

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

A correspondent, with a scientific turn of mind, and dealing every day with scientific and mechanical problems, writes:—

I must confess that I look upon the idea of a future life as almost as unthinkable as the idea of the infinity of time and space. Some of us like one form of intellectual exercise and some another, and I am inclined to leave the question. I have a theory, though it is only a theory, that the whole idea of a future life is simply a figment of man's egoism and self-sufficiency. It originated when man thought himself the ultimate object of Creation. I have not such a very high idea of man's intellect. It is chiefly a matter of memory and its accumulated experience, that gives man his power over the forces of Nature. His creative, his originating power, is not so much greater than that of the lower animals, and I quite think that there is nearly, if not quite, as much difference between the intellect of the average man and the best (in intellect) man as between the average man and some of the lower animals. Our hands and our tongue give man his great superiority. Ask any engineer or doctor how far from the beaten track he can go with certainty as to results. He can experiment, but he can very seldom do this with absolute certainty.

We agree that the idea of a future life is almost as unthinkable as the idea of the infinity of time and space: but we are compelled to infer the infinity of time and space; and the unthinkableness of it is caused only by its magnitude and subtilty, not by its doubtfulness or its crudity. So with a future life. We are content to leave it at that; and then fall back upon experiments.

As for man's value compared with the value of 'the lower animals,' we can only say that, bad as our opinion is of some men and women, we think that the human race occupies a position radically different, if not immeasurably higher;—a position which suggests far higher developments, and on planes of being which strongly suggest evolution into higher regions of intellect and spirit in unseen worlds.

The Editor of 'The Race-Builder' (London: Elliot Stock) proposes 'A League of Thinkers.' He says:—

Man is shaping the world by his thought. Our machinery, pictures, battleships, mansions, parks, cities, slums, churches, heroes, sages, drunkards, fallen women, paupers, police, all of us and all our handiwork are the outcome of thought; all existed in mind before they were made evident in form. Thought, however, is not to be blamed for the production of what is evil, which is due to the warping conditions under which it has to work.

Thought needs directing, and emancipation from the sordid and narrow range of animalism and selfishness. 'A League of Thinkers' would aim at something like a Mutual Improvement Society on a large scale, in which collier and bishop would compare notes, and philosopher

and apprentice lad, christian and agnostic would tell one another their troubles, or lay before one another their ideals.

We do not doubt that good might come of it. We are all too apt to get into our separate camps or dens and make faces at one another; and all sorts of Leagues, especially of people who differ in opinion but agree in spirit, must be useful. We ourselves, in 'LIGHT,' welcome communications from the doubtful, the perplexed, the alarmed, as well as from the convinced, the comforted and the hopeful. The closing words of 'The Race-Builder's' proposal we cordially adopt as our own:—

No life is too lofty and none too wretched or degraded to be helped and inspired by persistent, purposive thought. Is life a round of drudgery; is it loveless and lonely; is it full of doubt and perplexity? Are we powerless to carry out our high resolves? Are we paralysed with self-pity, instead of strengthening our courage and muscles and nerves to fling our hindrances aside? Are we feeble in health or broken in spirit? Are we burdened with the sorrows of others, sick with the world's suffering, weary at the evidences of its pain? Persistent, concentrated thought holds the promise of deliverance. The purposive thinker will no longer be the sport of environment, but will gather strength to shape his conduct according to his vision of truth. In work and play conscience will be his guide; and the food he eats, the pleasures he enjoys, the work he does, the friends he gathers, the social activities he finds, will be the architecture of a beautiful and useful life, reared above the fret and stress of circumstance upon the foundations of truth, for the verity is eternal that 'The truth shall make you free.'

Persons who reflect much upon eternity, and our future life, do well to ponder a thought which, though by no means new, never takes hold of mankind on any large scale. Only here and there, a mystic, a refined thinker, a poet, rises high enough to discern or feel the hidden truth, that what we call 'the eternal life' has no special relation to the future life. 'Eternal life' has its true significance in a state of mind, a condition of spirit, not in space, or place, or time. Amiel beautifully put this, and in a true light and with wise discrimination, when he said:—

The eternal life is not the future life; it is life in harmony with the true order of things—life in God. We must learn to look upon time as a movement of eternity, as an undulation in the ocean of being. To live, so as to keep this consciousness of ours in perpetual relation with the eternal, is to be wise; to live, so as to personify and embody the eternal, is to be religious.

A few days ago we overheard—and could not help it—the following brief conversation, after a lecture:—

*Hearer:* They tell me you have joined 'The New Thought movement.' Is it so? Your lecture sounded like it.

*Lecturer:* What do you mean? Are you thinking of the enterprising little regiment of people who work that name?

*Hearer:* Yes.

*Lecturer:* Why should I join them? There is always plenty of new thought about, and from all directions. It is nobody's freehold. New thought is too big for anybody's possession; and no set of people can have it for their freehold. There is a good deal of impudence as well as enterprise in some people's labels.

The lecturer was a trifle too severe, but the provocation was a trifle too obvious. There are far too many attempts

to exploit the truth, to bottle the spirit of the age, and to pin labels on men and women who want to think for themselves and be free.

A writer in 'The Agnostic Journal' combats the assertion that we must credit Christianity with the abolition of the 'crime' of witchcraft and of slave-holding. It is easy enough to show that every crime that can be committed has been committed by persons professing to be Christians; and this is nearly as true to-day as it ever was. At any rate, 'The Agnostic Journal' writer draws blood when he says;—

Until 1770, Christian England was not only a slave-holding country but a *slave-country*. Here is the proof; In the issue of the 'Gazetteer' dated April 18th, 1769, there was advertised FOR SALE at the Bull-and-Gate Inn, Holborn, a 'well-made, good-tempered Black Boy.' And in the 'Public Advertiser' for November 28th, 1769, the following advertisement appeared: TO BE SOLD, a Black Girl, the property of J—B—, eleven years old, who is tolerably handy, works at her needle tolerably, and speaks English tolerably well; is of an excellent temper, and willing disposition. Inquire of Mr. Owen, at the Angel Inn, behind St. Clement's Church, in the Strand.'

The man who struck the first effective blow against slavery is the man for me, and that man was the free-thinking Humanitarian, Granville Sharp.

The following telegram was lately sent to the London 'Chronicle' by its own correspondent:—

Paris, Tuesday Night.

The 'Petit Parisien's' St. Petersburg correspondent sends a sad story regarding the sister of Admiral Makaroff, whose hair, although she is only fifty years old, has turned absolutely white. She told a representative of the Press that she had two visions on the night of the Admiral's death, when he appeared and told her of the explosion. Her name is Mme. Tabounoff. She is the widow of an officer, and receives only a small pension, which Admiral Makaroff used to supplement.

We have received,—probably from the publisher,—a book entitled 'A Vampire of Souls,' by 'H. M. P.' It is a lurid bit of sensationalism, without a word of truth in it—in our opinion. In our opinion, also, it is an absolute wickedness to send forth such horrible and grotesque works of fiction in the guise of truth. We want the light of intelligence thrown upon the unseen world, not the shadows of a turbid imagination.

#### SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many shrines.)

Blessed be Thou, O Lord, who bringest forth on earth, and out of earth, every living thing, and makest man after Thy likeness, to rule the earth, and crownest him with blessing. From Thee came ancient revelation and writing: deep sayings of prophets and songs of praise. From Thee are all the wise sayings of old time; the experience of story, and worship of prayer and offering. In the blind struggles of men is the promise of Thy truth; and in fulness of time fulfilment, when out of evil comes good, and patience ends in victory. By the agony of mankind striving; by men's heads bowed in shame, and eyes filled with tears; by their necks weighed down with burdens, their feet and hands perplexed and bound; and by their strong crying out of misery to their God: be moved, O Lord, to arise and amend the earth! Make us children of quietness and heirs of peace: enkindle in us the fire of Thy love: strengthen our weakness by Thy power; and bind us closely to Thee and to each other in one firm and indissoluble bond of unity. Amen.

#### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East (*near the National Gallery*), on

FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 20TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

REV. JOHN HUNTER, D.D.,

ON

'Some Conditions of Right Thinking.'

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Address will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

#### SPECIAL NOTICES.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PSYCHOMETRY AND CLAIRVOYANCE will be given at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., by 'Clairibelle' on Tuesday *next*, May 10th. 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.—The next séance will be held at the rooms of the Alliance, with Mrs. M. H. Wallis, on Friday *next*, May 13th, 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 Spiritualism and life here and hereafter.

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, *for the last time before the recess*, at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, Charing Cross, W.C., on Thursday afternoon *next*, May 12th, 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.

PSYCHIC CULTURE.—Mr. F. Thurstan's classes are suspended for a time. Due notice of their resumption will be given.

MRS. AND MISS MORSE.—We see by the 'Banner of Light' of April 23rd, that Mrs. J. J. Morse and Miss Florence Morse, who were to set sail for England in the Cunard ss. 'Saxonia' on April 25th, were accorded a handsome 'Farewell' reception, on April 22nd, by the First Spiritualist Ladies' Aid Society, of Boston.

THE marriage of Mr. John Hill, formerly president of the Cardiff Society of Spiritualists, and Miss Margaret Williams, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Williams, who passed on some few years ago, took place on April 29th. Mr. and Mrs. Williams will long be remembered in Cardiff and district for their sterling work in our cause, at 198, Cowbridge-road, Canton, Mrs. Williams having been a particularly fine speaker and medium. The ceremony took place at St. John's Church, Canton, and the bride was given away by her brother-in-law, Mr. Joseph Preece, president of the Canton organisation. The happy couple, who are respectively secretary and organist of the Canton Society, were the recipients of many tokens and kind wishes from spiritualistic and other friends.

## ALLEGED 'WONDER-WORKING IN LONDON.'

We are indebted to several correspondents who have sent us copies of a remarkable story, published in the 'Weekly Dispatch' of April 17th, entitled, 'Wonder-Working in London.' We were indisposed to make any allusion to this circumstantial narrative because no particulars were given by which it could be investigated and the statements either substantiated or disproved, and because experience has taught us to distrust newspaper utterances of a sensational character, especially those having reference to questions of an occult character. We have, however, received a communication from Mr. W. Turner, the honorary secretary of the Fulham Society of Spiritualists, which, while fully justifying our hesitation to give further publicity to the 'Dispatch' story, makes it advisable that a summary, at least, of that story should now be given, that the two narratives may be carefully compared.

'The writer in the "Weekly Dispatch" affirmed that a certain Mr. Calvert joined a Franciscan Order near London as a lay brother, and after a time certain manifestations were observed to take place while Calvert was engaged in devotional exercises. Owing to ill-health he visited a friend, a physician in the West End, and during conversation with him Calvert was taken suddenly ill and apparently fainted. The doctor lifted him on to the couch and let down the blinds to protect his eyes from the sun, and in the mellowed light the doctor observed a halo of *bluish hue* around the sleeping monk, which, it is said, was also observed by the doctor's brother. Some time afterwards, Calvert having in the meantime ceased to be a monk, arrangements were made by the doctor's brother and a scientific friend to investigate Calvert's strange powers, and an old greenhouse in a secluded garden in Hampstead was used as a séance room. The report in the "Weekly Dispatch" is not very clear regarding the phenomena, but it is alleged that messages were received, *bluish lights* were observed, physical manifestations occurred, a voice was heard, a luminous cross appeared, and a *shower of stones* fell on the floor—apparently coming through the roof without breaking the glass, and when picked up the stones were found to be hot. Calvert, it is stated, was instructed to go to the Meat Market, Smithfield, on a certain morning at a special time, and stand under the clock, and having obeyed the instructions a man appeared, shook hands with him and told him to call at a certain place and ask for employment. Calvert, who recognised in the man a long deceased brother, acted upon the instructions he had received, and was *accepted as a partner* in the business, and in two years he saved sufficient money to pay the senior partner out.'

The foregoing summary gives the important points of the story as told in the 'Weekly Dispatch.' We will now let Mr. Turner relate his experiences, and our readers will then be in a position to draw their own conclusions. Mr. Turner says:—

'When I first became acquainted with Spiritualism I joined the Marylebone Society. After a few months it was arranged that a circle should be formed in the interest, chiefly, of investigators. A lady member of the society kindly placed a room at the disposal of the circle, and for the purpose of this narrative this lady shall be known as Miss R. Myself, together with others, formed the circle, numbering about a dozen members. Chief amongst these, besides the lady already mentioned, were Miss P. and Mr. S. We sat mainly for table movements, and I was very much interested.

'At the close of the sitting, a little conversation took place amongst us, turning chiefly upon the different phases of phenomena. In the course of one of these conversations Mr. S. mentioned that he had a friend named Mr. Carter, who was a wonderful medium, judged by the phenomena that took place in his presence. A request was made that Mr. S. should bring Mr. Carter with him one circle night. This was arranged, and Mr. Carter came. After sitting at the table a short time he appeared to be under control, and requested paper and pencil, which were supplied, and he wrote a message for each sitter, but what struck us most was that whilst writing the messages a *bluish light* appeared to travel with the point of the pencil. During the remainder of the sitting he gave a few short addresses, presumably under control, and whilst these were being delivered *bluish light* appeared on his finger tips.

'Once he fell back, but as a couch was conveniently near he fell on that, and was, if I remember aright, supposed to be controlled by Cardinal Newman, and we were requested to sing "Lead Kindly Light." Whilst singing this hymn, Mr. C. held out his hand, upon which appeared, in the same bluish light, the *form of a cross*. After the circle was closed he gave

us a little of his history, of which the following is a brief account:—

'He had formerly been connected with a *monkish Order* whose quarters were in, or near, Ely-place, Holborn. One night the *spirit form of his brother* appeared to him and told him he must leave the monkish Order, and he was to be somewhere about the precincts of *Smithfield Market* very early one morning and he would instruct him what to do. The time arranged found Mr. Carter at the place appointed, and the spirit brother told him to go to a certain place in Clerkenwell and he would find employment. Thither Mr. Carter proceeded and interviewed the employer he was sent to, to whom he said, "I understand you are in want of a man." The employer replied, "I am in want of a partner," to which Mr. Carter replied that that was no use to him as he had no money. The employer replied that that did not matter and forthwith took Mr. Carter *as a partner*.

'Another evening, at a circle which I was unable to attend, I was informed that whilst Mr. Carter was present a quantity of small gravel was thrown upon the table and struck several of the sitters on their hands. Some of these saved portions of the gravel as a memento of the occasion, and remarked that it was quite warm.

'A few sittings afterwards it was arranged that Mr. Carter should come again, and I asked permission for my wife to attend, which was consented to. We sat round a large table, and Mr. Carter sat at my right hand and my wife at my left. When Mr. Carter got up to say anything he had invariably the fingers of his right hand in his vest pocket, and would keep taking them out to make gestures with his hand, and on his finger-tips appeared the bluish light. Suddenly he jumped up, went behind one of the sitters opposite, and began to make rapid passes over this sitter's head. Whilst doing this a shower of gravel came across the table, and some struck my wife's hand. I picked some up; it felt warm, and I remarked that it was similar to the gravel kept in a bin in Oxford-street (we were sitting in the vicinity of Oxford-street). I came to the conclusion that this gravel had become warm as the result of being secreted on Mr. Carter's person, and that, whilst making the passes, he threw it upon the table.

'Just afterwards I noticed on the floor, close to where Mr. Carter had been sitting, something glowing. I reached down and found it was a wax match, and some of the phosphorus got on my fingers and made the glow. I immediately jumped up, saying: "See, I can do this!" Mr. Carter did not turn up again at that circle. I may say that Mr. S., who introduced Mr. Carter, had, or appeared to have, the greatest faith in him.

'3, Bettridge-road, Fulham, S.W.' W. TURNER.'

## A CHOIR OF SPIRITS.

I have permission to send you the following report of a private séance, held on the evening of March 24th, at the residence of the medium, Mr. James Booth, of 22, Bramhall-street, Warrington. There were eighteen persons present, and the room was well-lighted. It was observed from the commencement that the conditions were unusually good, and the power very remarkable. Mr. Booth, who is a deep trance medium, was controlled first by an Indian, and the physical phenomena were quite startling, a heavy table being raised repeatedly with several people sitting upon it. Another control then gave illustrations of clairvoyance, and answers to questions were rapped out very distinctly. We were then asked if we would like another control, named 'Gentle,' to come and give some music on the organ in the room; to which we assented. 'Gentle,' we were told, had been, when on earth, an organist and conductor of a French military band, and it was soon evident that he must have been a musical genius, for it was a marvellous performance, sounds resembling trumpets and drums being distinctly heard. But the most extraordinary feature of the performance was the manner in which he apparently beckoned and gathered an invisible choir around him, sometimes only using one hand on the keyboard of the organ and conducting his choir with the other. Once he got off the stool, waved back some members of the circle to make more room, and appeared to be placing his choir in a different position. Spirit voices were frequently heard, but not continuously, and appeared to come from a distance. After the medium left the organ the instrument continued to vibrate for about a minute. 'Gentle,' pointing upwards, told us very impressively that we should thank the Supreme Being, and not him.

Latchford, Warrington.

W. CHIMES.

### TEST SEANCES.

It would appear from Mr. John J. Hamilton's letter in your issue of April 23rd, that my former communication on the subject of Materialisations suggested to him that I was sneering at investigators who sought the truth by means of test séances.

I am sorry if any words of mine are capable of such interpretation; such was not my intention. My letter was intended to suggest to real and earnest students that it was not only the medium who was instrumental in creating the necessary conditions, but that the sitters themselves were even more potent in influencing the composition of the subtle condensable fluid which forms the basis of phenomena.

But there are some people who, whilst posing as truth-seekers, are really anxious to discredit the entire subject, and are only desirous of 'proving' that their own preconceived or inherited notions—being in direct antagonism to the evidences afforded by countless experiments—are true. Such 'truth-seekers' should in fairness study the question in all its bearings, and I think they will arrive at the conclusion that if precautions are necessary to secure the honesty of the medium, they are quite as necessary to secure the honesty of the sitters!

I do not hold a brief for all or any of the mediums I have met, but I will remark that many of them I value as friends, and am convinced of their perfect *bona fides*. I may also say that amongst the many investigators I have met who devote themselves to a patient inquiry into this absorbing subject, I have generally observed a loyal adherence to honourable conduct. I say, however, very emphatically, that I have had experience of sitters who, in the face of the distinct promise to the contrary, have deliberately acted in direct violation of such promise. Herein lies a great danger, not to the medium alone, but also to the sitters themselves—a danger which has been often referred to by experienced writers on the subject.

My letter did not convey a condemnation of polite and humane precautions—this I admit is advisable, and every genuine medium that ever I met has acquiesced in such regulations; but what seems to me to be reprehensible and entirely calculated to destroy the very basic conditions necessary, is the atmosphere of suspicion, irritating discussion, and downright insulting conditions which have so frequently accompanied test séances.

When Sir William Crookes entered upon his investigations he did so with an absence of bias, with calm dispassionate courtesy, and with such precautions as one might expect from a logical, truth-loving, and philosophic mind. The results obtained were commensurate with the high purpose and consummate skill which marked his procedure.

As Mr. Hamilton says, 'There are cases of fraud in connection with Spiritualism,' and I would add to that, that there are cases of fraud in every business and purpose of life. But because there are numberless rogues in the world, I do not see that it is necessary to treat everyone as a rogue; that is the way to make more rogues. Our public school method is to treat every boy as a gentleman, and to appeal to his honour in regard to his conduct, and this practice is found to work well. Mediums are men and women first, and mediums after, and it seems to me that they are entitled to the same courteous consideration in the prosecution of their peculiar vocation as other people are.

Can it be said that the conductors of test séances have ever been guided by such methods? So far as my information goes the general practice is distinctly contrary to this. A medium is a passive agent, and is largely subject to the magnetic atmosphere given off by the sitters. If this atmosphere is charged with violent opposition, desire for fraud, and a strenuous intention on the part of even one sitter to defeat genuine manifestations, it is highly probable that *apparently* fraudulent effects may be produced, as the magnetic aura in such a case will attract undeveloped spirits whose delight is to deceive. Yet still the manifestations may be genuinely produced by exanimate agency. In such a case who is to be blamed? Surely not the medium!

The whole subject is a stupendous scientific problem in the very earliest stages of empirical practice. Nothing is yet known

of the laws regulating the intricate and varied effects beyond the fact that they do occur.

It is not by accidental and perfunctory attendance at a mixed séance that one can hope to obtain convincing evidences. Only by loyal and constant association of harmonious and truth-loving, passive natures can correct conditions be permanently established, and then remarkable and convincing effects will surely follow. It is unfortunate that the mental attitude of many people is not only sceptical—which is, of course, quite correct and legitimate—but is biassed and opposed towards the subject, which is equally incorrect and illegitimate.

Look, for example, at the 'Daily Telegraph' in this connection. This really great paper, has successfully conducted many noble enterprises in a great public spirit of duty, yet when it approaches the subject of Spiritualism always does so with a determined and rancorous bias, which is as clearly evident as it is unfair. The judgment of the 'Daily Telegraph' is that the whole subject is a delusion, the mediums all frauds, and investigators all fools. Those of us who have devoted intelligent and passive scrutiny to the subject know very well that the 'Daily Telegraph' exhibits an amazing ignorance of the whole subject, and like the proverbial ostrich puts its head in the blinding coverture of sandy ignorance, and thinks, because it cannot or will not see, that there is nothing to be seen. The 'Daily Telegraph' seeks to ignore the exalted revelations of Swedenborg, Andrew Jackson Davis, Hudson Tuttle, and others; and pooh-poohs the results of the exhaustive and conclusive inquiries conducted by Crookes, Reichenbach, Zöllner, Wallace, Cahagnet, Hare, and, latest, by Myers.

One would think that before passing a sweeping condemnation upon any subject *some* inquiry should be made independently by the critic. It is quite evident, however, that no such inquiry has ever been made by the conductors of the 'Daily Telegraph.' When M. and Madame Curie announced the discovery of Radium, the 'Daily Telegraph' was amongst the first papers to accept the discovery, and shower compliments upon the authors. The 'Daily Telegraph' could see much to admire in the discovery of a new radio-active manifestation in the residues of pitchblende, but apparently cannot even tolerate the idea of there being a far more potent, because intelligent, residue in 'Human Personality.'

To revert briefly to the test séance question, I would emphasise the view that conditions should not be arbitrarily imposed, as hitherto has most unfairly been the case.

If a Rajah in India were to insist that water should be converted into ice in the noonday sun, he might wait many geological periods in vain for such a manifestation. But if he would consent to make his experiment in the cold stillness of an ice-well, he would get his effect quickly. So I would suggest to the advocates of 'test séances' to inquire first what are the necessary conditions for spiritual manifestations, and then faithfully, loyally, and with honest purpose, observe them. I venture to say that no honest sceptical inquirer would under such conditions have cause to regret the time and money spent in the investigation.

That some mediums, or so-called mediums, are frauds, is only too probable, as there is a percentage of fraudulent people in every walk of life, but that is no reason for treating every medium as being so.

EDWIN LUCAS.

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### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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

Contributions of original poetry are respectfully declined.

'E. W.' and 'F. E. P.'—Next week, we hope.

'F. W. F.'—You make some good points, but on the whole the article is hardly suitable for our pages.

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A REMARKABLE OFFER.—As will be seen by the advertisement on the last page of this week's 'LIGHT,' we are offering 'Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World,' by the late Robert Dale Owen, at less than half the published price.

## ARE THERE ANIMALS IN THE SPIRIT WORLD?

The problem whether animals survive bodily death is one which has already been mooted in your columns; hence it may interest some of your readers to hear some of my own experiences in this connection.

That animals share with us the vital spark, which in them differs in no appreciable manner from the same life in us, seems to me to postulate that for them, also, there may be some future evolutionary phase of existence, and I have tacitly accepted this view in my own mind as a working hypothesis until further is known or revealed to correct it. I have repeatedly had occasion to describe the spirit forms of dogs, birds and other animals,—but then I have also had to describe a waggon load of hay!—which few will expect to possess a spiritual counterpart! Yet even this is not impossible,—if Carlyle Petersilea's spirit friends are to be believed! In one of his books that author states that every particle of matter, whether organic or inorganic, sooner or later gives up its 'ghost,' and thus provides the scenery, buildings, and flora and fauna of the spirit spheres. But be this as it may, I am constantly seeing or sensing animals in the company of my clients, and these spectral dogs certainly evince all the joy, and perform all the antics, of their kind just as though physically present. Moreover, they appear to respond to recognition, which they would hardly be expected to do if they were mere thought forms, conjured up by recollection or affection; nor, in the latter case, would one expect them to appear unless they were in the mind of the person whom they accompany, and this I find, on inquiry, is seldom the case. I was once sitting in social conversation with several ladies, when all at once I exclaimed, 'Oh, here is such a nice dog!—a big black dog, with a curly coat—a retriever—do you any of you know him?' One of the ladies, the hostess, at once said, 'We once had a dog like that, but it is a great many years ago. Do you think you could give us his name, madame?' Like a flash the name was given and I said, 'It was Rover!' and to my surprise I found it was correct. Within the last few weeks, a client from London was accompanied by the spirit form of a small lap dog, which leaped and frolicked around her, and evinced all the usual signs of canine joy at finding himself once more in her company, or at being recognised. Now what are we to think?

For my own part I see no great difficulty in thinking that they still exist, and that it is only the ignorant prejudice of ages, during which mankind has been led to consider himself a being higher than, and apart from, other forms of animal life—the proud possessor of a 'soul'—which renders the belief repugnant to the unthinking, who, after all, constitute the majority. Would it not be more in accordance with our truer knowledge of the Great All-Father to admit the possibility of the continued existence of those we are accustomed to term the 'lower animals,' when we ought rather to call them the 'other animals'? We are continually being taught by those on the 'other side' that their life is very much the same as ours, but on a higher plane, and if this is so, why should we wonder that our most familiar friends and companions amongst the 'lower animals' fare similarly?

I expect to be told that man is pre-eminent over the 'lower animals' as being the only possessor of 'a soul.' To such objectors I can only reply 'You do not know.' Because the canine conscience does not work in the same groove as the human, or in the same way, it would be futile to argue that it does not exist, for we know that dogs are susceptible to anger, fear, shame, jealousy, love, and nearly all the attributes upon which we pride ourselves as being the sole conscious possessors. That dogs and cats have some mode of imparting intelligence, or communicating ideas to each other, is too well known to be controverted; yet we do not know by what means they are able to do so. In this respect, their functions are exercised in a key to which we cannot respond; how do we know that the 'lower' animal soul is not also attuned to some such different pitch? Indeed, to deny animals a continued existence is to attack the very foundations of Spiritualism, for they do undoubtedly come to the clairvoyant, and if they are but thought forms, or the figments of some unexplained telepathic law, why not all the

rest also? I think it is time some of us showed the 'faith that is in us' by daring to predicate a more hopeful future for the 'lower animals,' many of whom are knit to us by bonds of love as strong as any human ones. I do not think we shall be far out, and the belief will certainly be more in accordance with what we believe to be the All-Father's mercy and goodness. I have little doubt that many other psychics could confirm what I have said as to the appearance of animals in spirit, and it would be useful if such others would publish their views and experiences. The ancients certainly had a firm belief in a hereafter for animals, and the longer we live the more it is borne in upon us that the poor despised and ridiculed people of bygone ages were neither so ignorant nor so foolish as we have been taught to consider them. We are, in fact, rapidly recovering many of the long exploded beliefs and theories of ancient times, and finding them sound and tenable. Some few of us know that whatever degree of knowledge or science we in the twentieth century have attained to, is but the merest shadow of what was once much better known and understood; for the civilisation of to-day is but the imperfect shadow of the civilisation of ancient peoples, which we are slowly and labouriously recovering by the help of the original possessors now in the next phase of existence. May we not, therefore, find also that the place once accorded to animals in the spirit world is, after all, the correct one, or at least based upon more than a superstitious imagination? I am hoping that some thinker, cleverer than myself, will follow up this subject, which has, for me, at any rate, an intense fascination.

BIANCA UNORNA.

Blackpool.

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 THE VALUE OF PRAYER.
 

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The value of prayer is not realised sufficiently by many. Prayer is an uplifting of the soul for all that is good and true and pure. When we pray—or desire earnestly—we set in motion a mighty vibration which brings us in touch and direct communication with the All-Good. Before we can rightly pray, we must be brought to *feel*, for prayer is of feeling, and a throbbing heart must be at the back of every prayer, so that its very vibrations can make known our true hopes and aspirations. No vain petition for our own gratification is *real* prayer. Such prayer is both selfish and meaningless, and if answered in our own way, would not bring the satisfaction we desired.

What a vague thing we make of prayer! To go through the form of the bended knee is not the only way to pray. Look at Nature. Is there not prayer all round us? The hope of spring, the song of birds, the bursting of buds, and the murmur of brooklets. What prayers and praises cannot they teach us! Why, to the one who has evolved sufficiently to cognise the good and beautiful in 'all things great and small,' life and work are prayers.

Every high desire and act, every true thought, a yearning sorrow for the weak and ignorant, and a sincere wish to better poor struggling humanity, are the truest forms of prayer conceivable.

Prayer is thought atmosphere, and its power is undreamt of. Prayer is needed *here* in this material world—the prayer for the neighbour and friend who are unconscious of our good and helpful feeling towards them, and which prayer is known only to ourself. *This* is unselfish and refining prayer which in very truth is made manifest above. Let us, then, pray aright, and understand the value of prayer, knowing that in helping and praying for others we are brought ever nearer to the one great God.

ELSIE CROWE.

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SPIRITUALISM A VITAL FAITH.—The Rev. Heber Newton (Episcopalian) in a sermon said: 'It is a fact concerning Spiritualism that through it the conviction of the life to come is taking a new hold of man's mind and heart. Myriads of men are to-day rejoicing in a firm and positive conviction of the reality of the life to come who, but for this movement, would have been left in the doubt which overshadows vast masses of men to-day. This faith has become so vital that it renews the early Christian joy in the presence of death. Instead of impugning the sources of this renewed faith, let orthodoxy make more real to those who abide within its folds this ancient and fundamental and vital faith of men.'—'Light of Truth.'

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
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## Light,

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### PROFESSOR BARRETT'S OUTLOOK.

#### I.

Professor Barrett's notable Address before the Society for Psychical Research, as its President, has at last been published (by R. Brimley Johnson). We have read it with complete satisfaction, notwithstanding the deprecation of 'the common run of spiritualistic séances' which 'revolt one's feelings,' and are 'always a weariness to the flesh.'

The Address covers, or, perhaps, we ought to say hovers about, the whole field, fluttering even over astrology and alchemy. We should call it an undoubtedly fair, wise and candid Paper, full of indications of ripe knowledge and careful observation, tempered or guided by caution and courage. All along, the Professor seems to write mindful of his own declaration that 'we are but at the beginning of a task so vast that it may, in time to come, make all the discoveries of physical science seem trivial, all its labours seem insignificant, in comparison with the stupendous problems that are before us.' This, from a Royal College Professor of Science and a F.R.S., is really a tremendous statement. The most fanatical Spiritualist has never gone an inch farther: and, in truth, we do not see how he or anyone could. But, in spite of this, the rulers in the worlds of science and religion are, for the most part, antagonistic or scornful or disagreeably restless. 'It must be confessed,' says Professor Barrett, with a sigh, 'that psychical research is still looked at somewhat askance by the leaders and organs of official science': and he asks why this is so:—

No one asserts that the knowledge we are seeking to obtain is unimportant, for, as the learned Dr. Glanville said two hundred years ago about similar subjects to those we are studying, 'These things relate to our biggest interests; if established they secure some of the outworks of religion.' Nor, so far as I know, does any one assert we are hasty and incautious, or unscientific in our method of investigation. No doubt one reason for the present attitude of official science towards us has been the prevalence and paralysing influence of a materialistic philosophy, which denies the possibility of mind without a material brain, or of any means of access from other minds to our mind except through the recognised channels of sensation. Both these propositions are of course denied by our religious teachers, who assert that a spiritual world does exist, and that the inspired writings were given supersensuously to man. Nevertheless as a body, though with some notable exceptions, even they do not welcome us with open arms.

What is the reason? The answer is that both science and religion have their accepted channels by which every-

thing is, as a matter of course, judged. Science holds that 'all extension to our existing knowledge can come only through the channel bounded by the five senses': while religion recognises authority only. As an illustration of the bigotry and narrowing prejudice of science, Professor Barrett tells a useful story concerning the really great scientist, the late Professor Helmholtz. He says:—

I had then recently published a paper giving for the first time *primâ facie* evidence of something new to science, called thought-transference, now known as telepathy. Helmholtz, who was a great physiologist as well as physicist, had some conversation with me on the subject, and he ended by saying: 'I cannot believe it. Neither the testimony of all the Fellows of the Royal Society, nor even the evidence of my own senses, would lead me to believe in the transmission of thought from one person to another independently of the recognised channels of sensation. It is clearly impossible.'

If such stupid nescience is possible in the case of such a man as Helmholtz, what must we expect from Robinson, Jones and Brown? And it is precisely what we are continually getting from Robinson, Jones and Brown.

But, as Professor Barrett testifies, it is not all Helmholtz and Robinson and Jones and Brown. He says: 'There is a more open mind on the part of science towards psychical research,' and 'unquestionably a change of opinion is gradually coming about.' 'The widespread and unreasoning prejudice which twenty-five years ago existed against all psychical inquiry is breaking down': but the stolid wall of 'authority' stops the tumbling down of prejudice: and yet, even authority is beginning to crumble: for, both in science and religion, it is being rapidly discredited. Almost every recent discovery in science crumbles away a venerable 'certainty' and explodes an ancient 'impossibility'; and every advance of honest criticism in theology riddles an accepted document or scuttles an essential creed. 'We always thought of an atom, as Lucretius did,' says our Professor, "'strong in solid singleness," as the most immutable and immortal thing in the physical universe. Now it appears to be capable of disintegration and transmutation, and the views of the alchemists are beginning to revive: soon we may be looking for the "philosopher's stone"—the substance that by its presence enables the transmutation of other heavy atoms to come about. Thus does the whirligig of time bring its revenges.' It is 'Authority' itself, then, that must be put on its trial, or, as Professor De Morgan said, have the bench pulled from under him, without ceremony.

Professor Barrett insists that a strong case has been made out for the most serious investigation, over a wide area, with patience and in a systematic way. But there must be no more of this fatal prepossession that 'there is nothing to investigate but imposture';—a fruitful remark! and one which refers as much to Spiritualism as to Psychical Research. We have had far too much of that 'fatal prepossession' and of work done only in the spirit of it: so we thank the Professor for his sturdy backing up of even the derided Spiritualists, who, after all, it appears, are not to be doomed to 'perish everlastingly.' We shall have more to say of that, and of this fruitful Address generally, but, for the present, conclude with the following acknowledgment of our work:—

The acute and powerful intellect of Professor De Morgan, the great exposé of scientific humbug, long ago said, and he had the courage publicly to state, that however much the Spiritualists might be ridiculed, they were undoubtedly on the track that has led to all advancement in knowledge, for they had the *spirit* and *method* of the old times, when paths had to be cut through the uncleared forests in which we can now easily walk. Their *spirit* was that of universal examination unchecked by the fear of being detected in the investigation of nonsense. This was the spirit that animated the Florentine Academicians and the first Fellows of the Royal Society two hundred and fifty years ago; they set to work to prove all things that they might hold fast to that which was good.

And their *method* was that of all scientific research, viz., to start a theory and see how it worked. Without a theory 'facts are a mob, not an army.' Meteorology at the present moment is buried under a vast mob of observations for want of ingenuity in devising theories; any working hypothesis is better than none at all. And so I agree with De Morgan that the most sane and scientific method in psychical research is not to be afraid of propounding a theory because it may seem extraordinary, but have courage to do so and see if it works.

### GOD ON MANY PLANES.

If we may take it as true that every man's God is the ideal which he forms for himself, then, in this sense, there are Gods on many planes, just because there are many planes of human activity, consciousness, and idealisation. And in this sense, too, every man has his own God; in fact he may be said to create his own God, not in his own precise image, but as the glorified image which he forms as his ideal, and holds up to himself as the goal of his own ambition and possible attainment.

But in order that any of these purely personal Gods may become objects of general belief, they must be extended and generalised to form types of popular conception, so that each nation or people comes to have its own God, representing its strivings, its ideals, as a community. The national God will then mirror forth the national ideal, will become a personification of the national genius, varying in conception with the advancement of the national spirit, and its power of abstraction from the Seen into the Unseen. Thus these personal and national Gods are progressive in their nature, and represent the guiding principle of the person or of the nation on its way from its present stage of ideality and aspiration towards that which lies before on the upward course. And as such guiding principles they have their reality, and their utility as forces tending towards personal or national advancement.

'Not in vain the nation's strivings,  
Nor by chance the currents flow;  
Error-mazed, yet Truth-directed,  
To their certain goal they go.'

Some of these stages of abstract intellect have left their mark on the philosophy of religion to such an extent that we can recognise their respective ideals, thus personified into Gods, as the representatives of certain well-marked phases of philosophical abstraction, and as theomorphic emblems of the corresponding conceptions of the Universe and its origin. Thus we have the Cosmic God, or the Pantheistic God, beautifully described by Dr. Washington Sullivan, represented as pervading the whole of Nature; and we have the Transcendental God, the Unmanifested Centre from which the whole Cosmos derives its being. These are, in other words, the God of the Spiritual Plane underlying and interpenetrating the material one, and the God of the Divine Plane which pervades all without differentiation or manifestation.

But it is not every conception that has power to pierce so deep below the surface, or to rise so high above material conceptions. There are also Gods on (and of) many lower planes. The humanitarian makes Mankind his God, and strives to raise himself and the rest of humanity towards the ideal he has formed. The self-seeker, who only looks to making the most of this world for his own personal and temporal advantage, finds his God in Pleasure or in Riches. The artist takes for his God the Auto-Kalon, Beauty in the Abstract, and this conception lent itself to the æsthetic soul of ancient Greece, and inspired the idea of so shaping the surroundings, in the home, in the city, and in the national life, that Hellas should become a fitting abode for that ideal conception. The musician imagines a God whose voice is the Harmony of the Spheres, and rules

over the just combinations of tone, as the artist's God presides over those of colour and of form; and yet the two are one, and one also with the Self-Beautiful.

The physical scientist has a God whom all physical matter obeys: a God of Law, blind rather than purposeful, being immutable, bound by the fetters of his own inexorable self-limitations. The student of living Nature, who solaces himself with the thought of a natural evolution, has his God too, in the form of a living tendency, yet rather the slave of Necessity than endowed with freedom of choice; and akin to this is the God of the rationalist thinker, inflexible and pitiless, ruling over the processes of thought and reason, yet himself scarcely reasonable. The God of each plane is the Law of that plane, whether it be the Law of Beauty, of Harmonics, of Physics, of logical processes, or of mathematics. And the most divine resolve that can come to a man, on any plane of thought, is to develop and promulgate the benefits and teachings of that plane, in order that by realising them for himself he may be instrumental also in extending them to the rest of mankind, thus fitting himself and others for attainment to a still higher level.

It is a Godlike thought on the plane (or from the point of view) of the successful millionaire that he ought to die poor, after devoting the wealth he has amassed to the benefit or instruction of his less successful and poorer fellow-men.

It was a Godlike thought of Newton's, after penetrating deeply into the mysteries of Nature, and laying them open, as far as was in his power, to his contemporaries and to posterity, that he was, after all, poor in real knowledge, and merely, as it were, a child picking up pebbles on the sea-shore of Eternity.

It was the act of a God when Christ renounced the holiness of His life that He might benefit mankind, and went before His Father as one forsaken by the Divine Spirit that had actuated Him through life, which had been the mainspring of His work on earth; and, being innocent, died the death of a common malefactor, of the vilest criminal.

Wealth, knowledge, spiritual gifts, are ours but that we may renounce the personal and exclusive benefits to be derived from them by ourselves, in order that we may make them serviceable to others, and this at the bidding of a still higher Power which is Divine, and which needs none of these advantages, for it is perfect in itself, and can suffer neither addition nor diminution by our wealth or our poverty in material, mental, or spiritual gifts and attainments.

God, then, is found wherever we search for Him; and, according to the nature of our quest, so we find Him manifested in action. If we search on the material plane, we find God revealed only as Law. On the mental plane, He appears as Logic—another term for Law as it exists on that plane. On the spiritual plane, we find the same God, the same Law, working in a higher form, as Spiritual Law; and on each of these planes, as long as we confine ourselves to the consideration of its phenomena, we find only the all-pervading, all-ruling Law as the manifestation of God on that plane.

In like manner we find the God of the Cosmos revealed by His cosmical attributes; but the real God has no attributes, which are but definitions, circumscriptions, therefore limitations, or fragmentary conceptions of His Infinitude.

But in all these aspects God appears on the one hand as the ruling principle, but on the other as suggesting to the thoughtful intuition a still higher Principle, for, however high we mount, we are always able to infer Something that is above us, and therefore to acknowledge that God must also be the Sum and Centre of that which lies beyond.

Therefore, also, we are inclined to call everything 'God' that is beyond us, and that passes our comprehension, stretch it as we may. To the animal creation, Humanity may seem divine, in the manifestation of its superior powers and faculties. When we come to the Spiritual Plane, and do not find God except as manifested by a still higher realm of Law, around and yet above us, we must either give up the search for God, or postulate a still higher Divine Plane, or series of planes, still leading us on and on, up to God as the Ultimate Reason, Law, and Centre, as well as the Circumference, of All. God is the Whole, and every part of the Whole exists in God also, and 'God in Everything.'

JOHN B. SHIPLEY.

#### SPIRITUALISM IN GERMANY.

No doubt, it will be of interest to your readers to learn how the spiritualistic movement is spreading in Germany. The true German thoroughness and love of detail, mingled with a great deal of obstinacy, are proverbial, and make it very difficult for our movement to combat German scepticism. How applicable are yet to-day the words of J. W. Goethe: 'Incredulity has become like an inverted superstition for the delusion of our time.' We, have, therefore, to congratulate ourselves that, under the excellent leadership of Mr. Feilgenhauer, a society has been founded, called: 'The German Spiritualistic Society' (Deutscher Spiritisten-Verein). Allow me to quote some striking sentences from the address they have issued to the German people:—

'The most important question for every thinking man has ever been whether death means annihilation of our individuality, a question answered in the affirmative by Materialism founded on physiology, and in the negative by all religions whatsoever. If we maintain that man does not possess a soul distinct from the body, the belief in its immortality must vanish. Philosophy wavers between the two opinions, but rather tends to the spiritualistic doctrine that—if not in the spiritualistic sense, at least in the pantheistic sense—the survival of the soul may be possible. On the other hand, philosophy, and especially the psychology taught at universities, agree with natural science in that they neither answer this immortality question in the affirmative nor in the negative, but simply involve the answer in an "ignoramus" and even an "ignorabimus."

'The newer psychology, however, has been forced by irresistible, scientifically investigated experiments to recognise the existence of a soul separable from the body. Even the most eminent representatives of this science not only ascribe to the soul a survival after death, but think it possible that it may under certain conditions enter into and influence our lives.

'And on this point they agree with the Spiritualists. The phenomena of Spiritualism have been acknowledged as genuine so often, and by the first men of science, that the question of to-day is only the enforcement of this official scientific acknowledgment. And for this purpose we have formed the German Spiritualistic Society, a Society which embraces all followers of a science the aim of which is to prove the survival of the soul after death.'

After an explanation of the reason for calling the Society 'Spiritualistic Society,' the address concludes with the suggestion that the German people who claim as their own, Kant, who made the well-being of a nation dependent on its progress in metaphysics, so on them lies the special duty of making the question of the survival of the soul the topic of the day.

The council have already achieved much in having obtained as honorary members of the Society such eminent men as Professor Dr. Falcomer, Professor Casar Lombroso, Professor Morselli, Dr. med. Acevedo, and Professor Richet, while the announcement of the honorary membership of other eminent men will doubtless soon follow.

I would add that the Society has printed pictorial postcards with portraits of great scientists, and a few of the words which they have said about Spiritualism thereon. Anyone, and especially any German, who is interested and wishes for further particulars may apply to the undersigned.

HERMANN BRINKMANN,  
English Representative of the Society.

6, Bartholomew-road, N. W.

#### THE SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHY AND HERBERT SPENCER.

Now when the name of Herbert Spencer is on so many lips, you will, I hope, allow me to make this presentation. Briefly, the Synthetic Philosophy defined evolution to be integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of Motion. A recent critic in a work fairly entitled 'The Grand Survival,' amended the definition by a difference of a word, so that, Evolution is Integration of Matter and Concomitant Integration of Motion.

But long before these doctrines were heard here in the West, wise men of the East taught that Spirit and Matter are one—that illusion of the senses, caused by transitoriness of matter, always moving, ever changing, tends to confuse, what has but empiric apparency, with substantial reality; meaning that the Western notion of the motion inherent in matter is really Spirit manifesting, directing, by means of the vehicle, Ether, the last attenuation of matter, which in Sanscrit is called Akāsa, the sky, having even greater potentiality than is intended when we speak of the Heavens.

And the Eastern origin of Western philosophy is traceable in Spencer's work, though his tools were mostly of the newest modern manufacture; and more apparently so in case of his disciple; for freedom of will, or as the 'Grand Survival' explains it to mean, control of desires, is what a thrice-born exponent of his cult would enjoin upon his Chelas as necessary to keep them within the everlasting Harmony of the Great Design.

I leave this holy ground with my hat off because Mr. Spencer and the disciple agree, and are in the same attitude of veneration that all of us must have for the One—The Absolute.

Now, may I add something about Herbert Spencer? His earnestness impressed me much when I have played at billiards with him. I thought that, if he had cared to, he could have conquered that very difficult game. His hand and eye worked together and he had a promising delicacy of touch. Under restraint while he played, he was not quite self-controlled, for occasionally his proneness to argue would overcome him and he would flash out, as I recollect he did about memory—'It is only useful as a means, it has no great mental value.' He always played in four games because of the timely rest his physique needed, and he was considerate, consulted his partner, and acted on advice. I remember his asking, 'Shall I play on the red?' It was under the cushion. I said, 'No, beware of the unknown.' He gave a miss. When I have spoken to him about his health, he told me that he was anxious because he had functional heart disturbance; and he frequently felt his pulse with his thumb. I asked him, 'Why do you feel your pulse with your thumb?' He said, 'Pulsation synchronises.' Soon afterwards he said, as was his way, 'I'm tired, good-bye.' Sometimes that signal came suddenly. Rebuking me for a belief in dowsing, I was asked, 'Don't you know that if you dig deep enough you will come to water?' And I was dismissed before I had time to tell him that I had found that out at Bendigo, where, however, miners don't know when they will get water till it comes in. But some dowsers can locate it.

There was a kindliness about these dismissals of the sort that a nutmeg ought to feel in course of degradation. I never heard Herbert Spencer laugh. But his smile was a thing to remember. I told him about the Sunday-school girl, the pertest of the lot, who, to the teacher's question, who was Moses' mother?—answered, 'Pharaoh's daughter'; and when the clergyman's wife said, 'No my dear, recollect, she found him in the bulrushes,' promptly stated, 'She said so!' Then the great man smiled deep down, and the dungeon where we were playing shone with it. Another time, an outraged whist partner followed me into the billiard-room, upbraiding me for my misdeeds. I said, 'Why you ought to be your own partner; but you can't be in two places at once, and I can't get rid of myself.' Then there was the same effulgence in the room. Herbert Spencer was there. I hope he has light now.—R. I. P.

GILBERT ELLIOT.

Highfield, Mottingham, Kent.



## 'REINCARNATION RECONSIDERED.'

On a first glance at Mr. Shipley's article on 'Reincarnation Reconsidered,' in 'LIGHT,' of April 16th, I was impressed with the hope that now, at last, some real and definite idea would be given—first, what reincarnation really is; second, what it is that is supposed to incarnate life after life; and thirdly, why reincarnation is held to be a prime factor in the spiritual evolution of the soul? This latter view of reincarnation is adopted only by Theosophists and advanced occult students in general.

Now, while Mr. Shipley has proposed to 'reconsider' the process of reincarnation, he, consciously or unconsciously, has given as nearly as possible the theosophical view; while he seems on the other hand to denounce the esoteric philosophy. I have read with mingled interest and amusement nearly all the letters appearing in 'LIGHT' on reincarnation, and cannot help feeling that the majority of the writers have persistently misunderstood and misinterpreted it, while some have denounced it who, obviously, have no clear conception of the subject.

To every Theosophist reincarnation is as clear, as beautiful, and as convincing as the light of day. Of course no one can demonstrate in physical terms the proof of reincarnation. The truth of it is inward, not outward, though the evidence in favour of it is manifold. To us it is a veritable law of Nature. But what is reincarnation? It is a process of Nature which has to do, not with bodies—whether physical, astral, or lower mental—but with the spirit, the thinker, the real man himself. It is he whom the law of evolution (it matters not one iota whether that law is, as Mr. Shipley insinuates, 'automatic' or otherwise; the nature of the law does not concern us) compels to incarnate life after life on this lower physical plane of dense matter. He lives here his life of physical, astral, and mental activities, and then the change men call death sets in and carries him to the 'next world,' or astral plane of Nature, where he functions in his astral body—a body still made up of matter, but finer and more radiant than physical matter. Now Theosophists do not believe, as Mr. Shipley would seem to imply, that the man's life is 'aimless, a sort of pseudo-enjoyment, a state of illusion and oblivion, which continues until the whole process has to be gone through again.' That statement is only partly true, and in thousands of cases is wholly incorrect. Not only Theosophists, but every thoughtful and devout Spiritualist, knows that it is eternally true that 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.' If a man has lived an aimless existence here, has pursued the Will-o'-the-Wisp of pleasure in the flesh, what can he expect in the next stage of life but a foolish, aimless, and false existence? We do not make the law, we simply state its mode of operation—and that mode is a perfectly just and loving one.

But even in the next world the change called death once more arrives, and the law of evolution carries the man, the spirit, another step upward. The astral body, like the physical, dies, but the man lives and cannot die. After the dissolution of the astral body, the man wakes up in the next plane or world, and becomes conscious in his mental body. In the mental world he lives a life proportionate in joy and helpfulness, or otherwise, according to the nature of intellectual and spiritual energy he has, so to speak, liberated here. For Nature always gives to the man his reward in his own current coin. Like produces and evolves like. Even on this sublime plane the lower mental body, through which the Divine Man functions, is subject to death—that is, decomposition of the mental body. That also he puts off, passing into the glorious, unspeakably beautiful heaven-world. Yet even there he is not, as some foolishly imagine, without a body. Gradually he wakes and becomes conscious in his glorious causal or real spirit body—the 'body not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' What that body is, and what the glory, the beauty, the unspeakable bliss and joy which vibrate through its Divine mechanism, it hath not entered into the heart of man to wholly conceive. We can only dimly guess the magnificence, the ineffable splendour of that region. Yet it is here as well as there; and some of us who are trying to tread 'the path,' to live the Higher Life, have faint glimpses, foretastes, of its beauty.

It is just at this point where the great rock of offence lies between the Theosophist and the Spiritualist. Does the man stop here, or does he still advance, or does he return to earth life? These are vital questions—questions which many devout students of spiritual philosophy are eager to have solved. Some Spiritualists emphatically say, 'No, the spirit man does not return.' Others, again, are a little more modest and say, 'We do not know, but would like to know.' The Theosophist—what does he say? He says it all depends upon the man himself. God has given to him Divine powers, the right exercise of which, by an unailing law, will carry him away from this 'vale

of tears,' this 'unintelligible world,' for ever. He is not bound to reincarnate unless there is something in his past which binds him to earth. If there is anything earthly in his soul then assuredly he will be drawn to the physical plane to get rid of it. Have we not read that 'flesh and blood' cannot enter into, or abide in, heaven? Just so. That which is of a fleshly, carnal and evil nature cannot possibly stay there. Is not that as it should be? Is it not perfectly just?

But why does not the man pass on? Why does he not still progress? Simply because the man has nothing in his constitution—his mental, moral, and spiritual nature—that can respond to the delicate and beautiful touches (vibrations if you like) of the heavenly life. His Divine energies are all now exhausted, spent up, as it were. The Heaven he deserved, which he made for himself, has been realised, so that his being is simply incapable of entering into the Divine felicity of pure spirit life. So he comes back—reincarnates. He does it willingly and joyfully. He feels the absolute justice of the law and acquiesces in it. He has need, as Mr. Shipley points out, of more experience. He has many more lessons to learn, more knowledge, wisdom, and love to assimilate into his nature. In a word, he must rise above all that is earthly and selfish. Then when he is fit to quit this mortal life for ever; when he is so wise, so beautiful and loving in spirit; when his soul can vibrate to the heavenly impulses that are ever striving to reach him, then he shall enter through the gates of the City, and they shall never more be closed against him. He shall become a pillar in that Heavenly Temple—a source and centre of help and strength, radiating beauty, joy, and inspiration to all who need it and seek it.

Mexborough.

J. M. NUTTALL.

Though a member of the Theosophical Society I have always been interested in Spiritualism, and have always felt much sympathy for it, especially since I met with your splendid English medium, Mr. A. V. Peters, at Princess Karadja's séances in Stockholm in 1901, and I am inclined to believe that most members of the Theosophical Society have nothing left of the old superstition-like antagonism to spiritualistic sayings and doings, but that they, on the contrary, long for the time when all workers for the uplifting of humanity will join each other's hands, and work in harmony.

At the same time I am sure that Theosophists in general possess an intimate knowledge of the spiritualistic views, but it seems to me that Spiritualists do not know what Theosophy really teaches, or at least what the later views indicate, for in your esteemed journal there often appear exceedingly inaccurate statements about Theosophy.

Now, as to reincarnation, there was an admirable article by Mr. Shipley, in 'LIGHT' for April 16th, treating of this fundamental doctrine in a most able and truly theosophical manner. All he says about the true Self and its temporary manifestations on earth is purely theosophical, so far as my knowledge of Theosophy goes. Why then does he tell us that the 'stock theosophical arguments are so inadequate and arbitrary as to condemn it by implication'? What are those stock arguments 'so repugnant to common-sense and to the higher instincts of the soul'? I never saw any such.

On the contrary, Madame Blavatsky, Mrs. Besant, and Mr. Leadbeater, &c., always pointed out that the true Self cannot be said to incarnate or reincarnate, because it belongs to a higher plane and cannot express itself fully on any lower plane than its own; nor can it be said of the human personality that it reincarnates, because its life-time ends with the devachanic period on the mental plane, and a new personality is being formed during the new 'reincarnation.'

What, then, is reincarnation? It is the true Self that sends a ray, a portion of itself, into matter, thus building vehicles for expression on mental, astral, and physical planes; and by means of these vehicles it gains experience and knowledge, which otherwise could not be gained. So long as the Self is not yet able to answer the high vibrations on its own plane it must learn this answering to vibrations on lower planes.

Thus to speak of the devachanic life as a life of 'illusory forgetfulness' is far from being correct, since neither the physical nor the astral or mental life is real from the point of view of the Self. All life on lower planes is 'illusory' or 'relatively real'—just as you like. But as the astral plane is one step, and the mental plane two steps, nearer the self than the physical plane, it would be more correct to say that the devachanic life is much more real than the physical life.

Mr. Shipley is quite right in saying that 'on every plane and in every sphere we look to work and service—service to others being the highest form of service to self'; but he seems to forget that most men, even on this physical plane, do not wish to work for others at all. And how could those

souls who have not learnt the A B C of service down here—how could they at once become angels on the astral, and gods on the mental plane?

Yet it is true that they who have made themselves fit for the task will not have to look in vain for work on the higher planes of existence. There is plenty of work, but the workers are few.

Aggelby, Finland.

PEKKA ERVAST.

#### WHAT IS THE 'HIGHER' SPIRITUALISM?

In a recent discourse on Spiritualism, the Rev. Minot J. Savage expounded what he called the 'Higher Spiritualism,' and gave the following condensed summary of the belief and its significance; a belief which, he said, 'has come to be practically a religion to millions of people in the most civilised countries of the world.' Mr. Savage said:—

'What is, then, the first grand belief? Simply that death is not an end; that it is merely an expression, an incident in the onward and upward struggle and progress of the individual life. It claims to have demonstrated this, to hold it not as a hope, not as a belief, but as knowledge. It teaches that inside these gross physical bodies there is an ether body, a body that has grown with it, shaped by it, adapted to it, perfect in every part and faculty; and that this ether body is disengaged at death, like a germ delivered from its sheath, and that it goes on, the soul taking this ether body with it as a perfect equipment in every faculty for the fullest expression of its higher and better life. According to this teaching, the soul simply goes on with its power to think, to remember, to love, just as of old.

'It further teaches that this universe everywhere is under the law of cause and effect, and that we begin life hereafter just as we leave it here—precisely what we have made ourselves by our thoughts, our deeds, our words on earth. Therefore, this other life is not peopled with ghosts, with ghastly, thin, and unreal beings, such as we have imagined in the past; they are real folks—our fathers, our mothers, our neighbours, our friends—just as we have known them here, only released from their lower, physical condition, but carrying with them the same kind of character, of thought, of personality which they had here.

'It also teaches that, under certain peculiar conditions, there can now and then be manifestations of the reality of that life to this life; that sometimes there comes a whisper, sometimes a hand is reached across the abyss, and that they are demonstrations of the fact that those we have loved and that we talk of as lost, are not lost but are living as we are living.

'This Higher Spiritualism is in perfect accord with the finest and highest philosophy of the world. It is in perfect accord with the finest and highest moral principles that have ever been discovered. So there is nothing that we know that is contradictory to these claims of Higher Spiritualism. Therefore, whether it can demonstrate itself as true or not, it is not in contradiction with any known truth that science or philosophy has to offer, and is in perfect accord with the finest ethical teaching and the highest hopes of man. So much must be said in defence of this claim of what I have called the Higher Spiritualism.'

The foregoing summary by Mr. Savage fairly well defines the position of the Spiritualist, and would, we think, be acceptable to most of the readers of 'LIGHT'; but why call it the 'Higher' Spiritualism?

#### CLAIRVOYANCE?

Writing in the 'San Francisco Examiner,' H. J. W. Dam gives the following as an 'ordinary case of clairvoyance,' and remarks that 'a hundred cases with a hundred different clairvoyants who have had no training, no knowledge of each other, no possible community of action, will all reveal the same general facts.' Mr. Dam says:—

'Miss B. is a fragile, delicate girl of twenty, whose health was shattered by an accident four years ago, in which she received a severe blow on the head.

'She, sitting in a room in Providence, R.I., with a number of ladies and gentlemen, is asked if she will go to Roxbury, Mass., where, as is well known, she has never been.

'Miss B. consents and relapses into unconsciousness.

'She reaches Roxbury, which fact appears from her questions and her description of familiar landmarks. She asks if she may go into a shop which attracts her. She is told that she may. She wants an apple. She is told that she may have it.

She takes it from a stand, eats it, and says that it is very nice. Then she is confused and blushes. Asked why, she says she has no money to pay for it. She is given some money, lays it on the counter and goes out.

'These details are given because anybody who is analytical can see their importance. Miss B.'s entire personality in all respects, including her self-consciousness and her sense of humour, is clearly in Roxbury.

'She goes out of the shop and asks her way. She is directed along the streets, turning corner after corner, as is clear from her description of them. Finally she reaches the designated house.

'She enters, and, as directed, goes into every room from garret to cellar; accurately describes all the furniture, decorations, and persons there present. To remove the possibility of telepathic influence, the furniture, paintings, and decorations have been disarranged in a way which no one present knows. Her description, verified the next day, is found to be perfectly accurate.

'She goes all over the house as requested, describes, comments, admires, and questions precisely as if she were a material guest. When the house has been minutely inspected she returns to herself and becomes conscious. She knows nothing of where she has been and of what she has seen and said.'

If the facts occurred as described by Mr. Dam, and we see no reason to doubt the accuracy of his statements, it seems to us that what he calls 'clairvoyance' would be more correctly described as an instance of 'transcorporeal activity of spirit.'

Miss B. travelled to the place, and accurately described the furniture and decorations; and, had another sensitive been in the house at the time, it is very probable that she would have seen Miss B. present in person. Mediums sometimes describe people whom they perceive psychically, and imagine they are incarnate individuals, whereas they really see persons who are still embodied, but are temporarily emancipated, and travelling in their spirit forms on the psychic plane.

#### INTERESTING EXPERIENCES.

In a letter in 'The Harbinger of Light,' Mr. A. W. Euston relates the following interesting experiences:—

'As my daughter at Chilwell and two of her boarders were sitting sewing, they all three heard a voice distinctly calling "Annie" three times (the name of one of the boarders). They were much surprised at hearing a voice but seeing no one. In an adjoining room there was a sick boarder, of whom they inquired if she had called for Annie, which she denied. About two or three days after this, Annie at Chilwell received a letter from her sister, who was then living with their mother in Gippsland, stating, among other things, that "she could not think how it was that her mother should be so concerned about her (that is Annie), for as she was dozing in her chair the other day she called out "Annie" three times," and this agreed exactly with the time the voice was heard by all three at Chilwell. These are facts, vouched for by a truthful woman, the explanation of which I leave with others. The next item I have to mention comes from the same source, and is of more importance, at any rate, to me, as it draws aside a little the veil that hides the glorious land of the emancipated, and this is cheering to one whose poor old heart is growing weak and weary from its eighty-four years of ceaseless labour, without even a strike. It is as follows: A lady of my daughter's acquaintance was suffering from dropsy, and while undergoing an operation very lately came so near to the end of mortal life that she got a glimpse of some of the beauties of the spirit world, so beautiful that she longed to stay, but having revived a little was obliged against her will to return to this world of many changes with a wail upon her tongue, "O, why did they bring me back?"'

#### CHARITY.

She makes excuses where she might condemn;  
Reveled by those who hate her, prays for them.  
Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast;

The worst suggested, she believes the best;  
Not soon provoked, however stung and teased,  
And if, perhaps, made angry, soon appeased;  
She rather waives than will dispute her right,  
And injured, makes forgiveness her delight.

Such was the portrait an apostle drew,  
The bright original was one he knew:

Heaven held his hand—the likeness must be true.

—COWPER.

## COUNSELS BY AUTOMATIC WRITING.

I enclose a continuation of 'Counsels by Automatic Writing' of some import; they emanate from a very ancient Intelligence, and I hope you will find room for more.

Ω.

## II.

Know that the body is nought and the soul is all. Is not man a rational being? His body is divisible, extended, and penetrable; subject to the ravages of decay and disease. And does not death come to all men? Man has a brilliant and inventive faculty of imagination to form wonderful ideas upon which he acts; hence inventions and marvellous works.

If thou dost take a survey of the world is it not a glorious sight?—the busy quay, the hurrying crowd, the fast-steaming leviathan—all, in fact, go to show the glory of God. Man does improve; it must be so; and OMN gave forth his decree, 'Thou shalt live on the fruit of the world, and thou shalt increase and multiply in number, in riches (spiritual), and in wisdom, that thou mayest understand thy destiny.'

O puny man! thou dost think thy powers great, and thy discerning abilities above contradiction, but even the passing of the spirit from the body is not understood by thee. Enlightenment comes slowly and with the passing of time.

Nurture within thy heart love, for by exercising this passion in a sphere of purity thou dost liken thyself unto God + who loves all that is and that will be to the end of time. Love not thyself better than others, for surely if thou dost thy heart and mind are narrowed and selfish.

Thou knowest that the body doth contain the soul; and, as a proper resting-place for that sensitive part of the organisation, it should be clean, pure, and without blemish. By giving vent to thy bodily passions thou dost corrupt all that is good pertaining to the soul. I cannot say too much, to all, of the chastity of the body. Be wary, therefore, lest thou dost, for thy damning actions, have to work out a long penance, which will not be pleasing to thee hereafter.

Again, look at thy body from another point of view. Art thou not a part of God? And, as thou knowest this, thou shouldst befit the dignity which is thine by being pure in thy actions and deeds. For, being part of God (+), doth not the other (Divine) part of God + know what His erring part doeth which is wrong? Be chaste, clean, and holy in thy bodily actions, for a sensual man is degrading to God + and a damnation to himself.

Regarding the words used with respect to sitting with unbelievers, a spirit, no matter of what grade or degree, gathers the power to control or materialise from those who sit, the emanation and auras being the mainstay of the spirit in question. The spirit may wish to prove all, and be able to prove nothing if there be one who disbelieves the agency of spirit intelligence. The bad aura (not necessarily bad from a material point of view) impregnates the auras of the believers with its unbelief, thereby minimising the good results which would be obtained if all who sat were of the same state of mind. Hence spurious materialising and lying controls.

## 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.*

## Mr. Peters in Germany.

SIR,—Hearing that Mr. Alfred V. Peters was in German Switzerland I invited him to visit our city of Freiburg. Mr. Peters is known to German Spiritualists through the reports of his mediumistic powers which have appeared in the German Spiritualist Press, and I thought it would be a good opportunity to see him and test his abilities for myself. One of the first things which struck me was that, while I was waiting on the platform of the railway station, Mr. Peters came directly up to me, called me by name, and entered into conversation; yet there was nothing about me to indicate who I was, and Mr. Peters had not seen me, or a photo of me. He tells me that this curious gift is one that he does not understand himself. Two public sésances were held in a large room in this city, but they were not as successful as we could have wished, because many people had come to oppose the medium, and, in fact, two of those who obtained tests were afraid to acknowledge them publicly, but I heard afterwards that most of the descriptions were really recognised. One test was particularly interesting. A lady received a description of a spirit lady, and of a piece of jewellery, and also a piece of lace, but she was unable to recog-

nise her friend, or the articles referred to by Mr. Peters. However, on the following day she searched in her home and found a portrait of the lady who had been described to her, and also a brooch, which she had forgotten all about. At the private sésances, where good, harmonious conditions prevailed, Mr. Peters was eminently successful. I cannot describe all I saw or heard (for I acted as interpreter on some occasions), but one or two incidents are well worth recording. First, I myself received a communication from my son, who controlled the medium, and told me of things about which no one in my own city knew but myself, and as for Mr. Peters, or any other Englishman, knowing them, the very supposition is absurd. To a lady who has lived in America for twenty-five years, a description was given of her deceased husband, who afterwards controlled the medium, and gave his widow evidences of his identity which were beyond dispute. He told her of their home in far-off Mexico; how he had been nearly killed by falling from a horse; how he had promised before his death to return to her if he could; how she had stood by the coffin after he died; and he repeated the very words she spoke to a lady at that time. All of these statements, the lady admitted, were perfectly true. At another sésance a man who committed suicide was described; he also controlled the medium and told exactly how he died; how another man was accused of the crime of murder, and how he drank the night before his death. These painful details were all true, and made a marked impression on his hearers. I must pay a tribute to our young friend's marvellous powers as a palmist. I have heard our best palmists give what you English people call 'readings,' but Mr. Peters excelled them all. The persons to whom he gave the readings were like open books to him. Their past and present experiences were accurately stated; and unpleasant as well as pleasant things were told. I have been a Spiritualist for forty-six years, and have seen much of the power of the spirits, and as I am an old man now I do not expect that many more mediums will cross my path, but I feel that English Spiritualists are privileged in having amongst them such a bright, honest medium as our friend and brother Mr. Peters. I conclude with all good wishes to the Spiritualists in England, for I shall never forget the kindness I received at their hands when I was amongst them during the great Congress in 1898.—I am, sincerely your friend and fellow Spiritualist,

DR. GEORG VON LANGSDORFF.

Freiburg i. Baden.

## 'An Appreciative Reader.'

SIR,—Looking through my copy of 'LIGHT' of last week I was struck by the large number, and the variety, of the subjects touched upon in its pages. In the illuminating 'Notes,' Prevision, Astrology, Rhythmic Living, the Real Hell, a Browning Anecdote, and Live for Others, are dealt with in a helpful and suggestive way. Mr. Boulding's 'experiences' are intensely interesting and make me wish that I too could enjoy such inspiring and satisfactory intercourse with my departed loved ones. But what shall I say of the splendid leading article on 'Religion's Source'! It deserves to be printed in a handy leaflet or booklet form, so that whenever one hears a discussion upon theological matters copies of it may be handed to the disputants, with the suggestion that they should try to understand *Religion* and enter into its spirit. Their disputes would surely end in sympathetic reconciliation. 'The Inwardness of Events' also looks below the surface and finds the underlying reality, of which outward happenings are but the appearances. Miss Mack Wall's pathetic picture of the peaceful 'passing' of Mrs. Corner, and her brave confidence and fidelity, even in the last moments of her troubled life, touched my sympathies, and I too, with another correspondent, wish her 'God-speed and progress' over there. Reincarnation, like Banquo's ghost, 'will not down,' and 'Imperator's' statements afford material for some interesting reasoning, more or less convincing, according to the reader's point of view. The quotation from the 'Daily Telegraph' regarding the introspective power of clairvoyant 'seers,' will doubtless be amusing to old students of mesmerism, because this faculty, which is said to be a 'new' discovery, was well-known and frequently exercised fifty or sixty years ago! Still, it is a remarkable power and ought to be developed more fully. The report of 'An Unexpected Séance' is instructive, and is another illustration of the fact, so often observed, that spontaneous manifestations are frequently the most satisfactory. The testimony of clairvoyants to the real existence of 'The Spirit's Body' is of great value and incidentally indicates an important objection to reincarnation. If the spirit has been elaborating a body, during earth life, for its future use in the spirit world—and that body represents the aggregate spiritual and educational results of the earth life of the individual—surely it is inconceivable that the spirit will lose that

body and have to go through the whole process again to form another! 'Colour Healing' is a subject of premier importance, and the summary of Dr. Babbitt's system is a valuable contribution, which should be of service to students. It seems strange there are so few healing mediums at work in London. Surely this is a practical branch of spiritualistic work which should not be neglected. The 'Letters to the Editor' are, as usual, varied and interesting, and I cannot help thinking that, from first to last, the contents of the whole paper are unusually readable and valuable. At any rate that is the opinion of

AN APPRECIATIVE READER.

#### The Society for Psychical Research.

SIR,—I am sorry to gather from your footnote to my letter inserted in 'LIGHT' of April 9th, that personal prejudices are accountable for the hostile undercurrent against the Society for Psychical Research. I trust, however, that, supported as the Society is by men of the highest standing, it may yet prove a boon and a blessing to those who have the cause of true Spiritualism at heart.

Allow me, sir, gratefully to acknowledge the pleasure I find in reading 'LIGHT' week by week. Its varied information and its refreshing impartiality add zest to its perusal.

I am afraid I cannot undertake to read all the works mentioned in the letter of your correspondent, Mr. Chrimes. The extract quoted should not, I think, prove a very hard nut to crack. When he appeals to that vague abstraction, 'common-sense,' I would remind him that our five senses, though most useful helps, are limited in their scope and require to be coordinated with judgment and reason. If science had not aided our sense perceptions we should probably still believe that the sun and the stars revolve around our globe.

Thanking you for your courtesy,

Bradford.

W. TIDMAN.

#### Concentration.

SIR,—Replying to the question of 'An Inquirer, in 'LIGHT' of April 23rd, kindly permit me to say that mental concentration is the centralisation of mind, the focussing of thought, the act of willing an undivided attention into any one particular mental channel. The object is: to develop the will, to become positive or passive by desire, to isolate the mind from all external surroundings which may be operating to distract attention.

From a psychic aspect, concentration enables many to develop clairvoyance, whether objectively, subjectively, or mentally. Also, for the development of psychometry it is above all things the most necessary for the student.

Several methods have been advocated for the obtaining of this power; the one which I have personally found successful in obtaining speedy results is as follows: Make a black spot, about the size of a sixpence, upon a piece of cardboard about six inches square. The cardboard should be fastened against the wall on a level with the eyes, when comfortably seated. The mind must then be focussed on the spot; no other thought must be allowed to enter the mind; it must be the spot, and the spot only. This must be practised daily for not more than five minutes.

Any other question arising out of this reply I shall be pleased to answer.

W. RONALD BRAILEY.

#### National Union Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—Kindly allow me to acknowledge on behalf of my committee the following subscriptions to the National Union Fund of Benevolence, received during April.

The kindness of the West London Spiritualists' Club in holding a social meeting in aid of the Fund of Benevolence, and granting its proceeds to that fund, is much appreciated, and we most cordially thank them and all our subscribers for their practical interest in, donations to, and work for, the welfare of the Fund of Benevolence.

Yours faithfully,

(MRS.) M. H. WALLIS,

'Morveen,' Hon. Financial Secretary.

6, Station-road, Church End,  
Finchley, London, N.

Amounts received: From Mrs. D. Wilkinson, 2s.; Mrs. Ada F. Atkinson, £2 2s.; Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Browne (annual subscription), £2 2s.; West London Spiritualists' Club (per Miss Ada Wilkins), proceeds of social, £3 3s.; 'L. F. E.', (collecting book), £1; 'W. S. D.', 2s. 9d.; T. C. Dawson, 2s.; 'Wood Green,' 2s. 6d.; Mr. J. B. Shipley (per Mr. E. Dawson Rogers), 10s. 6d.; Dundee Society of Spiritualists (per Mr. D. D. Clarke, treasurer), for Mr. C. Ware, 10s. Total, £9 16s. 9d.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

Notices of future events which do not exceed twenty-five words may be added to reports if accompanied by six penny stamps, but all such notices which exceed twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns at the usual rates.

BRIGHTON.—BRUNSWICK HALL, BRUNSWICK-STREET EAST.—On Sunday last, Mrs. Russell-Davies dealt with 'Spiritualism versus Theosophy' in a very able and lucid manner. Speaker on Sunday next, Dr. Berks Hutchinson, on 'The Phenomenal, Scientific, and Religious Aspects of Modern Spiritualism.' Hall open Tuesdays, 3 to 5 p.m., for inquirers.—A. C.

HACKNEY.—YOUENS' ROOMS, LYME-GROVE, MARE-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Robert King occupied our platform, the subject of his lecture being 'What is Clairvoyance?' On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. R. Brailey, address and clairvoyance. On Friday, at 8 p.m., circle for inquirers, 95, Downs Park-road.—N. RIST.

CLAPHAM SPIRITUALIST INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last a beautiful invocation by Miss Rhodes was followed by recitals of personal experiences by Messrs. Brown and Slaughter. Mrs. Boddington presided. On Sunday next the speaker will be Mr. R. Boddington. A public circle for psychometry is held every Thursday evening at 8.15 p.m. Tickets, sixpence.—S.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD.—On Wednesday evening, April 27th, Mr. Marklew, of Preston, gave one of the most stirring addresses it has been our pleasure to hear. On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey gave an address and illustrations in clairvoyance with his usual ability. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. John Adams. Wednesday, May 11th, at 8 p.m., psychometry, by Mr. Ronald Brailey. Bazaar, May 19th and 20th.—W. T.

CHISWICK.—AVENUE HALL, 300, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last, owing to a misunderstanding in regard to dates, an open meeting was held, and Mr. J. MacBeth Bain, who was advertised for May 1st, will be with us on Sunday next. On Monday last, Dr. Berks Hutchinson, who related some very interesting spiritualistic experiences, was much appreciated by his hearers. On Sunday, May 8th, Mr. J. MacBeth Bain, at 7 p.m.; and on Monday, the 9th, at 8 p.m., Mr. P. Preyss, on 'Cranial Psychology.'—K.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—Our Sunday morning circle was ably conducted by Mr. J. Huxley. In the afternoon, on Peckham Rye, with Mr. H. Boddington's kindly assistance, a large meeting was held. At the evening service Mr. Huxley gave a trance address on 'The Influence of Modern Spiritualism on Modern Thought.' At the after-circle Mrs. Williamson and Mr. Huxley gave several good tests. On Sunday next Miss Lynn will give clairvoyance, and on Friday, the 13th inst., Mr. Ronald Brailey.—VERAX.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last the Union of London Spiritualists paid us a visit. The addresses in the park in the afternoon by Mrs. H. Boddington, Mr. Wright, Mr. H. Fielder, Mr. Claireaux, Mr. J. Adams, and Mr. R. Boddington were well received. At the hall in the evening able addresses were given by Mr. Claireaux, Mr. Wright, Mr. J. Adams, and Mr. Veitch. Miss Bixby gave illustrations in clairvoyance and Mr. Fielder presided. On Sunday next, the 8th inst., at 3 and 7 p.m., at the sixth anniversary services of the Lyceum, special hymns, solos, and recitations will be given by the children, and short addresses by Messrs. A. Clegg, Imison, Cash, Adams, Fielder, and Miss Morris. Tea at 5 p.m.—J. MORRIS.

CAVENDISH ROOMS.—51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last, a large and enthusiastic audience welcomed Mr. Ernest Marklew, resident speaker of Preston, who made his first appearance on this platform. His address on 'What Spiritualism has done for Man' (a brilliant example of powerful oratory) was received by the numerous audience with repeated rounds of applause. Many friends expressed the hope that Mr. Marklew would visit us again in the near future. Miss Samuel delighted the audience with her sweet rendering of 'The Better Land.' Mr. W. T. Cooper, vice-president, officiated as chairman. On Sunday next, Miss MacCreadie will give clairvoyance; early attendance is requested, as seating accommodation is limited; doors open at 6.30 p.m.—S. J. WATTS, Hon. Sec.

CARDIFF.—87, SEVERN-ROAD, CANTON.—On Sunday last, at 6.30 p.m., Mr. A. Stark, of Barry, gave an interesting address on 'Spiritual Development.'—J. H.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Miss Burton's trance address on 'Spiritual Perception,' and her answers to questions were listened to by an appreciative audience.