

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have received a pamphlet setting forth the aims of a newly constituted Society called 'The Alpha Union.' It has grown out of the well-known work by E. N. Dennys, entitled 'The Alpha: or First Mental Principle and Truth-Guide to General Well-being and Progress—a Revelation, but no Mystery.' This book strongly appealed to the late A. C. Swinton, of Hindhead, who, with Dr. A. R. Wallace, found an outlet for their Socialist ideals in the Land Nationalisation Society.

By his will, Mr. Swinton bequeathed a sum of £3,000 to be expended by his executors at their discretion 'in establishing an Educational Union on spiritual principles of life, as, for example, as shown in Dennys' "Alpha." These executors were Aneurin Williams, B.A., and J. Bruce Wallace, M.A., but, upon the resignation of Mr. Williams, Dr. W. Winslow Hall and Mr. W. Ravenscroft Hughes, M.A., were appointed.

The upshot of the matter is the establishment of this 'Alpha Union,' at Letchworth (Garden City), though its members are to be sought for 'the world over.' Mr. Bruce Wallace's 'Brotherhood' will be its 'literary organ'; a Library in some suitable centre (presumably Letchworth) will be established; a 'Summer School' will be formed; and propaganda lectures will be given in various parts of the country.

The pamphlet includes a number of light-emitting suggestions, all brightly idealistic; and members of the Union, in all parts of the world, are invited to concentrate their thoughts once a day 'in mentally realising, as strongly as they can, the following truth and sentiment':—

One Real Life pervades the whole human race, and is pressing forth to fuller recognition and manifestation. We are not really separate independent units, but members one of another. I can and do work together with the One Love-Life for its peaceful, harmonious, gladsome and perfect realisation everywhere.

As a Society that may possibly do something to suggest good thoughts and to sweeten human passions, we wish 'The Alpha Union' success.

The latest 'Harbinger of Light' to hand contains the following welcome news:—

DR. PEEBLES' 85TH BIRTHDAY.

On March 23rd, at the V.A.S. Rooms, was celebrated the 85th birthday of this valiant worker in the cause of Spiritualism for on half a century. Fuller notice will appear in our May

issue. The following poem, written for the occasion by Cavalier James Smith, is meanwhile given to our readers.

TO DR. PEEBLES.

23rd March, 1907.

Welcome, old comrade from beyond the seas,
Immune alike from age, and from disease;
Brave fighter in the sacred cause of Truth,
Gifted by God with never-fading youth.
How men might learn from thee, if they were wise,
The certainties of life beyond the skies;
What splendid promise the Hereafter holds,
How limitless the progress it unfolds;
And how, transcending all the bounds of time,
Our destiny grows more and more sublime!
To thee, Apostle of this later age,
Belong the privilege and pow'r to wage
Incessant war on ignorance and wrong,
And all the superstitions that belong
To mediæval creeds and that great curse
Which fell upon this glorious universe
When priests, defaming Him whose name is Love,
Sought, in the darkness of their minds, to prove
That He, who first conceived Creation's plan,
Is but the image of His creature, man.
Go on thy way, lightbearer, to thy kind,
Diffusing all the treasures of thy mind
To those who listen to thy words of fire,
Until the mandate's issued, 'Come up higher';
And, then, may angels spread upon thy bed
'A soft white pillow for that good white head.'*

JAMES SMITH.

A writer in 'Unity' comments upon the disturbed admissions of a certain New York clergyman who shows that the Baptist and other Churches of that city are making no way although the population is growing rapidly. On the other hand, attention is drawn to the success of Christian Science Churches, and the guess is hazarded that this success is due to the fact that Christian Science lays emphasis upon health and happiness *here*. 'Has he not really hit the point,' asks this writer, 'that what the world needs is a world salvation rather than a future hope?'

Add to this that Darwinism or evolution has revised our views of the body and we shall get possibly a clearer conception of the cause of this contrast. The body is no longer a despicable appendage of the soul. It is the work of God; the finality of thousands of years of evolution. It is sacred, not common and unclean. Its wholesomeness is one of the chief ends of purposing. A noble and beautiful body, permeated with a noble and beautiful spirit, constitutes a child of God. We have hardly yet comprehended, to the full at least, the work which this new hypothesis has wrought out. That it has found more or less expression in church organisation was inevitable. The Christian Scientist, whatever may be his peculiarities in other directions, brings at least the gospel of health and happiness, and is winning the crowds. Naturally our New York pastor feels that something of that spirit should find its way into the common churches. He would have us stop serving 'Christianity on ice,' and he refers to the churches as sacred refrigerators. He would have the church door open all the week through, to the light, and to the approach of the poorest man and the saddest, and have such a welcome for them of good cheer and good fellowship, that they would feel at home.

* Shakespeare, 'Henry the Fifth.'

'Unity,' on another page, looks back kindly even upon Dr. Dowie, and says :—

The death of John Alexander Dowie has called forth a multiplicity of comments in our exchanges, but we have failed to see any defence of the man or his methods. Even the sane and sober 'Congregationalist' speaks of him as a 'pugnacious, dogmatic, avaricious Scotch egoist.' The fact is, however, that many people were helped, sick people healed, by consulting 'Dr.' Dowie. Admit all deceptions and delusions, there remains a modicum of actual results. Query: Did the 'prayer of faith' actually save, or did God work through this man, or were these actual results wrought by the reflex action of personal mental faith? In the light of the achievements of 'Dr.' Dowie and Mrs. Eddy, there is room for a definition of prayer and faith.

A clean American Magazine, 'Colliers,' does good service by exposing what low but popular American journalism is doing to corrupt the mind and degrade the taste under the auspices of a late candidate for high office, Mr. Hearst. In giving a glimpse of it we feel inclined to apologise to our readers, but what is happening in this country makes it necessary to create or strengthen a public opinion that shall be strong enough to stand out against the sinister operations of any forthcoming English Hearst. 'Colliers' says :—

One section of Mr. Hearst's 'New York American' for March 3rd consisted of twelve pages. The first page contained a photograph of a painting of the rape of the Sabine women and a large and gruesome picture of alleged similar doings in Alaska. The second was mainly devoted to an illustrated discussion of the question: 'Is woman human or animal?' The third was occupied by a tale of a 'woman with a past' and an 'infatuated weakling.' The fourth described a torture chamber. The fifth was devoted to the 'black spectre that frightens fashionable brides at the altar.' Although the sixth and seventh were supposed to be given up to science, there was a chance for a female figure to hold up her dress while walking through a sewer. On the eighth was presented 'the gruesome enigma of a dead hand.' On the tenth a gentleman explains 'How I fascinated over twenty different women,' and gave exact lessons in the art of bigamy. The eleventh combined fiction about 'love, intrigue, tragedy and mystery,' with some of the most indecent and contemptible advertisements known to man. Taken altogether, this section of the 'journal for the home' gives an idea of the work Mr. Hearst and his seven million dollars are doing for the betterment of his kind.

Archdeacon Colley got in two or three good retorts during the recent trial. Here is one :—

The Judge: You rather surprise me when you say that Swedenborgianism is consistent with the doctrines of the Church of England or any Christian Church.

Witness: It is. The late Bishop of Worcester knew my views.

And did he say that you had seen visions?—Just as in the same way Jacob wrestled with the angel, and as Peter, James and John saw visions.

Here is another :—

Mr. Gill: Are there any fraudulent mediums?

Witness: Of course there are, as there are fraudulent men both in Church and State.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many Shrines.)

Infinite and Eternal One, since by Thy power we are made, and by Thy goodness preserved, we desire to come before Thee with the offering of grateful hearts. We thank Thee that Thou hast brought us, not to fear Thee as a hard master, but to trust in Thee as the Father of our spirits, and the Saviour of all mankind. Do Thou, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, remember and relieve the necessities of poor mankind. Let not the proud always oppress, nor the ungodly blaspheme any more. Quicken the seeds of knowledge; and the more the eyes of our understanding are opened to

things earthly, so much more do Thou give us the wisdom of things heavenly; and, sanctifying us by the in-breathing of Thy mind, make us Thy chosen people. Though the world move slowly, so that this Thy kingdom seems to halt, and be slow in winning, let us meekly resign the times and the seasons into Thy hands. But be it our wisdom now and ever to do Thy will; for since the heavenly powers obey Thee, why should man alone rebel? O heavenly Father, bring our wills more and more into harmony with Thine; so that, acting on the plan of Thy eternal wisdom, we may give to this earth more the look and mind of heaven. Therefore, let all the sicknesses and sorrows, which are the wages of sin, become less and less; let the poverty which comes of idleness, and the shame which follows vice, retreat farther daily before the glorious spread of the light of Thy truth; and do Thou give us, with Thy fatherly care, whatever things Thou seest good, either for our souls or our bodies. Do Thou for us graciously above all we can either ask or think, who commit ourselves as Thy children into Thy fatherly hands for ever. Amen.

MR. GERALD MASSEY.

Mr. Gerald Massey, the well-known poet and Spiritualist, who was once an honoured friend of Tennyson, Browning, Ruskin, and other literary giants, has been closely occupied for twenty years in writing an important work on 'Ancient Egypt,' with a view to tracing the influence of Egypt in the Old and New Testaments. The 'Morning Leader,' on Monday last, said that Mr. Massey, who is in his seventy-ninth year, was lying ill at Norwood, and that, in order to raise the necessary funds for printing, he had sold his house. Over seven hundred pages of the work are now in type, and, as it will consist of about a thousand pages, the cost of publication is estimated at upwards of £500. Mr. Massey is in receipt of a pension from the Civil List of £100 a year, and his friends hope that the Prime Minister will see his way to give him a grant from the Royal Bounty Fund. We are pleased to learn from a friend, who visited him recently, that Mr. Massey finds time to read 'LIGHT' and so keep in touch with Spiritualism. We heartily congratulate him on having so nearly completed his labour, and trust that he will be spared to give the world the benefit of his study and research.

M. CAMILLE FLAMMARION'S VIEWS.

M. Camille Flammarion, the celebrated French astronomer, is one of those who are incorrectly reported to have disavowed Spiritualism. The conclusion of a series of articles by him in 'La Revue' (Paris) is summed up in the 'Review of Reviews' as follows :—

'In the present state of our knowledge it is impossible to give a complete or absolute explanation of the phenomena which we observe. The spirit hypothesis ought not to be eliminated. We may admit survival of the soul without admitting communication between the dead and the living. But all the facts observed which incline us to believe that there is such communication merit the most serious attention of the philosopher. It is not matter which rules in the Universe, but a dynamic and psychic element. The real nature of the human mind is still a mystery to science and philosophy.'

M. Flammarion's conclusions are therefore the same as those he arrived at in a previous work, namely, that the soul exists as a real entity independent of the body, that it is endowed with faculties not yet understood by science, and that it may act at a distance, both by perception and by influencing other souls, without the intervention of the bodily organs of sense or speech. His conclusions are based upon scientific observation of phenomena studied by the experimental method, and are therefore not likely to be hastily or arbitrarily abandoned for a less advanced theory, though they might give place to some explanation which leads further on in the same direction.

INVESTIGATIONS WITH EUSAPIA PALADINO.

The mediumship of Eusapia Paladino is attracting the attention of scientific men of the first rank. It was recently reported in the newspapers that practically all the learned men of Italy had formed themselves into a committee for investigating the phenomena occurring in her presence, and that a series of sittings was held at Rome at which remarkable manifestations took place. 'The Annals of Psychological Science,' for May, contains the first portion of a series of articles contributed by Professor Morselli to the 'Corriere della Sera,' of Milan, on his experiences with this medium, to which we referred on pp. 113 and 142 of 'LIGHT,' and an account of some further observations made at Turin by Professor Pio Foà and his three assistants.

Professor Morselli is careful to explain that although he does not consider that spirit action enters in any way into Eusapia's phenomena, yet these manifestations are in themselves real and authentic; 'Paladino is a subject truly and certainly endowed with that exceptional power which is called "mediumship," with those still unknown forces which are, perhaps, possessed by all living organisms (especially human ones) in varying quantities and with different degrees of aptitude for their manifestation.' Formerly he was a bitter sceptic, not only 'with regard to the hypothesis of survival of the defunct, but also with regard to the objective reality of the phenomena themselves'; and as to the latter he has changed his opinion.

With regard to the medium herself, Professor Morselli says :—

'Eusapia Paladino is mainly a physical medium; and if students of psychical matters have preferred to go to her, it is because she has consented to hold sittings under the control of men of science, and has accepted, up to certain limits imposed by the form of her mediumship, unusual conditions of experiment; she has also submitted to examinations which no medium had ever previously permitted. In this respect Eusapia's attitude is worthy of praise, and her position as a medium ought to be regarded with less distrust. . . .

'There can no longer be any doubt as to the reality of Eusapia's phenomena. They have now been seen by too many persons under excellent conditions of verification, with the full certainty that the medium had not her hands and feet free, and that many of the phenomena occurred at a distance which excluded all possibility of deception; and there are now too many trustworthy men, accustomed to observe and experiment, who say that they have become convinced that Eusapia's mediumship is genuine.

'We have now got far beyond the time when her phenomena could be explained by the exchange of hands and feet in the dark; the method of inquiry into her phenomena is very different, and so is her attitude in the sittings, especially when she is watched by persons not bound by preconceptions and by fear of trickery, and in whom she has confidence. In fact none of the most celebrated mediums are accredited by so many explicit declarations by scientific men of the foremost rank; no one, from Home and Florence Cook onward, has allowed the introduction into the sittings of scientific instruments and methods with so much tolerance as Paladino.'

Professor Morselli is rather sarcastic over the means adopted for the display of mediumistic power: 'the self-moving tables, the black curtains, the perpetual mandolines, and violins, and *carillons*.' He calls it 'a grotesque lot of paraphernalia,' and goes into the history of Spiritualism in America and England in order to explain how the 'stereotyped technique' of séances was formed, and how it has 'been imposed by invisible suggestion on Paladino by those who have developed her mediumship, so that she cannot give it up.' Yet he admits that 'there seems to be some reason for the habitual technique of Spiritism,' and even for the feeble or red light :—

'It is not the "psychic" phenomena alone which require this condition; is it not also demanded for the impression of images on a photographic plate? Have not certain chemical combinations in the laboratory to be made in the dark? and does not the night bring about changes in the functions of organisms, animal as well as vegetable? It is no wonder, therefore, to a scientist who knows these facts, if the mediumistic, or metapsychic, or bio-dynamic force (the name is of no importance) is inhibited or neutralised by

light, especially for the production of the important phenomena of materialisation. Even as seen in the light of historical analogy we may find justification for the determinism of spiritistic phenomena; the table, the black cabinet, &c., are like the earthen pot of Papias, with regard to our modern locomotive, or as the rude electrostatic machine of a hundred and fifty years ago in comparison with our present stupendous dynamo!'

We might add that just as the early railway carriages were stage-coach bodies mounted on wheels, and the design can still be traced in the modern ones, so the articles introduced at the earlier séances were probably chosen because they were ready to hand, and were convenient objects for the display of mediumistic power; and their use has become traditional partly, perhaps, because the unseen entities have accustomed themselves to certain methods of demonstration. The weak point in the line of reasoning pursued by Morselli and others appears to us to be that they persistently regard the medium herself, in some phase of consciousness, as being the active agent, the person whose will determines the production of the phenomena. They can admit the manifestation of hands, bodies, and faces which are not those of the medium, but they refuse to accept the obvious conclusion that different hands or faces may be governed by different wills and intelligences.

A large portion of this article is taken up by a list of phenomena observed with Eusapia, which are divided into nine classes and thirty-nine varieties; most of these were seen and accepted as incontestably genuine by Morselli himself; a few are classed as doubtful, because related by others, or not observed with sufficient precision.

The second article in 'Annals' contains a report of two séances held with Eusapia Paladino, at Turin, by Professor Foà and his assistants, at which elaborate preparations were made for registering the psychic force exerted at a distance from the medium. The apparatus was something like a recording barometer, a sheet of smoked paper being wound round a revolving drum, on which a steel point made a white mark (by scratching off the lamp-black) when pressure was applied. At the first sitting records were obtained, but the results were not considered satisfactory because 'John King' had amused himself by tearing off the seals and coverings from the apparatus. On the second occasion the table carrying the apparatus was moved out of the cabinet by unseen agency, and, while it was in view, and not touched by the medium or sitters, pressure was applied so as to leave a tracing on the recording cylinder. A small table on which some toys had been placed was also brought out and deliberately broken into many pieces before the eyes of the sitters, while the medium was held by three persons. A photographic plate nailed under the main séance-table was released and brought up onto the table itself, two of the nails being drawn out; and on another plate, wrapped in black paper, a photographic impression of four fingers was made, this being apparently 'a phenomenon of radio-activity and not of luminosity, since the plate was impressed through an opaque body.' Thus four manifestations were obtained, of which objective proof remained after the séance was over, and, as the observers say: 'Even supposing that everything else we had seen was false, if all the other phenomena were due to erroneous observation, these four facts would remain which cannot be explained either by the hypothesis of trickery or by that of hallucination.'

MEDICINE FOR SICK SOULS.—'Roger Dinwiddie, Soul Doctor,' by A. M. Irvine (T. Werner Laurie, Clifford's Inn, price 6s.), is a brightly written story which passes in review many of the real and fancied ills of modern life—the spiritual needs of the idle rich and of the overburdened poor. Dr. Dinwiddie conducts his practice on unorthodox lines, claiming to treat the soul scientifically as an ordinary physician treats the body, and more especially to check the spread of 'the fatal disease of scepticism.' He belongs to no Church, in order to reach all; some of his remedies and methods seem to be suggested rather by the impulse of the moment than by any strictly scientific rule of procedure, but this is because, as he says, 'the individual disease of the soul should be dealt with individually, and supplied with its individual remedy.' The story is thoroughly readable, and gives an insight into the workings of many highly diversified characters.

RELIGION OF A BUSY MAN.

The following interesting article, written by the Rev. John Page Hopps, which appears in the current issue of 'The Coming Day,' will, we think, be welcome to the readers of 'LIGHT.' Mr. Hopps says :—

As religion is a universal concern, and as everyone is supposed to be personally and vitally interested in it, it surely must be something that everyone can understand or practise, and it surely is all wrong to suppose that it needs philosophers and scholars and learned divines to comprehend it and set it forth. It is also surely wrong to suppose that before one can satisfy the claims of religion it is necessary to examine and decide between the claims of various churches, or to prove the efficacy of a saving sacrament or the correctness of a metaphysical creed.

Perhaps the best way to arrive at a conclusion, or, let us say, to get hold of the right clue, is to assume that religion has to do with what we may call the will or the desire of the Mysterious Power from whom we seem to have proceeded and upon whom we seem to depend. Or, to put it on a lower plane, we may say that religion has to do with the tendency of the Mighty Unity of Force and Life of which we all form a part.

That being so, it is plain that religion must largely, if not entirely, be concerned with conduct, and with conduct in close connection with the laws of Life as manifest in their tendencies and uses.

If it were possible for an inspired infant to think, and to think in a comprehensive and orderly way, with perfect wisdom and a big grasp of Life from its beginning to its end, and if it could tell its thoughts, it might say something like this : 'Well, I have arrived in a world that is to be my home for a number of years ; perhaps only a few years, or maybe seventy or a little more. I am a child. I have a father and mother : I have, or may have, brothers and sisters, and certain friends, and all this is a part of the wonderful order of the world, and I think it would be wise of me, and right, to fall in with that order,—to remember that my father is my father : that my mother is my mother : and that my brothers and sisters and friends are my brothers and sisters and friends. This means that I owe them all something, that I must behave myself as a child, and as one member of a family. I must not run across the lines of right and duty, but go along with them, and be, not a discord, but a harmony.

'Then I see that my little life-path will branch out. I shall have teachers and schoolfellows and playmates : and I see that they will all want different treatment from me. If I am to learn I must be teachable. If I am to have class-mates I must be a good comrade. If I am to have playmates I must keep my temper, be agreeable and play fair.

'Then I see a wonderful thing opening before me. I shall have to go into the world to share the work of it. I may be a servant and shall have to be directed by a master. He will pay me to do work and I shall owe him fidelity. But my work will not only be for him, it will also be for the world. Therefore my work must be honest work, done by me as a world-helper as well as a paid hand. Or I may be a master and have the command of men and women and children. In that case I shall be tempted to take advantage of weakness and necessity, and I must resist that. I must not put first the desire to get all I can from those who serve me. I must aim at co-operation before supremacy, and do all I can to make the conditions of service as honourable and happy as possible.

'Then still wider prospects open. I shall be a citizen of my country, with duties to the State, to help in its right government for the good of the whole people ; and good government means the combining of all the forces in the nation, and their use, for the helping of the helpless, and the right ordering of all things for securing, to every peaceable and industrious person, a possibly prosperous and useful life. In this I must help in every way, by my conduct, by my influence, by willing payment of money to the State, by my vote and by the support I give to everyone who stands for the public good against wrong-doers.

'Beyond all this I see a world-wide claim upon me. It is a world of nations, separated by seas, and mountain ranges, and rivers, and artificial boundaries ; and it is a world of rivalries and suspicions and even hatreds ; but it ought to be a world of brothers, helpful to one another by pouring their various treasures into a common stock, so that by interchange they might all profit by that which is produced by all. Therefore I must stand for generosity and goodwill and peace. Ah me ! it is a difficult and mighty task to which I am called.'

Then, having thus spoken, the wise child, tired and a little sad, might nestle down into its mother's arms, and sleep ; just as

it might do, when, after completing its life-journey, it would sink into 'the everlasting arms.'

The fulfiller of that life-programme might know nothing of Baptismal Water and Holy Eucharist ; nothing of Church and Priest ; nothing of Ritual and Creed ; and yet, as a co-worker with the great Lord of life, and a doer of His Will, we may safely say that he had found and been loyal to Religion.

He may not have known that ; and it may never have occurred to him to ask how he stood in relation to that ; but he had loyally fallen into the ranks ; he had done his duty on the march ; he had been faithful in his 'few things' ; he had made the best of this one world, and had so earned his right to begin happily in any other. Such a man would surely hear the welcome any God or angel had to give ; 'Well done, good and faithful servant ; enter into the joy of thy Lord : ' and such a man would be a true follower of him who said, 'It is my meat and my drink to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish the work He has given me to do.'

HOW TO USE MENTAL ENERGY.

There are forces in Nature which are terrific in their potency, and which may be either destructive when let loose uncontrolled, or powerful for good when properly harnessed and applied. Not the least of these forces is the energy of the mind, according to an ancient view which is again largely finding acceptance, and Mr. William Walter Atkinson's book, 'The Secret of Mental Magic' (published by L. N. Fowler and Co., price 4s. 6d. *net*), is written in order to make plain to everyone the manner in which the mysterious potency of mind can be converted from an uncontrolled force into a scientifically guided engine of influence and power. His 'basic statement' is that :—

'There exists a Universal Dynamic Principle of Life, pervading all space, immanent in all things, and its essential nature is Mind. Its services are open to all, and it operates in response to the proper effort, no matter by whom exerted. But the proper effort must be exerted, consciously or unconsciously, else there will be no operation of the forces.'

Under the term 'Mental Magic' Mr. Atkinson includes all manifestations of will-power, and the influence of one mind over another, such as personal magnetism, suggestion, mesmerism, faith-healing, and many of the magical operations of antiquity. Under all these, he says :—

'We may find the underlying principle of the existence of some mighty force connected with the human mind, or will, that was at the bottom of the mysteries, magic, and miracles, the ceremonies, rites, and incantations. Back of the amulet and charm was the working of the will of the person wearing them, which was called into effect by the faith or imagination (a real power, and not a fancy, as some suppose) of the man ignorant of the real force.'

Mr. Atkinson draws a distinction between thought-currents, desire-force, and will-power, the latter being the controlling influence which selects or restrains the desire-forces, and projects the thought-currents towards other minds, while it also repels undesirable thought-waves sent out by adverse wills. He believes that the currents or vibrations in the minds of those living in each town or country combine to form a 'mental atmosphere' which can be sensed as characteristic of that locality, and that, in the same manner, 'waves of feeling' are generated, causing national or public movements, from the actions of mobs to religious revivals.

The main theme of the book is personal influence in its various manifestations, with chapters on mental therapeutics and 'mental architecture,' or the remodelling of the character by stern determination ; and the object is to arouse a state of 'desire and will, strong, forceful, and dynamic, determined to assert the individuality in being and doing that which the Universal Creative Desire and Will is hoping that you will be and do.' Mr. Atkinson's work is closely packed with solid food for thought, and is a strong incentive to right decision and effective action ; it needs to be carefully studied, and for this purpose it is printed and bound in such a form as to be conveniently slipped into the coat pocket for consultation at odd moments. The methods given are simple but powerful, and are of more value than all the charms and amulets in the world for raising the personal will into a protective entity of might and power to bring all good fortune and success which we can rightly ask and expect.

FOOD FOR THE PSYCHIC BODY.

BY LILIAN WHITING.

There can be no question that while food controls and predetermines the achievements of life to a great degree, it is yet made too prominent and invested with a false importance by the columns of cooking receipts that appear in the daily Press, with minute directions for preparing stuff that should certainly never be eaten. The discussion of health foods, the vegetarian régime, &c., while probably contributing much toward reform, has not yet, perhaps, precisely elucidated the fundamental truth regarding the relation of food to life. The salient truth is that the minimum of food is the maximum of health. We are apt to think of food as indispensable, but we are nourished by many things beside, and to far more purpose than by food. The human being is sustained by air to a far greater degree than he realises, and he is capable of being indefinitely sustained by thought. That which we call physical strength is, in its best quality, not physical strength at all, but mental energy. The body is the instrument, the mechanism, but the real force is spiritual. Therefore, whatever nourishes the spiritual energy develops and increases the power and capacity for accomplishment.

Now when we think of the body, not merely as matter, but as a structure complicated by the psychic body interpenetrating the physical body; when we realise this psychic being as our real self—the self that thinks, perceives, aspires; the self that is immortal in its nature—we realise that in this self is our real life; that we should eat, sleep, bathe, and exercise for the best good of the ethereal body. Here, as many believe, is the explanation of the faith of our friends, the vegetarians. Animal food produces coarse and harsh vibrations; it is not suited to this finer self, this ethereal body. The food that is best suited to this psychic body is that of grains and fruits, rather than vegetables. The ordinary food of the ‘well-regulated family’—the average well-to-do people—is a terror to gods and men. The only wonder is that there is any available energy after a régime of soups, fish, meats, game, pastry, ices, and heaven knows what! It is a signal triumph of mind over matter that the life goes on at all. The whole system is clogged and all sorts of diseases are induced by too much eating. It is a habit only, and there is not the slightest necessity of following it.

The interpenetration of the physical body by the ethereal body is always an essential fact in regard to health. All impressions made on the ethereal react on the physical, and this is the underlying principle of Christian Science—to bring the higher powers to act on this psychic body and thus cause new physical states. This psychic body is in a state of far higher vibration than is the physical. Impressions on it are of a finer character.

More and more can each one learn to carry on his affairs of life by thought than by action. This is like using the electric motor rather than an ox team. It is bringing the swift, sudden, resistless potency rather than the slow, clumsy effort. When the apostle says, ‘If there be love, charity—think on these things,’ he offers a philosophic principle. If one would accomplish any specific result, *think* on it. Build it in the astral, construct it in the ethereal world, and it will take form in the outer world.

The most favourable time for successful auto-suggestion is at night. Before going into the unconscious state of sleep, one should impress the suggestions upon the psychic self. They will work outward the next day. The law of success is in discerning the psychic and magnetic currents and working in accord with them. For thus do all the stars in their courses fight for the achievement, and the personal effort is supported by the polarity of the universe itself.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold meetings on Sunday, June 2nd, at the Assembly Rooms, Gauden-road, Clapham. At 3 p.m. Mr. George F. Tilby will open a discussion. At 7 p.m., speakers: Messrs. George F. Tilby, G. Tayler Gwinn and W. Turner.

‘THE JEWS AND JESUS.’

The criticism of so-called Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament, referred to in the article on p. 234 of ‘LIGHT,’ might be extended almost indefinitely. Dr. G. C. Workman, in a book recently noticed in the ‘Daily News’ (‘The Servant of Jehovah,’ Longmans, price 5s. net), takes up the ‘Servant’ passages in Isaiah, chapters xl.-lv., and shows that:—

‘Strictly speaking, “a Servant of Jehovah” was one who, in obedience to an inward prompting, dedicated himself to the service of God, and, according to the degree of light and knowledge he possessed, devoted himself to the performance of the work which God assigned to him. The prophet applies the title to the nation, and instructs them that in their collective capacity they are to establish the ordinances of pure religion in the earth by means of silent spiritual influences. They are to become the prophet-people of Jehovah, to give His law or His religion to mankind.’

The ‘Encyclopædia Biblica’ (article ‘Servant of the Lord’) takes a similar view, and points out that in certain passages the writer of Isaiah (chapters xlix. and l.) seems to refer to himself as expecting to be called to a public mission for which he has been prepared by past suffering.

Again, a writer in the ‘Open Court’ for April takes up Micah’s prophecy (chapter v. 2) about Bethlehem Ephratah, showing that it refers to an expected deliverance from Assyria, and that the prophecy is to be fulfilled, in part at least, when ‘she that travaileth hath brought forth,’ an expression which reminds us of the one quoted in the article in ‘LIGHT’; it was a ‘passage of plain meaning,’ and the words were uttered ‘in view of a clearly perceived and pressing situation.’ The same is probably true of all the Old Testament sayings which have been claimed as prophecies of the coming of Jesus.

S.

CURED BY HYPNOTISM OR SPIRIT POWER—WHICH?

M. Camille Flammarion, in the ‘Matin,’ gives a report of a remarkable cure of a young woman, Mlle. B., aged twenty-eight years, who, suffering from consumption (from which disease both her mother and brother had died), took to her bed in April last year, and three doctors decided that there was absolutely no hope of saving her life. Recently, M. Emile Magnin, a student of hypnotism, visited Mlle. B., and she told him that in September last she was lying awake at 2 a.m. when a voice spoke, ‘Can you stand the test?’ She answered, ‘Yes.’ She then saw a long, slender hand, holding a torch, approach, and read the words: ‘On May 8th you will rise.’ M. Magnin gave the patient magnetic treatment, and she began to sleep daily for two hours after his visit. On March 8th (according to the ‘Morning Leader’ account, from which we quote) Mlle. B. told M. Magnin that she saw a ‘pretty lady’ on awakening. This lady is (supposed to be) ‘one to whom M. Magnin is greatly attached, and towards whom his thoughts turned, probably involuntarily!’ Be that as it may, Mlle. B. fell into a hypnoid condition, and, a few minutes later, cried, ‘Help me, help me!’ By magnetising the larynx M. Magnin ‘restored the choking woman.’ ‘Help me to get down,’ cried the patient. Then M. Magnin said: ‘You, who are there, who are causing this woman to rise, make her also walk.’ He repeated to the patient, ‘Walk, you can do so.’ ‘In a word, Mlle. B. got up, walked round the room, and from that moment her condition has rapidly improved.’ On March 15th she slept seven hours and she said that ‘her little friend had touched her hands and given her fresh life,’ and by May 15th she was cured!

So much for the facts. It is said that M. Flammarion ‘confesses himself unable to discover a plausible explanation of the beneficent personality which was *nothing but a beloved and latent image in the magnetist’s mind*, and which, nevertheless, was seen and felt by the patient, understood by the patient’s organism, and saved her on the brink of the tomb. We are in a complete mystery, he says, but fact is fact, and this biological event will live in science as a document of the highest value.’

Surely the facts themselves suggest a very different explanation!

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FREDERIC HARRISON'S 'APOLOGIA.'

Mr Harrison's new book, 'The Creed of a Layman: Apologia pro fide mea' (London: Macmillan and Co.), will be acceptable to many who have long learnt to admire his literary skill and to respect his brave and consistent career. It does not contain a great deal that is new, but the old wine is, for the greater part of it, not only excellent, but better than ever; and, as one leisurely tastes it here and there, the reflection continually occurs: Our non-agreements are many, but what a pioneer, and, in one sense, what a prophet, this man has been and is!

The volume includes a piquant autobiography, every bit entertaining and often important: bright glimpses of thoughts arrived at on great questions; and reprints of notable Essays and Addresses, belonging to the past forty years: the exciting 'Westminster Review' Article on 'Neo-Christianity,' for instance; the notable 'Socratic Dialogue' which brought John Ruskin into the field in fighting array; the touching Address 'In Memoriam Omnium Animarum,' and other still greatly living documents.

Mr. Harrison, practically all his life, has been a follower of Comte, and a leading teacher of the faith of Positivism; and, throughout this book, that is never absent for long; in fact, it is never really absent, as it tints and tones everything. The essence of Positivism is the recognition of Humanity or the Human Race as an Existence which takes the place of God, and the persistence of man's influence in human life which takes the place of personal survival after death: and it is this that throws a shadow over the whole, notwithstanding the stately reverence, the beautiful spirit and the heroic courage which everywhere command our admiration.

The following short sentences tell the whole story: 'The one thing that in Positivism represents the Saving Faith is this:—That in the sense of devotion to the vast Human whole, of which each of us is an infinitesimal member, there lies the harmonising Principle that can give unity and force to our mundane nature.' 'We acknowledge in Humanity, in the Past, the Present, the Future of Man, the source of the best things that we possess, our protector and comforter when evil things threaten us, the end and object of our work and hope.' There is in this no uplook to anything that could be construed as God, and

no outlook that carries with it any prospect of personal life beyond the incident of death.

In the exceedingly touching 'Confession of Faith,' written in his twenty-ninth year, and now for the first time taken from a locked diary and shown to mortal eyes, there is a glimmer of something like hope. 'A future life there may be,' it says, 'Let us say there is, beyond this world. Yet, be it what it may, we cannot know it by imagining. We cannot prepare for it, save by living here on earth. And, if after the grave there is indeed another life—as many true hearts trust—they only will attain it to the fullest who have best lived here.' But, as life and the struggle went on, this glimmer seemed to disappear, and the anxious outlooker saw at last no farther than his fellows in the flesh and their environment.

Mr. Harrison admits that the Church 'in its promise of an immortality of bliss as the reward of a good life gave to human conduct a stimulus which till then had been quite unknown'; but, as he truly remarks, this great boon was qualified by the horrors of the mediæval hell and John Calvin's brutalities; and he might have added that the promise of bliss 'as the reward of a good life' was much more often offered as the price of consenting to believe the most cruel and irrational creeds.

An abundance of passages in this book quite clearly set forth the only hope of Positivism for the individual—that he will persist in life only as a memory and an influence. In the Burial Service, here given, all that is said of the dead is that 'he is with us still in our hearts, in our thoughts, in our lives, . . . immortal in that eternal Humanity, the great host of those ever-living dead to which he has passed, to live without tiring for ever and ever.'

Those last words remind us of the one thing in Positivist declarations which alone excites in us a certain resentment. Again and again, the idea of a personal life after death is repudiated, and sometimes almost with a touch of derision, but, at the same time, the phraseology of the believer in personal life beyond the grave is used. The closing words of the quotation we have just given are an instance of this: and there are many others.

Many have been entirely misled by George Eliot's much-quoted poem, greatly used by Positivists, beginning, 'O may I join the choir invisible.' That has been taken in the Spiritualist's sense, and the closing line of the Address on the 'Day of all the dead' suggests that:—'We shall feel the comfort and the inspiration of their spirits.' Probably, this anxiety to retain as much as possible of the old ardent believing language is caused by the evident and confessed insufficiency of the narrowed hope of Positivism. Mr. Harrison speaks of a certain death as 'a calamity under which the reason itself seems to reel'; and he confessed that 'it would be idle, it would be inhuman, to pretend that this close and intimate pang can be absorbed at once in the wider and distant hope of Humanity.' And it must be confessed that, in some cases, this is true of even our larger and lovelier hope. But let us be frank about it. When the Positivist, in his burial service, says of the dead man, 'We sorrow for ourselves, not for him: this loss is ours, not his,' we feel that there is a false note in it, not intentional, but very real. The Spiritualist, or any rational believer in life beyond physical death, may truthfully say, 'We sorrow not for him; this loss is ours, not his'; but that cannot be true if the man is gone out into personal nothingness. In that case, his death, unless he lived a hopeless and miserable life, is something to sorrow for on his account, and the loss is much more his than ours, for he has lost his life, and at least we live.

'THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MEDIUMSHIP.'

By MRS. LAURA I. FINCH.

An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday evening, May 16th, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall; Mr. H. Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

MRS. FINCH said: The subject to be treated this evening is, I feel sure, familiar to everyone present, experienced as you all are in the vagaries and mysteries of mediumship, but I have chosen it because it is commonplace—for it is just the commonplace that is often neglected, which seems to me wrong, for the key to mysteries oft lies buried in the commonplace.

Though I pronounce the word commonplace, it is by no means easy to establish the physiology and the psychology of what is commonly called a medium. In principle, a medium is a person who is capable of producing abnormal, that is to say unknown, material or psychical phenomena: material in the sense that he can produce 'raps,' levitations, lights, materialisations, *apports*. It goes without saying that mediums for physical effects are extremely rare; for, undoubtedly, genuine phenomena of materialisation, *apports*, levitation of the human body, &c., are forthcoming only on exceptional occasions. Perhaps these phenomena would be more frequent if we gave ourselves up to more abundant and more methodical investigation; but, in the present state of things, we may, very approximately, say that there is not one person in fifty thousand who produces abnormal physical effects.

Mediums for psychical effects are much more frequently met with; but here, the difficulty lies in knowing how to distinguish the true medium from those whom I propose to call *pseudo-mediums*. As a matter of fact, many persons, if they take up a pencil or a planchette, are able to obtain automatic writing; that is to say, to write long pages in a state of semi-consciousness, pages written by a personality claiming to be different from the personality of the medium. If we agree to consider as mediums all those persons who are able to give automatic writing, the number will be legion, and I think it is no exaggeration to say that there is, perhaps, one person in every twenty-five who is capable, in this fashion and under special conditions, of presenting the appearances of mediumship. The proportion will be larger still if we decide to give the name of medium to all those persons who are capable of presenting the phenomenon of changes of personality.

Mediumship does not appear to be the attribute of a few individuals of a special physical constitution; nevertheless, almost every medium presents a certain physical characteristic, almost pathological, consisting in momentary losses of memory, that is, partial amnesia, which, however, we must guard against confounding with hysteria. This point is important, for several medical men are inclined to look upon mediums as afflicted with hysteria. Most of the mediums I have had the opportunity of meeting were not hysterical in the pathological sense of the word. Hysteria is a disease which, as we know, exists in every degree, from a simple disposition of character and of health which is scarcely noticeable, to a more advanced degree where it becomes a terrible neurosis, involving total blindness, paralysis of the limbs, and intense disorder in nutrition. It is easy to say if a person has or has not scarlatina; but it is impossible, in examining a great number of young women, for example, to say who are and who are not hysterical, for the greater number present some slight phenomena, which we have not the right to neglect, scarcely sufficient to allow us to look upon them as hysterical, sufficient nevertheless to distinguish them from persons who are absolutely normal. It seems to me, however, that we have not the right to apply the term 'hysteria' to cases where there is no anaesthesia; no anorexia; no mental instability; no persistent neuralgia.

Now, if we accept this definition which classes hysterical subjects in a well-defined morbid group, we shall see that

mediums, in general, are not hysterical. This idea is not quite conformable with the idea of Dr. Pierre Janet, who considers that all mediums are affected by the taint of hysteria, more or less accentuated. For him, the fact alone of change of personality, of light or deep trance, or partial amnesia, constitutes a decisive proof of the existence of hysteria; but it is a question of definition, for from the moment we suppose that the fact of writing automatically constitutes an indication of hysteria, it is certain that every medium is an hysteric. The loss of consciousness for a certain lapse of time and inability to give an account of the phenomena which were produced during that time, is common to all mediums; but this fact does not seem to be sufficient to justify us in concluding that every medium is an hysteric, since, by definition, we attribute to hysteria other well-defined physio-pathological features.

If poisons stimulating to the central nervous system be administered, the phenomena are the same, no matter what the poison may be,—the virus of tetanus, of absinthe, of strychnine, or of ammonia. In the same way, under the influence of a nervous stimulus, the intelligence, the sensibility, the motricity may be attacked, and, whatever the stimulus, the reaction will be about the same; so that in the crises of hysteria and in the crises of mediumship, though the stimuli may be different, the reactions are the same. I propose, therefore, to apply the term *hysterioform* to the nervous attacks of mediums who have nothing of hysteria but the appearances.

To make my meaning clearer, let me give an example: There is a poison which causes certain symptoms which vaguely resemble an hysterical crisis. I refer to hashish or Indian hemp. But it would be absurd to maintain that everyone who is under the influence of Indian hemp is suffering from hysteria. It is the same thing with mediums, who have *hysterioform* crises without being for that reason hysterical.

It is not possible to state precisely the physiological characteristics of a medium. Even the sensibility to the hypnoscope, to which Dr. Ochorowicz attaches so much importance, does not seem to be a specific feature. It would, indeed, appear that many subjects who are sensitive to the hypnoscope are by no means mediums, and, on the other hand, there are mediums who are not at all sensitive to the hypnoscope, although evidently the latter fact is somewhat rarer.

If the *physiological* characteristics are lacking, it is none the less true that all mediums present other general characteristics, certainly variable, but nevertheless sufficiently marked to enable us to establish a kind of *psychology of mediums*. One of the first and most essential of these characteristics is sensitiveness, or, if you like, susceptibility. Facts of an internal nature react upon mediums more markedly than upon other people. A contrariety, even a slight one, will bring about profound and durable changes of humour; not only an offence or an unkind word troubles their serenity, but even imaginary offences produce the result that they imagine things that are not. Little events of no importance at once transform their mental disposition in a most grievous manner, and it is all up with the séance from which much was expected; not only if they really have something to complain of, but even if they imagine, rightly or wrongly, that they have some grounds of complaint.

I referred just now to serenity, but this word seems tinged with irony when applied to mediums, for what characterises them as a rule is precisely the absence of serenity—of that quality of temper which supports with indifference and calm any exterior events, happy or unhappy, which may occur. It seems as though their attention was always on the alert to find some cause of trouble, to invent contrarieties when real motives for contrarieties are lacking. They seem to be ever on the *qui vive*, always distrustful, susceptible, and irritable; not that this contrariety really ends in veritable irritation, but it produces a discontent, a sadness, an anxiety which causes them to lose the cheerfulness which was theirs a few minutes before. No doubt this extreme sensitiveness is due to the fact that mediums perceive sensations which

other people do not perceive, as though the coarser senses of ordinary people were not affected by that which touches their delicate senses. Let us add that mediums, whether professional or non-professional, possess, because of this very susceptibility, a *finesse* in sentiment and a perspicacity which are truly remarkable. Nothing which is said in their hearing escapes them; the attitude and physiognomy of persons near them are examined and interpreted, even exaggerated. From this we may draw the practical conclusion that it is necessary to pay great attention, and to be extremely prudent in all we say to mediums, or in their hearing, because they are essentially sensitive and susceptible and their feelings are most easily hurt. To be a good experimenter it is necessary to be an excellent diplomatist,—a diplomacy, however, which does not exclude frankness, for mediums quickly distinguish words of sincerity from those spoken with the lips only.

The truly wonderful perspicacity of mediums should never be lost sight of when constructing theories regarding the phenomena they produce. I have observed this characteristic repeatedly, and never so well as during the past winter when, for seven months, I was privileged to participate in a long series of experiments with a young medium whom I shall call Miss B. This lady stayed in my home in Paris during those seven months, and my opportunities for observation were, therefore, as valuable as complete. A casual word let fall, one would have thought, out of hearing (that is to say, out of the hearing of ordinary people), would suffice for the trance personality to construct a whole edifice thereon a few hours or even days later, embodying generally nothing but error, though, sometimes, these romances would contain truly remarkable gems of truth, apparently obtained through some unrecognised channel, and, apart from their nature, which precluded chance, too often repeated to be due to coincidence; as though a normal basis served as a good starting-point for the obtaining of information in this unknown fashion.

I have constantly observed in myself what a little sufficed to put the psychic sensitiveness on the track of hidden truth. On the other hand, an inconvenience also presents itself: alertness to all inward and also exterior indication is so intense that even a breath is sufficient to indicate direction, which is just as often as not a false one, and which destroys the validity of the phenomena. This hyper-sensitiveness to extraneous as well as to interior signs became so developed in myself, that when seeking for clairvoyant or telepathic phenomena, in order to destroy all possibility of receiving clues from without, I came finally to work without seeing or being near persons. That is, Professor Richet (to whom, as you may be aware, I have devoted, for the past seven years, my somewhat meagre mediumistic powers) would remain in his own home at a certain hour with a friend, chosen by himself and unknown to me, whilst I, for my part, remained alone in my own home; then under these conditions of space, I would endeavour to obtain information concerning Professor Richet's friend and the subject of their conversation. Sometimes Professor Richet chose no friend, but instead, letters which he would read over for an hour, always alone in his own library, and I alone, at the same time, in my home, trying to see into his mind. Well, it has been under these apparently severe conditions that our best and purest phenomena of clairvoyance have been received.

If I may turn aside from my point for a moment I will quote the following, taken from about twenty similar cases. It is fairly interesting as illustrative of the powers of symbolisation and dramatisation of the subliminal. On this occasion, Professor Richet was to sit in his library between ten and eleven p.m. and think of a friend. I, in my home, was to strive to get the name and as many details as possible concerning that friend and his deceased relations. But on this particular occasion I could get absolutely nothing, and a night's sleep brought me no help. I tried several times during the next day, but without success. I went to bed the next night with the fixed determination of finding out the name, or, at least, the initials of the friend in question. It seemed to me that I had no sooner laid my head on the pillow than I fancied I saw myself outside my body. I could see the latter lying motionless on the bed. I moved away from the bed

with the intention of going to find M. Richet, when, to my joy, I walked the dream-image, the 'astral,' some would say, of M. Richet himself. Immediately my dream-self seized the dream M. Richet by the hand and said to him (it was all so vivid that I can see the whole scene again as I describe it to-night): 'Now that we are both out of the body, you can tell me the name of your friend.' The dream-man looked annoyed, and replied sharply: 'I shall not tell you his name.' It was in vain that I tried to make him understand that, under the circumstances, the experiment would be quite as valid if he gave me the desired information as if a 'spirit' came and gave it to me. To all my entreaties, he replied: 'You must find it out for yourself. I shall not tell you.' Finally, in my dream, he turned away from me as though to leave the room, and just as he turned away I saw the two capital letters, *P P*, spring out of his forehead and stand out clearly before my eyes. I exclaimed triumphantly, 'You have told me in spite of yourself. The initials are P. P.,' and I turned quickly to my body, with the intention of waking up and writing down my newly acquired information while it was fresh in my mind. I woke up, as a matter of fact, and noted the time. I had been asleep for half an hour exactly. I remembered everything, and made notes of my experience; and, as I wrote down the initials, other details concerning the friend poured into my mind. The initials, also the details, were correct.

The perspicacity which accompanies mediumship is an essential part of the psychic nature; perhaps I should rather say that the development of the psychic vision inevitably brings about a corresponding development in perspicacity. This latter fact hampers—and hence one of the causes of so much error in psychical effects—the independent work of the interior vision when the medium for psychical effects is in the presence of the person for whom he is working. It seems to me that a medium wastes his psychical strength by striving to shut out environment; something is stronger than he is, and ordains that he should save himself trouble by taking clues when these are offered. The ever active law of economy of force is largely responsible for the rôle which perspicacity plays in psychic phenomena; and I strongly advocate experimenting on the lines which I have tried with sufficient success for encouragement to continue in the same way, and to beg of other mediums to do the same, if they aim at demonstrating clairvoyance.

Most mediums, during the state of trance, produce phenomena of which they are not conscious in their normal state. It would seem, therefore, that they ought to be keenly interested in those phenomena which they have produced during trance, and of which they have retained no, or very little, recollection. As a matter of fact, such is not the case; and more frequently mediums, whether professional or non-professional, do not care to be spoken to about the phenomena they have produced during a state of unconsciousness. It seems as though it is painful to them to recall to memory phenomena of which their conscious memory has not retained any recollection, and they do not seek to retrace the course of what they produced during trance. They are, so to speak, cut off from their secondary personality, and the contrast is often remarkable between the interest which they appear to take in the little things of life, and the absolute indifference, unaffected but profoundly real, which they manifest for the strange phenomena which they have produced during the state of trance. In a word, the recall of their secondary condition appears to produce a painful shock. Nevertheless, it seems to me that mediums are truly aware of what has taken place, and, from sheer weariness or under the influence of self or collective suggestion, either feign an ignorance which is not true or only half true, or absolutely lack the power to recall sufficiently vividly to be able to relate what they have lived and acted but a little time before. They are like the somnambulist, who remembers perfectly all he has said and done under hypnosis, but, yielding to the command given to him by his hypnotiser during the state of dissociated personality, feels incapable of reacting against the suggestion; it seems to be too great an effort, it is not worth while, and

he will tell you that he has retained absolutely no recollection of what occurred under hypnosis, when, in very truth, he has not forgotten one single iota, though he may forget it very soon, just as dreams are forgotten. A little self-adjustment and strength of character would suffice to shake off the suggestion; but this is rarely forthcoming. It may be the same with mediumship, the suggestion coming either from the subliminal self or from a sort of collective consciousness from those present. So little do I believe in the absolute loss of memory in the normal state of a medium's mind of what has occurred during an abnormal state of his mind, that I, for one, would never dream of saying to an entranced medium what I would not care for the medium to know in his normal state.

By way of experiment and experience, I have frequently begged Professor Richet to plunge me into the hypnotic sleep. He has been able to produce the lethargic and cataleptic states, loss of sensibility, exteriorisation of sensibility, and the rise of a secondary personality. I retain consciousness and power of observation during these proceedings. I note all that is said and done, and remain in command of my own organism; this secondary personality never utters a word without, as it were, consulting me. It seems to be incapable of inductive reasoning and of volition in itself. There now occurs an anomaly: I hear the command 'You will forget all that has been said'; and when I awaken, or, to speak more correctly, when I am freed from this somnambulethargy—before I have quite re-instated my normal self—I hear myself say that I remember nothing of what took place during the recent slumber. It is an automatism, for I know quite well what has been said. There has occurred a dissociation of personality, and I can feel an automatic effort on the part of the fraction to hide something from the whole in response to a will stronger than itself.

From a *subjective* point of view, there is no analogy between hypnosis and highly developed conscious mediumship. Hypnosis, in my humble opinion, is the road leading to the deterioration of individuality by the dissociation of personality: it is a reprehensible practice, it seems to me, because it is the control of one's brain centres by the will of another, and it is the eventual paralysis of the mental energies; but the conscious use of the psychic faculties, on the contrary, in proportion to their constant and regular employment (for the exercise of a faculty increases that faculty), is, it seems to me, the high-road to an ever fuller and more perfect individuality, and to a deeper comprehension of the Divine.

(To be continued.)

HAS THE SOUL WEIGHT?

With reference to the sensational newspaper reports as to the weight of the soul having been discovered by some Massachusetts doctors, the 'Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research' for May publishes an article by Duncan MacDougall, M.D., in which he describes the experiments in question, and some correspondence between Dr. MacDougall and Dr. Richard Hodgson is also given. Dr. MacDougall proceeded on the assumption that 'if personal continuity after the event of death is a fact, if the psychic functions continue to exist as a separate individuality after the death of brain and body, then it must exist as a substantial material entity, for it is unthinkable that personality and consciousness can be attributes of that which does not occupy space and is absolutely imponderable.' To this Dr. Hodgson demurred, and Dr. MacDougall explained that he thought that 'there may be a middle substance which is the soul substance,' between the ether and ordinary matter, and in his article he points out that if the substance which appears to leave the body at the moment of death 'is a counterpart of the physical body, has the same bulk, occupies the same dimensions of space, then it is a very much lighter substance than the atmosphere, which weighs about one and one-fourth ounces per cubic foot.' We might say that the air representing an ordinary man's bulk would weigh at least three ounces; but the loss of weight recorded by Dr. MacDougall's scales

varied 'from three-eighths or half an ounce up to one and one-half ounce,' and in most cases the drop of the scale-beam was a sudden one.

Mr. Hereward Carrington also writes to the 'Journal' protesting against certain statements being attributed to him, and commenting on the facts. He shows that the amount of air contained in the lungs, especially of a consumptive person, is insufficient to account for the change of weight, and he instances some remarkable observations on fasting persons to show that the weight of the living body appears to increase and decrease in a way that is not accounted for by any consumption of food; in fact, that 'certain persons gained more weight than the food they ate' during the period of observation. Yet, as Mr. Carrington points out, 'it is premature to assert that an observed loss of weight at death is due to any soul-substance, or that it has any connection with soul or consciousness at all.' If it had such connection, it would (on our lines of thought) be merely that of another and finer medium for the manifestation of consciousness; in fact, what some call the 'spirit body'; a vehicle, but not the personality itself.

JOTTINGS.

In his latest work, entitled 'The Borderland of Psychical Research,' Professor Hyslop contends that 'personal immortality or future life implies the retention of memory; the same consciousness in general as in the material embodiment. . . . Personal survival involves a memory of the past earthly life. Unless this is involved in a doctrine of reincarnation it cannot be practically distinguished from annihilation or materialism.'

Mr. A. V. Peters' many friends will be glad to hear that his health is so far restored that he has been giving several sittings at Milan. An influential correspondent writes us that these have proved highly interesting, all the more so as the phenomena are different from those to which Italian investigators are accustomed, and that Mr. Peters has gained confidence and sympathy by his simple and straightforward bearing. Mr. Peters has also, in letters to us expressed himself as greatly pleased with his reception and with the progress made by Spiritualism in Italy, and says that in Milan the book-shops are full of Spiritualist literature.

Camp meetings are very popular with American Spiritualists in summer time, and one of the oldest and best is situated at Lake Pleasant, Mass., about a hundred miles from Boston. It is controlled by the Spiritualist Camp Meeting Association, and is divided into two sections, the uplands and the lowlands. We learn, with much regret, that a fire has recently occurred at this popular resort, by which about a hundred cottages and a hotel were destroyed. Practically every building in the lowlands section was burned down, only the railway station and five or six cottages remaining intact. The loss is estimated at over twenty thousand pounds.

A Chicago physician named Charles Gilbert Davies claims to have published, a year before the appearance of the Rev. R. J. Campbell's work on the 'New Theology,' a book entitled 'The Philosophy of Life,' in which the main line of reasoning and many expressions and similes are said to show a parallelism of thought amounting to 'mental telepathy.' The 'Literary Digest' gives a few samples of these correspondences, but the year's priority claimed by the Chicago doctor is quite insignificant in regard to thoughts and teachings which go back to Plato, Pythagoras, and the Vedas. Yet if the Rev. R. J. Campbell and Dr. Davies can bring these ancient and immortal truths to the acceptance of the world, and rivet them in the minds of the people, they will have done a great work. But they will not be the only ones to deserve a share in the honours, and those who are the loudest in putting forward their claims are not always those best entitled to the reward of merit.

Mr. Waddy, in his address on 'Legal and Medical Aspects of Spiritualism,' which we briefly noticed last week, draws a sharp contrast between the views of doctors and lawyers as to what constitutes insanity. In law, insanity is judged by actions; the medical expert looks for states of mind liable to lead to the commission of such actions, but neither lawyer nor doctor is able to give a definition of insanity, or to state where it begins or ends. Insanity has been made to include 'all

borderland cases, eccentrics, cranks, grumblers, letter-writers, and crazy persons of all sorts, more especially those who avow their belief in symbolisms and allegorical expressions and figures.' On some ground or other, as Mr. Waddy shows, all mankind might be declared to be insane.

Referring to wills made under alleged spirit influence, Mr. Waddy cites a judgment of the Supreme Court of Maine, delivered in 1875, wherein it was held that the question was one of the influence of Spiritualism on the judgment; there was no limit to the freedom to ask advice, even by prayer. In this case the testator 'thought she had received letters from a husband who had gone beyond this world to another,' and the Court found that she 'did not yield implicitly and blindly to these suggestions, but regarded them as she would have regarded such letters if they had been written during life, as friendly suggestions, which had some effect on her mind, but not to the point of destroying her own free will and deliberate judgment.' If Spiritualists at large would take this hint, and look upon communications from departed friends in this light, it would save much foolish and unbecoming dependence on those who, after all, are removed from the scene of action, and, therefore, are not invariably competent to give the best advice.

The many friends of Mr. James Robertson will be grieved to learn of the sad loss which has befallen his daughter May, Mrs. Crowther. Less than a year ago Mr. and Mrs. Crowther went to Italy, Mr. Crowther having been appointed manager to a large mine there. Mr. and Mrs. Robertson recently visited them, and after spending two or three weeks returned to Glasgow after a brief stay in London. Soon after they had reached their home they received a telegram informing them of the accidental death of Mr. Crowther, who, we learn, stumbled and fell down one of the shafts of the mine and was killed instantaneously. Mr. Robertson and his eldest daughter started at once for Italy, but arrived too late for the funeral. Our readers will, we are sure, join us in sending sympathetic thoughts and condolences to Mrs. Crowther and her relatives.

Telegrams from Rome have appeared in the daily newspapers recently to the effect that practically all the leading scientists of Italy have attended five séances in the physical laboratory of Naples University with Eusapia Paladino, none but scientists being present. Unofficial statements have been made to the effect that very striking phenomena occurred, and in each case photographs were taken. It is said that some twenty spirits materialised, numerous articles were transported through the air, the medium was lifted from the ground, strange lights appeared, solid bodies passed through other solid bodies without leaving traces of their passage, and several members of the committee were dragged across the room against their will by some mysterious force. Details of experiences with Eusapia Paladino will be found on p. 243.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

'Can Sin be Forgiven?'

SIR,—Kindly allow me to say a few words relating to the letter of 'Student' in 'LIGHT' of April 20th last.

If, as the author of 'The Alpha' says, 'ignorance does not sin and knowledge cannot sin,' then the word sin means *nothing*. It is thus the only word in the language which does not represent anything. Yet further down in the quotation I read that 'crime is sin committed against society'; showing that there is such an act as sin; and thus the author contradicts himself. Surely a man who commits a crime against society *knows* that he is acting against society—he, therefore, acts, or sins, with knowledge that he does wrongly. But Edward N. Dennys says that 'knowledge cannot sin.' I maintain that a knowledge of the wrongfulness of an act does not always prevent a man from doing it; and I do not think any man can say that he has never acted against his knowledge that the act was wrong. *Sin* is the doing wilfully that which a person knows, or believes, he should not do. A person acting against morality in ignorance (I do not mean against a civil law) may not incur a penalty, but if he does something ethically right, which, however, he believes that he should not

do, it is a sin, because he is acting against his higher self, against his moral code. Mr. Dennys says that 'mercy is not an attribute of God'; I agree with him, in spite of Shakespeare. Mercy must be an attribute of earthly justice, because man cannot know all the extenuating circumstances, and to pronounce the full penalty may be to do an injustice.

In the case of God, who is absolute justice, a remission of part of the penalty, that is to *show mercy*, is to be unjust. God can 'make the penalty fit the crime,' and, therefore, need not show mercy. I believe that the Hebrew word in the Old Testament, which is translated mercy, does not mean 'a remission of part of the penalty,' but means *pity*. If God is just, and cannot remit part of the penalty, if man must reap whatever he sows, as Paul says, then it is useless to ask God, our Father, to 'forgive us our trespasses.'—Yours, &c.,

JOSEPH CLAYTON.

[Mr. Clayton overlooks the fact that the author of 'The Alpha,' when he said that 'sin is an impossibility,' was referring to so-called 'crime committed against God.'—ED. 'LIGHT.']

SIR,—Permit me to add a few thoughts to those submitted by 'Student,' in 'LIGHT' of April 20th last, with reference to the forgiveness of sin.

When we entreat an earthly parent to forgive the offences committed against him, we ask that he will not punish us, that he will not be revenged upon us, but that he will suppress his indignation. Such a petition, addressed to beings such as we are, is perfectly rational and in accordance with human nature. But the same petition addressed to God, the Absolute, implies that He is of like passions with ourselves and is capable of being injured by our offences—an implication that ancient tradition, *plus* a pernicious theology, has ever sought to establish and justify. It infers that God has human passions, that He is vindictive, irritable, a 'jealous God,' a revengeful potentate, who governs the universe by occasional, erratic, and chaotic interferences, and who can be moved by entreaty and apology to forbear from retaliation and forego vengeance. We find this idea expressed in the Litany, in the Common Prayer Book, thus: 'Neither take thou vengeance of our sins'; as if Deity was not exempt and aloof from passions and propensities that are essentially human!

Again, forgiveness of sin, in the generally accepted definition of the term, means escaping from the consequences of sin. It implies that God will interpose between cause and effect: that is to say, upon our asking, or entreating, He will violate the eternal and harmonious order of the universe, that we may escape the rebound of our vain attempts to violate eternal law. But, as Euclid would say, this is absurd. The punishment of sin is not arbitrarily inflicted from without; it is the inevitable recoil of the injured faculties and comes naturally from within us. Just as surely as the acorn contains all the potentialities of the oak, so sin contains its own retributive penalty, which cannot be evaded upon any pretext, or escaped through any apology. The commission and the consequence are as inseparable as the antecedent and the sequent. 'A sin without its punishment would be as impossible as a cause without an effect.' If I attempt to violate Nature's laws, I must suffer the consequences, and reap what I have sown. Sackcloth and ashes cannot efface the results, for the wrong cannot be undone, and, as Lady Macbeth exclaims, 'All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand!'

But the fact that the punishment must fit the crime, that the effect must of necessity follow the cause, need not occasion in us feelings of despair; it does not incapacitate the soul, but is an incentive to it, to strive to tread the upward path that leads to virtue and to God.

If we are heartily sorry for our sin, that sorrow is a consequence of, and arises from, the recognition of our wrongdoing, and from it there springs a steadfast desire, a quickening of the will, to do better in future. It is the awakening of the soul to the trumpet call of the higher self, and means a change of heart, of attitude and action—it is the outgrowing of sin. Such a philosophy is not depressing but encouraging, and it rescues the reputation of the Infinite and Eternal from the aspersions of an obsolete creed, and shows us the supremacy of Universal Justice, whose wise and inviolable laws of cause and effect are destined to bring our discordant conduct into harmony with the All Good:—

'We rise by the things that are under our feet,
By what we have mastered of ill or gain,
By the pride deposed and the passions slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.'

—Yours, &c.,

WILL. W. CRAIK.

Barry, Glam., South Wales.

Do Animals Survive Death?

SIR,—If Mrs. Effie Bathe wishes for some evidence of the existence of animals in the spirit world she might obtain it from those pious Christians whose dogs are interred in the dogs' cemetery in Hyde Park, near the Marble Arch. She will find there tombstones to departed dogs, engraved with texts from the Bible. I am informed by spirits that animals do not possess any immortal principle, and that those persons who have time and money should interest themselves on the earth-plane in sympathizing with, and alleviating the lot of, many poor human beings—children and others—who need it sadly. Help and pity for poor humanity is the best and truest work, the spirits say, but dog and cat culture, when projected into the spirit sphere, is an objectionable superstition.—Yours, &c.,
Salem House, Tottenham. T. MAY.

SIR,—I have frequently, in clairvoyant trance while in bed, seen our two dogs' souls, although they have been dead many years. I have seen them at times when *not* thinking about them previously at all. Human spirits have told me that the souls of animals exist in the other world, or state. I believe that even insects and flowers have their own spirits, which are indestructible. The spirits of animals seem to visit those who have loved them. Our dogs, a fox terrier and a brown retriever, seem as fond of each other, and as frisky, now as when on earth.

My experiences are real visions, not mere dreams, and have been corroborated through mediums.—Yours, &c.,
G. W. BLYTHE.

SIR,—Perhaps the following extracts from 'Life and its Manifestations,' Vols. II. and III., will meet Mrs. Effie Bathe's question with reference to animals surviving physical death:—

'As I have already stated, this applies only to external organisms, and hence it is that those forms which do not possess the human principle of life yield up and for ever lose their own consciousness at what is called death, and the life which they possess is re-absorbed in the mother earth life. Hence these forms are not immortal, and their self-consciousness expires with their destruction and dissolution. . . . There is a self-consciousness that applies to animals, but it is distinct and diverse from that which is possessed by the human forms, for no animal can declare, like the human being, "I know who and what I am." . . . No animal form of life can ever be ultimated upon any plane where it can gain a higher degree of self-consciousness. It is this which distinguishes the animal from the human principle of life. Animals have no prior existence, neither will they exist as such after they have lived their life upon an outer earth wherein they had their existence.'

But it must be remembered that the 'astral plane' and 'body' are part and parcel of the 'earth plane' and 'physical body'.—Yours, &c.,

J. MARGETTS.

SIR,—I wish I could, as a witness, cite an instance of the survival of animals after their death, for I agree with what Mrs. Effie Bathe has so well written in her letter in 'LIGHT' of the 11th inst. Often in the course of my observation of phenomena and study of psychics, during fifty years and more, I have had reason to know that animals after their death have appeared to incarnate human witnesses, and incarnate witnesses have testified to the survival of animals in another state of consciousness.

It seems to me that too much is taken for granted about so-called brute animals and their status. Is it quite certain that the rights claimed over their lives and actions by us rest on any better foundation than might? Certainly I prefer Mrs. Bathe's way of thinking about animals to what I copy from Sir Oliver Lodge's ideal of a child's religion:—

'Q. What is the chief difference between animals and man?

'A. Man can choose between right and wrong. He is not in a state of innocence like the animals, and he is conscious of a fall when he does wrong.'

Ah me! How many dog friends I have had who were ashamed and grieved when they miscondacted themselves! When horses fall in the hunting field, or fail to win a race, is not their disappointment apparent to people who know their ways? I am much inclined to agree with that old French woman who said: 'The more I see of men the more I like dogs'.—Yours, &c.,

GILBERT ELLIOTT.

Highfield, Mottingham, Kent.

SIR,—For about twelve years I had a collie dog named 'Lassie' to whom I was very much attached, but two years ago I was compelled to have her destroyed, and she came back to me within half an hour. She is continually in my surroundings, showing the same affection and pleasure at being noticed as when in the body. I have seen her accompany my daughter in her walks, as she was always in the habit of doing. On one occasion, when my daughter went into a shop, the salesman observed, 'What a beautiful collie you have with you.' She replied, 'No, I have no dog.' He said, 'It has just run out, and I saw it come in with you the other day.' He was evidently clairvoyant. The dog in earth life was undoubtedly clairvoyant, for on two occasions she showed extreme delight at seeing a member of the family who had passed away, and who I saw at the same time. On another occasion I saw her playing with a cat (also passed over) with which she used to play in earth life. One day my mother and I were sitting in a room and 'Lassie' came in. Mother said, 'I wonder if she would come to me if I called?' I replied, 'Try.' On being spoken to 'Lassie' immediately ran to her and laid her head on her lap. I am sure all lovers of animals will be glad to have evidence of this nature, which goes to prove the continued consciousness of animals after death.—Yours, &c.,

MYRTLE JACKSON.

6, Balcombe-street, N.W.

A Strange Phenomenon.

SIR,—The experience described in 'LIGHT' of the 4th inst., entitled 'A Strange Manifestation,' draws my attention to a somewhat similar phenomenon which I have frequently observed. The chair I usually sit in when reading is a large wicker-work armchair, over twenty years old, well upholstered and padded with cotton wool. The peculiar phenomenon in this case is that if I leave the room for twenty minutes or so, on returning, the chair will sometimes commence to creak just as if someone were rising from it, continuing usually for a few seconds, though on one occasion for fully two minutes, I being at varying distances up to ten feet away.

I do not necessarily connect a presence with the phenomenon, although in one instance, as I was passing in front of the chair without touching it, the creaking was sudden and violent, as might have been the case had one startled an occupant; on repassing the chair there was no recurrence of the creaking. I have sometimes *felt* a presence, as I did on this occasion, but have seen nothing. The longest period of absence which was followed by this result was about two hours, and I have never noticed anything similar either when getting up from the chair or, later, whilst remaining in the room, since, owing to its age, its elasticity is mostly expended.

The cotton wool is, probably, a factor worthy of consideration, as it absorbs and retains personal magnetism more readily than most substances.—Yours, &c.,

THE OLD ARMCHAIR.

Letter from Mr. W. J. Colville.

SIR,—Permit me to inform my many friends that I am visiting England for a few weeks this season to make arrangements for the introduction of my new book, 'Universal Spiritualism' (a copy of which I beg to present to the extensive and valuable library of the London Spiritualist Alliance). I have had good success in Toronto, and find many Canadians wide awake to the spiritual philosophy. The copy of 'LIGHT' which appears weekly in the public library is read eagerly. Much discussion appears to prevail on both sides of the Atlantic anent the 'New Theology.' The Rev. R. J. Campbell's book is discussed in Toronto with great animation, and there are a great many people whose views on spiritual questions are not far removed from the doctrines enunciated in your splendid editorials.

The Unitarian congregation here would welcome the Rev. John Page Hopps or any other spiritually minded visitor. The present minister, Rev. R. J. Hutcheon, who succeeded the Rev. T. J. Sunderland, is a very liberal and scholarly man, and an excellent practical preacher. I have been twice invited to speak from the Toronto Unitarian pulpit, and on each occasion found myself facing a truly sympathetic as well as highly cultivated audience.

I shall sail on the 18th inst. on the Allan steamer 'Parisian,' from Montreal to London *via* Havre. Mrs. Wm. Paulet kindly permits letters, &c., for me to be addressed, in her care, to 24, South Molton-street, W. If I deliver any public lectures they will be duly advertised in 'LIGHT.' Hoping to renew many pleasant acquaintances during my flying visit to old scenes.—Yours, &c.,

W. J. COLVILLE.

A Reader's Difficulty.

SIR,—In the opening chapter of Dr. J. Maxwell's 'Metapsychical Phenomena' I find the following remarkable statement :—

'In all parts of Europe the "spirits" vouch for reincarnation. Often they indicate the moment they are going to reappear in a human body, and they relate still more readily the past avatars of their followers. On the contrary, in England the spirits assure us that there is no reincarnation. The contradiction is formal, positive, and irreconcilable.'

This is a serious difficulty to myself and, I doubt not, to many other earnest students of Spiritualism. In the face of an overwhelming weight of evidence to the contrary, one cannot reasonably explain it away by declaring Spiritualism to be a fraud. It is equally impossible to doubt the accuracy of Professor Maxwell, who has devoted years of patient research to the study of metapsychical phenomena. Nor have English Spiritualists any more reason to repudiate the teachings of spirits on the Continent than have Continental Spiritualists reason to disbelieve what the spirits tell us on this side of the Channel.

How, then, are we to account for two such contradictory statements? Would any of your readers help me in this difficulty?—Yours, &c.,

King's College, Cambridge,

F. S. SNELL.

'Interesting Experience at a Private Circle.'

SIR,—I was annoyed at seeing a letter in last week's 'LIGHT' giving my name and address, and also inaccurately describing an incident that took place at a private circle.

For the benefit of those who have read it I will briefly give the facts.

I, for my own personal satisfaction, asked one of the controls if he would be good enough to answer a test letter. This letter was written by me to him, and three persons besides myself saw it sealed by a non-Spiritualist in the first envelope, which was then signed by four persons on the flap of the envelope. It was then placed in the second envelope, and closed, and sealed with wax. I left it on the mantelpiece when I left home to attend a service at St. Paul's Cathedral (Sons of the Clergy), and upon my arrival at Brondesbury, where my husband met me, I learned that he had mistaken my wishes and had not brought the letter.

I asked a spirit present, an adept at bringing matter through matter, if she would go home for it. She said she would try, and, at the second attempt, brought it.

Mr. Clegg's letter was not submitted to me, or it would never have appeared. I am always willing, if requested, to give experiences that may be of service to others in this vast field of research, but I, as a student of the occult, object strongly to being advertised in this manner.—Yours, &c.,

ADELINE V. E. PERRYMAN.

'Death-bed Attendant Spirits.'

SIR,—I was much interested in a letter which I read in 'LIGHT' of March 9th last, headed 'Death-bed Attendant Spirits,' and I should like to mention two incidents which convinced me that a death-bed is surrounded by spirits ready to help the spirit of the person who is dying, as soon as he or she has done with the mortal body. A few years ago I was at the death-bed of a very near relation, a girl. The only people present were myself, the girl's father, and the nurse. The dying girl looked round the room (she was quite conscious at the time), and said, 'What a lot of people there are in the room.' The nurse, thinking she referred to us, moved out of sight. The girl a few minutes afterwards breathed her last. I was quite ignorant regarding Spiritualism at that time, and the words had no meaning for me, but about two years afterwards my attention was called to the subject by a friend. I was in very great trouble, and was glad to grasp at anything that might bring me comfort. I read all the books I could get that dealt with the subject, and I thought it out seriously for myself, with the result that I was convinced of its reasonableness. But I wanted some decided proof for myself. Having heard of some reliable mediums in England I proceeded there, and went to see Mr. Vout Peters, to whom I was a perfect stranger; he knew absolutely nothing about me. After accurately describing several relatives who had 'passed over,' he described the girl to whom I have already referred. Suddenly his hand was controlled, and following the initial letter of the girl's name he added these words: 'I know now, M—,' (mentioning the name she called me by) 'that the numbers of people I saw in the room when I was dying were spirits.' At the time this conveyed nothing to my mind, and it was only after I had re-

turned to the house in which I was staying that the full significance of the words that had been written flashed upon me, and I then realised what an overwhelming proof I had had that the dead do indeed return to comfort those whom they have left behind them in grief and loneliness. I realised then that spirits released from the body do not go into the 'Great Beyond' alone, but that there are loving spirits to help them when the great change comes.

The second incident which I will mention was also connected with the death-bed of one who was very near and dear to me. A few months after the death of the girl I have mentioned her brother died. I was not with him when the incident I am about to relate occurred, but the nurse told me of it. Two days before his death, when he was quite conscious (so the nurse told me), he said that he saw his sister standing at the foot of the bed. He spoke to his sister by name and became quite impatient because she (the nurse) could see nothing there. He turned to her with what she said was 'a world of reproach in his eyes,' and said, 'There, she is gone now; why did you not see her?'

There are one or two of my friends who can vouch for the truth of what I have written.—Yours, &c.,

Natal, South Africa.

C. T.

Puzzling Experiences.

SIR,—During the past month or six weeks both my maids, at different times, have come to me as if in answer to a call of mine, and sometimes they have looked as if they really doubted my word when I said that I did not call. The same thing has happened with my children. I am amused as well as puzzled that in these particular instances the maids obey in quite a hurry, even when in the midst of work at the top of the house.—Yours, &c.,

BESSIE SKINNER.

P.S.—My thoughts are certainly not upon them at the time.

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.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Roberts gave an impressive address on 'Angelic Ministry,' and Mr. Roberts clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Roberts, of Leicester, will give an address and clairvoyant descriptions.—N. R.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last good addresses and answers to questions were given by Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., also on Monday at 8 p.m., Mrs. A. Boddington. Silver collections.—A. C.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last, Miss Nellie Brown gave psychometric tests, and in the evening Mr. Stebbens' address on 'The Angels see us' was much enjoyed. Sunday next, an address by Mr. Percy Smyth. Sunday, June 2nd, Mr. J. H. Pateman.

OXFORD CIRCUS.—22, PRINCE'S-STREET, W.—On Sunday last, speaking to a full hall, Mr. E. W. Beard gave a lucid and helpful address on 'The Power of Spiritualism for Good.' Mrs. Fairclough Smith's messages and clairvoyant descriptions, and Mme. Hope's vocal solo were much appreciated. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. J. J. Morse (see advt.).

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. E. W. Wallis delivered a brilliant address, which gave much pleasure to his hearers, the subject being 'Why not?' Mr. W. T. Cooper, president, officiated as chairman. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. W. Boulding will give an address on 'Weights that hinder us.'—A. J. W.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Frank Pierce's interesting address on 'In Moments of Inspiration' was much appreciated for its many original thoughts. Mrs. A. Boddington's clairvoyant delineations were all recognised. On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., children's Lyceum. Service at 7 p.m. Speaker, Mr. Abbott, of Fulham.

CHISWICK.—110, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last an elevating address, under spirit control, and in the evening Mr. A. J. McLellan's interesting address on 'Miracles in the Light of Modern Science,' were much appreciated. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; Lyceum, 3 p.m., and at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Adams. Monday, at 8.15 p.m., Mrs. S. Podmore, clairvoyante.—H. S.