

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way .....	493	Conversations of the L.S.A. ....	499
L.S.A. Notices .....	494	'The Creed of an Agnostic Spirit-	
Can Continued Existence be		ualist' .....	500
Proved? .....	495	Items of Interest .....	501
Difficulties of Spirit Communica-		The Order of the Star in the East	501
tion .....	496	Affinities and Counterparts .....	502
A Verified Dream .....	497	'Bilocation' .....	502
Transition of Col. G. Le M. Taylor	497	Position of Bed during Sleep ..	503
Spiritualism in the United States	497	Practical Phrenology for Teach-	
Mystical Side of Freemasonry ..	498	ers .....	504

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

The September issue of the 'Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research' contains some records of automatic writing, from which we select the following passage as bearing suggestively on the question of spirit communion:—

One great hindrance to spirit-recognition, one of the deepest perplexities common to seekers of truth along the line of Spiritualism is the fact that the messages of the spirit often bear upon subjects that have little or no vital interest to the inquirer, and were [? are] apparently utterly foreign to the nature of the spirit bringing the message.

It appears that unconscious prejudices and misconceptions in the mind of the medium are often to blame for this, as well as the difficulties that beset the spirit communicator on his own side.

There is something of pathos in a subsequent passage in the same communication, and we can enter sympathetically into the idea expressed:—

Your spirit friend longs for the understanding intelligence that can draw from him the idea that loses its beauty by a homely utterance. We laugh bitterly at the strangeness of our own messages, and are seized with a strange homesickness of heart when we realise how far from the real thought was the expression of it. But let us come into communion with a soul akin to our own, and we find a quick and ready mind to grasp our thought and convey its true meaning to our dear ones.

That gives us the communicator's side of the question, and throws considerable light on the problem of strange and perplexing messages.

Without committing ourselves to any opinion regarding the truth or falsity of astrology, we may say that we occasionally happen across some interesting coincidences in connection with 'the science of the stars.' Just recently for instance, we observed a statement in the Press regarding the appearance of a new comet in the sign Virgo, which sign in astrology is supposed to preside over the destinies of Turkey. And comets, according to the astrologers of the past, were held to betoken wars and calamities.

Reviewing Mr. J. Arthur Hill's book, 'New Evidences in Psychical Research' (already noticed in our columns), 'The Hindu Spiritual Magazine' (Calcutta) remarks:—

It is now believed by many that all psychic phenomena do not owe their origin to the direct activity and presence of disembodied [? discarnate] spirits. Much yet remains to be known about the unseen world. No one can positively say how it is peopled; what its laws are, and whether or not its denizens have any hand in producing any class of these phenomena.

We cordially agree with the proposition that all psychic phenomena are not attributable to independent spirit agency. The powers of the incarnate soul have also to be taken into account, and it is in this direction we must look for an explanation of at least some of the anomalies and contradictions which beset the path of the inquirer. But as to whether spirit beings 'have any hand in producing any class of the phenomena,' our friendly contemporary is perhaps expressing itself a little vaguely.

If 'The Hindu Spiritual Magazine' means that we cannot *always* say to what extent any class of the phenomena is due to spirit action *ab extra*, we agree; but the case for such action in many instances is fully made out. Indeed, as the reviewer goes on to say that Mr. Hill's book 'teems with phenomena which cannot be explained by any other theory than what is commonly known as Spiritualism,' no doubt our suggested interpretation of the passage we quote is the correct one. Meantime we blushing acknowledge the following tribute to 'LIGHT' in another part of the 'Magazine':—

'LIGHT' . . . as the reader is aware, is one of the best and most ably conducted psychic papers in the world.

We trust that we shall always live up to this commendation.

'In the Light of Theosophy' is the title of a small book by 'A Fellow of the Theosophical Society,' published at the Blavatsky Institute, Hale, Cheshire, cloth, price 1s. 6d., post free. It is one of the best expositions of Theosophy that we have read. The writer is temperate, lucid and persuasive, and sets forth his case for Theosophy with a simple directness which is as commendable as it is unusual. Apart from the Eastern phraseology, the somewhat arbitrary definitions of the seven planes, and the assertions respecting reincarnation, the book might almost as well have been entitled 'In the Light of Spiritualism,' for its philosophy, in the main, is our own. There is, however, from our point of view a great deficiency, in that the writer confines himself to the consideration of life here, and seems to have no room in his philosophy for continued conscious individual life after death. Instead of the going-on of the spirit in a progressive existence on ever-ascending spiritual planes out of the physical body, the author seems to find satisfaction in the idea of repeated partial expressions in life after life in the personal form on earth. Surely the ever-increasing evidence of human survival after bodily death: of continuity of self-consciousness, involving identity, memory, character, and all the consequences accruing from past motives and methods, as also indications of purposive life, educational experiences and successive spiritual unfoldings and achievements in the after-death spirit world—surely this evidence and all that it implies and reveals is entitled to serious attention. Is it possible that Theosophy has no place for it? It cannot be ignored much longer, and no philosophy of existence will be complete or satisfactory that does not

include it, for the facts which have been established by Spiritualism and psychical research generally show that man goes on living as man on other planes of life and action, where his environments and experiences bear direct and sequential relationship to his earth-life—in a word, that over there he reaps the results of what he sows here, and goes forward in an educational career to attain the realisation—the fulfilment and fruition—of his spiritual nature, which realisation could not (and never can) be won by the spirit while embodied on this elementary plane.

Of course, that a fact is unpleasant does not make it untrue, but, in a sane universe—and this looks like one, on the whole—a monstrously unpleasant hypothesis needs a great deal of justification for itself. For instance, it is a monstrously unpleasant hypothesis that the universe contains only cradles and graves—cradles and graves of worlds, cradles and graves of races of various kinds, cradles and graves of prophets and poets and Christs, with nothing to represent and respond to their intuitions, their promises, their visions and their love—with no answering Lover, no guardian angel, no God.

Apart altogether from evidence, such a monstrously unpleasant hypothesis needs an indescribable amount of justification. But it has just one grain of sense in it. If it is all true, there is no God. There may be a Devil, but God—no. As one modern thinker said:—

Is the Creator deceiving us? Will He mock our immortal longings with a paltry threescore years and ten? Will He extinguish our life just as we learn to live? When we are hoping for illimitable progress, will He cast us into unmitigated night? When His children turn to Him with faith and hope—when they lift up their hearts to worship—when, perchance, they have begun to love Him—when for His sake, that they might be better prepared to meet Him, they have suffered the loss of all things, will He welcome them, as they come into His presence, with annihilation? If so, He is no good, He is not God. There is no God.

Fortunately Spiritualism proves the reality of life beyond the grave and thus gives us a scientific basis for our belief in God.

Epes Sargent, in his valuable work, 'The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism,' deals fully with the religious aspects and inferences of psychical phenomena and shrewdly observes that:—

It is the glory of Spiritualism that its appeal is to the reason through science; that it gives us the elements of a religion, old as the world, and at once rational, scientific and emotional. But this religion the individual must himself deduce from our facts, and thus make it truly his own, and not a graft from some other man's tree of life.

The influence exerted by Spiritualism having its source in the phenomena, we must not leave these behind as things outgrown, but continue to study them and draw from them—confirming as they do belief in spiritual, immortal life—such truths as may make us wise unto eternity. J. H. Fichte truly says: 'The grounds for an enlarged and improved psychology lie in Modern Spiritualism, since its physical phenomena are, in remarkable particulars, analogous to those known long ago. The old has been unexpectedly confirmed by the new, and *vice versa*.

Belief in the immortality of the soul is ratified by these evidences of psychical experience. It is now known that we may seize our future destination already here in the earth-life.'

Let it be remembered that Spiritualism is now in a transitional stage, and that we cannot expect its full results in a religious respect until its external phenomena are freely accepted by coming generations as facts of science. We may then expect the development of those truths which must give new force to the religious intuitions of our nature.

THERE was much truth in the quaint expression of the man who said 'I don't think it will please God in any way for us to rest on the Sabbath, although I can understand that it might please Him if people worked so hard and so well that they were glad to rest one day in seven.'

## LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, OCTOBER 26TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

ABRAHAM WALLACE, M.D.,

ON

'The Churches and Modern Spiritual Science.'

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

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

Meetings will also be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on the following Thursday evenings at 7.30:—

Nov. 9.—The following speakers will take part in a Symposium on Some Unorthodox Systems of Healing:—

Mrs. Home on 'The Principles of the Science of Being.'

Lady Coomaraswamy on 'The Work of the Psycho-Therapeutic Society.'

Mr. W. S. Hendry on 'Vital Magnetic Healing.'

Mr. Percy R. Street on 'Direct Spirit Healing.'

Mr. J. L. Macbeth Bain (if in London) on 'The Immanent Christ the Healer of Soul and Body.'

Nov. 23.—Rev. Edgar Daplyn on 'A Modern Aspect of Immortality.'

Dec. 7.—'Cheiro' on 'Personal Experiences of Psychic Phenomena in India, America and Other Countries.'

The arrangements for next year will be announced in due course.

## MEETINGS AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

### FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On *Tuesday next*, October 24th, Miss Florence Morse will give clairvoyant descriptions, at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Associates; Members free; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each. 31st, Mr. J. Isherwood.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.—On *Thursday next*, the 26th inst., at 5 p.m. *prompt*, Miss Violet Burton will give a trance address on 'Two Rules for Psychic and Spiritual Development.'

FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Friday afternoons, from 3 to 4, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism, for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On *Friday next*, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience relating to life here and on 'the other side,' mediumship, and the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism generally. Admission 1s.; Members and Associates free. MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to this meeting without payment. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of *general interest* to submit to the control. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

SPIRIT HEALING.—On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for diagnosis by a spirit control, magnetic healing, and delineations from the personal aura. For full particulars see the advertisement supplement.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—H. Blackwell.—The discussion closed last week. 'A Thankful Reader' (Holland).—No claim is made that the effect is produced by psychic means. 'L. Y. H.' and others.—Next week,

## CAN CONTINUED EXISTENCE BE PROVED?

There is a passage in Professor Flournoy's recent work, '*Esprits et Médiums*,' which calls for more than passing attention on the part of those who experience deep interest in the recent developments of psychical research. The tendency of the passage referred to is to minimise the importance of establishing belief in the survival of the human personality on a rational and scientific basis. Stress is laid on the necessity for the exercise of a personal choice of belief and for a real 'act of faith' whatever theory be adopted as affording the best explanation of facts of a supernormal description. In support of his contention the author points out the hypothetical and transitory character of all such scientific attempts to explain natural phenomena as involve the conception of objects or agents which are beyond the reach of our sense-perceptions. He instances the use made by scientific men of such conceptions as that of the atom, the molecule, the electron, and the ether, the actual existence of none of which has ever been verified by the human senses, and points out the wide gulf that separates their instrumental use as means to facilitate our comprehension of natural phenomena and belief in their existence as actual realities.

Accordingly, admitting the possibility that the theory of personal survival may eventually come to be accepted by science as constituting the most accurate explanation of Spiritistic phenomena, he contends that even should the advocates of the spirit hypothesis succeed in securing such acceptance and approval on the part of science they would still be as far as ever from their real goal, which consists, according to him, in the establishment of the absolute certainty of survival as a fact of universal occurrence. For they would only have succeeded in establishing the probable correctness of one explanatory hypothesis as against other possible explanations. Their theory, like that of the atom or of the ether, would still be only an hypothesis incapable of verification by means of the senses, and subject to the possibility of abandonment with the continued advance of knowledge.

The professor seems inclined to be somewhat over-sceptical as regards the value of an experimentally well-established hypothesis, nor does he appear to take note of the distinction that exists between the theories of the scientist and those of the metaphysician—a distinction that has been very forcibly pointed out in the following passage in Professor Karl Pearson's work, '*The Grammar of Science*,' p. 53 :—

In this process we often analyse the material of sense-impressions into elements which are not in themselves capable of forming distinct sense-impressions. . . . Atom and molecule are intellectual conceptions, by aid of which physicists classify phenomena and formulate relationships between their sequences. From a certain standpoint, therefore, these conceptions of the physicist are supersensuous—that is, they do not at present represent direct sense-impressions; but the reader must be careful not to confuse this kind of supersensuousness with that of the metaphysician. The physicist looks upon the atom in one or other of two different ways; either the atom is real—that is, capable of being a direct sense-impression, or else it is ideal, that is, a purely mental conception by aid of which we are enabled to formulate natural laws.\* It is either a product of the perceptive faculty, or of the reflective or reasoning faculty in man. It may pass from the latter to the former, from the ideal stage to the real; but till it does so, it remains merely a conceptual basis for classifying sense-impressions, it is not an actuality. On the other hand the metaphysician asserts an existence for the supersensuous which is unconditioned by the perceptive or reflective faculties in man. His supersensuousness is at once incapable of being a sense-impression, and yet has a real existence apart from the imagination of man. It is needless to say that such an existence involves an unproven and undemonstrable dogma. Nevertheless, the magnitude of the gulf between the supersensuous of the physicist and that of the metaphysician is frequently neglected, and we are told that it is as logical to discuss 'things-in-themselves' as molecules and atoms!

It will be seen from the extract just quoted that some scientists, at any rate, place the working hypotheses of science in a category very far removed from that occupied by the somewhat nebulous speculations of philosophers concerning 'things-in-themselves'—theories, these latter, which are by their

very nature confined to the region of purely abstract mental conceptions, and possess no real connection with the actual world, that we know through the senses.

It would seem, therefore, that if the spirit-theory should eventually attain a scientific status in relation to psychic phenomena comparable to that occupied by chemical and physical theories with regard to the facts to which they respectively apply, the rational position of those who support this hypothesis would not be quite so precarious as the author of '*Esprits et Médiums*' would have us believe.

But the problem that confronts the investigator with respect to the theory of survival partakes of the difficulties that arise in connection with the proof of other-consciousness in general. The strictly logical position as regards proof of the existence of other conscious personalities has been briefly described in the following passage in the same work by Professor Pearson to which reference has already been made, p. 51 :—

Some physicists infer the existence of atoms although they have had no experience of any individual atom, because the hypothesis of their existence enables them to briefly resume a number of sense-impressions. We infer the existence of other-consciousness for a precisely similar reason, but in this case we have the advantage of knowing at least one individual consciousness, namely, our own. We see in ourselves how it links sense-impression and deferred exertion.

We are now in a better position to consider how matters will stand if once the assumption made by the Swiss critic becomes an accomplished fact, that is to say, if 'the experimental method obliges us to admit the reality and the intervention of the dead to explain mediumistic phenomena, just as that method obliges us to admit the reality and the action of molecules, atoms, electrons, etheric vibrations, &c., to explain the phenomena of the physical world.' According to Professor Flournoy, as already stated, those who are intent on proving the absolute truth of survival as an actual fact would still be as far as ever from the attainment of their object. All that would have been done would be to show that this theory was best fitted to co-ordinate and systematise the observed facts. It would, therefore, simply constitute for the time being the most satisfactory explanation of the phenomena.

But, one is inclined to ask, in what would its probable correctness differ from the probable correctness of the theory by which we attribute a real conscious and individual personality to each of the human beings by whom we are surrounded in the present world? Could not each of us explain the phenomena of social life by the theory that oneself was the sole genuine human individual, and that all the rest were the puppets of 'the great Deceiver,' or representatives of 'the Unconscious of Hartmann,' or merely manifestations of 'the cosmic memory'? Surely here again it is only a case of weighing various possibilities. The theory of a world of independent personalities being by far the most probable to our minds, we adopt it as the one that best accords with the whole of the facts.

For the same reason, if the pressure of mediumistic phenomena obliges science to accept the spirit theory as providing the sole explanation that harmonises with all the observed facts, the question as to its absolute truth will be of the same order as that which is concerned with the possession of conscious individuality on the part of our fellow-creatures. In the latter case we base the operations of normal life on the assumed correctness of a theory which we severally possess no means of logically verifying. We infer consciousness and distinctive personality in others from the analogy of what takes place in our own minds.

It is a theory which fits in with a coherent and rationally connected scheme of the universe. When the hypothesis of human survival is found adequate to fill a similar position, and when it meets with all the requirements of the experimental method it is difficult to perceive on what grounds we should refuse to assign to it a similar validity.

At any rate, it is manifest that if the investigation of mediumistic phenomena should result in scientific confirmation of the spirit theory, adverse criticism of that theory, on the ground of its inability to afford a guarantee of absolute truth, might, with equal reason, be directed against the assumption which underlies the conduct of our daily life, and would, there-

\* That is, it is part of a physicist's mental shorthand.

fore, for practical purposes, be beside the mark. For proof of the continued existence of the dead would rest on the same foundation as that on which we base our present belief in the personal existence of the living.

G. S. C.

### DIFFICULTIES OF SPIRIT COMMUNICATION.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MR. HORACE LEAF TO THE PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE CLASS OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5TH.

One of the gravest difficulties of Spiritualism is the paucity of the information received from 'the other side.' The old believer, as well as the young investigator, wonders why, if spirits can manifest, they cannot say who they are; if they can give some facts about themselves, why they cannot give their names; if they can give Christian names, why they cannot give surnames, and so on. It is the dream of the budding medium to be able to settle all doubts in the mind of the recipient of a test by giving not only the description of the spirit manifesting, but also full name, date of death, and other matter equally explicit. Alas! we seem as yet to be far from so desirable a stage, but we may one day solve the problem.

Apart from physical modes of communication adopted by spirits, including the 'direct voice,' there are four well-defined methods—namely, inspiration or impression, the interior voice, waking visions, and dreams, or sleep visions.

Inspiration is undoubtedly the commonest method employed, and on account of the difficulty of discriminating between it and one's own impressions, it is difficult to tell when it takes place. It probably occurs daily to most persons, although they may know nothing of the possibility of spirit communion. Mediumistic development is the cultivation of the ability not only to receive more frequently such impressions, but also to distinguish them from personal ones. This is seldom satisfactorily attained, and in consequence spirit messages are more or less mixed and wrong.

The difficulty is easily appreciated when it is remembered that the medium has to translate into words impressions, some of which may be quite different from those normally experienced by him. In such instances the medium translates them into words that he thinks best express them. He may be entirely wrong.

It is exceedingly difficult to convey an idea of the nature of the various impressions received in this way. These impressions may come as ideas or as feelings, such as a glowing feeling in the chest, a quickening of the breath, an affection of the arm, a peculiar sensation in the eyes, a difficulty in breathing, a choking in the throat, a strong desire to shake a certain person by the hand and call that person son or daughter, or to use some endearing term; but these are only the simple and more easily understood examples. If the spirit is endeavouring to convey information regarding events, the translation is much more difficult, and can be accomplished in a fair proportion of cases only after considerable experience. If, for instance, advice is being given to the effect that the recipient should break away from certain existing conditions, the medium may see and hear absolutely nothing, but be conscious of something being stretched until it breaks, and feel an impulse to say something to the desired effect. The likelihood of error is plain.

The interior voice, although rarer than inspiration, is much more satisfactory. Its peculiarity is that, although nothing is heard externally, there is a distinct consciousness of a voice speaking, the words being clearly defined. The voice may seem to be speaking right inside the head, or perhaps some other part of the body. A curious circumstance connected with this method of communication is that the head or part of the body where the voice is heard seems sometimes to be rendered void. It is as if a vacuum had been caused, and the voice appeared to be within it. There can be no doubt that many lunatics are affected in this way, and it is open to question whether they are not really being influenced by some spiritual beings.

The incompleteness of these two modes of communication necessitates the spirits adopting some additional means of con-

veying their messages to earth. One method that is frequently and satisfactorily used is symbology. It must at times impress investigators as singular that elaborate and curious symbols should be adopted to convey quite simple ideas. How much more simple and satisfactory it would be if the spirits were to say outright that a person is fighting against adverse circumstances than to show a sword partly immersed in a cloud; or to tell a person that he has travelled extensively, than for a spirit to appear walking like a juggler on a globe; or to say the person lived in a certain house, than to build a picture of the house and successively show parts of it which, owing to the lapse of time or forgetfulness, the recipient may not recognise.

A similar perplexity attaches equally to some dreams. Dreams are frequently used for spirit communication, and are sometimes even adopted by 'guides' of mediums to give them important information. The following is an excellent authentic example of a method adopted by spirits to convey a simple suggestion to a person who was undergoing a psychic development. It was accompanied by a peculiar physical effect demanding a strong effort of will to overcome, and the recipient, not knowing its significance, was inclined to neglect the warning, to her personal danger.

Retiring to bed she dreamt she was a mesmerist practising in a large well-furnished room with two subjects. Turning away from them for an instant to attend to something, she immediately felt a singular influence affecting her. Looking round she saw one of her subjects, a sinister-looking person, crawling on the floor behind her and exercising hypnotic power on her.

She immediately excited her power to ward off the effect, and a fearful struggle between the two minds took place. The tendency was for the lady to be defeated, which caused her to redouble her efforts, during which she awoke with a full consciousness of the relationship of the dream to her psychic development.

Symbology is a very ancient method of spirit-communication. The curious waking and sleeping visions of the ancient Hebrew prophets are open to precisely the same criticisms as those of modern mediums; indeed, they are much more complex and difficult to understand. There seems to have been a considerable advance made by spirits in this direction. Modern mediums experience nothing so abstruse and obscure as the prophet Daniel's great image made of various kinds of metals and clay; or the four living creatures of Ezekiel, each with four faces and four wings and curious feet, and of the colour of brass, which came in a great whirlwind, cloud, and fire; or the many complex symbols recorded in the book of Revelation.

That such roundabout methods, so liable to failure, are resorted to is a proof of the difficulty which spirits experience when communicating with earth. It is inconceivable that they adopt such methods from choice, for to do so would be unreasonable; indeed, the fact that every opportunity of employing more satisfactory modes is seized upon shows that they are not the result of choice.

Impression, the interior voice, and visions are examples of telepathy. There is, however, a danger of applying to spirits in their communications with earth the same rules that exist between ordinary persons when acting telepathically. It must be remembered that spirits state that thought-transference is the normal mode of communication among themselves. This largely explains the difficulties that harass their communications with us, for thought-transference renders the use of language amongst them unnecessary. Amongst us, on the contrary, language is so important that thought is almost inseparable from it—we mainly think in words. Some kind of clothing for our thoughts is so necessary that when we dispense with language we must use forms—mental images which we convey by gestures, drawings, &c. It appears to be practically impossible for ordinary persons to appreciate pure thought. Could they do so there would be no language barrier, for, although nations speak differently, they think similarly. Germans, Frenchmen, and Englishmen, when hungry, experience the same kind of sensation, and, desiring bread, think alike, but necessarily express themselves differently. So intercourse solely by thought must tend to cause language to be forgotten. In view of this, it is not difficult to realise the

reasons why impressions and symbols are so prominent in spiritual communications.

Experiments in telepathy have proved that it is much easier to transmit forms than words; so much so that successful telepathists have to cultivate symbology so as, whenever possible, to express the thought in some form. It is for this reason that thought images of concrete objects, such as keys, watches, and cards, are transmitted more successfully than abstract ideas, such as love and hate. Modern experience in telepathy, therefore, makes readily conceivable some of the difficulties of spirit communication.

#### A VERIFIED DREAM.

A strange story is told in the Rand 'Daily Mail' of September 12th. It appears that Mr. F. Smith, a saddler, had occupied a shop in Church-street, Maritzburg, for nearly twenty years without its occurring to him that the space between the panelled back of the window and the staircase leading to the upper floor held anything of interest. On the night of Sunday, the 10th ult., however, he dreamt that he entered the enclosure by a secret door and saw before him a large safe. His dream so impressed him that next day he tapped the brick wall on the shop side of the enclosure. Noticing that it gave out a hollow sound, he set to work with the help of a native to knock a large hole in it:—

This accomplished, he crept through the orifice, and, with the aid of a candle, looked about him. He found that he could stand upright in a small chamber, and he at once descried the safe he had dreamt of embedded underneath the stairs. He was more than ever astonished when, on turning round, he found himself face to face with the door by which he had entered in his dream. The door had been hidden by the outside panelling, but was evidently the secret entrance which had been used by the former occupant of the building, who had contrived this ingenious hiding-place for his valuables. What the safe contained was the most important consideration, but Mr. Smith did not have it tampered with in any way. He preferred to preserve it intact, and has since given directions for a key to be made to fit it. Before Mr. Smith's time the place was occupied by a jeweller. Since his strange discovery Mr. Smith has found that above the staircase, which winds around like the stairway of a castle, there is another space boarded up. He intends taking an early opportunity of investigating this secret enclosure also, and it may be that still more curious finds await him in this upper chamber.

#### TRANSITION OF COLONEL G. Le MESURIER TAYLOR.

Through a night of sorrow we often wake to a glorious dawn; so, though it is with much regret that I have to write of the passing out of this earth life of my dear friend Colonel G. Le Mesurier Taylor, I cannot but rejoice, with all who knew his gentle, thoughtful nature, that that passing means to him a glorious dawn. For sixteen years I have been his firm and trusted friend and co-worker in his investigations in search of evidence that would establish the certainty of a life after the death of the body, into which research he was awakened by the deep sorrow of his life, the early loss of his much beloved wife. Any words of mine would be poor to express his indefatigable patience, his careful examination of every fragment of evidence, which he sifted and looked at from every point of view. In the pursuit of the truth which he so much desired to know he spared neither time, labour, nor money, and I feel privileged in being able to state confidently that he was at last able to say 'I have found.' Of this I hope to give more detailed account in the book, to be published later, dealing with our united work. The results of his long, painstaking and thorough investigations finally gave him the comfort of the belief in the continued progression of life and led him to be content to trust the unseen future. From the doubting attitude of his scientific, analytical mind, he at last awoke, somewhat reluctantly, to the realisation of the fact that the evidence which he had accumulated was inexpressibly too definite and conclusive to be susceptible of explanation on the ground of chance coincidence or any other theory that excluded spirit action, and he passed over happy in the belief that the one he sought so earnestly would be ready and waiting to greet him and give him welcome. For some years

past Spiritualism was a great comfort and help to him; it was the guiding hand that led him to recognise the certainty of a loving God. He has left sealed papers with me that contain the possibilities of confirming evidence of his return to speak the message of communion to those on this side.

For many years on the Council of the Society for Psychical Research, he laboured earnestly with and for the members of that Council, anxiously desiring to convince them of what he himself had found; Mr. Myers, Professor Sidgwick, Dr. Hodgson, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Barrett and many others were his respected friends. His deep sympathies were with the London Spiritualist Alliance, and he always spoke with much appreciation and warmth of his friend Mr. E. Dawson Rogers and other active members of that body. 'LIGHT' was kept as his Sunday literature, and he availed himself of any opportunity he had of attending the Spiritualist services.

At rest from material ills and sicknesses his mortal form has been laid beside that of the one he loved, but as the Phoenix rises out of the fire and the butterfly from the chrysalis so the spirit awakes to its glorious inheritance of activity and work!

L. HOME.

#### SPIRITUALISM IN THE UNITED STATES.

The 'Progressive Thinker' for September 30th publishes in advance the report prepared by Mr. George B. Warne, president of the National Spiritualist Association of the United States, for the opening of the Annual Convention, fixed for October 10th, at St. Louis. In this eminently hopeful document Mr. Warne says:—

It is ours to note a steady growth, rather than an abatement of interest, upon the part of the multitude in proofs of the continuity of life for the individual after death. Newspapers and monthly periodicals, with rare exceptions, continue a tolerant attitude toward the affirmative side of that great question. Suppliers of mental pabulum are as much obliged to meet the current demands of actual or prospective patrons, as are the purveyors to the physical necessities of mankind.

Since the beginning of 1911 leading theatres in some of our metropolitan centres have been thronged with people to witness presentations of 'The Return of Peter Grimm.' Simple in conception, painstaking in details, accurate in portrayal of the realities, difficulties, and possibilities which confront Myn Herr Grimm on the plane of spirit life, and sublimely impressive at critical moments, the play has inculcated lessons of universal interest in a most effective manner. David Belasco, the facile creator and master manager, and David Warfield, the princely delineator, have so co-operated as to comfort sorrowing hearts and make even the careless feel the possibility of all they witnessed, and hope that the scenes of the mimic stage are only faint foreshadowings of the actual realities awaiting each one in turn. Truth comes through familiar and unexpected avenues, and can never be denied a final, fair, and full hearing. . . . During the past winter proposed measures hostile to mediumship and our constitutional rights as American citizens have failed of adoption in the Legislatures of New York, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Missouri. No small credit for that outcome is due to the alert watchfulness and wisely chosen efforts of the officers of our State Associations in those jurisdictions.

Mr. Warne pays a high tribute to the memory of the noble helpers in the cause who have been called higher during the year, and congratulates the Convention on the fact that the organised work of Spiritualism is marching along the highway of material prosperity. In concluding, he says:—

We are assembled in this Convention to add our efforts to the furtherance of the plans proclaimed at the birth of our Association in 1893. Their full fruition is yet in the future. It remains for the hands now holding the oars to pull in harmonious stroke for more general co-operation, more perfect protection of worthy mediumship of every phase, and more complete enjoyment in each State and municipality of this great nation of the religious freedom guaranteed to every American citizen.

MARRIAGE:—At the Unitarian Church, Newcastle-on-Tyne, on October 12th, by the Rev. Alfred Hall, M.A., Harry A. Kersey, of Grosvenor-place, Jesmond, to Mary (Violet), widow of the late Robert L. Sinclair, of Jesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne. We wish the newly-married couple every happiness.



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

### THE MYSTICAL SIDE OF FREEMASONRY.

A vast amount of scholarship and research is contained in the two massive volumes in which Mr. A. E. Waite sets forth 'The Secret Tradition in Freemasonry' (Rebman, Limited, London, £2 2s. net). Mr. Waite has acquired a reputation as one of the foremost authorities on occult and mystical subjects, and it is not surprising to find, therefore, that he treats his present theme from a mystical standpoint. He claims, in fact, that 'Masonry offers an instance in Christian times of the Secret Tradition expressed in dramatic form.'

Much of the evidence concerning that tradition was given in a remarkable volume by the same author, 'The Hidden Church of the Holy Graal,' which was reviewed in 'LIGHT' some considerable time ago. That great legend, which relates to the loss by humanity of a 'certain treasure of secret life' (which it is ultimately to regain) is, our author maintains, implicit in all the mystical literature of the past, its main avenue of transmission in the West being the Latin Church. He finds its symbology vividly expressed in alchemy (which was concerned with very much deeper matters than the discovery of the yellow metal or the Philosopher's Stone): but alchemy was a doctrine of attainment. Its chief aim was not to perpetuate the memory of man's great loss so much as to discover the means of restoration. Like the Graal Legend it was concerned with a Great Quest. In the Kabbalah the tradition deals with the mystery of 'the Lost Word,' while it appears in various forms in the lesser mystical cults and schools, as well as in certain orders of chivalry.

It has apparently been reserved to Mr. Waite to find in the doctrines and rituals of Masonry itself certain affinities to the mystery of loss and quest. Whether those who are equally versed in the arcana of Freemasonry will accept his conclusions is yet to be seen; but at least they are presented with a profundity of learning and a skill in synthesis that entitles them to a respectful consideration.

Just as the literature of the Holy Graal is concerned with a 'House of many Hallows,' so (on the hypothesis) the inner side of Masonry relates to the erection—or attempted erection—of a 'Holy House,' the building of which was frustrated by a dark conspiracy, as the result of which certain things—the plans, it may be—were lost. The loss, however, was more apparent than real, what actually occurred being 'that an intended manifestation was delayed through the ages.' This fact, though known to certain of the initiates, was not by them communicated to their less

enlightened brethren, with the result that 'Symbolical Masonry draws from a Fellow Craft Lodge instead of a Lodge of Masters.' And we read that:—

Craft Masonry signifies a quest for that which was lost, like the Word in Kabbalism; for that which has been hidden, like the Holy Vessel in the Graal; for that which is communicated by God, like the Mystic Stone of Alchemy; but Word and Vessel and Stone are all evasions.

Pursuing the analogy, we learn that the Masonic idea on its esoteric side is the creation of the 'Holy House' already mentioned, but in so spiritualised a form that it can be erected only in the heart. This purpose is not openly expressed except by way of rite and symbol, since 'there is nothing so silent as Masonry in respect of its real claims, because they are below the surface.' The thing is invested designedly in a cloud of mystery; there are veils and evasions. Mr. Waite even hints at the existence of 'Veiled Masters far from the public eye,' an allusion which irresistibly suggests the Mahatmas of Theosophy.

A manifestly wide and deep knowledge of Masonry, past and present, enables Mr. Waite to bring to the aid of his thesis a formidable array of Masonic authorities, and, by way of collateral testimony, he cites extensively from other sources more or less related to the subject. The author's reasoning has to be followed on a plane greatly removed from the ordinary associations of Freemasonry. He claims, indeed, that Freemasonry in essence must be regarded as distinct from the incorporated societies by which, in its external aspect, it is represented. Certainly we quite coincide in his assertion that 'the position is inscrutable along all ordinary lines.' And it is equally conceivable that the great majority of those who participate in the rites of Masonry have never penetrated to the underlying idea, as presented by the author, viz., the building of a Mystic Temple. But then, Mr. Waite is dealing with a transformed Freemasonry; he believes that sometime in the seventeenth century a school of Kabbalists transmuted it in true alchemystical fashion, imparting to its doctrines a new and higher significance which they did not previously bear or of which they had, at least for the time, lost sight and touch.

There is a world of curious learning in the two massy tomes, and, quite apart from the central argument, they contain much that should prove attractive to the mystic and the romanticist. For our own part, although not acutely concerned with the main problem regarding Freemasonry, we find the work of interest as a testimony to the eternal and unquenchable strivings of the human spirit. Whether its quest is symbolised by a magical Stone, a Holy Vessel, or a House of Vision, it is ever on pilgrimage in search of the Divine Reality. No material ideal has ever satisfied or will ever satisfy it. Its image-making faculty—its imagination—prompts it to weave strange fantasies about the object of its quest as something concealed, and manifested only under veils and symbols—even sometimes guarded by mysterious wardens like the treasures in ancient legends. But to us the whole matter is summed up in the words 'Self Realisation,' the discovery of the Divinity within the soul itself. The Great Teacher put it all into one flashing utterance: 'The Kingdom of God is within you.'

THERE is always room for and work to be done by earnest and capable men and women in Spiritualism as in everything else. As L. M. Montgomery well says: 'There are never too many good, honest men of business, ready to do clean big things for the betterment of humanity and the upbuilding of their country, to plan great enterprises and carry them through with brain and courage, to manage and control, to aim high and strike one's aim.'

## CONVERSAZIONE OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A numerous gathering of the Members and Associates of the Alliance attended the *Conversazione* held in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, on Thursday evening, the 12th inst. The spirit of animation and cordiality which prevailed was in happy contrast to the gloomy and depressing conditions of the external world—political and climatic—and the event, as the chairman said, portended well for the winter Session of the Alliance thus inaugurated. To the undisguised pleasure of the meeting, Miss Lilian Whiting was present, journeying from France for that purpose, and delivered an inspiring address (a report of which appears below); Mr. A. V. Peters gave a demonstration of his remarkable clairvoyant powers, and Mr. Karl Kaps' orchestra rendered an excellent programme of music.

MR. HENRY WITHALL (Vice-President), in opening the proceedings, said: I am glad to-night to see so many assembled, because it seems to augur well for our forthcoming session, and, on behalf of our Council, I desire to welcome all our old friends and also those who have recently joined us. I hope that during this coming year they will become enthusiastic in our cause, thoroughly convinced of the reality of Spiritualism, and willing to be messengers and advocates of our movement. The work of Spiritualism is not done merely from the platform: it is done by all of you who use your influence on your friends and acquaintances to induce them to join us, and if they do so the means are provided by which they may become satisfied of the truth of spirit communion. We do not want anyone to accept our views on hearsay; we want them to investigate for themselves and so become firmly convinced, and it is with this idea that we have made arrangements by which Members may attend our circles on Tuesday and Friday afternoons free of charge. We regret that we cannot at present include our Associates in this privilege.

The Chairman then referred to the consolatory aspects of Spiritualism in relation to those bereaved by death. Mourners could not realise the nearness of those from whom they were thus separated so thoroughly as when they mingled with Spiritualists. Thousands of their unseen friends took advantage of such occasions as the present one to come into association with those still in the body. They could accomplish this through the interblending of the magnetic auras of those who met in harmonious conditions. And it was a fact that after such meetings people went away physically improved and mentally enlightened by their experience. It was a good thing, then, to associate with Spiritualists and to support their work.

Alluding to the presence of Miss Lilian Whiting, the Chairman said that in the announcement of the meeting it was stated that Miss Whiting would be present if she were in London. It gave him great pleasure to announce that she was with them—she had come from Paris especially for that purpose. He hoped they would give her a hearty welcome, especially as she was going to speak to them regarding the value of Spiritualism—that Spiritualism which they had assembled to represent. (Applause.)

MISS LILIAN WHITING said: The 'value of Spiritualism' is simply measured by the value of life itself, using the term in its most complete and far-reaching significance, as including both the life which now is and that which is to come. When this theme was first suggested, I mentally demurred, as it seemed to me to have that insuperable obstacle of the obvious. To discuss its value seemed like discussing the value of learning to read and write, or the value of intelligence and morality. 'The solar system has no anxiety about its reputation,' says our Emerson, and Spiritualism need have as little, for its philosophy is the explanation of the vast and stupendous problem of human life; its faith is the expansion of religion; its conception of the profound significance of that phase of experience which lies between birth and death is the conception that absolutely agrees with the teachings of Jesus, the Christ, and which is substantiated and illustrated by the entire teachings and records of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Still, even the obvious sometimes fascinates us into some degree of analysis. Let us,

then, after focussing its significance in one strong, brilliant ray that illuminates the entire workings of the universe, submit it to a sort of spectrum analysis. Is not, perhaps, its initial value that of giving to us a clear and accurate conception of the relative significance of the duration of that part of life we are now living, that which begins with birth and ends with the change which we call death? It is as disastrous an error to ascribe undue importance to this period as it is to under-estimate its importance. It might be compared to the educational phase which lies between the primary school and the University. If the student in the Grammar or the High School conceived of the University as being the really determining and important thing in his educational progress, and thriftily resolved not to tax himself with any particular application to study until he entered the University, why, obviously, he never *would* enter. For all progress is a series of sequences, and if the series is broken at any link, the progress is checked until that link is restored. So one salient value of Spiritualism is the just and due—never the undue—importance that it ascribes to life in the physical world. The phases of experience, if any, which have preceded the one in which we now find ourselves are not, perhaps, absolutely and definitely to be described, even by our friends the Theosophists, who have contributed much of speculative and of absolute value; but just what phases *succeed* this present one is being constantly revealed to us—revealed in an increasing degree, the measure of which largely corresponds with the measure of our own spiritual development. Jesus came to bring life and immortality to light, and he makes the immediate future after the transition into the ethereal world absolutely clear to us in proportion as we are able to lay hold of and interpret the divine laws.

Another vital value in Spiritualism is that of the regenerative power of hope. The Spiritualist, if he be true to his faith, never despairs. Darkness and disaster and calamities may come upon him; but he knows that nothing is final, nothing is fatal. Within the cloud the glory lives undimmed. It is, of course, true that the Christian believer who is not so fortunate as to have yet progressed to the larger and more inclusive philosophy that we call Spiritualism has this same assurance, based on faith in his Saviour, but he believes without any realisation of the steps and the processes of the spiritual law, while the Spiritualist, in greater or less measure, does know of the nature of these processes. As a Churchwoman, I could always say, from the depths of my heart, 'Faith is enough, however blind and ignorant I may be of the ways through which I am led'; I could always, with all the power and fervour of which I am capable, say 'Thy grace is sufficient for me.' Nevertheless I find no less an authority than St. Paul counselling us to add to our faith knowledge. When knowledge is added, faith is not less, it is even more, profoundly significant. If a blind man were being led through an interesting and beautiful region by a friend in whom he had complete trust, he would walk by faith; yet, were his sight restored, he would add to his faith knowledge, he would have an increased understanding and appreciation of the miracle of divine law, as seen in Nature; his spirit would expand; he would be more fully a companion and friend; he would be able to enter still more deeply into those sacred relations of the spirit to its Creator.

As the true Spiritualist never despairs, he is in the position to conquer evil and misfortune, knowing they are but temporary phases of life, and that all evil, whatever its guise, can be overcome with good. In the beautiful expression in the Bahai literature, he can say, 'My calamity is my opportunity; it is not fire and vengeance, it is Light and Love.' He will not be driven to the awful spiritual disaster of suicide. In the wave of suicidal mania that has, of late years especially, swept over the United States, and perhaps equally over this vast and noble Empire, how one has longed to preach the gospel of Spiritualism in a universal way—to teach the simple truth that whatever the suicide evades by his severance from the physical life, he precipitates himself into conditions far worse, out of which, by the divine law, he must emerge with terrible suffering and trial before he can even regain the place that he so rashly quitted, much less attain to something higher. It is not that God punishes evil, but that evil carries within itself the germ of

its own bitter consequences. Time forbids me to dwell in detail on this point, but the grave importance of understanding the true nature of the law of life and the results that follow the taking of one's own life is reflected around us by the tragedies in the daily press of every day in the year. The despair out of which the suicidal mania springs is closely allied to lunacy; it is on the direct road to it; and this tendency could be, and would be, corrected by some understanding of spiritual laws. To realise that our Heavenly Father acts through His messengers; that He, 'to whom all hearts are open' and 'from whom no secrets are hid,' will send our own nearest friends, or other intelligences, if better suited to the work, to help and uplift us; that the parent, the brother or sister, the husband or wife, the friend most precious, who has withdrawn from the physical body, is not gone from us but is nearer than before; and, far from being lost, is gained; that the more or less imperfect relations of love and friendship on earth are perfected and rendered still more vital, and even practically efficacious, by the release from the trammels of the physical body, is to have that serene and living faith in Christ, and in his teachings of immortality, that transfigures our human life.

A few months ago there came to me a message from the Rev. Dr. Edward Everett Hale, whose name needs no introduction, which seemed to me singularly illustrative of the absolute continuity of consciousness. Last spring Dr. Hyslop, than whom no more earnest and faithful researcher into spiritual laws has ever lived, was in Boston having a prolonged series of séances with Mrs. Minnie M. Soule, the most remarkable transmitter of significant messages that I have known. It is she with whom Dr. Hyslop is carrying on a work not yet given to the public, and of which I must not say more. But one evening Dr. Hyslop said to me, 'Did you know Dr. Hale?' 'Oh, yes,' I replied. 'But I mean, did you know him at all intimately, in any familiar way?' I still replied that I did. 'Well,' continued Dr. Hyslop, 'he sent you the queerest message at this morning's sitting; I can't understand it. He said: "Tell Lilian Whiting I have met Kate Field, and that she is the most adventurous spirit I have ever seen in a feminine body."'

'But I quite understand this, Dr. Hyslop,' I returned, 'for the beginning of that message lies fifteen years in the past. Miss Field died in May of 1896. I was in Paris, and apropos to nothing on my part, I had a little note from Dr. Hale that began: "Susan [his sister] tells me that the death of Kate Field will be a great grief to you. I want to tell you how sorry I am. I did not know Kate Field; I hope I shall know her." Now Dr. Hale passed into 'the life more abundant' thirteen years after, in the June of 1909, and do you not see, Dr. Hyslop,' I continued, 'how he has taken up that kindly interest in Miss Field, whom he had never met here but hoped he should meet? He has met her now and, recalling the little note he then wrote to me, says, naturally, "Tell Lilian I have met Kate Field," and then he adds the impression she had made on him of being, for a woman, an "adventurous spirit." How perfectly simple and natural it all is.' So Dr. Hyslop also thought, and I promised to find the original note, of 1896, which Dr. Hale had written, to go, with the record, into Dr. Hyslop's archives.

The value of Spiritualism? Is it not the value of a rational, noble, and truthful conception of the nature of life in its wholeness—the life that now is, in its close relations with the life that is to come? Is it not the value of an increasing consciousness that there is no break in our dearest relations, no loss of precious companionships, no interruption to our expression—that, as Robert Browning says:—

'No work begun shall ever pause for death'?

Is it not the value of realising that the law of evolution, which pervades the entire universe, persists in precisely the same way over man's life; that death is but the withdrawal from the physical body, as we may withdraw from our apparel, with as little change, in any immediate sense, of individualism and with no break in consciousness? Robert Dale Owen, in a message through Mrs. Cora Richmond, described how, in the moment of transition, he saw, with equal clearness, the friends in both the physical and ethereal realms around him. 'I was not surprised at this,' he said; 'it was in accord with what I had known for more than twenty years. But there was one surprise.

I had never even faintly dreamed of the wonderful sense of exhilaration, and the feeling of a power to instantly achieve and accomplish anything, that I experienced on leaving the body.'

This it is which prefigures itself to us as the value of Spiritualism: the larger knowledge of the Divine law by which to shape and amend our lives; an extension of sympathetic and beautiful relations; that 'closer walk with God' which comprehends all the faith and the longing of the Christian follower of the Christ; the recognition of spiritual companionship; and we hear again the ringing words of England's and of the world's greatest woman-poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, when she beheld her vision of poets:—

'Glory to God, to God,' he saith;  
'Knowledge by suffering entereth,  
And Life is perfected by Death.'

(Loud applause.)

Mr. A. V. Peters, after giving a brief message of greeting from the late Mr. J. B. Shipley, which he had received at one of his home circles, described a number of spirit people whom he saw clairvoyantly, in most instances accompanying the description with details of personal characteristics or peculiarities, or incidents connected with the earth life of the spirits, that enabled the recipients readily to recognise the descriptions as those of their departed friends.

#### THE MUSIC.

Amongst the pieces rendered by Mr. Karl Kaps' orchestra were the following:—

March: 'Viennese' (*Schrammel*); Intermezzo: 'Rendez-vous' (*Aletter*); Valse: 'Septembre' (*Godin*); Barcarolle: 'Tales of Hoffmann' (*Offenbach*); Dance: 'In the Shadows' (*Finck*); Selection: 'Chocolate Soldier' (*Oscar Strauss*); Waltz: 'The Druid's Prayer' (*Dawson*); Selection: 'The Arcadians' (*Moncton*); Two-Step: 'Bustlin' Billy' (*Kaps*).

#### 'THE CREED OF AN AGNOSTIC SPIRITUALIST.'

Everything is to the good that awakens interest in our subject, and Mr. J. Arthur Hill's striking contribution, under the above title, to the September number of 'The National Review' is well calculated to have that effect. Mr. Hill starts by saying that, like Huxley, he is an agnostic. He has no deep sense of certainty about anything. He is not prepared to say that he *knows* even that the sun will rise to-morrow. But he has opinions, and, while not a Spiritualist in the most usual sense of the term, he admits to being a psychical researcher, and one, moreover, who has been convinced rather against his will that things happen which orthodox science does not account for, and which suggest the possible or probable agency of minds other than those of people at present in the flesh. Seeing, however, that he is not at all sure of his interpretation of the facts, though he is pretty sure of the facts themselves, he invents and adopts the title of 'Agnostic Spiritualist.'

Mr. Hill goes on to answer the questions 'What do I believe and why?' taking the second question first. At the outset he narrates a striking case of true diagnosis of disease from a lock of hair, the person from whose head the lock was taken not being present and the person who brought it to the medium being quite ignorant as to the nature of the disease from which her friend suffered. From this experiment and others Mr. Hill suggests that somehow or other, by handling a lock of hair or an object worn by an absent person, a medium can sometimes gain knowledge for which neither fraud, nor chance, nor thought-transference from the sitter can account. He has little or no belief that spirits have anything to do with this kind of phenomena, but he is convinced that there is some unrecognised channel of knowledge by which perceptions reach the medium's mind from some region as unknown to his own consciousness as to that of the sitter.

After these experiments, and sundry others with useless mediums, Mr. Hill and his friends 'struck oil' in the shape of a medium who gave astonishing results—describing spirit forms, giving full age and other details, and being practically always right. Mr. Hill narrates particulars of some remarkable tests obtained through this medium, and while he sees no necessity to invoke spirits as a general explanation, he admits in one case that the incident suggests the genuineness of the entity purport-



ing to communicate. Thought-transference—a legitimate supposition in explanation of some of the facts—does not, he affirms, cover all, for in some cases the sitters were inclined to deny the accuracy of a statement which, after all, turned out to be correct. What the true explanation is he refrains from saying in any dogmatic fashion. Some of the incidents point to clairvoyance, others at least suggest, though they do not prove, the agency of a surviving mind that formerly manifested itself through an earthly body. This is the extent of Mr. Hill's swing in the direction of Spiritualism. Spiritualists in general seem to him to be much too ready to accept phenomena at their face value. 'But let us,' he concludes, 'refrain from postulating omnipotent subconscious minds, which would, of course, explain everything—or, as I hold, nothing.'

### ITEMS OF INTEREST.

A thoughtful correspondent writes: 'The people want reliable clairvoyance and will go where they can get it. The way in which a medium who recently visited our society was guided to the strangers was remarkable. She gave a test (three or four, in fact) to one man well known to me as a sceptic, a man who a short time ago spoke against us and said that his experience proved that mediums were mostly frauds. Last night he had two descriptions given to him which he reluctantly had to recognise, also four names of people known to him.' This is the kind of work which helps to convince inquirers and inspires Spiritualists with renewed hope and energy.

Writing in 'The Messenger and Plan,' for October, Mr. R. H. Yates says: 'Perhaps the greatest lessons that Spiritualism has taught me are those concerning my own spiritual nature, the greatest revelations are those concerning the stored up possibilities of my own life, how I may be the centre of forces radiating from me, energising, stimulating, and linking up with other centres equally potent, and become consciously a part of a mighty scheme for the evolving of a race of beings who shall know God because they shall know each other by co-operating in the spirit of love in all the great ideals and enterprises that tend to make the world better. Such an enterprise is Spiritualism, it invites all the best in men and women, it offers facilities for labour and gives an inspiration no other movement can, it extends our horizon, it makes deeper grooves for our experiences, it links us up with forces that are infinite. Oh! what a wonderful world of possibilities it opens out to us in which labour becomes a joy.'

Whether or not the so-called lower animals know anything of telepathy or clairvoyance, they would certainly appear to possess powers of perception other than those of the physical senses. Over the signature 'Puzzled' a correspondent writes to the 'Daily Express' as follows: 'I have a little fox terrier who was viciously attacked some time ago by a big retriever which passes my house several times a day with its master. Now, whenever the retriever passes through the street my terrier invariably notifies us of the fact by excitedly barking and running around. He certainly cannot see the retriever because the window is too high to admit of that. Moreover, he is usually lying down on the hearthrug when he begins to give us warning of the retriever's approach—the retriever being sometimes at the extreme end of the street, and even not visible to us from the window. How, then, does my little dog know of the other's approach?'

The revolt against the pessimistic idea that this is a sad world goes on apace, and we are glad of it. One of the latest protests comes from 'K. W. H.,' in 'The Christian Commonwealth.' He rightly says: 'It is not necessary to deny or belittle the evil that is at present in the world in order to affirm that it is not a sad world. It is serious enough and arduous enough, but it is not sad. The majority of us have not found it sad, whatever the preacher may say. For the immense majority of people happy experiences hopelessly outnumber bitter experiences. The present writer has at times believed the world to be sad, but has lived long enough to understand that in those gloomy moments a good deal more was wrong with his vision than was awry with the world. . . . The average human heart is kind. The normal human life has rich ingredients of sympathy and thoughtfulness and mercy and pity. These lie at the root of things. The burden of the world is carried for the most part on the broad shoulders of average normal life. It would appear as if the fabric and structure of human society rests upon this basic rock of average, normal

kindliness, soundness, goodness of the heart. If this is true, what about the theory of a "sad world"? Are we going to trust the Church's vision, or, rather, that of the Creator himself, who, seeing what was before him, and understanding all its potentialities, said that the world was "very good"? Do we not need a new interpretation of religion in terms of joy?'

The Bishop of Lichfield, in his opening Address at the recent Church Congress at Stoke, dealt quite frankly with the difficulties which face the Church at the present time. He admitted that the clergy 'need to know the real mind of the laity,' and said that 'the relation of man to God, of the human to the Divine, of the natural to the supernatural as revealed in Christ, should be presented in terms which commend themselves to the consciences of men, and satisfy their genuine longing for vital religion. Men desire to render a reasonable service to God, and also to give to their fellow-men a reason for the hope that is in them. We must not quench the spirit. . . . We must take heed that we do not confound our own opinion with the Faith, and alienate those who believe in God, in Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, with a personal faith and experience truer, and stronger, and more vital than our own, but who do not and cannot accept the human and limited opinions or interpretations of any past age. . . . It is in the atmosphere of to-day that we must read the signs of the times and be ready to face the problems of our own age. Each generation must work out its own salvation.' Further, after declaring his belief that no living member of the Church is destitute of spiritual gifts, and dealing with certain 'obstacles to progress,' he continued: 'A vision rises up, if these obstacles were removed, of an access of spiritual power to the whole body of the Church, which at present is totally lost, but, if recovered, would make its influence for good irresistible.'

Experienced and thoughtful Spiritualists can often assist perplexed inquirers, and be of great service to them at critical stages of their investigations. A correspondent illustrated this fact in a recent letter, in which he said: 'After experiences of what I knew intuitively to be the real expression of spirit life and thought, I came on masses of perplexing stuff which belonged neither to earth nor heaven. It was not diabolical—it was not clever enough—nor was it pure twaddle, for it had gleams of something unearthly, and it perplexed me immensely. It was then I made acquaintance with the intermediate or "dream state" of consciousness, the border-land between sane earth life and sane spirit life. I was a good deal bothered by it, for to express a doubt or a question invariably raised the angry passions of the people who received it all with gaping credulity. And it was much easier to accept the bunkum as coming from spiritual sources than to go painfully into a philosophical inquiry as to its true sources; and it was here that I received invaluable help from a friend, who gave me a comprehensive rationale of the whole subject. But it meant getting frequently at loggerheads with the unthinking section of Spiritualists, who appeared to suspect that you wanted to knock away the foundations of their faith, and raged and ramped accordingly. But I found the older generation of Spiritualists had made discoveries of their own in the same region—A. J. Davis amongst them, also dear old James Burns.'

### 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.*

#### The Order of the Star in the East.

SIR,—In answer to 'Libra's' questions regarding the 'Order of the Star in the East,' may I refer him to Mrs. Besant's books 'The Changing World' and 'The Immediate Future'? He will find in the chapters 'The Coming Christ' and 'The Coming of a World Teacher,' the reasons, based on the author's occult knowledge, for belief in the coming of the World Teacher and for his identity with the Christ. Mrs. Besant certainly claims to know the truth of what she teaches, but as 'no one can acquire for another—not one; no one can grow for another—not one' (Walt Whitman), such knowledge cannot be communicated directly, though logical reasons for belief in any doctrine can, as has been done in this case, be put forward for consideration. John the Baptist did not offer the world any 'evidence or proof' justifying his claim to possess his special and specific knowledge concerning 'he that cometh after me.' John merely asserted the fact. For the fact that 'history does repeat itself' is one of the justifications of the present teaching, many of the conditions at the time of Christ being now repeated.

If 'Libra' is a student of occultism he may have noticed that occultists are not in the habit of offering proofs or direct evidence of their teaching. Such a procedure is, I understand, forbidden; for occultists are disciples of, and members in, a graded hierarchy, acting under the orders of their superiors. Their teaching has to stand on its own merits for the world at large, and not on authority, and for the self-evident reason that the authority the occultist recognises and obeys is not existent to the less evolved man.

The teacher will justify his right to his title of World Teacher by the teaching he gives. There is no other way. History shows mankind as more sceptical than credulous of any teacher, and no religious teacher has yet been universally followed or acknowledged. A spurious Christ will soon betray himself; a Christ, a World Teacher, cannot be manufactured by any society or any order, or any person. False prophets are sure to arise in the future as in the past.

It is a law of Nature that those akin in nature and temperament recognise each other and are attracted to each other. The 'Order of the Star in the East' aims at developing in its members the Christlike qualities with the object, among others, of awakening in them the discrimination which will enable them to reject the false and accept the true Christ. Truly the 'elect' only, in the past, recognised the Christ; the majority of the Jews excluded themselves, having 'eyes that saw not, and ears that heard not'; a mental attitude very likely to be repeated. An attitude of belief—in those who are not in a position to know—is necessary for the reception of any truth—religious or otherwise. But it is not in the least obligatory for anyone to believe this particular teaching. It is not being given alone by Mrs. Besant. There seems a widespread spirit of expectancy of a new teacher in the air. We hear of Christian ministers reviving a belief in the Second Advent, a Christian belief held since Christ's Ascension, and an integral part of Christian doctrine. We hear of wandering ascetics in the East preaching the coming of an Avatara or Teacher; of a Jewish community in Arabia who have seen a sign in the heavens signifying to them the coming of a teacher; of Buddhists holding the same belief. And the reception given to, and the membership, ever increasing numerically, of the 'Order of the Star in the East,' show that to many the teaching is reasonable and that the coming of the Lord is eagerly anticipated by many devout and loving hearts, willing to work in unison to 'prepare His ways and to make ready His path.' The members of the 'Order of the Star in the East' recognise also with joy the facts I have quoted which show that outside the Order there are many—probably future disciples of the Christ—co-operating in their work. Again, I believe, there will be many folds and many sheep.—Yours, &c.,

ELISABETH SEVERS.

P.S.—As this week I am sailing for India I regret I shall be unable to pursue further this correspondence.

Bath, October 8th, 1911.

SIR,—I thank you for your courtesy in forwarding me an advance copy of Miss Severs' reply to my series of questions regarding the 'Order of the Star in the East' which appeared in your issue of the 7th inst.

I am disappointed with Miss Severs' letter, which, to me, is not a reply at all. It is only an attempt to justify a claim to specific knowledge on particularly negative statements.

I understand that through occult means certain persons have been informed that a great World Teacher will be born, presumably in the East, and probably soon. Such a person will be no other than the reincarnated Christ of Christianity. We are therefore invited to membership of the Order referred to, to welcome this teacher.

Let us see what this involves:—

1. Complete acceptance of the bare statements of certain occultists, in conjunction with confident anticipations and negative conclusions.
2. Acceptance of the doctrine of reincarnation.
3. Faith sufficient—the result of schooling the mind to certain habits of thought—to accept a promised teacher as being the actual reincarnated Christ of Christianity.

With regard to the first, as no positive evidence can be offered, the prophecy must 'stand on its own merits.' And as the truth of any prophetic utterance can only be proven by the culmination of events to which it relates, we must trust the prophets, and simply 'wait and see.'

The second is a more serious matter. There is not a whit of tabulated scientific evidence to prove that the doctrine of reincarnation is true. It is an hypothesis, a working theory only. Those who do not, through lack of evidence, believe in reincarnation cannot, of course, accept the prophecy.

With regard to the third, does Miss Severs wish it to be

believed that the development of Christlike qualities will enable the members of the Order to discriminate, that if presented to a teacher they will be able to say positively: 'This is the reincarnated Christ of Christianity'? If so, blind faith will once again dethrone reason. We shall, indeed, have faith without knowledge.

Profound believer as I am that those 'akin in nature and temperament' are attracted to each other, and also in the desirability of the development of Christlike qualities, it is straining faith to its utmost limits to ask it to decide something which ought to be decided by a direct appeal to facts.

It is to be hoped that those who are likely to become members of the Order will subject themselves to a severe questioning as to what facts justify them in becoming associates, and further seriously to ask how they will be able, should they be presented to a teacher, to know he is the reincarnated Christ of Christianity!

A great soul may arise at any time, as many have arisen in the past. Out of the womb of the Undefinable, what greatness may not come? But I have a profound conviction that whenever another great teacher does arise, he will—as all great teachers have been—be quite indifferent as to whether we are members of this or that order. Let us only be truthseekers, he will stretch out his hands to bless us.—Yours, &c.,

'LIBRA.'

#### Affinities and Counterparts.

SIR,—In reply to 'Omnia Vincit Amor,' when I said I heartily agreed with the condemnation of the nonsense and wickedness written and propagated in regard to the word 'affinity,' I thought it was unnecessary even to explain, so obvious was my meaning. The word 'affinity' has often been used in derision, both in America and here, in reference to 'Free Love.' Homes have been broken up by the so-called affinity. Between husband and wife, between mother and son, father and daughter, in true friendship and love, affinity means the exchange of true affection and spiritual understanding. It is the greatest gift on earth. But, alas! the true words and meaning have been dragged as a jewel in the mud, trampled under foot, misunderstood, and tossed to swine.—Yours, &c.,

FLORA AMES.

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of October 7th 'F.' states that he 'does believe in pure, unselfish love.' Counterpartal love is such, the twin souls working as one in perfect unison and harmony for the uplift of humanity. Farther on he says, 'When two persons truly and purely love each other their love must endure, and there can be no question as to reunion after death, for heaven would not be heaven were such loving hearts separated.' I entirely concur. He and I are in complete agreement as to the truth of counterpartal union.

As to 'marital infidelity and so-called "free-love" practices,' every truth can be put to a base use. Not all marriages on this earth are based on love. Are antipathies, then, to be tied together to all eternity? True and lasting marriages are made in heaven.

In the same issue 'Lover' asks for evidence. Such can only be given by those who know the truth of the doctrine of counterparts, or twin souls, experimentally, whether incarnate or discarnate, and even then it must rest on their *ipse dixit*, which might or might not satisfy 'Lover.' The fact that the union of twin souls in marriage is infrequent on this earth does not affect the truth of the doctrine. If two, who do not happen to be twin souls, are united in marriage, they can still live happily together while on this earth and meet in the next as brother and sister.—Yours, &c.,

OMNIA VINCIT AMOR.

[This discussion must now cease.—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

#### 'Bilocation.'

SIR,—Mr. Turvey and I are, I hope and believe, quite good friends, and I feel sure he will pardon me, especially as I am notifying the fact to him, for traversing a portion, at least, of the facts given by 'A. E. L.' in the letter he quotes in 'LIGHT,' of the 7th inst., page 479.

I was myself one of the four persons constituting the circle at 'A. E. L.'s' house on the Wednesday night in August, 1908, referred to in that letter, and although the event occurred over three years ago my recollection is clear as to the facts.

The table, which was very violent that night, in a pretty full electric light, at length tilted towards myself and tipped out the following: 'Turvey—Vincent—Play on—Parle Français—Go on to B's.' The others present said, 'Mr. Turvey often does this,' and "Play on" is a favourite expression of his,' and 'A. E. L.' then related to me the 'direct voice' and 'bed-

lifting' incidents which (I think) another person present confirmed, but I am not quite sure on this point.

I questioned this 'entity' and elicited replies as to two questions only, which next day I found, on telephoning to Mr. Turvey, were both inaccurate. I also found out in the same manner, both from him and from 'A. E. L.' that he had that morning telephoned to 'A. E. L.' to say that he was going to try and manifest there and afterwards to 'Go on to B's,' where another private circle would sit at the same time. B. and his circle were not so notified by telephone, and no such manifestation occurred there. Now I am very far from being one who denies the 'spirit hypothesis' entirely, or, on the other hand, from denying the various other hypotheses which may apply, each in certain other cases, for I am one of those who believe that each of the various hypotheses may apply, each in its own particular case.

Here, I submit, is a pretty clear case—not even of 'telepathy' of any sort whatever—but of 'unconscious cerebration' pure and simple on the part of 'A. E. L.' As regards the interpolation of the words 'Parle Français,' this appears to me to be unconscious cerebration on my own part, for I was all the previous week worrying over a nonsense-code which the table had given me the previous Wednesday, and trying to twist it into—French!

The words 'Parle Français' were not in my mind at all, but every student of psychic research is aware of how the sub-consciousness can twist and turn inside out and symbolise one's own conscious ideas.

Mrs. de la Spoer's experiences in 'crystal-gazing' (related by her many years ago as 'Miss X'; she was then Miss Goodrich Freer) are some of the best illustrations of this factor in Nature. The fact is, I think, 'A. E. L.' and I were that evening playing an unconscious game of mental 'see-saw.'

Surely it is a fortunate fact that this letter of 'A. E. L.' did arrive 'too late for publication' in Mr. Turvey's book, which I regret that so far I have not yet read. Of course what I say has no bearing on the séances that are mentioned in that book, as I was not present at them.—Yours, &c.,

G. H.

#### 'What is Knowledge?'

SIR,—The key to the solution of the problem propounded by Mr. F. C. Constable on page 485 has been supplied by himself on page 348. Writing on 'Man and the Universe' he there pointed out that we know nothing of size *per se*, but only of relations of size—that if the earth and all visible objects were alternately to increase and diminish in bulk we should be quite unconscious of the fact. Of course, the same thing applies to position: 'up' and 'down,' 'left' and 'right' are only relative terms, expressing the relationship of objects to the earth's surface and to our own bodies. If the picture on the retina of our eyes were to turn alternately to one side and the other, or even to swing completely round, we should, so far as visible appearances go, be none the wiser, as objects, including our own body and limbs, would continue to bear the same apparent relationship to each other. In Mr. Constable's problem the experimenter would appear to be viewing the needle under different conditions from those under which he views other objects; so that, while he is consciously putting into force a muscular action which experience tells him will increase the distance of his hand, and therefore of the needle, from the earth—or, in common phrase, will cause them to 'go up'—the appearance to his eye is that the needle is approaching the earth, not receding from it. If I am asked whether the picture he sees of the needle and its motion is false, I cannot say that it is positively so; I can only say it is so relatively to the picture he has of other objects. If it were possible for him to see everything under the same optical conditions as those which affect his vision of the needle, the disagreement between the evidence of his eyes and that of the muscle of his arm would cease.—Yours, &c.,

D. R. F.

P.S.—I wrote the foregoing before trying the experiment. I regret to say that, although I have carefully followed directions the expected result won't come off! My eyes persist in seeing the needle go up, not down. In my case, viewing it through a hole seems to make no difference in the conditions of vision.

SIR,—The problem propounded by Mr. F. C. Constable, on page 485, is well known, and I am not aware that its solution involves any special difficulty, or goes to the root of our theories of cognition. By some oversight, he does not describe the experiment correctly. The needle must be kept between the eye and the card, not on the farther side of the card. Any horizontal edge will do as well as a needle. When moved up from below a shutter appears to descend across the pin-

hole from above. The effect is due to the fact that the pin-hole acts as a point-source of light, and illuminates the retina uniformly. The needle or screen throws a shadow on the lower portions of the retina, and produces on them the effect of darkness. Now, it is just these lower portions of the retina which we use to see objects in the upper part of the field of view (somewhat as we look through the lower sash of a window to see stars nearly overhead). A darkness on the lower retina, therefore, makes us conclude, involuntarily, that the dark object is approaching from above.

The real arbiter of motion in a vertical line is the muscular sense, and so long as we can translate the messages of the retina into muscle messages, we do not fall into error. We are confronted by the same problem in shaving with the help of a mirror, which does not show us 'as others see us,' but reversed right and left.—Yours, &c.,

E. E. FOURNIER D'ALBE.

Birmingham, October 14th.

#### 'A Burning Question for Spiritualists.'

SIR,—I am delighted to read the letter from Mr. Stevenson, of Dundee, on page 401, and, as an Edinburgh Spiritualist, trust that the motion tabled at the last meeting of the Scottish Alliance will be carried out to the letter. Indeed, I would go further than Mr. Stevenson, and ask every society affiliated with the Alliance to purge its roll of platform speakers and clairvoyants, and see that no one given to anything approaching fortune-telling, or predicting what is to happen to one's mundane affairs three weeks or three months hence, be allowed to take part in the services. I regret to say that in a few cases our clairvoyants are a reproach to Spiritualism. If the cause which is dear to us is to succeed, we must exercise the strictest vigilance and keep our spiritual teachings pure and undefiled.

A great change has taken place in Scotland in regard to the attitude of many not within our ranks. Only six years ago, to mention Spiritualism to an orthodox friend meant being scoffed at or ridiculed. Now one is readily listened to by thinking men and women when relating personal spiritual experiences. There is plenty of mission work to be done in Scotland for Spiritualism, but if it is to be a success, every endeavour must be made to give from our platforms pure spiritual teachings and the very best illustrations of spiritual clairvoyance.—Yours, &c.,

Edinburgh.

JOHN DUNCAN.

#### Position of Bed during Sleep.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mary Gibbs, on page 480, wants to know why she sleeps quietly and in comfort when the bed is placed east and west, and yet has disturbed sleep when the bed is north and south. The following statements may throw some light on the matter.

Many years ago my attention was drawn to an article in a newspaper which suggested the south as the best position to lay the head during sleep. I tried the experiment without any particular reason for so doing, but finding myself next morning more refreshed and invigorated than usual, I continued the practice with beneficial results. But knowing that we are influenced in some degree by reading the ideas of others, the question forced itself on my mind, 'Do I sleep better because it was suggested to me, or are there more physical laws to account for the phenomena?' A hypnotist can influence his subjects by merely writing or telegraphing a command to sleep at a given time, and, this being so, we have yet to learn that a suggestion made through the medium of the Press is not as influential in producing results when presented to a sensitive reader as a suggestion emanating from a hypnotist by other modes, for hypnotists of the Nancy school maintain that there is suggestion without hypnosis.

On the other hand, it is recorded that the French Academy of Science made experiments with the body of a guillotined man which tended to prove that each human body is in itself an electric battery, one electrode being represented by the head and the other by the feet. It appears that the body was taken immediately after the execution and placed on a pivot to move as it might. After some vacillation, the upper portion of the body turned towards the north, and became stationary. It was then turned half-way round, but it soon regained its original position, the same results being repeatedly obtained until organic movements finally ceased. Why the experiments were made with a guillotined man instead of a healthy living subject puzzles me.

A doctor, writing to the 'St. Louis Globe Democrat,' informs his readers that 'each human body has magnetic poles, one positive and the other negative, some having the positive pole in the head and the negative pole in the feet, and *vice versa*.' If

this be so, it is more than ordinarily important that each person should sleep in that position which will ensure perfect harmony with the magnetic phenomena of the earth. For instance, if A. has his nervous or mental system more prominently developed than his motive or vital system, it is reasonable to infer that the positive pole is in the upper portion of his body, and that he should sleep with his head towards the south, and thereby induce a magnetic equilibrium between himself and the earth, producing the following result: The magnetic pole of the earth would affect the iron in the system and draw the blood from his head, enabling him to sleep much better than if he slept with his head to the north, in which case the blood would be drawn to the head, producing insomnia and the evils arising therefrom. If B. has the vital system in predominance he should sleep with his head to the north, as in this class of temperament we may infer the positive pole would be in the lower part of the body. Possibly those who possess a well-balanced temperament may sleep with their heads north, south, east, or west without experiencing any difference whatever.—Yours, &c.,

ALBERT ELLIS.

82, Central Beach, Blackpool.

#### A Death-bed Scene Repeated.

SIR,—Permit me to contribute to 'LIGHT' an instance of a remarkable proof of spirit identity received in an interview with Mr. J. J. Vango.

I was in attendance at the 'death-bed' of an old friend for several days prior to his transition. A few hours before he passed over he asked his sister to give him his watch and chain, from a drawer which he indicated. He then handed them over to me in a very peculiar manner, accompanied by a characteristic observation. Some time subsequently I went to one of Mr. Vango's sésances. I had never previously seen Mr. Vango, and was quite unknown to him. When it came to my turn Mr. Vango minutely described the personal appearance of my departed friend, gave his Christian name, and repeated with remarkable accuracy every detail of the death-bed scene.—Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM PICKERING.

#### PRACTICAL PHRENOLOGY FOR TEACHERS.

Mr. James Webb, for fifty years an elementary school teacher, and for over fifty years a student of phrenology, lectured, on October 10th, at the British Phrenological Society. He stated that, having spent a considerable time in studying child character and child talent, and having taken some thousands of measurements of the heads of school children, as well as contours of heads, he had come to the conclusion that phrenology was the only true and living psychology. He had found that, other things being equal, size of brain was a measure of mental capacity, that the kind of mental capacity, be it intellectual or moral, depended upon the proportional size of the several regions of the brain, and that special ability or defect depended on the comparative development of the various brain organs whose duty it was to function the corresponding mental faculties. The heads of school boys increased in size as they improved in their position in the school, the circumference of the heads averaging  $20\frac{1}{4}$  and  $20\frac{1}{2}$  inches in the lower and  $21\frac{1}{4}$  and  $21\frac{1}{2}$  inches in the upper classes of our elementary schools. He had also found that if any two boys in the same school were measured, the boy with the anterior lobe of the brain more fully developed as compared with the posterior lobe was found to be in a higher class than the boy with a larger posterior development compared with a smaller anterior development; and that the smaller brained boys in any class had larger anterior lobes than the larger brained boys in the same class, however large those brains might be. It was also proved by these measurements that the gentler boys and those with more pleasing dispositions had the upper regions of the brain more amply developed than the lower region, whilst the energetic, the cunning and the passionate boys were more widely developed in the temporal and lower parietal areas of the brain than in the top part. In regard to the contours that were taken, he was struck with their graphic illustration of the value of phrenology to the teacher. There was no explanation of them except that contained in the teachings of phrenology; and this might be proved in every school.

The most pressing problem of education was the possession of a knowledge of the talents and dispositions of the individual boys or girls and the provision of such environment and instruction as would develop their faculties to the greatest perfection, according to their needs. He urged all parents and teachers, therefore, to obtain some knowledge of the brain organs of the young people under their care, and to adapt their instruction accordingly.

#### SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, OCT. 15th, &c.

*Prospective Notices, not exceeding twenty-four words, may be added to reports if accompanied by stamps to the value of sixpence.*

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—Miss Florence Morse gave remarkably successful clairvoyant descriptions to a deeply interested audience.—15, Mortimer-street, W.—9th inst., Mrs. Cannock gave well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions and helpful spirit messages. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided at both meetings. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-circus, W.—Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave addresses under spirit influence. Morning subject, 'Beyond the Veil'; evening, 'Spiritualism: Where does it Lead?'—E. C. W.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—An address by Mr. H. Boddington was greatly appreciated. Sunday next, service at 11.15 a.m. At 7 p.m., Mrs. Harvey will give an address.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD.—Miss J. Morris spoke on 'Our Spirit Friends,' and Madame Gaffer gave clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Neville, clairvoyance. Lyceum at 3.—H. M.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mr. D. J. Davis gave an address. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton; 3 p.m., Lyceum. Circles: Monday, at 7.30 p.m., ladies'; Tuesday, at 8.15 p.m., members'; Thursday, at 8.15, public.—G. T. W.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD.—A helpful and inspiring address was given by Mr. G. R. Symons. Sunday next, Mr. Drake, one of the pioneers of Spiritualism, will take the evening service.—A. T.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Morning, Mr. W. Rundle spoke on 'The Soul's Flight.' Evening, he related interesting experiences. Recognised clairvoyant descriptions at both services and at after-circle. Sunday next, Miss Florence Morse.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE.—Mr. Smith spoke on 'Wisdom,' and Mrs. Smith gave successful clairvoyant descriptions. 12th, Mrs. Mary Davies related remarkable experiences. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address by Mr. Geo. Tayler Gwinn. 26th and 29th, Mr. Savage.—H.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. Jamrach gave two interesting addresses and well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Miss F. Morse, addresses and clairvoyance. Tuesday, at 8, and Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Clarke, clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, members' circle.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mr. J. G. Nicholson gave an address on 'Childish Things.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Isherwood, of Australia; address on 'The Resurrection,' clairvoyant descriptions, and inspirational poems from words selected by the audience.—T. B.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. Geo. F. Tilby gave an interesting address on 'Some Things we Overlook' and made an eloquent appeal on behalf of the Fund of Benevolence, to which the collection was entirely devoted. Mr. E. P. Noall presided. Sunday next, address by Mr. H. Boddington.—W. H. S.

BRIGHTON.—HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST.—Mr. T. O. Todd gave scientific addresses to good audiences, dealing with 'The Miracles of the Ages.' Sunday next, at 11.15 and 7, he will lecture on 'Foregleams of Immortality.' Clairvoyance on Mondays at 3 and 8, and Wednesdays at 3. Circle, Thursdays, at 8.15.—A. C.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mr. A. V. Peters gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. His appeal on behalf of the Fund of Benevolence resulted in a second supplementary collection of 16s. 2d. (making 30s., total of two Sundays' contributions). Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Alice Jamrach, address and clairvoyance. Monday, at 8 p.m., Mr. J. Richardson, clairvoyance. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., astrology class. Friday, 8.30 p.m., healing circle.—N. R.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, Mr. Graham gave an earnest address, and a friend gave clairvoyant descriptions. Evening, Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn spoke on 'Home,' and the sum of 22s. was collected in answer to his appeal for the 'F. O. B.' The quarterly members' meeting followed, Mr. Gwinn, of the London Union, presiding. After the secretary's report, the importance of prayer circles was emphasised, and arrangement made for a class for the study of the various subjects relating to the movement. The question of purchasing Lausanne Hall was discussed and held over for one month, pending promises of help from members and friends. There is a growing disposition to make this a strong centre for spiritual work. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Alice Webb. Tuesday, at 8.15 p.m., healing circle. Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., prayer meeting; at 8.15 p.m., circle. Sunday, October 29th, Mrs. Hylda Ball.