been asked to put some questions to Alexis, he first inquired from him as to his (the preacher's) moral character, to which the somnambulist replied that he was a minister of the Gospel. To a second query as to his functions of that day, he answered that he had preached in a church before a great crowd; and on being finally questioned if amidst the multitude he could make out some distinguished personality, he said that at the minister's sermon had been present the Queen of France, the Queen of Belgium, and the Princess of Joinville.

"This was ascertained to be perfectly true and correct."

Lady Peel, partaking of the general astonishment, felt induced to make a trial herself, and asked Alexis to go to London, thence to Windsor, and to a house she would afterwards point out to him. Alexis crossed the Channel mentally and, as he reached the indicated locality, said that a large hotel, lighted in the front by some gas lamps, stood before him. He entered through the gate, went upstairs to the second floor, went into the room No. 47, and there saw a young boy quite absorbed in reading a book.

"Could you tell me the name of that book?"

"No doubt; it is the first volume of 'Le Diable à Paris.'"

"Is the boy all right?"

"He is satisfied and laughs. He rather skims over the engravings than reads the contents of the book."

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"Yes, my lady; in front of the table I see hanging from the wall, in a rich, gilt frame, the water-colour portrait of the Count de Paris."

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Lady Peel stated that a few days before she had sent the portrait and the books to her son, who was in a college at Windsor.

The spectators' surprise was gradually increasing and everyone was eager to try the experience for himself.* One of the party asked the sleeper:—

"Can you read the title of this book wrapped up as it is with a shawl?"

"I will try; the touch of your hand already tells me that you mistrust your own eyes."

And placing the packet on his bosom, Alexis added: "'Le Beffroi de Gand' is the title of your novel. The whole volume bears only one annotation in very small writing, and after I have copied it on a separate sheet you will trace it by cutting the pages at the one hundred and twentieth."

He then took a pencil and wrote the following sentence:—

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"Do you not guess how nervously anxious I am?"

"I quite understand what you mean, but I read as well in his mind . . . shall I tell you the truth about him?"

"Of course!"

"He now enters a theatre. Many young gentlemen shake hands with him, and to some of them he answers with a smile. The pit is full of people. The boxes are not open like those of our theatres. He looks round with his eye-glass, and at last stops and composes himself with an affected grace. Oh! the coxcomb he is! The actors are playing a love drama, to which

he pays no attention whatever; his thoughts are roaming elsewhere. Finally he moves, goes up two flights of a staircase, opens the door of a box, where he is most welcome. There is the woman he loves, she who has stolen his heart from you."

"Is there no hope left?"

"None whatever. Honest men, between my age and his, are easily to be met, and a well-to-do young man, for example, will on no account steal others' property, but he will not act up to the same principle with a woman. To deceive a poor heart, to become its idol, to boast of it, to break a betrothal, to rob a deceived heart of the peace and ease of life, is a trifle to him. I know that he always esteems you, that is all. The great comfort for you, his esteem!"

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"Well, here am I—no—wait a moment. It's all right now. You wish me to take something in a box?"

"Yes."

* At this stage I must point out how the sentence just reported, the meaning of which is fully corroborated by what precedes and still more so by what will follow, may already be considered quite sufficient to entirely destroy the force of Mr. Podmore's most serious objection, the main purpose whereof was to discredit Alexis' actual state of mesmeric clairvoyance. Mr. Podmore thus writes on the matters: "I have already pointed out that the records of the clairvoyance shown by Alexis Didier are vitiated by considerations of analogous kind, Alexis being able to choose the one or two persons to whom he furnished successful tests out of the large number present at his séances." (Vol. I., p. 331.)—E.B.

"Which box is shut up in the library, is it not?"

"Just so."

"And that I should examine a small portrait on ivory, encased in a leather box?"

"It is correct."

"That portrait was painted twenty years ago, by Smith, in 1827, as I see written at its bottom, and represents a lady, who has since grown a little—But—here she is! Allow me to have the honour of introducing her to you."

He stood up and, taking Lady Peel by the hand, led her before Lord Peel.

There was also with us a free-thinker from Venice, who, as our enthusiasm was breaking forth, contented himself with smiling, considering us all as Alexis' mates, or at the most the greatest simpletons he had ever come across. With the doctoral look which is peculiar to folks of his kind, he walked up to the table where we sat in a circle round the young magician, and put him the following questions:—

"What is there under this envelope?"

"A sheet of paper folded in four."

"And on the said sheet?"

"A sentence."

"Could you read it?"

"Of course, and when I have read it may I hope you will withdraw what you have written?"

"But I cannot believe you will ever be able to read it."

"I have already read it."

"Well, then, if you ever succeed, I promise I shall henceforth believe all you wish."

"In that case from this very moment you can believe, since you have written 'I do not believe at all.'"

He was thus out-done, although not convinced; quite abashed he stepped up to me and said in his own dialect: "I should never have thought him capable of such things. Really, he is an extraordinary being; if he came to Venice he would make a good deal of money."

"Alexis, are you tired?" asked Dr. Marcillet.

"Yes, very."

"But the séance has not lasted very long."

"No, but this gentleman, whose temper is the most stubborn I ever met with, by his incredulity has upset all my nerves, breaking them down and giving me the headache."

"Do not fear; I shall soon put you right." And on saying so he sprinkled his head with magnetic fluid.

"Are you well now?"

"I feel better. Let me travel, however, that I may entirely recover."

"In what country?"

"Wherever they please."

Whereupon another gentleman went up to Dr. Marcillet and whispered a few words into his ears, to which the latter replied: "You can do it as you like best; give him, however, your hand if you wish him to follow you."

The new inquirer sat down beside the young sorcerer, and having taken him by the hand, thus began: "Let us go."

"I am in Marseilles. We are carried by steam-power on a sea voyage; it seems to me we are landing in Africa. It is very warm. The Arabs may consider themselves very lucky for having no idea of our fogs."

"Where are you?"

"On the sandy shore of an island in the Mediterranean, parted from the continent by a canal, which is narrow in some places. But you do not wish to get across?"

"No."

"The harbour is very small; close by is the market. There is an Arch of Triumph similar to the one in Place du Carousel. On the arch, ruined here and there, is an inscription, reading, 'Antonino et Vero,' &c. Oh! the great crowd of people! How many black and ugly men on horseback! The soldiers are equipped like those of the Bey of Tunis, who lately paid a visit to Paris. Amongst them I see also French soldiers belonging to the African troops."

"Where are they going?"

"They are all rushing to the sea-shore to the right. Oh! I see an obelisk. How strange its structure is! Oh! the mean trophy, made up with human bones! Behold! those white skulls have been crying for vengeance for centuries . . . and vengeance they have already had in Algeria. Now full satisfaction has been given!"

"In what manner?"

"The Arabs by order of their chief have destroyed their fathers' ignominy; the execrable pyramid has crumbled down, the bones are gathered in a tomb, and the Mahomedan cavalry has rendered the funeral honours to the remnants of the glorious braves, who fell victims for the honour and the faith of their country. By-the-bye! Now only I notice it. You attend the ceremony with your uniform of French Colonel."

"All that you have told us is perfectly true, and it is wonderful thing to listen to you."

A lady, quite enraptured by the results of the last séance came up in her turn to consult the oracle. She led him Florence, at the address, "Via del Palagio," in her sister house, and required him to give her a description of the apartment, the colour of the walls and of the ceilings, the shape the furniture and its position. A Chinese black-lacquer book-shelf, with gilt embossed trimmings, lying in the drawing room, was by him minutely described in every detail.

"A slender lady, of low stature, is seated on a crimson velvet sofa. She speaks to a rather big, old man; you seem to be connected with both of them. A third party comes in—he is a soldier with a thick, black beard. They speak a good deal but I cannot understand them."

"In the drawing-room do you not perceive some other objects?"

"Yes; on the table there is a Carcel lamp, a little book, newspaper, a letter—with Paris stamp. Oh! I now know the name of the lady, as also your own—you are sisters."

I, in my turn, led him by my thoughts to Rome, and came to know that my dear Cicirucchio at that moment was not at home; that His Holiness Pius IX. enjoyed perfect good health, and that at that instant he was busy in setting his universally revered name on some sheets of paper which were presented for his signature; that a friend of mine living in Via del Santi Apostoli, was lying in bed with a cold and, although suffering, was writing verses. That's all right dear Peter, you still hold on to your poetical manias!

As I invited him to go to the Arms Alderman's Palace, he remarked at the entrance a strong bad smell of stable and of tobacco-smoke; in the drawing-room to the right, facing the square, he saw a black-dressed little man writing; some what bald, lofty forehead, and with an open and intelligent look.

"Could you tell me his name?"

"No, I cannot guess it."

"Could you not read it on some of the many papers scattered over his writing-desk?"

"They are written in Italian. I will try. They are addressed: 'A Sua Eccellenza Monsignor Presidente dell'Armi, Roma.'"

"What is there in the room?"

"The Pope's portrait; a clock on the mantelpiece facing the two windows; in the corner several muskets and swords. . . Someone is knocking at the door to the right; a waiter enters and hands a letter to the black-dressed man—Oh! Now at last I know his name, and if you give me a pencil and a slip of paper I will copy the address." Alexis, in fact, wrote the following words, spelling them one by one: "Monsignore Giovanni Rusconi."

It was thus that I came to know how my friend, formerly pro-major domo to His Holiness, had been appointed Director of the Ministry of War.

(To be continued.)

HEALED BY SPIRIT DOCTORS.

A correspondent furnishes the following strange story, with the assurance that it is literally and exactly true:—

"During the early part of my public career, I found myself afflicted by what the doctor whom I consulted was pleased to call sciatica. There were times when the pain was simply unendurable. One day, I remember it well, I was on the point of sending a telegram to my agent saying it would be impossible to fill the engagement to lecture the next night. I took up my pen to write when, instead of the words I had in my mind this message was written: "Go to your bedroom; undress and lie down; allow no one to disturb you for two hours and we will cure you, and you will be able to fulfil your engagement to-morrow night." I rang the bell, gave orders that I was not to be disturbed and did as directed, and when I was quite ready, wondering what was going to happen, I suddenly felt drowsy, and seemed to be under some spell. I could not move or speak. I knew that three men had entered the room and stood looking at me, when suddenly I felt a desire to look at my body. The three doctors were taking my leg to pieces! I saw them take piece after piece and lay them down and I saw distinctly that they were scraping the bone. When they seemed satisfied with my leg, and with what they had done, they put it all together again, and one turned to me and said, "You will never suffer again from that limb." And then I saw them looking at me with faces beaming with love, and knew they were going away. When I awakened from the stupor I felt as well as I ever did in my life, and never since during all these years, have I had one recurrence of pain in that part of my body."

As a recent seance held in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, while under control, answered, among many others, the following questions, for the report of which we are indebted to the kindness of Miss May Harris :—

Q. : Is the use of intoxicating drink detrimental to man's spiritual progression here ?

A. : The use, or rather I should say the abuse, of anything is likely to be detrimental to the development of the spiritual nature. I do not confine my thought of the ill-effects of excess to intoxicating drinks, because one may be, as the phrase goes, a temperance man, and yet indulge in other directions in such a way that the physical body becomes but an indifferent instrument for the use of the spirit. Broadly speaking, the misuse of anything is likely to cause harm, and personally, I should think that abstinence from intoxicants in every form is the best method to pursue for almost everyone ; not that of necessity great spiritual development would result from such abstinence, but because of the dangerous tendency to increase the small proportion taken at one time, and of safeguards being overthrown through familiarity. The point, however, that I want to present is that a temperance man, or a teetotaler, is not of necessity a better man than the moderate drinker ; he may be a very much better man, but not of necessity simply through abstinence from alcoholic drink.

Q. : What is the immediate condition of a man who has freely indulged in drink here, when he arrives on the other side ?

A. : I think the result of the free indulgence is the clogging of the physical condition and a weakening of the real power or strength of the individual, so that immediately after transition he would be in a cloudy, gloomy condition, which, under other circumstances, might have been avoided. Great indulgence is usually accompanied by deterioration of character and a slower and less clear perception of truth or of good. Consequently, an average individual who, but for this indulgence, was fairly good, would, on passing over, find his perceptive powers dulled and himself closed in for a time. But after a while there might be an awakening to the consciousness of the foolishness or wickedness of his past conduct and he might make a very strong and determined effort to break away from the results of his old habits. If, on the other hand, he continued to desire further indulgence, his gloomy condition would increase, and himself be shut off from the clearer spiritual atmosphere. Should the desire be very strong, he might find himself in close association with those like-minded on the earth, and in that way exercise a harmful influence upon another which would be re-actively injurious to himself. But it is only those who have similar desires who can be thus influenced, for one who is determined to live a temperate life cannot be affected by such an individual approaching him from the spirit side. It is, however, a fact that there is much hypnotic, suggestive influence without any direct intention of such result, both on the earth and from the spirit side, made upon those who are susceptible.

Q. : Is there any great movement on your side resembling our teetotal movement here, for the purpose, if possible, of inducing people to refrain from such indulgence ?

A. : No, I do not think there is, exactly. We on the spirit side have got away from the temptation, except in the manner to which I have referred ; hence there is no necessity for any strong measures to be taken to safeguard those who have passed on ; but those who have felt strongly on this question are drawn into association, and without forming themselves into a body such as you have upon the earth, they seek to exert an influence over earth dwellers in this direction for their good.

Q. : In the case of one passing from this life into the next, who, while here, relied solely on Christ to make him secure in the life to come, how does such an one enter spirit-life in conjunction with those who have lived a godly, moral life, free from vice and many things which we sometimes find those professing Christ are liable to ? Is there anything in the spirit-life in which an orthodox belief in Christ would make him any better or worse than ordinary people ?

except in so far as it has a beneficial effect upon the character, is not of value on the spirit side. Spiritual liberty is not gained purely through belief. If belief on your side has contributed to the strengthening of character, and assisted in making the individual better, truer, more honest, more faithful, then, in that way, he experiences good results when he reaches the spirit side. Belief in any truth is of value only so far as it helps the individual to ennoble and perfect the character.

Q. : It is said that our homes in spirit-life are built by us while we are on earth in the flesh : are we to accept this statement as a literal fact, meaning an architectural structure consisting of floors, walls, and roof ?

A. : I think it would be more accurate to say that the spiritual homes are partly built by those still in the body, and that, in accordance with the laws of spirit-life, there is what appears as an architectural structure, as the result of the thoughts, feelings, and desires which have animated the individual while upon the earth ; hence the necessity, to which I make reference occasionally, for clear thinking in regard to the kind of home that is desired. Those people who just drift along are not likely to have a very well finished habitation when they pass away ; but those who have clear conceptions and strong thought power, and act in unison with spiritual principles, are likely to have very congenial homes when they enter the spiritual realm. But many conditions are associated with life experiences, and the home that is being fashioned is continually altering as the result of the life that is being lived. In just the same kind of way in which the homes are prepared, so are the garments ; and when a spirit passes out of the body he is draped in suitable garments which represent the quality and intensity of his thought and love life, just as his spiritual home is the outward and visible indication of the degree of his spiritual development or activity. Spirit homes are perfectly objective to those who dwell in them, and some spirits are very glad that they are not finished productions, because they would not like to be compelled to live throughout eternity in conditions which are the immediate result of the life lived on earth. They find many things in their spirit homes which their larger experiences make them wish to alter, and so they rejoice that the process of development is continuous and that they can build more beautiful homes as they increase in knowledge, power, wisdom, and love.

Q. : In a recent gunpowder explosion, two men were blown utterly to pieces : in what condition would they be upon arrival on the other side ?

A. : I should judge they would at first be in a condition of deep unconsciousness, and would remain so for a period. They would, however, be taken by spirit attendants to a suitable place, or condition, and left there entirely alone, but in such a way that, when the awakening came, there could be quick response by those in attendance upon them. Spiritual nature is a wonderful doctor, and on the spirit side there is no need for the administration of drugs, or the performance of operations, but we simply wait for the forces of the spirit to get into due and correct relationship, and then the patient is practically restored to health. There are a number of spirit-people continuously linked to the earth condition, who make it their business to be at hand to give the necessary aid to, and ensure the safety of, those who are suddenly sent from your side to ours, and very often these spirits are those who endeavoured, when on earth, to understand the laws of health.

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TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.

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A.: Belief in anything, whether in the teachings of Jesus Christ, or in the 'saving power of Christ,' as it has been termed, except in so far as it has a beneficial effect upon the character, is not of value on the spirit side. Spiritual liberty is not gained purely through belief. If belief on your side has contributed to the strengthening of character, and assisted in making the individual better, truer, more honest, more faithful, then, in that way, he experiences good results when he reaches the spirit side. Belief in any truth is of value only so far as it helps the individual to ennoble and perfect the character.

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AFTER-DEATH STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

Mr. Myers' great work is chiefly valuable as a sort of spiritualistic Klondyke which may be worked in all kinds of ways, by all kinds of explorers: but always with a strong chance of finding gold. We could name a score of topics of the highest importance which would well repay separate and exclusive research altogether apart from the general argument or the cumulative value of the whole. We may occasionally direct attention to some of these, and select as a first separate topic what we will call 'After-death states of consciousness,' though Mr. Myers' phrase, 'Transitional state of consciousness immediately after death,' has special value.

It is far too readily assumed, even by many Spiritualists, that death at once frees the spirit from earthly limitations, and passes the emancipated self into clearer light. In some cases this is probably true: but there must be a multitude of possible hindrances, turning upon habits of thought, the controlling interests of the earth-life, the aptitudes of the spirit-self as to the ability to swiftly adapt consciousness to environment, and even the nature of the bodily disease or cause of severance between body and soul: and the phrase 'earth-bound' needs careful and economical use. Not only may the very earthly and the vicious be held here, but it is quite conceivable that an eager reformer, a powerful statesman, a zealous preacher, an absorbed scientist, a devoted philanthropist, or even an intense lover of kindred, may, in a sense, be earth-bound: and yet, so far from being emancipated from limitations, and borne up to perfect light, all these may, for a time at all events, be almost distressingly unable to adjust themselves to their new and unfamiliar conditions.

What more reasonable? The old tools, though infinitely inferior to the new ones, were at all events familiar; and the new channels of communication, though infinitely superior to the old, are as yet untried. What more likely, then, than a state of uncertainty, a period of mental groping, perhaps a time of amazed drifting or baffled struggle, as of one who woke up to find himself in a land of mist and dream?

Mr. Myers introduces one of his impressive stories with this remark: 'I will begin by referring to a curious case, where the impression given is that of a spiritual presence which seeks and finds the percipient, but is itself too confused for coherent communication. . . It will be seen that this narrative is thoroughly in accord-

ance with previous indications of a state of posthumous bewilderment supervening before the spirit has adjusted its perceptions to the new environment.'

Other cases suggest that there may be an incomplete separation between spirit and body, with consequent subjective sensations that are 'dreamlike and fantastic.' Mr. Myers uses the phrase 'the transitional dream,' and suggests that 'the passage from one state to another may sometimes be accompanied with some temporary lack of adjustment between experiences taking place in such different environments—between the system of symbolism belonging to the one and to the other state.'

What may really be happening to the spirit on the other side we cannot tell: we know only what seems to be happening. The spirit may, in relation to its spiritual surroundings, be perfectly clear and happy, and yet, in coming, or trying to come, into the old conditions, it may be more or less incoherent, may talk as if in a dream, with memory confused, knowledge all mixed up and 'at sea,' and with the will blundering as in hovering between utterly different states of mind. Or, as another alternative, the fault may all be on our side, as when we look upon a friend, outside in the sunshine, through dark blue glass, or try to discern features through glass full of cracks and waves, when a heavenly smile may easily look like a grotesque frown: or, still nearer the truth, as when in telegraphy through wireless space, the 'receiver' is defective, while the 'transmitter' may be all right: so that what seem to us 'after-death states of consciousness' may, very often, only be after-death difficulties of telegraphic or telepathic connection.

Mr. Myers makes the useful remark that certain narratives suggest that spirits recently freed from the body may enjoy a fuller perception of earthly scenes than it is afterwards possible to retain. This, again, is entirely reasonable. There are, he says, 'very few cases where actual apparitions give evidence of any continuity in the knowledge possessed by a spirit of friends on earth.' That is, perhaps, not an altogether enjoyable thought, but it is perfectly reasonable. That great new life must have its great new interests; and its voyages of discovery may, in millions of cases, be incompatible with entire continuity of connection with old interests, scenes, memories, and even friends; but this may be recognised and accepted in entire harmony with the belief from which we cannot part, that no duties need be left undone, that no affections need be dishonoured, and that all who love will 'prepare a place' for all who long.

In the meantime, let no one be discouraged because those who love and those who long seem to be separated. Presence does not necessarily mean ability to communicate: or if communications are baffling, incoherent and inaccurate, it does not necessarily mean that the communicator is in darkness or is a fraud. We must be very patient about all these matters, for we are all seeing 'in (or through) a glass darkly.' In a little while we shall 'see face to face.'

SOUL-POSSESSION.—'The longer I live the less anxious I am about my soul's salvation; the more content I am to wait and see, the more resolved I am to trust the God that made me. There is something pitiable in the modern running to and fro, seeking for salvation,—people praying, crying, believing, hoping, fearing;—to-day hysterical with dread, to-morrow hysterical with rapture. I should like to say to all these people: You talk about faith, but if you had real faith in God, you would not make all this disturbance about your being saved; you would trust Him; you would hold yourselves at His disposal; you would "in your patience, possess" your souls.'—'The Coming Day.'

MUSINGS ON MEMORY.

'We look before and after,
And sigh for what is not.'

Memory is one of the greatest marvels in life. What picture galleries we all possess! If we sit quietly by the fire on a winter's evening and let our thoughts wander on the backward track, recalling past days, what scenes and faces start up before us! The well-remembered surroundings of our early days—trees, meadows, walks, and the distant hills—so real and actual that we recognise them at a glance. Friends of long ago stand out so clearly that they seem really present with us, and we startle ourselves with the echoes of their dear familiar voices. And so we go on, lovingly and lingeringly, or hurriedly and sadly, turning over the pages of the wonderful book of memory wherein are inscribed the incidents of our life's story that none but ourselves may read. Thus through the eyes of memory we look out upon our world: the world in which we have lived and moved and had our being.

After all, the world is to us just what we are able to see and feel and know regarding it. No one ever really possessed anything of it beyond what he was able to make his own by understanding it, and transferring it to his inner self. The wayfarer who feasts his eyes on the lovely landscape, and takes his fill of delight as he gazes upon and appreciates the beauty of the scene, possesses it more truly than he who holds the title-deeds of the land, but is careless of, and unmoved by, the beauty that is spread out before him.

But how is the consciousness of these surroundings aroused in the onlooker? How are vibrations transmuted into sensations and the pictures transferred to, and interpreted by, the living consciousness? How do we remember if our thoughts, emotions, and efforts are constantly using up brain tissues? If every thought represents, and necessitates, the expenditure of so much phosphorus, and the substance of the brain is continually wearing out in the very process of cerebration, where can the impressions be made? On what are the records so indelibly imprinted, when the very fact of their reception and registration destroys the living tissues by which we are enabled to become conscious of them?

M. Gabriel Delanne, in a recent issue of the '*Revue Scientifique et Morale du Spiritisme*,' pertinently asked:—

'How does it happen that the memory is conserved, when the nerve tissues of the brain are being incessantly renewed? For it is certain, as Claude Bernard has said, that every vital phenomenon is a phenomenon of organic destruction. When a brain cell enters into activity it can only do so by the decomposition of part of its elements, and if it functions considerably, at the end of a very short time it is completely renovated. Given the intensity of mental life, we must suppose that in the case of an adult these changes of the cerebral matter occur a great many times after his birth. (And here we may remark that Flourens, the eminent French physiologist, has shown pretty conclusively that the softer of the human tissues are replaced in the short space of three or four weeks.) Hence we may well ask in what elements are these recollections preserved, if the constituent substances of the brain cells have disappeared?'

The idea that all sensations, desires, and volitions are recorded, and stored away in the brain, like so many photographic records, and that memory is but the reproduction of those impressions as the result of their being again run through, or re-traced by, the machine, is surely an inadequate, mechanical, and unsatisfactory attempt to account for the inexplicable phenomena of consciousness. Surely we must look behind (or beyond) the machine for the explanation of this mystery, and recognise the seer behind the brain and realise the existence of the spirit, who not only perceives through the senses, but feels, thinks, and acts, and is conscious of his consciousness, and of his inherent power to express and realise himself.

Perception, interpretation, and expression are clearly attributes of the spirit-self and not qualities of the matter of

becomes the organism through and by which the spirit continues to remember the impressions and ideas received and acquired while here, and still further reveals its divine capabilities as the result of educational experiences on the other side.

It is not, however, so much with the mode of manifestation as with the content of consciousness that we are at present concerned; with those wonderful faculties of introspection and recollection by which we are enabled to 'look before and after'; to dream dreams and see visions; to create mental pictures; to imagine ideal states and conditions and call up to our remembrance 'sweet dreamland faces' and forms; and 'bring back to memory days of long ago.' Aye, not only to look back but forward, in obedience to our unquenchable conviction of continued existence in spite of seeming destruction, and experience the undying hope of meeting again with those we love and of knowing as we are known.

One of the most consolatory experiences that come to us as we move onward in the march of life is the realisation of the wonderful faculty which we possess of adjusting ourselves to changing circumstances and of covering over, or dropping out of remembrance, the painful, ugly, and unhappy incidents and experiences of the past. In early life our feelings are keen and the impressions made upon us are sharp and clear-cut. We fret and chafe against our limitations: we see the distant heights, but seldom realise the intervening valleys, bogs, and rocks that make the way hard and wearisome. We exaggerate the prize and are impatient of delays. Cast down by failure, soured by false friends, heart-broken because of loss, and vexed with ourselves because of weakness and sin, we live the intense, the arduous, strenuous life; our visions are in the main true and our efforts worthy, but we see as through a glass darkly and wear ourselves out in needless haste and strain.

Those who have travelled far, and have observed closely, will bear us out in saying that in after days, when recalling the incidents of their journeys, the disagreeable and disappointing experiences receded and gradually faded out, while the pleasant, enjoyable and happy memories remained with them always. Mellowed and ripened, after years of struggle and pain we look back without bitterness and feel that we have grown tolerant, patient, and kindly as the result of the open vision which we have attained. Our perceptions become clearer, our sympathies broader, and the insight which follows and results from sorrow and discipline enables us to discover hidden beauties in, and to realise the purport and value of, the past experiences against which we protested and fought until we learnt the futility of kicking against the pricks.

Just as kindly Nature is ever at work covering, softening, and adorning the rugged rocks and sterile places; giving a grandeur and charm to the bold and forbidding mountain peaks by enveloping them in mist or covering them with a mantle of snow; touching them to glory with the golden sunshine, or with the lovely after-glow when twilight falls—so in our inner memory the asperities, bitternesses, losses and sorrows are sweetened and transformed. Time's effacing fingers wipe away the blurs, touch and heal our wounds, right our wrongs, assuage our griefs, and we learn to look for and find the compensatory consequences of good and blessing—and be thankful. And so, as we sit by our fire and look into its recesses in meditative and retrospective mood, we smile through our tears, and past, present, and future seem lost in the living now. We haste not, nor make delay; we see the soul of good in things seemingly evil, and out of the shadows the loved and lost come back to us; secret sorrows and vain regrets that at one time tore and tried us fail to wound us now; buried hopes arise once more and we catch a glimpse, in the vision of the soul, of the Father's smiling face, and feel that all is well! The fitful fever of doubt and desire, the bitterness of hope deferred, and the disappointments and disillusionings which followed success and gratified ambition, have served their purpose; the prejudices and passions, as well as the sincere but mistaken exclusions and condemna-

MUSINGS ON MEMORY.

'We look before and after,
And sigh for what is not.'

Memory is one of the greatest marvels in life. What picture galleries we all possess! If we sit quietly by the fire on a winter's evening and let our thoughts wander on the backward track, recalling past days, what scenes and faces start up before us! The well-remembered surroundings of our early days—trees, meadows, walks, and the distant hills—so real and actual that we recognise them at a glance. Friends of long ago stand out so clearly that they seem really present with us, and we startle ourselves with the echoes of their dear familiar voices. And so we go on, lovingly and lingeringly, or hurriedly and sadly, turning over the pages of the wonderful book of memory wherein are inscribed the incidents of our life's story that none but ourselves may read. Thus through the eyes of memory we look out upon our world: the world in which we have lived and moved and had our being.

After all, the world is to us just what we are able to see and feel and know regarding it. No one ever really possessed anything of it beyond what he was able to make his own by understanding it, and transferring it to his inner self. The wayfarer who feasts his eyes on the lovely landscape, and takes his fill of delight as he gazes upon and appreciates the beauty of the scene, possesses it more truly than he who holds the title-deeds of the land, but is careless of, and unmoved by, the beauty that is spread out before him.

But how is the consciousness of these surroundings aroused in the onlooker? How are vibrations transmuted into sensations and the pictures transferred to, and interpreted by, the living consciousness? How do we remember if our thoughts, emotions, and efforts are constantly using up brain tissues? If every thought represents, and necessitates, the expenditure of so much phosphorus, and the substance of the brain is continually wearing out in the very process of cerebration, where can the impressions be made? On what are the records so indelibly imprinted, when the very fact of their reception and registration destroys the living tissues by which we are enabled to become conscious of them?

M. Gabriel Delanne, in a recent issue of the '*Revue Scientifique et Morale du Spiritisme*,' pertinently asked:—

'How does it happen that the memory is conserved, when the nerve tissues of the brain are being incessantly renewed? For it is certain, as Claude Bernard has said, that every vital phenomenon is a phenomenon of organic destruction. When a brain cell enters into activity it can only do so by the decomposition of part of its elements, and if it functions considerably, at the end of a very short time it is completely renovated. Given the intensity of mental life, we must suppose that in the case of an adult these changes of the cerebral matter occur a great many times after his birth. (And here we may remark that Flourens, the eminent French physiologist, has shown pretty conclusively that the softer of the human tissues are replaced in the short space of three or four weeks.) Hence we may well ask in what elements are these recollections preserved, if the constituent substances of the brain cells have disappeared?'

The idea that all sensations, desires, and volitions are recorded, and stored away in the brain, like so many photographic records, and that memory is but the reproduction of those impressions as the result of their being again run through, or re-traced by, the machine, is surely an inadequate, mechanical, and unsatisfactory attempt to account for the inexplicable phenomena of consciousness. Surely we must look behind (or beyond) the machine for the explanation of this mystery, and recognise the seer behind the brain and realise the existence of the spirit, who not only perceives through the senses, but feels, thinks, and acts, and is conscious of his consciousness, and of his inherent power to express and realise himself.

Perception, interpretation, and expression are clearly attributes of the spirit-self and not qualities of the matter of the brain, and M. Gabriel Delanne, like Andrew Jackson Davis, Hudson Tuttle, Dr. Peebles, and others, claims that the manifestation and exercise of these powers are made possible by the *perispirit*, or spirit body, in which all our memories are stored up. Surviving the dissolution of the earth-form, it

becomes the organism through and by which the spirit continues to remember the impressions and ideas received and acquired while here, and still further reveals its divine capabilities as the result of educational experiences on the other side.

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remain, and at last we feel that there is a Love Divine that may be trusted to the end. Possessing our soul in patience and in peace, awaiting the opening of the Gate Beautiful into the Land Immortal, we realise that :—

‘Through our lives’ mysterious changes,
Through the sorrow-haunted years,
Runs a Law of Compensation
For our suffering and our tears.
And the soul that reasons rightly
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Till it gains that calm condition,
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WHAT WOULD THE ‘RESEARCHER’ HAVE?

Is it not sad to think that after all the evidence spirit workers have offered to the Society for Psychical Research, they still remain Sadducees? They will not believe in the power of spirit people to return even after they have interrogated them to the fullest extent. One by one their complex and rather absurd theories have been met and the persistence of the human individuality clearly demonstrated, yet they still bring forward the old hash of crude hypotheses. How true it is that none are so blind as those who will not see! Dr. Hodgson was defeated by facts more strong than his theories, but he seems still inclined to deny that any other than Mrs. Piper has capacity to open the way. When will this finical spirit cease and the open mind come into view? Mr. Myers’ volumes have been published, we know they have been of service to some outsiders, but what have they done to help the Researchers out of the old hard shell of unbelief? Are they incapable of weighing up and sorting the facts that come from so many quarters? Some of them have been searching sufficiently long to have a fair idea whether the land will yield up any treasures, and it were better for them to leave the subject alone than be perpetually fighting the shadows and false appearances of their own blinded mentality. Did not Carlyle prophetically see the genus ‘Researcher’ when he penned his chapter ‘On Moses and the Dwellers by the Dead Sea,’ in which he says :—

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Mr. Piddington was expected to come out of the old rut and give us something clear and unvarnished after his sittings with Mrs. Thompson, but he still dwells among the tombs. Hesitancy and doubt, doubt and hesitancy, are all that we get. What did he look for and what amount of evidence would have satisfied him completely? It is to be feared, none! He still clings to his secondary personalities and sub-conscious states. Can we credit him with even commonplace perception when he is unable to arrive at a definite conclusion as to whether ‘Nelly’ is or is not a personage apart from the medium? It may be gravely doubted whether he has accurately represented Mrs. Thompson’s views as to ‘Nelly,’ for with her extended experience she surely knows that ‘Nelly’ has an existence apart from her own! The ‘Sidgwick’ who was enabled to manifest with the old manner, voice, and style of utterance, must have felt that he was resping his reward for past incredulity towards spiritual facts, when he was met with the stock air of doubt and denial! Why is it that Mr. Piddington has not the power to say that ‘Sidgwick’ was

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Some days after this Fräulein Tonica told them that at that day and hour 'Metudi' had imperiously told her to sit at the little table, which she was rather vexed at having to do, as no pheno-

mena occurred; and he then explained to her that 'he needed her medial force, as he was with the doctor.' This he also afterwards repeated to the latter himself, adding that he took the psychic force from the medium to produce phenomena in another place.

Several other similar occurrences are then mentioned, and the doctor draws an analogy between these transportations of psychic force from the reservoir, or medium, to another place, and that of gases, electricity, &c., by conductors—such as tubes or wire—in physics. The writer adds the following:—

"Metudi's" own account of this transference of the psychic force is interesting; he said: "At the place where I wish to give some manifestation, I must have a medium, however weak a one. Therefore I proceed in the following manner: I take the force from the strong medium, convey it to the place where I shall require it, transferring it to the weak medium, and when I desire to produce phenomena I withdraw the necessary force from the supply I have stored in the weak medium."

"It is characteristic that 'Metudi' only gave us this explanation after apparently receiving permission from higher spirits; and he would absolutely tell us nothing further about the way in which he produced the phenomena. 'I dare not,' he said in excuse. 'Who forbids you to do so?' 'God.' 'How can that be when you do not see Him?' 'I feel that the prohibition comes from God, and I am compelled to obey it.' 'But if you were wicked could you not disobey God's command?' 'No; a power would prevent me.'"

"We have frequently received similar answers from spirits. There are evidently things in the spirit world which we ought not to know, or at least, which we cannot comprehend without much trouble and experience on our own part."

Herr Hans Kordon, of Zurich, gives a continuation of his essay 'Writing under Spirit Inspiration.' In this chapter, after an account of the works he had read on Occultism and Spiritism, he says that he, like many others, was greatly averse to the idea of going to a professional medium, or public séance, and when in the spring of 1901 he became acquainted with a lady medium of Zurich, he hesitated for some weeks before deciding to invite her to give a séance in the country house at which he was then living. He does not mention this medium's name, nor whether she was a professional, but says that the séance took place in June, by full daylight, and that besides the medium and himself the only persons present were his father, his wife, and a Spiritist from Zurich.

The manifestations at this séance, and at a second one shortly afterwards, were by table-tilting and occasionally trance. At the first nothing very special took place except that it was declared that Madame Kordon was highly mediumistic, that she would be controlled by her mother, and that after the second séance her medial powers would become developed. Herr Kordon, it was said, was *not* medially endowed.

After the second séance the wife's mediumship rapidly developed, and husband and wife sitting together at a little table, communications through tilts were given. Soon Madame Kordon began to write inspirationally, even being forced by an influence she could not resist to rise in the night to pen some verses. A list is given of some of the poems, dramas, and other literature thus composed during some six months. The 'inspirers' claimed to be the spirits of her mother and sister. Herr Kordon writes that he was very sceptical about the inspiration coming from the supernatural world, and equally so when one day in July he was told by his wife—speaking under control—that he, too, would be used by the spirits to write, and that he would be controlled by no less a spirit than that of Goethe. He was quite incredulous, and very unwilling to be so used. However, on August 1st, 1901, while walking about his study, smoking a cigarette, he, too, was almost forcibly impressed to write. He describes his sensations then and at other times very graphically, and says that his doubts were dispelled, and that he abandoned himself to the influences—always elevated and good—which now used his hand and mind to write an enormous quantity of literature, the titles of many

CLAIRVOYANCE IN DREAMS.

Seeing the correspondence on this subject in 'LIGHT,' I venture to think the following two instances may be of interest:—

On November 16th last my housekeeper, who had been in my service some considerable time, gave me notice to leave, as she was to be married on the 19th of the following month, December; and the three days she would get at home, from the 16th to the 19th, would give her time to complete all her arrangements.

On the morning of November 19th, three days after she had given notice, I found her with a troubled face, and very depressed. I asked the reason of her change of manner, for she was naturally a bright and cheerful woman, and she told me she had had a dream which had caused her great uneasiness, and knowing I have psychic tendencies, she asked me if I would 'translate' it for her.

"I will do what I can," I said, 'tell it me.'

She then said that she had dreamed that it was her wedding day; everything had gone off naturally and in order, and she had arrived at the church. I may mention that she had been married twice before (so you see she was no coward, but of an adventurous and bold spirit!), and her son by her first marriage, which had been a very happy one, was to give her away. Her second marriage had been a dreadful experience, her husband turning out a confirmed drunkard, and a disreputable character in every way. In her dream she arrived at the church, and her son led her up to the altar, where the bridegroom awaited her. On looking into his face she was startled to find that she was looking at Richard Johnson, her second husband! 'It is all right,' he said to her, 'I am your husband.' She thought that they knelt together at the altar, and the clergyman advanced towards them. Her eyes being bent to the ground, she saw only his feet, which were fleshless, and partly covered by the long white robe he wore. In her dream a cold shudder went through her, and she raised her eyes slowly up to his face, and there she saw no man, but the figure of Death, with his arms raised, and holding on high the scythe in the act of striking. As she saw this, she says, she screamed and fell back into her husband's arms, and knew no more till she awoke.

'My dear Johnson,' I said, 'I don't think it requires any one very far advanced in psychic things to read that for you. There will be no marriage.'

'Oh! madam,' she said, 'pray don't say that. It may be nothing, only a dream.'

I said no more as I saw it distressed her; but I was not surprised when, after she had gone out to see her intended husband, two days later, on her return she came to me with a very grave face and said: 'Mr. Smith is very ill; he has been in bed two days, and the doctor thinks very seriously of him. That was on a Sunday, and she had had her first dream on the Friday night. She went out to see him on the Monday, and again on the following Wednesday, and on each occasion found him in very much the same condition.'

On the following Friday she had another dream, and this was the substance of it. She thought they were walking along the road that skirts Battersea Park, and close to where her future home was to be, when Mr. Smith drew the wedding ring out of his pocket, and asked her to let him put it on her finger. He did so; and as she was looking at it and turning her hand round with the palm upwards, she saw that the ring was broken in two.

'What is the use of giving me a ring like this?' she said; 'it is broken.'

'I am sure it is not,' he answered; 'it was the best I could get.'

'Look, then,' she said; 'it will hardly keep on my finger; I shall not be able to hold it any time; and even as she spoke

mena occurred; and he then explained to her that 'he needed her medial force, as he was with the doctor.' This he also afterwards repeated to the latter himself, adding that he took the psychic force from the medium to produce phenomena in another place.

Several other similar occurrences are then mentioned, and the doctor draws an analogy between these transportations of psychic force from the reservoir, or medium, to another place, and that of gases, electricity, &c., by conductors—such as tubes or wire—in physics. The writer adds the following:—

"Metudi's" own account of this transference of the psychic force is interesting; he said: "At the place where I wish to give some manifestation, I must have a medium, however weak a one. Therefore I proceed in the following manner: I take the force from the strong medium, convey it to the place where I shall require it, transferring it to the weak medium, and when I desire to produce phenomena I withdraw the necessary force from the supply I have stored in the weak medium."

"It is characteristic that "Metudi" only gave us this explanation after apparently receiving permission from higher spirits; and he would absolutely tell us nothing further about the way in which he produced the phenomena. "I dare not," he said in excuse. "Who forbids you to do so?" "God." "How can that be when you do not see Him?" "I feel that the prohibition comes from God, and I am compelled to obey it." "But if you were wicked could you not disobey God's command?" "No; a power would prevent me."

"We have frequently received similar answers from spirits. There are evidently things in the spirit world which we ought not to know, or at least, which we cannot comprehend without much trouble and experience on our own part."

Herr Hans Kordon, of Zurich, gives a continuation of his essay 'Writing under Spirit Inspiration.' In this chapter, after an account of the works he had read on Occultism and Spiritism, he says that he, like many others, was greatly averse to the idea of going to a professional medium, or public séance, and when in the spring of 1901 he became acquainted with a lady medium of Zurich, he hesitated for some weeks before deciding to invite her to give a séance in the country house at which he was then living. He does not mention this medium's name, nor whether she was a professional, but says that the séance took place in June, by full daylight, and that besides the medium and himself the only persons present were his father, his wife, and a Spiritist from Zurich.

The manifestations at this séance, and at a second one shortly afterwards, were by table-tilting and occasionally trance. At the first nothing very special took place except that it was declared that Madame Kordon was highly mediumistic, that she would be controlled by her mother, and that after the second séance her medial powers would become developed. Herr Kordon, it was said, was *not* medially endowed.

After the second séance the wife's mediumship rapidly developed, and husband and wife sitting together at a little table, communications through tilts were given. Soon Madame Kordon began to write inspirationally, even being forced by an influence she could not resist to rise in the night to pen some verses. A list is given of some of the poems, dramas, and other literature thus composed during some six months. The 'inspirers' claimed to be the spirits of her mother and sister. Herr Kordon writes that he was very sceptical about the inspiration coming from the supernatural world, and equally so when one day in July he was told by his wife—speaking under control—that he, too, would be used by the spirits to write, and that he would be controlled by no less a spirit than that of Goethe. He was quite incredulous, and very unwilling to be so used. However, on August 1st, 1901, while walking about his study, smoking a cigarette, he, too, was almost forcibly impressed to write. He describes his sensations then and at other times very graphically, and says that his doubts were dispelled, and that he abandoned himself to the influences—always elevated and good—which now used his hand and mind to write an enormous quantity of literature, the titles of many of the works being given; the composition of which at times greatly exhausted him.

The account—which is to be continued—is extremely interesting, and bears the impress of truthfulness in every line.

M. T.

CLAIRVOYANCE IN DREAMS.

Seeing the correspondence on this subject in 'LIGHT,' I venture to think the following two instances may be of interest:—

On November 16th last my housekeeper, who had been in my service some considerable time, gave me notice to leave, as she was to be married on the 19th of the following month, December; and the three days she would get at home, from the 16th to the 19th, would give her time to complete all her arrangements.

On the morning of November 19th, three days after she had given notice, I found her with a troubled face, and very depressed. I asked the reason of her change of manner, for she was naturally a bright and cheerful woman, and she told me she had had a dream which had caused her great uneasiness, and knowing I have psychic tendencies, she asked me if I would 'translate' it for her.

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'What is the use of giving me a ring like this?' she said; 'it is broken.'

'I am sure it is not,' he answered; 'it was the best I could get.'

'Look, then,' she said; 'it will hardly keep on my finger; I shall not be able to hold it any time'; and even as she spoke, she said, the ring came right apart and fell at her feet in two pieces. Mr. Smith took it up and turned it over in the palm of his hand.

'Broken, sure enough,' he said; 'dear! dear! what a pity! This ring is no good. We can't be married with

this ; I shall have to get a new one.' With that the dream ended.

Again she looked at me inquiringly, and again I shook my head.

'There will be no marriage,' I said. Still she did not believe me, but hoped against hope ; and though each visit she paid to Mr. Smith found him weaker and weaker, she would not believe the worst until it fell, exactly three weeks after she had dreamed her first dream. He had passed from earthly life, and was buried on the very day that had been fixed for their wedding, when, as she had dreamed, the figure of Death had interrupted it.

R. O'NEILL.

WILLIAM BLAKE, ARTIST, POET, AND SEER.

By MR. J. PAGE HOPPS.

We quote from the 'Eastern Daily Press' the following report of a lecture given in the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, by Mr. J. Page Hopps, on January 25th, on 'William Blake, Artist, Poet, and Seer':—

The lecturer, in the course of his opening remarks, said it was doubtful whether the century in which Blake lived really produced a dozen men as original, as brilliant, as gifted with true genius—and of course as neglected, as sorrow-smitten, as way-worn, and as poor—as William Blake. He was a very poor man. Very probably he might have been rich had he been less original, less loyal to his ideal, less resolute, less himself. Blake was born in London about 150 years ago. He was poor from the beginning, and was never really anything else. He was self-taught and a struggler, but very sensitive, and full of sympathy and feeling for all humanity's infirmities. Having started life as an engraver, he became a student at the Royal Academy. He was a poet, and a designer of weird, beautiful, mystical things, his strange, rich, wild, artistic fancy running over into the text of the poetry, and crowding lines and margins with figures and colours. His poetry only brought him poverty. It was his work as a designer and engraver that earned him his daily bread—15s. to 20s. a week. He worked incessantly, and taking a holiday was to him only change of employment. He died at the age of seventy, and one who nursed him said, 'I have been at the death of a blessed angel, and not of a man.' Blake as a seer saw the things behind the symbols, the meanings behind the forms, the unity beneath the diversity, the love behind the life, the spirit behind the 'muddy vesture.' Perhaps at times he could actually see behind the veil. He saw, as he said, not with, but through, the eye ; the literal things of other men were to him symbolic, and their symbolic things literal. Around him there seemed to swarm an infinite play of spiritual life ; the very air about him was populous with wraiths and phantoms. Blake was intensely sympathetic, pitiful, loving, and perhaps that opened the heavenly vision to him. The culmination of his work was the reproduction of his 'Songs of Innocence' and 'Songs of Experience,' unique in their letter and spirit. They were invented, composed, illustrated, printed, and engraved, yes, and sold (when he could sell them) by Blake himself. There was a great deal of mystery about these precious books. To get the true image of the man, and to feel in any degree the glamour of his peculiar inspiration, his books must be seen with all their spiritual beauty of design, and all their strange wealth of mystical fancy. He seemed to actually see what was hidden from the common eye. Mr. Page Hopps went on to quote from the minor sketches of song which illustrated Blake's peculiarities as a seer and an artist in his gradual progress until his works showed the complete man—the seer's insight, the lover's joy, the poet's music, the artist's grace. All these were seen in Blake, though in a form that might seem to belong more to the child than to the man in these lovely songs of 'Innocence and Experience.' If we thought them too child-like, let us remember Who it was that put a little child in the midst of bearded men, and said, 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.' Mr. Page Hopps went on to quote extensively from the 'Songs of Innocence,' which he called songs of love—of love of all creatures and all things, beast and bird, and glow-worm and emmet, and flower and field, and little child—true love, not of self, but of all that lay beyond self in this wonderful, many-sided world. The 'Songs of Experience' were next quoted, and Mr. Page Hopps went on to say that there were other poems touched with a deeper and darker meaning, notably the startling song beginning—

'I wander through each chartered street,
'Neath where the chartered Thames doth flow.
A mark in every face I meet—
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.'

The song entitled 'The Human Abstract' was almost too mystical for mere reading, but it had a profound meaning in it. The great secret of all Blake's writings was that man himself was the child of mystery. It was from his brain that his surroundings came, which he could make for himself luminous or dismal, loving or hateful, sweet or bitter, songful or dissonant, a heaven or hell. Blake seemed always wondering why man should manacle himself, and let joy go by, and put out the light of life, and muffle the laughter of the child. As a late writer had said of him, 'Full of the Divine fire of genius, conscious of a noble heritage, he refused ever to debase himself to the level of mediocre talent, and race with it for the attainment of wealth. To serve his art was to serve God ; to serve mammon was to worship the devil. Others might neglect their sacred trust and barter their birthright for a poor mess of pottage, but his choice never swerved from the nobler course. He was a child of nature, and utterly hated the conventional restraints of society, which imposed a wretched obligation of silence and suppression on all passions and thoughts likely to ruffle its sweet complacency. That, on the whole, Blake was happy, amidst all chances and crosses, we are perfectly assured.'

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.

Science and Spiritualism.

SIR,—In the number of 'LIGHT' for January 30th, you replied as follows to 'R. Wimpenny':—'Sir Oliver Lodge, we suspect, would not call himself a Spiritualist. He has borne testimony to facts which apparently indicated the presence of spirit people, but we are not aware that he has publicly avowed his belief in Spiritualism.'

I am sure he has *not*. But this he *has* said : 'I am, for all personal purposes, convinced of the persistence of human existence beyond bodily death ; and though I am unable to justify that belief in a full and complete manner, yet it is a belief which has been produced by scientific evidence, that is, it is based upon facts and experience.'

Now a Spiritualist is just such a man—a man convinced of the persistence of human existence beyond bodily death, a belief produced by scientific evidence. Nothing else.

In his book, 'Can Telepathy Explain?' the Rev. Minot J. Savage, also a member of the Society for Psychical Research, says : 'I have never called myself a Spiritualist. Those opposed to Spiritualism have frequently charged me with being one ; while, on the other hand, extreme believers have taken me to task for not assuming the name.' But Mr. Savage will not be called a Spiritualist because 'the popular movement called Spiritualism has been marked by credulity, a readiness to cover up, if not to defend, fraud, and an enthusiasm far from critical.'

But if that is the public opinion, the public is mistaken, and the Rev. M. J. Savage ought not to support the mistake. A Spiritualist is *not* a non-critical man who covers up fraud. On the contrary, one of his aims is to expose fraud. But the public will never know the truth if distinguished men of science and of the clergy do not tell them, as it is their duty to do.

But for Spiritualism, Sir William Crookes would not have written his valuable 'Researches,' and the Society for Psychical Research would never have existed, and the eminent men of science would not now have the slightest foundation on which to build up their scientific belief 'in human existence beyond bodily death.' And as they ought to be glad to have that belief, their duty to put the public right is a scientific duty and an ethical duty as well.

Of course there are 'credulous and non-critical' Spiritualists. But are there not plenty of credulous and non-critical Christians ? Is the old non-critical Christian woman, however, not a Christian, as well as the learned bishop ? And are there not non-critical men of science ? Surely Spiritualism has proved that there are.

Allow me now to introduce to Sir Oliver Lodge and the Rev. M. J. Savage a great friend of mine, Professor Gerling. According to Savage himself, Gerling, on a certain occasion, said : 'I have been asked to dissemble and not to let my views be known, but in consequence of this attack, I now declare that I am a Spiritualist, and shall always remain one.' When Crookes and Gerling 'go to their place' behind the veil, I shall try to slip in there between them. I am not likely to succeed but I will try. I need not say why ; it must be delightful there, amongst clear-headed and courageous men.

SEVERIN LAUVITZEN.

Halte, Denmark.

Sir Oliver Lodge and the S.P.R.—A Protest.

SIR,—I have been waiting and hoping for some more skilful and influential pen than mine to undertake the task of protest to which I now set myself, since none other has yet done so. For I cannot allow Sir Oliver Lodge's arrogant assumption, at the last annual meeting of the above society, of entire credit to that society for the present favourable feeling towards, and interest in, the investigation of psychic phenomena, to remain unchallenged.

Is it possible, I would ask, that such a timid poise as that Society has upon the hedge, with legs hanging down on the side of scepticism, ready for a jump off at the slightest alarm, and with only an occasional squinting glance toward the side of belief, could, alone and unaided, keep alive popular interest in psychic matters? Does history show that such dubiety and timidity have ever conquered the world? I trow not. It is whole-souled enthusiasm, founded upon honest conviction, and a willingness to sacrifice one's reputation, if needs be, for the things which one believes to be true, which have carried men's hearts and consciences with them, and aroused a like enthusiasm in the minds of the multitude.

These things Spiritualists, not Psychical Researchers, have, and therefore it is to the former, and not to the latter, must be principally ascribed the credit of the present growth of interest in psychic research. Psychical Researchers are but humble followers in the wake of Spiritualists—followers who, with a vast amount of impedimenta, in the way of precaution and self-care, are now walking in the tracks which Spiritualists, with self-abandonment to the work, have suffered and toiled to make. I think it was an American of eminence who once said, when remonstrated with for what was thought to be his over devotion to the purpose of his life, 'No one is ever likely to accomplish anything who is not prepared to die a little for his work.' Now, if he was right, does the general attitude of Psychical Researchers appear to render it probable that Sir Oliver Lodge's assumption is well founded?

Surely no! As the idea of forming the Society for Psychical Research germinated in the mind of the present president of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and was carried into execution by the aid of its former president, the Rev. Stainton Moses, so the Society owes its continued existence and growth to its having Spiritualism, with its ever-increasing accumulation of facts, and Spiritualism with its enthusiasm, as its abiding pioneer.

It is because of our belief in our cause, our devotion to it, and so our willingness, if by any means, to gain some, that so many of us Spiritualists belong to the Society for Psychical Research, and help it in its work of 'reaping where it has not sown, and of gathering where it has not strawed,' and not from any liking for its spirit, or respect for its methods. But there is a limit, even to our endurance, and Sir Oliver Lodge went beyond that in his retiring address as president of the Society; therefore this protest from a Spiritualist Associate of the Society.

MARY MACK WALL.

Reincarnation.

SIR,—I cannot resist the temptation to say a few words to 'Student.' He says: 'Surely it would be worth while to substantiate reincarnation doctrines!' Exactly so; but if Moses and all the prophets were to come back from the dead and tell of all their doings in the past, who in this world would be a bit the wiser, or be able to identify them? They would assuredly be called lunatics or romancers. No one would have the least proof that would satisfy his senses. They would only look on and think a large lunatic asylum had been let loose. How could any facts relating to the past be evidence to any not living in the past?

Supposing even the 'Twelve Apostles' were all to return (I don't know whether they have done so) who on this earth would believe their story?

Suppose John Wesley returned, would he have his hair as in his picture (as he would have for identification in a dream), and who would be the wiser? Or if he were to tell us that the line, 'in heavenly joys, or hellish pains,' was all owing to his deluded Oxford training of early days, what Methodist preacher would be convinced?

Suppose my own father were to come back as a nigger, as recompense for his warlike deeds, or for assisting the English to oppress foreign races, how should I know of the truth of the strange things he might relate, spake he ever so truly? The

A Perplexed Truth-Seeker.

SIR,—It may interest your readers to know of a case similar to the one cited by Professor Flournoy, and recorded in 'LIGHT' of February 13th. A friend of mine received a communication by automatic writing purporting to come from her sister, released from her long suffering, now on 'the other side.' This sister had been for years in a lunatic asylum, and inquiry showed that she was still there. Months have elapsed, and she is still living—in this world. I regarded the communication as purely subjective, the pure and unselfish character of my friend excluding for me the notion of lying spirits, and it invalidated, for my mind, a later communication of counsel addressed to myself, said to emanate from my guardian spirit; but this case of Alexander G., as interpreted by Miss Dallas, suggests a conceivable and reasonable explanation whereby the message may have been truly that which it professed to be.

The question raised as to Mr. Stainton Moses' change of view concerning evil-doers after death is, I think, a most important one. The theory suggested by Mr. Venning, in 'LIGHT' of February 20th, that they are as infants, is also advanced, taught as a truth, by the author of 'As It Is to Be,' an American book which many thoughtful people liked extremely, but which lost all authority for me precisely from this teaching, believing as I do in the reality of obsession. Still, this infant theory, if true, would do away with the objection that man would not reap as he has sown, and that therefore the new doctrine is immoral, for the sinner newly-born into the other world would be unable to enjoy as others were doing. He might be comparable to a cripple rather than to an infant, being conscious of his defects. I do not uphold this new teaching, I simply do not wish any prepossession to interfere with the search for truth. The same remark applies to the reincarnation question, and I should like to ask Dr. Peebles if all the Theosophists and clairvoyants agreed as to his six previous illustrious incarnations, or if some said he was Herodotus, some Origen, and so on? The horrible notion of Dr. Densmore that we have all to go through every sort of experience would imply that sin is a law of the Universe instead of being, as I think, an infraction of it. You may say one cannot break a law of Nature, but I mean in the sense in which one speaks of breaking the laws of health.

To turn to another matter. A consideration has occurred to me with regard to the creative power of thought. How does it affect actors? Will stage managers of the future be unable to find anyone sufficiently intrepid to play Iago?

As long ago as 1794, Jean Paul wrote: 'Nothing is more dangerous than to pretend to be in love; one becomes so really, directly after. So the effeminate Baron, when he had acted one of Corneille's heroes, became one himself for a few days. So died Molière as the "Malade Imaginaire," and Charles V. at the rehearsal of his funeral.'

JESSIE VESEL.

Spiritualism in Stalybridge.

SIR,—For some time past members of the Spiritualist Church at Stalybridge have been meeting in temporary premises, under great disadvantages as regards accommodation, the room only holding seventy persons, all the services being crowded. Now, however, new premises have been secured on very favourable terms, which, after certain structural alterations, will provide a large room on the ground floor capable of seating three hundred persons. The proposed alterations and furnishing are expected to entail an expenditure of about £150, and we are anxious to raise this amount before the opening service. May I through you earnestly appeal to the readers of 'LIGHT' for sympathy and aid to enable us to commence the work in our new church unencumbered by debt?

Cheques and P. O. Orders may be endorsed, New Spiritual Church Fund, Mercantile Bank, Stalybridge.

JAS. CROASDALE,

President.

43, Melbourne-street, Stalybridge.

Correction.

SIR,—In my article on 'Psychometric Clairvoyance,' in 'LIGHT,' of February 13th, p. 75, in quoting from memory a case of clairvoyance of the absent occupants of a railway compartment, I attributed the occurrence, correctly described in itself to Mrs. Conant whereas it happened to Mrs. Denton and

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Suppose my own father were to come back as a nigger, as recompense for his warlike deeds, or for assisting the English to oppress foreign races, how should I know of the truth of the strange things he might relate, spake he ever so truly? The very thought is staggering. What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is within him? Or the things of the divine save the divine spirit within him, which, being good, and beautiful, and true, testifieth of the things which are good, and beautiful, and true?

I.O.M.A.

A Perplexed Truth-Seeker.

SIR,—It may interest your readers to know of a case similar to the one cited by Professor Flournoy, and recorded in 'LIGHT' of February 13th. A friend of mine received a communication by automatic writing purporting to come from her sister, released from her long suffering, now on 'the other side.' This sister had been for years in a lunatic asylum, and inquiry showed that she was still there. Months have elapsed, and she is still living—in this world. I regarded the communication as purely subjective, the pure and unselfish character of my friend excluding for me the notion of lying spirits, and it invalidated, for my mind, a later communication of counsel addressed to myself, said to emanate from my guardian spirit; but this case of Alexander G., as interpreted by Miss Dallas, suggests a conceivable and reasonable explanation whereby the message may have been truly that which it professed to be.

The question raised as to Mr. Stainton Moses' change of view concerning evil-doers after death is, I think, a most important one. The theory suggested by Mr. Venning, in 'LIGHT' of February 20th, that they are as infants, is also advanced, taught as a truth, by the author of 'As It Is to Be,' an American book which many thoughtful people liked extremely, but which lost all authority for me precisely from this teaching, believing as I do in the reality of obsession. Still, this infant theory, if true, would do away with the objection that man would not reap as he has sown, and that therefore the new doctrine is immoral, for the sinner newly-born into the other world would be unable to enjoy as others were doing. He might be comparable to a cripple rather than to an infant, being conscious of his defects. I do not uphold this new teaching, I simply do not wish any prepossession to interfere with the search for truth. The same remark applies to the reincarnation question, and I should like to ask Dr. Peebles if all the Theosophists and clairvoyants agreed as to his six previous illustrious incarnations, or if some said he was Herodotus, some Origen, and so on? The horrible notion of Dr. Densmore that we have all to go through every sort of experience would imply that sin is a law of the Universe instead of being, as I think, an infraction of it. You may say one cannot break a law of Nature, but I mean in the sense in which one speaks of breaking the laws of health.

To turn to another matter. A consideration has occurred to me with regard to the creative power of thought. How does it affect actors? Will stage managers of the future be unable to find anyone sufficiently intrepid to play Iago?

As long ago as 1794, Jean Paul wrote: 'Nothing is more dangerous than to pretend to be in love; one becomes so really, directly after. So the effeminate Baron, when he had acted one of Corneille's heroes, became one himself for a few days. So died Molière as the "Malade Imaginaire," and Charles V. at the rehearsal of his funeral.'

JESSIE VESIL.

Spiritualism in Stalybridge.

SIR,—For some time past members of the Spiritualist Church at Stalybridge have been meeting in temporary premises, under great disadvantages as regards accommodation, the room only holding seventy persons, all the services being crowded. Now, however, new premises have been secured on very favourable terms, which, after certain structural alterations, will provide a large room on the ground floor capable of seating three hundred persons. The proposed alterations and furnishing are expected to entail an expenditure of about £150, and we are anxious to raise this amount before the opening service. May I through you earnestly appeal to the readers of 'LIGHT' for sympathy and aid to enable us to commence the work in our new church unencumbered by debt?

Cheques and P. O. Orders may be endorsed, New Spiritual Church Fund, Mercantile Bank, Stalybridge.

JAS. CROASDALE,

President.

43, Melbourne-street, Stalybridge.

Correction.

SIR,—In my article on 'Psychometric Clairvoyance,' in 'LIGHT,' of February 13th, p. 75, in quoting from memory a case of clairvoyance of the absent occupants of a railway compartment, I attributed the occurrence, correctly described in itself, to Mrs. Conant, whereas it happened to Mrs. Denton, and is related by her in 'Nature's Secrets,' pp. 13-15—a book which I read at the same time as Mrs. Conant's 'Life,' some twenty years ago, hence my mistake. I am indebted for its correction to Mr. James Coates, author of 'Human Magnetism.'

F. W. THURSTAN.

'When Augurs Differ.'

SIR,—The two letters on the above subject in your issue of February 20th, from Mr. Lees and Mr. Venning, give one matter for thought. But I am still puzzled.

Mr. Lees says that his investigations have 'invariably' been satisfactory, and that where the intercourse with the other side is not of an ideal nature 'the faults are mostly with ourselves.'

This is the researcher of all others whom so many of us wish to learn from. Will he disclose the longed-for secret and tell us in detail what to do, and what not to do? What, for instance, as a matter of principle, was wrong with the plans pursued by the many able Society for Psychical Research sitters with Mrs. Piper? For my part I cannot even guess. The only thing I can see plainly is that sitters who shut their eyes secure plenty of assurances of sorts; but for those who indiscreetly open them and ask awkward questions — ! Well, the 'other side' keeps its secret well, as of yore.

Then Mr. Venning, who has given up mediums as unreliable and unsatisfactory, is inclined to accept as true these latest assurances from the alleged 'George Pelham' and 'Stainton Moses,' that 'sinners are sinners only in one life.'

But he can only do this at the expense of the veracity of the real original 'Imperator,' who for so many years inspired the 'Spirit Teachings' of Mr. Moses in a contrary sense. As 'Imperator' was, and had been for centuries, 'over there,' he must have known all along that he was only spinning fanciful yarns. Why did not 'Stainton Moses,' when speaking through Mrs. Piper to Professor Newcomb, denounce him for this?

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On this earth-plane, again, no conscientious master ever dreams of chiding or misleading his pupils for asking intelligent questions. Quite the contrary. They are encouraged in every way to explain their difficulties. Mr. Venning upholds a different policy for the elucidation of incredibly difficult 'other side' problems, which assuredly will never be solved by our unassisted efforts. Can he justify such a paradox? In the absence of true and honest answers to true and honest inquirers, what advance has been made during the last fifty years in our certain knowledge of the conditions which obtain, and the real life which is lived 'on the other side'?

Without fear of contradiction, I unhesitatingly assert *none whatever*. A reform of methods on both sides is urgently needed. Will Messrs. Lees and Venning kindly tell us how to make a beginning?

'CIRCUMSPICE.'

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