

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER DOTHTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We very much regret to see that 'The peculiar people' are getting into trouble. It is always a pity to have seriousness, trust and courage wasted. All they need is broadening. It is a poor and narrow notion of God which restricts Him to the invisible, and trusts Him to work only in what one may call the sphere of magic. All the laws of Nature are the modes of manifestation of God, and it is radically absurd to say that one can rely upon God only by declining the help of man.

Charles Kingsley was right;

From God, all skill and science flow,
All pity, care and love.

God's revelations relate to medicine as well as to 'divine truth,' and His servants may be honest doctors as well as holy angels. Superstition is not believing in angels, but in limiting their sphere, and exaggerating in one direction.

'A lesson in seeing,' by an expert (London: G. Gill and Sons), is a queer little book. Others besides the author of it have noticed the odd resemblances to faces, figures, mountains, sea waves, animals and the like, in all kinds of objects, with the help of weather-stains and combinations of shapes, as of rock and leaves, and in the laying on of paint, apart from the artist's intention; but we have never before heard any one who attributed these to a sort of intention on the part of 'an Intelligent Influence that would seem to pervade all things, and to leave upon matter its artistic imprint in every direction.'

The writer of this book tells us he has given a great deal of attention to the subject, and has arrived at conclusions which he fully states, but he is not entirely convincing. He gives us sixty-one small pictures, specimens of his curiosities, and some of them are indeed remarkable, but others look far-fetched.

Oddly enough, just before receiving his book, we saw a young artist gazing at an ugly old yellow brick wall, and, on asking him what he was looking at, he said it abounded with beautiful suggestions for pictures. We ourselves have seen endless queer subjects in old carpets, in wood-graining, natural and artificial, and—in the fire. We are inclined to think that the whole thing is coincidence, aided by picturesque imagination; but it is a curious subject and worth following up,—by those who have time for it.

A Chicago publisher (A. C. Clark) sends us a small work by G. E. Wright, on 'The outer rim: studies in wider Evolution.' The object of the book is to indicate the tremendous regions which Darwin never looked at but in relation to which his doctrines must be applied. Darwin did no more than generalise a law from well-known facts,

and supply us with certain excellent object-lessons and illustrations. But, when we have done with pigeons and sensitive plants, monkeys and men, we shall really begin to comprehend what Evolution means. This little book is helpful in that direction.

'The New Unity' has lately appeared as a bird number, with its first page covered with representations of named birds, and its other pages full of remonstrance and entreaty concerning our treatment of birds. One quotation has a good deal of animation in it. A writer in 'The Chicago Evening Journal' said:—

I sat in a convention of women the other day and counted twenty-nine slaughtered birds. And these blessed women were improving their minds with ethical science and historic research! I attended church the other evening when a noted divine was preaching about God's pity, to a congregation of pretty barbarians who wore His murdered minstrels, His slaughtered harpers on their bonnets. Do you know what I am waiting for? I am only waiting until I get to be a sweet-voiced, grey-haired old woman, and then every time I see a girl with a blue-bird on her hat, or a matron with a robin on her bonnet, I'm going to say, 'My dear, let us pray!' And if I don't pray that daughter of wrath into some conception of her cruelty, then there is no efficacy in the fervent prayer of an aged mother in Israel.

'The Roxburghe Press' has published Mark English's 'The Sorrows of a Society woman.' We are sorry for it. It is, in a way, smart and exciting, but it is thoroughly unwholesome and, quite unintentionally, vulgar, though dealing entirely with the upper stories of Society's Hell. But we do not believe the upper stories are properly represented in these brimstone and treacle books.

We strongly commend to all sympathetic souls a publication just issued by 'The Brotherhood Publishing Co., London,' entitled 'Christian Martyrdom in Russia,' edited by Vladimir Tchertkoff, with a concluding Chapter and Letter by Leo Tolstoy (1s.). The book tells the sorrowful story of the persecution of 'The spirit wrestlers' in the Caucasus. We cannot avoid noticing that by refusing to serve as soldiers these good people broke the laws of the country, and in connection with a matter vital to the ruling gang: but, for all that, our hearts go entirely out to them—a band of men and women who honestly try to be Christians after the discarded fashion of Christ.

We have just been looking again at 'The Memorable relations' in 'The true Christian Religion,' by Swedenborg (London: The Swedenborg Society): and are strongly inclined to think that time has increased rather than diminished their interest, and possibly their value. A variety of topics are introduced upon which time and experience are throwing light, both from the religious and the psychical worlds. The Index, prepared by Swedenborg himself, is a sort of summary of the Relations, and is often keenly interesting. Many of the problems attacked are of vital importance to-day.

Is not what is called 'religion' in this country becoming largely theatrical? What is so-called 'worship' in our 'High' Churches? Nine-tenths of it merely musical and spectacular; and even many Nonconformists—and some who ought to know better—are becoming far too sensational; as though the people were unwilling to merely think and be quietly devout, and needed a sort of spiritual dram-drinking, in order to keep them going. It is not a pleasant sign of the times in our spiritual sky.

Our kinsmen across the Atlantic, too, appear to be suffering in the same way. The following is not by any means a pleasant suggestion:—

A remarkable religious service took place in Ocean-grove, in the State of New Jersey, where the building was purposely made totally dark, except for a gleam of light from the altar, where the head of Christ stood out from the purple draperies. No word was spoken, and the intense and impressive silence was broken at intervals by the soft notes of violin, and chimes made for the occasion, terminating in a weird echo of song. The darkness made moving impossible, and the audience was strangely moved by the ceremony, and worked up to a high pitch of excitement.

Mrs. E. B. Duffey (author of 'Heaven Revised') has printed what she confidently regards as a test of spirit identity. She says:—

While my husband and myself were engaged in this investigation, Benjamin Franklin, Napoleon Bonaparte, W. Stainton Moses, Nero, and other notabilities of the present and past, announced themselves on our board. Even the 'Devil' came one evening, but he proved to be a very ordinary sixth-circle devil, such as we had had dozens of already. As for the others, it did not take many minutes' conversation to land them all in the same circle.

There is one fact with which Spiritualists and non-Spiritualists are not acquainted: That it is no test whatever for a spirit to give you the name of a friend, even though it be a name that you have not recollected for years. The spirit may add corroborating circumstances for the purpose of identification, and gather every fact from the tablets of your memory, though you may have actually forgotten it all at the time. A spirit can read the memories—even the forgotten ones—of a living man, like an open book. I do not know that all spirits can do this for all men, though I have yet to discover one who cannot.

But not every spirit can read your active thoughts. They can only read those of persons on the same spiritual level with themselves—that is to say, in the same spiritual circle, or below. An exception to this rule is when the spirit, whether good, bad, or indifferent, becomes entirely *en rapport* with the individual. Then no matter what the spiritual chasm which separates them, every thought is read as easily by the unseen intelligences as ordinary speech is heard upon earth.

When this condition of *rapport* is not attained, it is easy to test the truth of the spirit by trying if he will respond to mental questions. If he has claimed a high place in the spirit world, and yet fails to heed questions mentally asked him, you may know that he is at least on a lower moral level than yourself. By this means, all unknown to the spirits themselves, I always test them when they claim to come from circles of light. And I have never yet found the test to fail.

Bear in mind, it is not what you remember of the past, or may have known and forgotten, which constitutes a test when it is repeated by an unseen intelligence, but what you are thinking of at the time of communication. No spirit who is on a lower spiritual level than yourself can read your immediate thoughts, though he may be able to repeat your past from alpha to omega, that which you have forgotten as well as that which you remember.

THE 'Dublin Evening Telegraph' announces that 'The Hon. Sec. of the Dawn of Day Spiritual Society is now residing in Dublin, and would be pleased to hear from Spiritualists or inquirers in Ireland. Address by letter to Mrs. Rorke, 16, Charleston-avenue, Rathmines, Dublin, Ireland.'

'CASSANDRA,' THE PALMIST, wishes her friends to notice that she has removed to 29, New Bond-street, W.

DR. RODES BUCHANAN'S 'PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.'

The author of this work, which was reviewed in 'LIGHT' some months ago, is, in my opinion, one of the most remarkable men and one of the foremost and most original thinkers—if original thought is possible to any—which the movement of Modern Spiritualism has brought to the front in America. I do not propose, however, to dwell especially on the man or his attainments, further than to express the hope that the present generation of British Spiritualists may become better acquainted with his writings, as they will then discover a treasury of the profoundest philosophy and original research by one of the closest reasoners and most critical investigators of human nature in the movement. I can do this with the greater freedom, when it is realised that Dr. J. Rodes Buchanan is close on the verge of mortal life, and cannot, in the natural order of things, reap any material benefit from my remarks.

That this able man is but little known to British Spiritualists is made clear by recent criticisms on the above-named work, when reference is made to the author. In dealing with the book itself, the reviewers have acted with fairness. But, however well meaning the reviews, a very poor idea is given of the real character and purpose of the work. Like every work of extraordinary pretensions, and—say, in science of new discoveries—such a work is open to severe and slashing criticism. This has not been given by the Spiritual Press. In 'LIGHT,' for instance, the reviewer confessedly did not attempt to review the book, but gave a few extracts from it as the next best thing. It was well meant, but the public are left pretty much in the dark as to the nature and scope of the book in which the doctor 'gives us an insight to the Christianity' of Jerusalem, and the corruptions of the Pagan Church at Rome. While he is in agreement with some of our 'Higher Criticism' authorities he is more radical and thorough than any in sifting the correct from the spurious, especially in exposing the suppression of the original Gospels, and the fraudulent manufacture of the now accepted Gospels which appeared in or about the year 150 A.D. The internal evidence of the manufacture of the Synoptics and the Gospel of St. John by a dominant priesthood at Rome, is shown therein. For the historical part more corroborative evidence is desirable. What is omitted in this may appear in the second volume.

The revised Gospel of St. John, as presented in this volume, cleared of interpolations, &c., presents a dignified and vivid picture of the man Christ Jesus, which is throughout in harmony with itself. The Gospel 'according to St. John,' as we have it, certainly does contain startling and contradictory statements; not only antagonistic to the Synoptics, but opposed to the manifested life and character of the pure-minded and lofty spirit of the Son of Man.

It is said in this volume that St. John himself made the corrections. This is a startling statement, but the reader is referred to the book for the details. Of course, there are many good Spiritualists who now take their Spiritualism without spirits. Thought-transference, sub-consciousness, &c., suffice them. Then there are others—equally good and sincere—who believe in and admit the possibility of spirit return, say of a personal friend, an old servant, and of earth-bound spirits, and perhaps of a castle-haunting spook, and draw the line there. To them the appearance of Moses and Elias, with Jesus, to Peter and John, belong, equally with the return of St. John to a medium in California, to the romance of Spiritualism. Romance meaning anything, from self-deception, collective hallucinations, to colossal lying. It is so easy to get rid of the trouble of reading or examining a book by saying that it belongs to the romance of Spiritualism. Dr. Buchanan is not a medium, so anything he has written in this book, as given from himself, has been given to the world in wide-awake, hard-headed, positive consciousness. Personally, I no more doubt Professor Buchanan's integrity than I do his genius.

Mr. Stead, who has always an open mind, has given an able review of the work in 'Borderland,' but even he has fallen into error regarding Dr. Buchanan, for he speaks of the doctor as a clairvoyant and seer giving to the world his mental impressions as spirit communications. This is all wrong. Dr. Buchanan is neither clairvoyant, seer, nor medium, but just 'an honest body,' laying no claim to either normal or abnormal mediumship. Perhaps Mr. Stead thought this the best explanation of the contents of the book. But, why give a person credit for medium-

ship—if there is any credit in this—when he has never claimed it for himself? How far Dr. Buchanan's mind may have been influenced by communications through his late wife and others, and how far the doctor may have unconsciously affected others, I do not know. But of this we may be certain: all transmission of thought will be affected by the channel or medium of communication. Psychometry is not less free from error than trance and inspirational communications.

As for Dr. Buchanan, whatever the character and the scope of this remarkable book, showing both ripe scholarship, and keen, careful, and original research, he has neither claimed excuse for its contents, nor yet acceptance of its history, teachings, or character, on the score of being a medium himself, or of receiving some of its contents by the way of the mediumship of others—which I see, in some cases, has been employed. It may be that we are all mediums, as one of your writers claimed recently for inventors. Be that as it may, if Dr. Buchanan is a medium, he is one who gets all his information by diligent research and hard work. More of this sort of mediumship would be useful in the movement just now. There is too little of self-culture, and too much reliance on the mediumship of others; too much playing at little children, shutting our eyes, and opening our mouths to see what the spirits will give us.

The old doctor, getting on to his eighty-fourth year, is now issuing a second edition of Vol. I. of 'Primitive Christianity,' and is correcting for press the second and last volume of the work. He labours on—albeit partly paralysed—in the profound conviction that his life will be sustained until that is given to the world, and possibly also his grand work, 'The New World of Science,' which was set aside when the time had come for issuing 'Primitive Christianity.' Those who knew this great reformer, this veritable Ishmaelite for humanity, whose trenchant pen has ever fought for the enfranchisement and elevation of his fellows—who has struck at, with St. George-like vigour, the hydra-headed dragon of monopoly, trusts and schemes which have made the few rich and despoiled the hopeless many; who has exposed political and religious corruptions, and has refused political office and honours for himself, when he could not be of service to his fellows—will find him frail in body, but as vigorous in intellect and as full of *enthusiasm* for humanity as ever. As a Spiritualist, there is none with whom I would sooner rank him in this country than our own great naturalist, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace.

I believe that underlying the constitution of the British mind there is an inherent love of fair play and an instinctive desire to render 'honour to whom honour is due.' The simple fact of a man being an American would not take from the Briton his admiration of true worth. If Dr. Buchanan is little known and less read with us, it is not because he is an American, but because many have never heard of him. It is their misfortune and not their fault. But I am certain, notwithstanding the criticism on 'Primitive Christianity,' that this distinguished writer and *savant* will improve on acquaintance, when his books are more widely read. As a Spiritualist, I do not believe in infallibility, in the flesh or out of it, in men or in books. But let no man refuse to read 'Primitive Christianity' under the impression that it is either the Spread Eagle hash of the typical inspirational medium, or the vagaries of an old fool in his dotage. I would ask all Spiritualists, and indeed non-Spiritualists, interested in the spirit of the Primitive Christianity of Jesus, to read this work and draw their own conclusions.

Whether I agree or disagree with the doctor is of little moment, but this I can assure the readers of 'LIGHT,' that the author of 'Primitive Christianity' and the gifted discoverer of psychometry, whose work on that subject is 'better' known than any other, and whose instructions on the cultivation of the faculty are as lucid as they are virile, and the author also of 'The New Education,' which places the ethical and spiritual and moral instruction of childhood in the forefront of education, leaving the intellectual training secondary and not first, as is the 'use and wont,' and of 'Sarcognomy,' a large volume on the healing art, made especially valuable for its insight to the interrelation of mind, brain and body in this life, editor of the 'Journal of Man,' and a brilliant contributor to the Press, and the Dean of four universities, &c., is no ordinary man, but is, in my opinion, one of the most advanced psychologists, profound thinkers and investigators of human nature now living in the States.

Rothsay.

JAMES COATES.

THE TRUE STORY OF A HAUNTED BOARDING SCHOOL.

BY THE REV. C. WARE.

(Continued from page 480.)

At the time when it was first arranged for a visit to be paid to the school, serious illness occurred amongst some of the inmates, necessitating a postponement; but the lady, in a telegram to myself, said, 'I intend to persevere to the end.' Very shortly after this I received the lady's final letter, making definite arrangements. The letter concludes thus: 'Last night I took one of my girls to share my room. I slept throughout the night, being overwrought somewhat; but the girl was kept awake. She told me she had heard noises all night; otherwise we have been very quiet lately.'

RECAPITULATION.

It now becomes my duty in connection with this case to give a sort of summary or recapitulation of the facts—written, so to speak, *from inside* the house where these things took place. Of course, on my visit to the school I heard much from the lips of the inmates that had not been mentioned in the lady's letters; and my desire is to give, in as complete a manner as possible, a *general view* of the whole case. I found that the inmates of the school had a most extraordinary and thrilling story to relate concerning the weird occurrences and strange experiences therewith associated. And, after all had been related, they could only say, 'The half has not been told.'

The town in which this school was situated is a place of some note in the county of Sussex, and the house itself is in the very heart of the town. At the back of the house is a kind of lawn, at the end of which is a rather large greenhouse. The path from the house to the conservatory passes to the left underneath a verandah. On the left of the path is a shrubbery with fruit and flower beds. There are several large laurel bushes nearest the verandah and the schoolroom; and half-way down the path is a plum tree. I mention these particulars because there had always been in the movements of these phenomena *outside* the house an apparent connection between the laurels on the left of the path near the house and the conservatory at the end; the plum tree being half-way between the two.

Now for a few particulars concerning the manifestations; an outline of the story must suffice for the present purpose; the details are simply innumerable, and were even embarrassing to the memories of the narrators. A great variety of phenomena had been witnessed—*i.e.*, seen, heard, and felt—by a large number of persons of both sexes and of all ages; hence the idea of 'hallucination,' which might be suggested in relation to the experiences of one person only, is totally inapplicable here.

Soon after the family came to the house, several of them, being in the sitting-room on the ground floor, would hear the street door, which they had doubly secured, apparently open, and a person has seemed to walk through the passage and ascend the stairs. A servant has waited, when all the family had retired for the night, because the front room has seemed to be occupied and lighted up. The door of the sitting-room has appeared to open when the family were present, and a person to walk in, whilst their physical vision belied what they all seemed vividly to hear. The mistress of the school had witnessed various appearances, such as lights assuming different forms. She had heard no end of noises, from the gentlest taps to sounds like thunder. A young lady visitor who had never heard of the former manifestations in the house, has seen a little white-robed girl walk along the first landing, and go towards a recess. She several times called the name of a member of the family, who she thought had been taken ill, but obtained no response, and no one of the household had been on the spot. She went downstairs much awed and frightened, and the family, seeing her paleness, drew from her what she had seen. Two ladies have stood at the French window of the sitting-room, watching together, at half-past nine o'clock on a summer evening, a tall, large, human form, dressed in heavy black, standing against the half-opened door of the greenhouse; even posing before them in conspicuous attitude, as if to be seen to the greatest advantage. The lady stated to me that she could sketch the figure from memory. The servant came up from the kitchen, asking if they were watching that 'big thing.' She said it had been there a good while. The figure was seen by the ladies to move up the path as far as the plum tree and then vanish. An

elderly lady, mother of the mistress, told me that one night, after retiring, having occasion to return downstairs, and being without any light, on approaching the window which looked out upon the lawn, she was astonished to see the glass conservatory brilliantly illuminated from end to end. Filled with wonder, she returned and called another lady, and both stood watching with awe the strange illumination. A little girl going for some water, saw 'a woman' walk from the laurels towards the greenhouse; she was much frightened. Another little girl states that a man came to her when in bed, moved around the bed, and put his hand upon her face; so that these 'invisible' visitors have been seen, heard, and felt. A young lady being in the school about half-past seven one evening, saw the hand and arm of a 'gentleman,' with black sleeve and white cuff; she was much disconcerted, knowing there was no gentleman on the premises. Another, an artiled pupil, saw a 'gentleman' walking along the path, turn round by the conservatory, and disappear. A brother of the mistress, whilst standing under the laurels, heard a strange rushing sound sweep by him; he entered the house very much surprised and impressed. Several of the family have been sitting at the table conversing, when a blow as of a sledge-hammer has come upon the table, yet there was nothing displaced, not even cups and saucers shaken. Noises like thunder and again like footsteps, and even like breathing and whispering, have been repeatedly heard in the rooms. In addition to all this, animal figures like fowls and cats have been seen in the house and on the lawn; they have been chased but not caught!

This is a bare outline of the strange story; the lady had suffered severely, both in mind and circumstances. She lost four pupils at once through frights received, and never recovered the loss. Two years prior to the time of my visit the disturbances were most distressing, and at the time she wrote to me her school, as such, was on the very verge of ruin. It is, however, a long lane that has no turning, and the worst of troubles ultimately have an ending. At the beginning of the year 1882 the lady was advised to communicate with me, and in this way *Spiritualism came to her aid*. If I ever hear the words *cui bono?* applied to Spiritualism, I never want to do more than point to this extraordinary case. After four years of unspeakable worry and trouble, Spiritualism brought this lady *immediate relief*, both to her own mind and spirit and also to her school; in addition to that, to a house that had been haunted and disturbed and upset during nearly fifty years, it brought a blessed deliverance. So, at any rate, the spirits themselves informed me in reply to my questions. The efforts that had been made, culminating in my personal visit, had greatly assisted to disentangle them from their fettered and earth-bound condition, and had cut a pathway, so to speak, whereby they could commence an *upward progress* towards freedom and happiness. In reply to my questions, they assured me that prior to these efforts they were unable to get away from these scenes of their former life and sin; they could only disturb and haunt the house, and make efforts to attract attention to their case; but the scientific and beneficent methods of Modern Spiritualism had changed all that! Orthodoxy was of no use in this case; orthodoxy could only jeer and scoff and mock. Orthodoxy could not even sleep in its room without a candle burning all night, and then it was scared. I slept in the same room during my stay in the house, but I did not need any candle kept burning. I felt far too much of love and sympathy towards the poor, unhappy, earth-bound disturbers to be in any respect frightened at their presence; and they, the unseen ones, were, generally speaking, inspired with far too much of grateful appreciation of my purpose in coming into their midst to have any special inclination to harm me. People will make a great mistake if they imagine that spirits haunt a house for the mere sake of disturbing the people who live therein. The 'haunted' house does not exist in either England, Ireland, Scotland, or Wales, where I could not gladly go, and sleep therein as calmly as in my own home; for the simple reason that I should not go to any such house without carrying with me such a spirit of love and sympathy and benevolent purpose as must always disarm any real antagonism on the part of its unseen inmates.

It is a suggestive fact that on the very evening that preceded the day of my visit the house was greatly disturbed; and the mistress of the school related to me with much amusement an incident that had occurred. She had that night taken

her governess to sleep with her, but their room was so disturbed that sleep was out of the question. At last, the much-trying governess exclaimed: 'Knock away, you old devil, your master is coming for you to-morrow!'

The details of the 'investigation,' such as they were, will be described in the next and concluding article.

(To be continued.)

A BOOK WORTH READING.

I have been reading a little book kindly sent me by the author, whose acquaintance I made when residing in Boston in the seventies. It is entitled 'Glimpses of Ancient Mysteries, Biblical and Classical.' Mr. A. E. Giles, the author, was practising as a lawyer at the time I first met him, but soon afterwards retired from practice, there being, as he told me, so much connected with the profession that was uncongenial to him, and he was in a position to do without it. He has since that time devoted himself to the study and advocacy of Spiritualism and other reforms, and the little book of eighty pages, which evidences an intimate knowledge of Biblical and Classical literature, and I may add of Andrew Jackson Davis' works, is a result of his studies. Mr. Giles I found, like Epes Sargent, a level-headed Spiritualist, and bringing a legal and logical mind to bear on the subjects that engaged his attention, arrived at just and reasonable conclusions respecting them. Andrew Jackson Davis, who is an intimate friend of his, and concerning whom there are some interesting particulars in the book, is the prophet he swears by. In his judgment there is no man like him. He once told me that he considered him the greatest man that ever lived, while Colonel Ingersoll places Shakespeare in that post of honour. 'The greatest man that ever trod the earth' are the words the Colonel employs to convey his estimate of the Immortal Bard.

Mr. Giles prefaces his book with a slight sketch of his career, telling how he resigned his twenty-five years' membership as a Baptist for Spiritualism, and also gives some of his very interesting spiritual experiences. He was on very friendly terms with Charles Foster, the celebrated medium, and gives in detail a remarkable instance of Foster's supernatural knowledge, which is to this effect. Mr. Giles, visiting New York, called upon a relation whose husband was a sea-captain. He found her in great distress, owing to the prolonged absence of the vessel of which her husband was the master. Mr. Giles thought of Foster, who was in New York at the time, and wrote on a slip of paper as follows: 'March 20th, 1880. Question to Chas. Foster: The *Wild Hunter*, Captain Minot, where is she?' and placing the paper in his vest pocket, called on Foster and began talking to him in a general way, but saying nothing of the purport of his visit, when suddenly Foster spoke out: 'Oh, The *Wild Hunter*, Captain Minot; only detained; foul winds; driven back from port; will hear of their arrival Thursday or Friday. No disaster; an old hulk; had to beat back all the way.' Mr. Giles called on the wife and told her what Foster had said and waited the result. At the time indicated by Foster Mr. Giles received a card from Mrs. Minot saying she had received a telegram from her husband announcing the safe arrival of the vessel, which had been due some thirty days. Mr. Giles remarks: 'The questions to be considered are—how did Foster know anything of what was on the paper in my pocket, and how did he know that the vessel would arrive on the following Friday, which in truth it did?' Of Foster, Mr. Giles says: 'In England he received many attentions from prominent persons. Sir Edward Bulwer invited Foster to his country seat, where he occasionally visited, remaining several days at a time. Bulwer was then writing his "Strange Story," and Foster was the model upon which he based his Margrave in that novel.' Mr. T. P. Barkas's 'Investigations in Modern Spiritualism,' one of the first books on the subject published in this country, was mainly founded on séances held with Foster, the medium who followed Mrs. Hayden, who was the first medium from America to visit England. This was before I knew anything of Spiritualism, and consequently I knew nothing of Foster at the time, but afterwards I called upon him in New York with Mr. Morse, and occasionally saw him in Boston subsequently.

My object in writing this letter is to call attention to a very valuable little book lest it be lost sight of, which would be a pity, for it may be read with advantage by even experienced

Spiritualists. Psychological Researchers, too, may gain some useful ideas from its perusal. The book is published by the 'Banner of Light' Publishing Company, Boston, U.S.A.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

Decease of Mr. Edward Maitland.

As we go to press, information reaches us of the decease of Mr. Edward Maitland, after a long illness. At present we are without particulars, but we hope to give them in our next issue, and at the same time to refer at some length to the life and work of our dear departed friend.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.

SOCIAL GATHERING.

The first of the usual winter gatherings of the Alliance took place on Friday evening, 1st inst., when a Social Meeting of the Members, Associates, and friends was held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall. The attendance was large, and the number of new friends present may fairly be taken as an index of the growing popularity of the movement, so far as the London Spiritualist Alliance is concerned.

The following programme of music was performed during the evening: Violin solo, 'Romance' (Papini), Miss Winifred Amos; Pianoforte solo, Fantasia, Mr. A. Pusey Keith; Violin solo, Mazur (Mlynarski), Miss Winifred Amos; Pianoforte duet, Tarantella (Raff), Miss Withall and Miss H. Withall; Violin solo, Tarantella (Fowler), Miss Winifred Amos. Miss Shaw was the accompanist, and the musical programme was under the direction of Miss Withall.

During the evening Miss Rowan Vincent kindly gave some clairvoyant descriptions, which, it is pleasing to add, were attended with success, six out of seven of the delineations being at once recognised. Especially good was the first description, where after giving minute particulars of a departed friend of one of the audience, Miss Vincent felt impelled to utter the surname (a quite unusual one), which, to the general satisfaction, was acknowledged to be correct. A cordial vote of thanks was accorded to Miss Vincent for her services.

'IS IT WISE TO STUDY ASTROLOGY?'

A special meeting of the members of the Astrological Society and their friends was held at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon-street, on the evening of the 1st inst.

Mr. Bishop-Culpeper occupied the chair, and in opening the meeting he referred to the position and work of the society and its need of funds. The President, Mr. Alan Leo, then gave a lecture, his subject being 'Is it wise to study Astrology?' As an astrologer, he said that his chief concern was with the inner or esoteric side of astrology. The science was not a mere fortune-telling study—an aid to speculation, betting, or selfish gain, but a reliable means of self-knowledge whereby we may learn much of the good and evil tendencies of our natures. Astrology is the soul of astronomy. The whole of the Divine mind is written in the skies. A true astrologer has intuition. The wisdom of the stars is not to be derived from books, but direct from the spiritual intelligences symbolised by the planets. The will of man is superior to planetary influence if he be so minded. A perfect nativity would be one in which every adverse influence had been met and overcome. Our ideals in this life form the horoscope of our next (Re-incarnation)—thoughts becoming things.

Mrs. Alan Leo, a fluent and able speaker, next addressed the meeting. She said she thought there were quite as many, if not more, women astrologers than men. The practical uses of astrology were (1) self-knowledge; (2) as a guide to the education and training of children; (3) as revealing buried talents and indicating a suitable occupation; (4) as a means to health; (5) marriage might not be so often a failure if astrology were consulted. She regarded astrology as the highest form of knowledge and of the greatest use to the world.

Mrs. Alan Leo was followed by Mr. King, who spoke of the value of astrology in medicine and the treatment of disease. There was a very good attendance, and the result of the meeting cannot be otherwise than beneficial to the society.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Mr. W. H. Terry, Austral Buildings, Collins-street, East.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.

A Meeting of Members, Associates, and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), on *Friday next, October 15th*, at 7 p.m. for 7.30 p.m., when an address will be given by Mr. Herbert Burrows, on 'Spiritual Sociology and the Problems of Earth Life.'

In accordance with No. XV. of the Articles of Association, the subscriptions of Members and Associates elected after October 1st will be taken as for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1898.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

- 'Pequeño Catecismo Espiritista.' Madrid: La Irradiacion. Barrio de Dona Caslota. Price 50 centimos.
- 'L'Initiation.' Revue Philosophique des Hautes Etudes, Paris: Chamuel, 5, Rue de Savoie. Price 1 franc.
- 'The Lyceum Banner': A monthly record of Lyceum work. London: J. J. Morse, 26, Osnaburgh-street, N.W. Price 1d.
- 'The Fall of Lucifer,' and other Essays and Poems. By WILLIAM SHARPE, M.D. London: H. A. Copley, Canning Town, E. Price 3s. 6d.
- 'The Temple.' A Stronger Home. By HELEN CAMPBELL. U.S.A.: The Temple Press, 33, Masonic Temple, Denver, Colorado. Price 10 cents.
- 'La Historia de la Tierra y el Progreso.' Por Camilo Flammarion. Precio 25 céntimos. Madrid: Biblioteca de la Irradiacion, Fuencarral, 106.
- 'The Literary Digest': A weekly compendium of the contemporaneous thought of the world. New York, U.S.A.: Funk & Wagnall's Co., 30, Lafayette-place. Price 10 cents.
- 'The Bible as Literature.' Lectures delivered in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, by REV. DR. LYMAN ABBOTT. Being No. 7, Vol. XII., of the Brooklyn Eagle Library. Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A. Price 5 cents.
- 'Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, showing the Operations, Expenditures, and Condition of the Institution, to July, 1895.' Washington, U.S.A.: Government Printing Office.
- 'Religion.' As Revealed by the Material and Spiritual Universe. Including the Wonders and Beauties of the Diviner Life. By E. D. BABBITT, M.D., LL.D. Second edition. U.S.A. College of Five Forces, 253, South Broadway, Los Angeles, California. Price, cloth, 1dol.; paper covers 60c.
- 'The Humanitarian,' for October. Amongst the contents are: Hall Caine on Social Questions, Special Interview; The Creeds of Restricted Faculties, A Reply to Grant Allen, by Hon. Auberon Herbert; Affinities, by Zula Maud Woodhull; Palmistry; Women's Degrees; &c. London: Hutchinson & Co., 34, Paternoster-row, E.C. Price 6d.
- 'Mind,' for October. A magazine of liberal and advanced thought. Amongst the content are: 'Psychology in Literature,' by JULIAN HAWTHORNE; 'Mind in Medicine,' by A. WILDER, M.D.; 'Automatic Writing,' by B. F. UNDERWOOD, &c. London Agents: The Roxburghe Press, 15, Victoria-street, Westminster, S.W. Price 1s.

A prospectus from Robert H. Fryar Bath gives particulars of two of his latest proposed reprints, viz., 'Magnetic Magic,' by L. A. Cahagnet, F.T.S., and the book of John Trithemius, Abbot of Spain, from the Latin of 1522, with a brief notice of that rare work, 'Prognosticatio eximii doctoris Theophrasti Paracelsi.' Eliphas Lévi (the Abbé Constant), said 'this work was a key to all the prophecies, ancient and modern, and presented an easy method without difficult calculation, surpassing in mathematical precision that of Isaiah and Jeremiah in the prevision of great events to come.' 'Magnetic Magic,' by the notable author of 'The Celestial Telegraph,' will contain hitherto unpublished letters from the author, also his portrait, &c., the only fear being that its revelations may be misused by the unscrupulous; the work will, however, fortunately in this respect, provide its own antidote. Another volume of the Rosicrucian 'Comte de Gabalis,' noticed some time ago, will be shortly ready, and a Dickens memento is announced as in preparation; and also 'The Sign of the Cross.'

MISS ROWAN VINCENT, we observe, is announced to give clairvoyance at Cavendish Rooms next Sunday evening. If she is as successful on this occasion as she was at the recent social gathering of the London Spiritualist Alliance, her friends will have great reason to congratulate her. In any event, we bespeak for her a large and sympathetic audience.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.O. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of 'LIGHT,' and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed '——— & Co.'

'LIGHT' may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria Lane, London, and all Booksellers.

A TIRESOME UNBELIEVER.

'Hallucinations and illusions; a study of the fallacies of perception,' by E. Parish (London: W. Scott), is doubtless a learned book, a very learned book, especially if the use of new words spun into involved sentences be an indication of learning. But it is a learned book in a better sense than that, and it is extremely desirable that such books should be written. At the same time, we confess they worry us, just as the cook would worry us if she insisted on serving up scales and test-tubes and stethoscopes with one's dinner. We prefer to eat our dinner, and have done with it. Some people may like these profound mental and emotional vivisections: we don't.

Perhaps the circular which accompanied the book made us a little impatient. It tells us that 'it examines and adversely criticises the evidence which has been brought forward in favour of Telepathy.' Fancy that! We are not to be allowed to have even *that* blessed refuge when we are bundled out of Spiritualism!

Mr. Parish suggests an athlete struggling to break any and every cord, just for the sake of breaking it. He goes in for rending and he rends: and, if nothing else avails, he simply clears the decks. Thus, after citing certain cases of dreams conveying important information apparently unknown to the dreamer, he says: 'It is clear that in all these cases it is not a question of new knowledge, but of the emergence in the dream-state of an apparently forgotten impression:' but he does not give a line of evidence to show that. 'It is clear' and 'Of course' are valuable aids to the philosophers of the Vigour and Rigour school. But they stand for the sheerest assumptions.

The discussion of 'involuntary whispering,' as a possible explanation of thought-transference, is a good specimen of this *tour de force*. It is all sheer assumption, and the writer does not seem to see that the assumptions are almost grotesque. Experiments with certain mirrors were arranged for the purpose of showing that involuntary whispering took place where thought-transference had hitherto been accepted as occurring. But, with all the apparatus employed, only about 33 per cent. of the results were quite correct, the results being greatly hastened by 'consciously listening.' But, without mirrors, and in perfect seclusion, where no kind of whispering would be of the slightest use, a higher proportion of results has been reached, as pure thought-transference. The element of 'grotesque' comes in when we note that Mr. Parish, in describing these elaborate mirror experiments, does not seem to see that he is really depicting what were probably thought-transference experiments. The mirrors were not for reflecting movements of the lips, but for the purpose of concentrating undulating motions of unconsciously emitted minute sounds, while the agent and percipient, back to back, thought intensely of a certain number or 'consciously listened' for it. Mr. Parish thinks that when the percipient got the number he did so by hearing the concentrated movements of an unconscious whisper! Thought-transference is really less puzzling.

It is a trifle amusing that, in a very good 'Index of subjects,' the word 'Spiritualism' does not occur: but one

refrains from wondering at this when, on hunting up 'Clairvoyance' in the Index, and referring to the only place where it is mentioned, we find the whole subject dismissed in three or four lines of small print, as a contemptuous foot-note, thus; 'The hallucinations of "clairvoyance" I purposely pass over here. The evidence for this reputed faculty seems to me of quite inconsiderable value, even that part of it which has been critically examined and sifted being open to grave objections.' And so the whole subject of Clairvoyance is severely swept into the dust-pan, as 'open to grave objection'! But that is this writer's way. If he thinks a thing is impossible, he fancies he refutes it by dismissing it, or by labelling it with one of his numerous explanations,—no, not 'explanations,' but magisterial decisions. And that settles it!

For instance: discussing dreams, he lays down the doctrine that, upon hearing of a startling event, one can become the victim of 'a fallacy of memory,' and fancy that he had dreamed this occurrence. 'Present impressions are projected backwards in a form involuntarily modified to suit the presentiment.' Then, having made his little pigeon-hole, and labelled it—'Fallacies of memory,' he begins to stuff cases into it, at his own sweet will. He does not prove, and certainly he does not for a moment consider the declarations of the dreamer: he simply stuffs the story into his pigeon-hole, and that, as we say, settles it. After stating his doctrine, he only condescends to add; 'Some examples will illustrate this.'

Here is one of his 'examples,' taken from the Proceedings of the American Psychical Research Society.—

One week from to-night (Friday, December 9th) I had a vivid dream. I was in a store with a friend, selecting a pistol. My friend was purchasing the pistol with the intention of committing suicide. I seemed to favour my friend's project, and was busy helping him to pick out a suitable one. I can see the store, the pistols, and all, very vividly now. The picture has fixed itself in my mind. The following night my friend, G. Z., shot himself in a New York hotel. I did not mention the dream to any one, thinking it of no consequence. The shooting was a great shock to me, as I had no suspicion of such a thing.

This seems circumstantial and clear enough; but, to this champion exposé of delusions, it is, of course, 'open to grave objection,' as being impossible: and so, *because* it is impossible, he simply shoves it into the pigeon-hole, labelled 'Fallacies of memory,' and merely adds this pert little note; 'The further details there given furnish a good example of the distinctness which can be assumed by this kind of retrospective hallucination.' This may be called 'criticism': we think it looks uncommonly like impudence. But it is the fashion with a certain class of pseudo-scientific men.

There are dozens of similar instances of arbitrary dismissal or characterisation. But one more must suffice. Apparitions are all mere hallucinations, *of course* (that is the essential preliminary!): and, when several people see the supposed apparition, it is, again of course, only a case of 'collective hallucination.' 'For instance . . . a child saw the form of his mother, who had died recently, and screamed aloud so that his father and nurse hurried to him, and then shared in the vision.' That is all! It is coolly assumed that the three persons were, of course, collectively hallucinated; and the case is simply bagged and exhibited as an 'instance' of what the little scientific pope chooses to say.

The book, however, has its distinct uses. It is well to have all possible sources of error and delusion pointed out, and this merely negative and nagging work is decidedly helpful. We are only sorry that such a book should be included in 'The Contemporary Science Series.' That is absurd.

COLONEL DE ROCHAS.

We are enabled to give the portrait of M. de Rochas, whose valuable experiments in hypnotism and magnetism have done so much to dignify psychical research in France, and whose experimental demonstrations of human psychic radiation, which he has described as the exteriorisation of sensibility and motricity, have added a new domain to psychology.

The real value of M. de Rochas' work in this direction has not yet received its merited recognition from the orthodox scientific authorities, who are always slow to recognise original research and often display a tendency to treat new discoveries as sacrilegious. Some of his experiments have, however, already been confirmed by several investigators, such as Dr. Luys, Professor Boirac, Captain Brémaux, Dr. Moutin, and others, so that official recognition cannot long be withheld.

The exceptional knowledge of M. de Rochas with regard to the effects of mental as well as verbal suggestion, enabled him, when experimenting with the phenomena occurring in the presence of Eusapia Paladino, to establish conditions which resulted in the carefully controlled production of most interesting phenomena; the record of which constitutes one of the most valuable contributions to psychical science recently presented. His exteriorisation of the subject's vital effluvium by magnetic passes, and the recognition that it is this effluvium that is used by the invisible operators to produce the phenomena, is one of the most important facts that has been recorded in connection with Spiritualism.

His description of the process by which the human double is exteriorised and his record of the fact that man's psychic double may have relation to some aspects of discarnate states; his record of the fact that a subject induced into the somnambulist state by a human operator may then be used as a recipient of thought-transference by an invisible discarnate operator; are revelations of the utmost importance to the science of Spiritualism. The realisation of the implications conveyed in these illustrations of the process by which psychic phenomena are produced may possibly revolutionise some of the current views of Spiritualists with regard to the meaning and origin of psychic phenomena.

M. de Rochas is himself inclined to consider that the most important result he has achieved is to have been able to establish an experimental basis for a belief in immortality, by the fact that he has demonstrated that there is a part of man which thinks and feels, that may detach itself temporarily, and enter into relation with discarnate states, and thus establish an experimental foundation for the conclusion that this same feeling and thinking part of man may also detach itself permanently, and survive the destruction of the physical body.

He has described his experiments in the following works published at Chamuel's or at Flammarion's: 'Superficial Hypnotic States'; 'Deep Hypnotic States'; 'The Exteriorisation of Sensibility'; 'The Exteriorisation of Motricity'; 'The

Levitation of the Human Body'; and two works on Reichenbach—'The Fluid of Magnetisers' and 'Odic Effluvia.'

M. de Rochas, Count d'Aiglun, is Colonel of Engineers and Administrator of the Ecole Polytechnique (the military and civil engineering school of France).

PHYSICAL PHENOMENA IN A PRIVATE CIRCLE.

REPORTED BY F. W. THURSTAN, M.A.

Since my last report there are the results of five more meetings of our little circle to chronicle.

Generally speaking, a considerable advance in the powers of our visitants to demonstrate their presence has been manifested. The health of Mrs. T. has improved. The fits of sickness which used to visit her have left her as predicted, since the date of the *apport* of the ring.

For the better elucidation of some of the phenomena that have recently taken place I will preface my report by a description of my room in Buckingham Gate Mansions where we held most of the sittings.

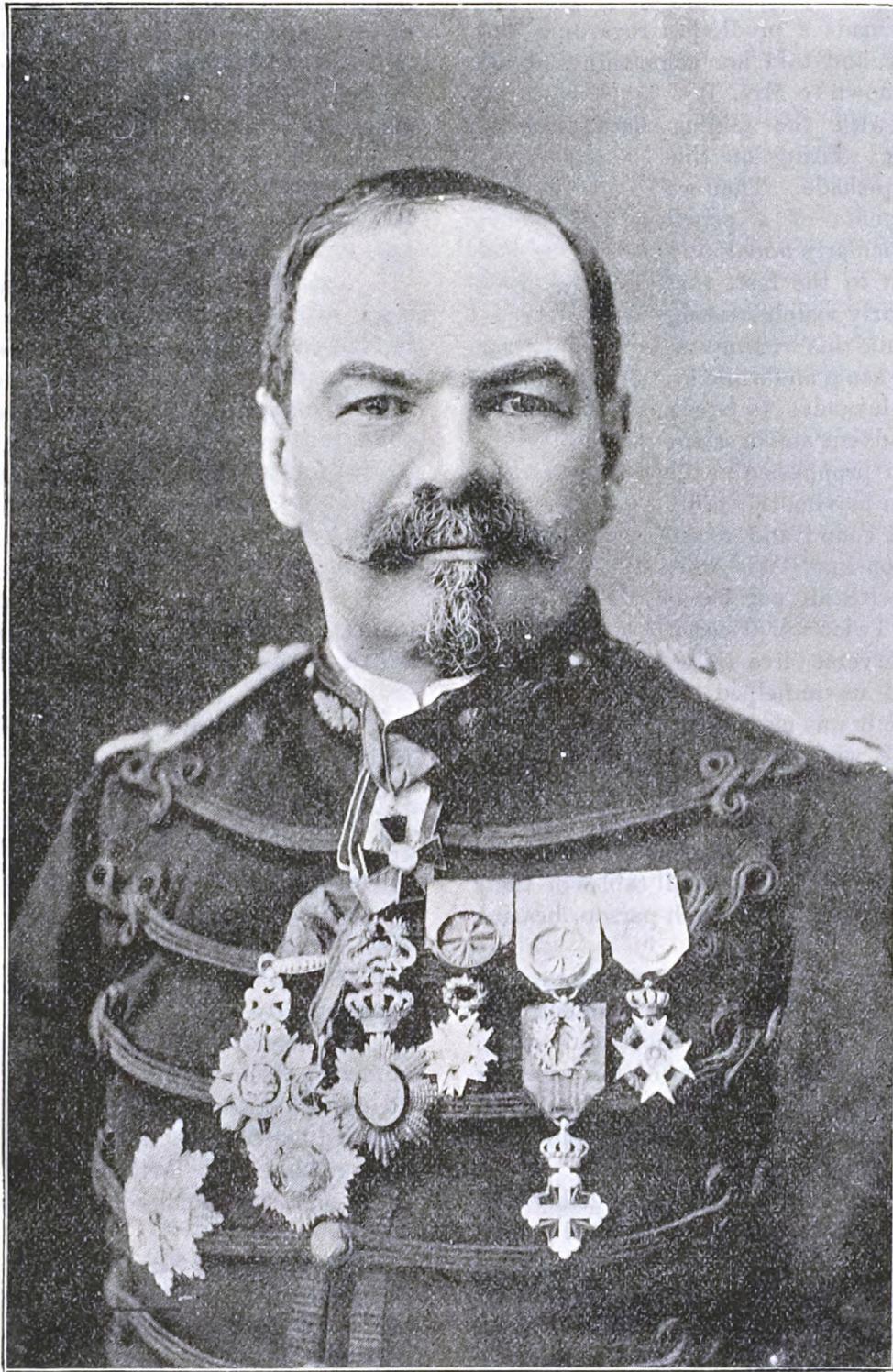
On entering, from a long passage on the ground floor, one finds the apartment is divided into two parts by an archway. The further part has a top studio light and a window looking out on to a well-court of the flats, the ground of which is a storey below the room. Consequently there can be no access to the further part from the outside. The nearer part has a door on the left leading into an adjoining room, but no proper window. It is lighted through panes of glass on the upper part of the partition, between the room and the passage outside. Between the two parts I have hung heavy plush *portière* curtains. When these curtains are drawn there are practically two rooms.

We sit round a small table in the part nearest the door, in a fair light, made by the gas burner in the passage shining through the partition

panes—a light in which we can clearly distinguish one another, our hands, and our movements. Meanwhile, in the adjoining part, to which there is no means of access except through our room, our visitants have begun to materialise their presence. We can hear them, distinctly, shuffling their hands and moving about, overturning distant chairs, shifting small tables, and shaking a tambourine; we can also feel them tapping or grasping us through the curtains, blowing them out often like sails, or lifting them suddenly up and dropping them again.

I will now give the noteworthy details of each meeting.

On Monday, August 9th, the meeting was quite *impromptu*. Mrs. T. happened to be calling on me in my rooms with a cousin of hers, a guest from the country. Finding the cousin interested in the story of our experiences I suggested holding a sitting there and then, to see if our visitants would favour us with some proof to convince her.



COLONEL DE ROCHAS.

We sat from 6 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. The summer evening was strong in the room, and a gas jet burning outside. We drew the *portière* curtains, and sat in the doorside part of the room round our usual small table, on which was placed our satin lampshade with paper and pencil, and a piece of blue chalk. On the table we also placed a Faber folding book-slate with a chip of yellow chalk in it. Some three or four feet behind Mrs. T. and her cousin were a vacant chair and a light occasional-table. The same distance behind my side of the table was another small table on which rested a large heavy musical box.

The first phenomena were raps, apparently coming on the floor and on the table behind Mrs. T. The loud, steady thumps which indicate the presence of our chief 'physical' agent on the other side, 'Peter Wharton,' were recognised; followed by a new set of raps which announced a deceased friend of the cousin.

Then 'Nellie' came and controlled Mrs. T. She had been sent, she said, to harmonise us by chatting and to give the cousin some messages. She made a prediction regarding the death of a relative of the lady, and told her some things about that relative which were unknown to Mrs. T.

Then we experimented with the folding slate, each of us holding on to a corner. Tiring of this we placed it under the lamp-shade. Then we heard distinctly the movements of a pencil scratching on paper. I particularly noted, and called our visitor's attention to the fact, that all six of our hands were clearly visible resting on the outside of the shade while this writing and tapping were heard. Then we sang, and while we did so 'Peter,' assisted by 'Alexander' (a Greek slain in the recent war, his advent amongst our band of workers having been prophesied in the early part of the year), began moving the table behind Mrs. T., spinning it round and round until it approached the cousin. We were sitting in full clear light, with all our hands on the table in front of us. Twice we placed it back, and twice, like a perverse live thing, it persisted in returning to us unhelped by mortal hands. The last time it was moving towards us, the table behind me, with the heavy musical box on it, simultaneously advanced. It reminded me of the account of the visit of Apollonius of Tyana to the priests of India, as recorded by his companion and pupil. Seated at a banquet, Apollonius said there was no need of attendants: for small tables of their own accord, like automata, slid up to each person, bearing trays of food.

Raps then announced a new visitant who wished to communicate. He purported to be a person of very eminent rank who died in 1884, whose son I constantly meet and whose house I have visited lately. He said a sister of his was very interested in the subject of human return, and he predicted that some day we, with his help, would be enabled to offer her some proofs.

'Nellie' then came again to explain matters more quickly than the method by raps could do. I put her psychometrical powers to a little test. I had in my pocket a letter received by post in answer to an advertisement for some apartments. On leaving for town in the morning I had hurriedly put the letter in my pocket and had not yet had time to interview the landlady or see the place. No mind-reading was possible. She answered that the landlady had mentioned certain terms in the letter, but she was a sort of person who as soon as she thought I would take her rooms would make excuses more than once to ask for more.

The sequel showed this prognostication to be right. The rooms suited me; I accepted the landlady's terms. The next day she wrote to me to say she was sorry, but after talking the matter over she found she must charge so much a week more. I agreed to this, and two days after she came to me with a proposal that demanded a considerable extra charge.

As it was growing dusk by this time 'Clare' came and showed a few firefly spirit lights, and the sitting was closed. Examining the folding slates afterwards we found a large C made with the blue chalk on the table, and not with the yellow chalk inside.

The next meeting was held on Saturday, August 21st, from 6.15 to 8.45 p.m., in my room at Buckingham Gate Mansions. Mr. and Mrs. T. and myself met by arrangement. The room was arranged as usual, and we sat in the ante-room as before.

Mrs. T., on coming in, said she was impressed to have herself searched, and asked her husband to turn out her pockets and to feel over all her dress to prove that nothing was secreted on her person.

As usual, 'Peter's' raps were the first signal of the presence of unseen friends. Then 'Nellie' was sent by the operators to control and explain the programme. 'Peter,' she said, wanted to practise bringing *apports*, conditions being favourable. He said there was a fruit and flower shop near, closed for the day, in which there was a large rubbish heap of things unsaleable. If we each named a fruit and flower, and it was procurable there, he would bring them. Mr. T. chose a small pear and heliotrope. I chose a plum and a large sunflower. Mrs. T. (on coming out of trance and told by us what had been requested) chose an apple and a pink carnation. Sounds of writing were now heard and Mrs. T. said she seemed to see a large sunflower condensing out of the globe of light under the lampshade, bubbles coming up. Then we all began to notice the perfume of some flower, growing stronger and stronger, like that of a carnation.

Then 'Nellie' controlled, with a message that we were to stand up round the little table so that the magnetism of our bodies should fall on the lampshade under which the mystical operations were going on.

We were told to hold hands. While we did this, and Mrs. T. came to herself again, suddenly a chair from the far corner of the room, about four or five feet away, began sliding of its own accord up to us. The light from the passage outside was strong in the room. We could see the time by our watches. We put back the chair, and again and again it would come up to join us. Then the table, with the musical box, began also to move up. While we were laughing at this episode, 'Nellie' was sent to control and tell us that the movement of the chair and table was a device done by 'Peter Wharton' to distract our attention from the operation in front of us. 'Alexander' and others were helping him. While some of the band were moving the furniture, others were hunting for the fruits and flowers. They had succeeded in bringing an apple and a plum and a pink. They had tried to materialise a big sunflower, but the operation required more force than they could muster. Heliotrope they could not find in the shop, and the pears there were all large expensive pears, which they did not like to take, but they saw some small pears in Mrs. T.'s house, and would bring one of those if we liked. We agreed, and while we continued standing for this to be brought, two new phenomena occurred unexpectedly. First Mrs. T., no longer under control, began to feel herself growing taller and taller. The elongation continued for some minutes, until she stood seven inches taller than her husband instead of half an inch shorter. All this while she said her feet and heels rested on the floor. We thought she was going to be levitated, but she was not raised; it was as if some tall being was occupying her body and transfiguring her.

Then suddenly Mrs. T., whose back was against the *portière* curtain, said she felt it blowing against her and thought there was a window open on the other side. Sure enough the curtain was blowing out, in the way the table cloth on a previous occasion had done, and a cold breeze was felt blowing from the other side. Mr. and Mrs. T. could scarcely believe me when I assured them that I had carefully shut all the windows on the other side just before we had commenced sitting. Mrs. T. then placed her palm against the curtain to feel the wind, when suddenly the pressure of a hand on the other side was felt against hers and startled her. Full of this new wonder we all three stood against the curtain and placed our hands up against the dark material, so that all of them were plainly visible to each, and as we stood thus, facing the inner room, we plainly heard a powerful figure moving about inside. We heard the shuffle of his hands as he rubbed them, as if making some material; then the footfalls of his feet. Then our hands in turn were gently pressed by hands on the other side, and at times we felt the pressure of a tall, powerful figure. He seemed at one time to contemplate issuing to our side of the room, for the curtain on the side near Mr. T. was suddenly lifted, and he saw a tall, turbaned figure of light, which so startled him that the figure shrank back and let fall the curtain. However, the form placed

his foot against the foot of Mr. T., who thought it felt like a foot in a wooden sandal. He also grasped Mrs. T. once or twice rather powerfully, but desisted when he found it frightened her, although she apologised for her timidity.

I then asked our visitant to answer my questions by pressing me three times for 'Yes,' &c. In this way he conversed with me for a quarter of an hour, informing us that he was a native of India who had lived between three and four hundred years ago; he had lived in the North of India—at Delhi; had been of high rank; had studied Yogism before he died, which study had helped him now to return. I said we should much like to know his name. Suddenly Mrs. T., who all through this had been in full consciousness, was controlled by 'Nellie,' who said it was a great tall Indian gentleman in grand dress in the other room, and he had sent her to say his name was Akkar, so far as she could catch the sound of the word.

I thanked our new friend for his visit, and said that I hoped that now he had found his way to us he would also draw near to us in spirit and help us to work together with him for the benefit of humanity. A deep powerful voice then answered 'Amen.' Other figures seemed forming, and on my asking if other persons were there a chair in the far end of the other room was heard falling down as an answer to my question.

We were told to conclude, and as I passed away from the curtain to switch on the electric light, a powerful hand grasped my elbow with a strong grip, while at the same time the whole curtain was lifted and flung over Mr. T.'s shoulder.

These manifestations of a materialised figure on the other side were the more remarkable, as the inner room is so lighted up by its top light as well as by a large window without blind or curtain, that it is impossible for me to darken it on a summer evening. Consequently the light in the other room was that of an August evening at eight o'clock. On our side of the curtain it was darker, but we could clearly see one another.

On lighting up we discovered under the lamp-shade a small apple and pear (recognised by Mrs. T.) and a soft ripe plum and a pink carnation.

As I was going home the conviction was suddenly brought to me that Akbar was the right name of our visitor, and not Akkar. When I reached home I referred to an Indian History and I found that the dates, personal appearance, and facts given us all fitted in for Akbar, the great Mogul Emperor of Delhi, even to the study of Hindu Yogism. This was corroborated by the experiences of our next meeting which was held on Saturday, September 11th, at Mr. T.'s house.

We were told two weeks beforehand by 'Nellie' that this day would be a good one for a meeting. As it also happened to be the birthday of Mrs. T.'s young daughter I was invited to bring my Indian charges to a family party. After tea, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., we adjourned to the small study upstairs, and Mr. and Mrs. T., their eldest daughter, aged ten that day (declared by our spirit friends to be a greater destined instrument for psychic manifestation than even her mother), my two charges, and myself sat down to what we merrily called a children's séance party, as children were to meet from both sides.

The room was purposely bared of all furniture except the table and chairs, and we spent the first few minutes in hanging a curtain by a string across a corner of the room behind Mrs. T.'s chair; and by pinning up drapery we darkened the window to a very subdued light in which we could just distinguish ourselves.

The mental atmosphere was very light-hearted and happy, and the day had been calm and fine after a stormy week.

We rolled up two paper tubes to help our visitants to speak in the direct voice and placed them behind the curtain. We also placed the wooden cover of a sewing machine on the table and covered it with a table cloth, with paper and pencils under it.

'Nellie' soon controlled and chatted with her sister, telling her that it was she who had called her by name in the direct voice the previous night, when the girl, like little Samuel of old, had thought it was her mother calling, and had gone to her mother's room only to find it was not so. Nellie also told us that 'Alexander' was a regular worker in our band, and had caused the upheaval of the table which had occurred while we had been seated at tea. She also announced that a person called Charles Bacon, who had died some time ago, would soon manifest in the band, and that the first part of the programme for the evening would be that 'Peter Wharton' would attempt to bring some unusual *apports*.

The sound of pencils moving under the box was then heard and at the same time 'Peter' began raps behind the curtain and to materialise force enough to constantly lift the chair Mrs. T. was seated on, and drag it quickly back three feet until it touched the curtain. Mrs. T. did not like this manifestation. Twice she put her chair back and twice it was dragged back; so we concluded that they wanted her near the curtain. While our attention was taken up by this occurrence, 'Nellie' came and said oracularly that she was ordered to say that nothing happens so easily as the unexpected. Almost immediately afterwards there fell a shower of some vegetables in different parts of the room. One of the boys picking one up found they were fresh-gathered capsicum chili pods of an unusually large size. 'Nellie' said some Indian gentlemen had brought them from a long distance and asked 'Peter' to materialise them.

Now it so happened that these very boys a short time ago had asked me whether I could not get them fresh chilies in this country. To gratify their whim I asked at numerous vegetable shops for them only to find that the demand in this country was so small that they were not kept. Consequently I had made up my mind that another year we must get the seed and grow them. This little domestic episode had never been told to anyone else in the flesh, but, lo, it seemed as if some friend of the boys' on the other side had noticed the boys' disappointment and brought them this pleasant surprise. 'Nellie' then said she was told to ask whether I liked them of a red or of a green colour. I answered I had always seen them red, but I should like to see a green-coloured one. Soon afterwards a green one fell by my hands. At the end of the meeting we counted up eight red ones and one green one; all about four inches long and fresh.

'Nellie' said that several figures were now going to materialise behind the curtain—herself amongst them. She wanted her sister to change places to the chair beside her mother and the curtain, as she wished to touch her. After that the boys were to come in turn to the same chair, as friends of theirs were coming for them. Just as 'Nellie' was relinquishing control of her mother, the speaking tube was flung violently from the inside of the curtain to a distant corner of the room, and 'Nellie' called out that it was a piece of childish mischief on little Toto's part, and that we were to bring it back, as 'Clare' would want it by and bye to speak with. Accordingly as the little girl changed places, the roll of paper was brought back again and put in its old place. Soon after she had seated herself in the chair beside Mrs. T., some three yards off, and some two feet from the curtain behind her, her chair was quickly raised and pulled towards the curtain, as her mother's had been, although no hands were visible coming from the curtain. The light, as I said, was clear enough to distinguish one another, and both hands of Mrs. T. were grasped by mine at her request, and rested on the table, so that her daughter and all could observe this fact, to which I called their attention. The girl's chair was replaced and two or three times dragged back again. Then she felt 'Nellie's' hands tenderly touching her, and making gentle knocks at the back of her chair. Meanwhile the tall, grand, turbaned figure of our Indian visitant of last time began again to manifest. He pulled back the curtain and startled Mrs. T. by his proximity, so he dropped it again. He took up the paper roll and tapped it against the wall beside him. I addressed him in Hindustani, and asked him if he was Akbar (three taps)—the great Mogul Emperor (three taps). Were the boys present any descendants of his? (three taps). Through their father? (one tap). Through their mother? (three taps). Were others with him? (Yes.) His old Hindu Guru? (Yes.) Would he like the boys to come near the curtain? (Yes.)

Accordingly the boys went in turn near the curtain, and he manifested himself to them by touching them through the curtain—the elder boy he grasped by the hand so tightly as to hurt him. I was holding Mrs. T.'s hand all the while. No one else was near the curtain, but all were sitting facing it, so that the movements of the curtain were seen by all. The boys' old riding master, the native Sowar, who had manifested on a previous occasion in this room, was also somewhere present, as we were constantly hearing the peculiar 'clink, clink,' as of spurs, which is his especial token and signal. He answered by these clinks some questions put him by the boys in Hindustani,

* The boys do not know for certain whether this is so, but it is very probable, as being Hyderabad noblemen, they are descended from Delhi nobles.

saying that the rains in Hyderabad this year were good (which is the fact), and that their pet Arab pony was all right (answered only after a pause as if he had gone to see). He then sent 'Nellie' the messenger (I have nicknamed her Iris) to say that he thought he saw the boys back in India on a visit at the end of next year. 'Nellie' asked if she could come on the trip with us in order to gain experience. I presume she means for me to consciously project the idea that she is our companion, at various odd moments of the voyage, and in this way she will gain consciousness of her personality.

'Nellie' said that 'Clare' (my sister) wanted to come to me and that we must sing her favourite hymn, 'For ever with the Lord,' in order to help her. As we were singing the hymn, we heard her joining in, all through, with a loud strong voice through the tube (Mrs. T. was quite visible sitting beside me and quite silent, for she has no singing powers); 'Clare' then greeted me in the direct voice and answered several questions of mine in the same way, in a half whispering voice. I asked if a certain date would suit them for our next meeting, and whether I could invite anyone else to be present. She said 'Yes, I could invite Mr. Dawson Rogers,' and they would try to do something to interest him. She also said that 'Emily,' Mr. T.'s sister, was also materialised. After showing some of her beautiful firefly lights she came out, invisible, yet palpable; for I could feel her hands fondling my head and neck, and at the same time Mr. T. was greeted in the same way by 'Emily.' We were then told to close. As we were singing the Doxology the window drapery behind me began to bulge with the magnetic breeze, and was tugged several times on the side of me farthest from Mrs. T., and finally brought down with a run at the close.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Ceremonious Sacrifice.

SIR,—Though I cannot furnish the definite information which Eleanor M. Beeby asks for in 'LIGHT' of the 25th ult., I can tell her that Hindus avoid shedding blood because they know how swarms of low entities, Bhoots, Pisachas, Ghosts, and all sorts of vile astrals, are attracted by blood spilt, and collected. Madame Blavatsky taught this; and sacrificial ceremony originated in, and rests upon, knowledge that elementals, some having great natural power, can be used as means towards ends which have always degraded and often enslaved mankind.

Mercifully, there is a tendency of Modern Spiritualism to release the minds of men from the savagery of ceremony, and its concomitant sacerdotal thralldom. The writings of Mr. Richard Harte, who might very well be called the Apostle of Modern Spiritualism; the teaching of Imperator; and, notably, the spirit of a letter of Charles E. Smith, published in 'LIGHT' of the 18th ult., are expressions of an ardent hope for veracity to replace the fetichism of beliefs which incessantly war against simplicity by substituting for it duplicity and complexity.

Spiritualism, in common with all inculcations of Truth, must rest mainly upon self-control, meaning much more than self-abnegation as an end. It must be taught as a means. Its intelligent practice is, in reality, the way, the one way, towards liberty. It would relieve us from all sorts of interested interference, not merely of the priestcraft which dominates reason by an audacity so unreasonable that nowadays it defeats itself; but other devices of the Adversaries might be met and thwarted. Just as theology was, and is still, the Black Terror, so also can a morbid worship of Science become the White Terror of these times. And not less injurious and misleading is superstitious reliance on phenomena, intended rather to attract attention towards an invisible world than to invest its pawns with an importance which they do not deserve.

Surely a complaint that just now rapping, and what is called physical mediumism, is on the wane, has a significance. May it not mean that it has done its work? At least, it is not so prominent as it was, nor has it the same influence. Now, there is a development correcting crudities, and helping us to help one another, and so help ourselves. And with this thought in my mind please permit me to say that poor Madame Blavatsky, God bless her, is beyond the reach of foolish sneers; and that all sorts of jealous carping at honest endeavour to find out

what is true or false can only hinder progress of the cause we all care for. The only Researchers beyond the pale of charity are those who torture animals to help themselves.

Tednambury Stud Farm,

GILBERT ELLIOT.

By Bishop's Stortford, Herts.

Blood and Astral Phantoms.

SIR,—Miss Eleanor M. Beeby's letter, which appeared in your issue of the 25th ult., under the heading 'A Problem in Psychology,' raises an interesting point. If Miss Beeby is not acquainted with the writings of Edward Maitland and the late Anna Kingsford, she will do well to get them and study them, for, apart from their priceless value in other respects, they do deal very explicitly with the question of the origin and nature of bloody sacrifices and of bloodshed in general. In Lecture IV. of their book, entitled 'The Perfect Way' (Third Edition), is the following passage, very much to the point:—

'The effusion of physical blood has, in all ages, been a means whereby magicians have evoked astral phantoms or phantasmagoric reflects in the magnetic light. The efflorescences of the lower atmosphere immediately related to the body, have a direct affinity for the essential element, called by the old physiologists the "vital spirits" of the blood, and are enabled by means of its effusion to manifest themselves materially.'

While preparing the lecture in which the above passage occurs, and in illustration of what she had written, Anna Kingsford received the following experience, also referred to in 'The Perfect Way' (pp. 98-101), but which I quote from 'Clothed With the Sun,' the book containing her illuminations ('C.W.S.,' p. 64).

'Here he (Anna Kingsford's Genius) led me into a large chamber, where I saw four bullocks lying slaughtered upon altars, and a number of persons standing round in the act of adoration. And above, in the fumes arising from the spirits of the blood, were misty, colossal shapes, half-formed, from the waist upwards, and resembling the gods. And he said, "These are astrals." And thus will they do until the end of the world.'

In the 'Life of Anna Kingsford,' by Edward Maitland, published a short time ago, it is stated that evil spirits, the souls of bad men on the downward way to extinction, 'are wont to associate themselves with persons in the flesh with whom they have affinity, partly in order to gratify their own evil propensities by inciting them to wickedness and mischief, and partly to obtain from them the vitality necessary to prolong their own existence; for they are absolutely selfish, and their most sustaining nutriment consists of the fumes of blood newly shed.'

It is well that the Vegetarians are beginning to look at the subject of flesh eating from the point of view of the mystic and occultist, as well as from that of the physiologist. The flesh of animals, as a food and stimulant, is especially favourable to the production and nurture of astrals, or blood spirits; 'they live upon the vital spirits of the blood, they deplete the vital energy, and are as vampires to those upon whom they fasten' ('P.W.,' pp. 77-78). The Blessed Buddha classed the practice of flesh eating with that of bloody sacrifice, and included both in his unsparing denunciation. The writers of 'The Perfect Way' say:—

'The reason is not far to seek. Man, as the microcosm, resembles in all things the macrocosm, and like the latter, therefore, he comprises within his own system an astral plane or circulus. In eating flesh, and thereby ingesting the blood principle—*flesh and blood being inseparable*—he sacrifices to the astral emanations of his own magnetic atmosphere, and, so doing, ministers to the terrene and corruptible. This it is to "eat of things offered to idols," for blood is the food of the astral eidola, and the eater of blood is infested by them' ('P.W.,' p. 102).

The same writers add:—

'The astral emanations resemble clouds which occupy the earthly atmosphere between us and heaven, and which, filmy and incorporeal though they be, are nevertheless material, and are born of the exhalations of earth. To perpetuate and do sacrifice to these phantoms, is to thicken the atmosphere, to obscure the sky, to gather fog and darkness and tempest about us, as did the old storm witches of the North. Such is that worship which is spoken of as the worship of the Serpent of the Dust, and this does he who ingests blood, for he makes thereby oblation to the infernal gods of his own system, as does the sacrificing priest to the powers of the same sphere of the macrocosm' ('P.W.,' p. 103).

'The interior life and clear Heaven are not attainable by men who are partakers of blood—men whose mental atmosphere is thick with the fumes of daily sacrifice to idols. . . . Abstinance from bloody oblations on all planes is, therefore

the gate of the Perfect Way, the test of illumination, the touchstone and criterion of sincere desire for the fulness of Beatific Vision' ('P.W.,' p. 104).

According to the divine illuminations which Anna Kingsford received, blood is one of the three veils between God and man. With blood for food salvation is impossible. 'They are miserably deceived who accept eternal life, and restrain not their hands from blood and death' ('C.W.S.,' p. 239). In 'Clothed With the Sun' is also the following passage:—

'It is to man frugivorous, and to him alone, that the Intuition reveals herself, and of her comes all revelation. For between him and his spirit there is no barrier of blood; and in him alone can the spirit and the man be at one' ('C.W.S.,' p. 111).

Atonement is salvation.

Other passages might be quoted from the works of these writers of a like nature to those above, but I have written enough. If Miss Beeby, and anybody who reads this, would like to have a synopsis of 'The Life of Anna Kingsford,' and will communicate with me to that effect, I shall be pleased to send them one.

SAMUEL HOPGOOD HART.

Mulgrave House, Sutton, Surrey.

Impress of Materialised Hands.

SIR,—Kindly permit me, in further reply to Mr. Thurstan's inquiry, to state, for his information, that over twenty years ago Mr. W. Armstrong, Mr. J. Miller, and myself (all of Newcastle-on-Tyne) took a great interest in the production of moulds of materialised spirit hands and feet, obtained through the mediumship of Miss Fairlamb (now Mrs. Mellon), and we were very successful in our experiments, with the medium sitting both inside and outside the cabinet. Our apparatus consisted simply of two ordinary foot-baths, one containing cold water, the other molten paraffin wax. The wax was melted, and sufficient hot water placed in the bath to keep the wax in a liquid state, so as to float on the surface of the water. I would recommend Mr. Thurstan to follow this method, and I have no doubt that he will meet with success.

The paraffin wax, I should think, could be obtained from any wholesale chemist. The easiest way to prepare the wax would be to melt it in the water intended for the bath over a gentle fire, and when in the liquid state pour the whole into the bath, having the bath nice and warm to receive it. The baths should each be about half full. All that is needed now is to place the baths and the medium in the cabinet and let the investigators sit round the cabinet about four feet from it and give the best conditions possible, always following the advice and guidance of the controlling power. A moderate light should be kept burning, but its rays should on no account penetrate the cabinet. Mr. Thurstan is quite correct in his remarks in regard to lamp-black, &c. On this subject he cannot be too scrupulous and careful, for it is dangerous to a degree both to medium and sitters, but more especially to the medium.

28, Heaton-road, Newcastle-on-Tyne. THOMAS ASHTON.

Clairvoyant Non-remembrances.

SIR,—If 'Quæstor Vitæ' will read the section on 'Memory' on pages 180 to 184 of my volume (1860), on the 'Natural and Supernatural,' he will find a much simpler solution of the phenomenon of the three stages of non-remembrances by mesmerised sensitives than Dr. Dumontpallier's of Paris, as observed by me during the mesmeric era of from, say, 1844 to 1854. By experiments, I found that each phrenological organ of the brain was susceptible to the chemical heat issuing from my finger when pointed over the organ *without* contact or suggestion, and that the normal power was increased to an abnormal power; that the phrenological organ called 'Memory' so operated on, gave two stages of excitement above the normal—the abnormal action power as is produced in fevers; and that, also when *extra*-abnormally excited, incidents occurred on and around the sensitive, none of which were known when in the ordinary abnormal state; and in like manner, when lowered to the normal state, all occurrences of events in either the abnormal or extra-normal state were unknown; but they knew of all incidents that occurred in the normal. The internal nerves machinery of the head, including those in the local function called memory, that assisted the result, were as little thought of as were the nerve wires of my hand and finger that started the phenomenon.

South Norwood, S.E.,

J. ENMORE JONES,

The Divining Rod.

SIR,—In the concluding sentence of your interesting and lengthy review of my recently published monograph on the Divining Rod, your Reviewer expresses regret that I "should be virtually pledged to arrive at conclusions that will be acceptable to the most ignorant and most prejudiced," and that I "should in fact be bound blindfold to the chariot-wheel of 'Official Science.'" I was not aware of the fact, but if such be the case will he help to enlighten me? What are the conclusions at which one who is *not* pledged to pander to the prejudiced, and *not* bound blindfold to any chariot-wheels, ought to arrive from a consideration of the evidence I have adduced? This latter I am glad to find he does not, like the "Leeds Mercury," call "a perfect farrago of evidential nonsense"; on the contrary it is in his eyes "the only part which is likely to have any value at all," so that as we are agreed upon the premises I am curious to know what conclusions he would deduce. Assume I am all wrong, how does your Reviewer explain the facts?

There are one or two inaccuracies your Reviewer has fallen into. In the otherwise perfectly fair outline he has given of some of the points brought out by the evidence, it is not quite correct to say that when the rod is held *in* tongs or pincers it turns and breaks. The reference is doubtless to p. 86, where a witness states that even after the extremities of the rod were held in pincers, the dowser as usual holding the forked ends, "the contortions still went on between the points held": a remarkable fact undoubtedly, but one needing repetition and corroboration. The other error made by your Reviewer is more serious; he states that I conclude "that the causes determining the motion [of the rod] are thought-transference and hypnotic suggestion. . . . As it may seem incredible to our readers that this is really Professor Barrett's conclusion, we quote from the five chief points of his summing up in his "Theoretical Conclusions," which your Reviewer does, but, though it "may seem incredible," he overlooks the words wherein I have expressly stated (p. 255), "Only here and there can this agency [thought-transference] be even supposed in the evidence cited in this paper." As regards hypnotic suggestion, it is not once mentioned, directly or indirectly, in the conclusions which, in my opinion, the evidence seems to warrant.

Kingstown, Co. Dublin.

W. F. BARRETT.

The Invisibles at Work Visibly.

SIR,—A reversal of the anticipatory prophecy, 'when the mortal shall put on immortality,' viz., when the immortal clothes itself in mortality—a descent from physical maturity back to the matrix, to use an approximate mundane parallel—brings to the cognising being almost a new sense, or an extraordinary extension of one latent.

Such a phenomenon, apparently indicating a retrograde physiological movement, finds the race, who are in strict bondage to the ordinary sense perceptions, void of the mental capacity for its scientific reception; hence the need of an immediate intellectual bound.

A submarine telephonic message from Paris to London would, in the absence of the knowledge of the special and definitive means for its transmission, present difficulties to the mind as to its genuineness, which a considerable widening of the perceptive faculties alone could remove. Similarly, a phenomenally rapid formation of hands and arms of corporeal substance, animated and controlled by human volitional power, brings to the unprepared intellect a mountain of doubt which only a special course of inquiry and reasoning will dissolve. Do the alleged facts of momentarily created hands, of tangible molecular structure, and guided by intelligence equal to mundane, really occur? This is the stereotyped question of the uninitiated, and an affirmative answer still requires a firm mental front on the part of the truth-server. Although nearly half a century has elapsed since the first physical signs of modern spiritualistic manifestations broke the silence of a spiritually dumb world, one needs, even now, to be prepared to sacrifice whatever credit for sanity and intelligence one may possess to the Moloch of popular common-sense, if the determination exists to testify to the actuality of supernatural appearances.

The writer had the privilege as recently as yesterday, of seeing and clasping hands which a quarter of an hour previously had no sensory existence. These hands, not only

shook his in a thoroughly human and sympathetic manner, but took a lead pencil from the table and wrote a message on two sides of a sheet of paper. This was repeated in the case of several other sitters.

The light was that emitted by two large luminous cards, and was sufficient to illuminate the hands and forms of the sitters near the curtains (which screened an apertureless recess) and also the materialised fingers and the motion of the pencil in the process of writing.

By no conceivable means, under the condition of the sitters, could the manifestations have been produced by human agency. The 'hands' carried a bell and a musical box, both luminous, around the room at an altitude of seven to eight feet.

The messages written for the sitters were in various calligraphical styles, and the purport was quite characteristic of the super-terrestrial authors.

The mediums for these phenomena were Mrs. and Miss Read, of Handsworth, Birmingham. The writer has been intimately acquainted with the entire family for the last twelve years; during that period the development of the mediums has been steadily progressive and their conduct unflinchingly honest.

By the light of the power of such mediumship we have the story of the long muster-roll of centuries, with its million-ranked mourners over the dividing by death, ended, and the restoration of the lost, and the discovery of the parted, made a blessed reality.

97, Fleet-street, London, E.C.

J. W. MAHONY.

Spirit Guides.

SIR,—I was very glad to see in 'LIGHT' of September, under the heading of 'Notes by the Way,' a most interesting quotation from the 'Progressive Thinker,' urgently protesting against the tendency to rely upon spirit guides. We must all most thoroughly agree with the writer of the article in question that 'our intellect was given us for a guide, and woe to him who does not recognise it. In the duties and avocations of life there is no guide for any person so high as his own consciousness, and he should never move in lines that conflict with it.'

I was the more glad to read this, as having already sent you an account of a series of communications received through the automatic writing of a member of our own family circle, and also suggested on another occasion that much good might result if your readers would send you accounts of any incidents that had occurred to them personally, and I feel bound in honesty to say that I have *myself* lately received communications purporting to come from the spirit of an old and valued friend but which communications also contained most mendacious statements on points of worldly information, such as I was enabled to put to the test. On my mentally pointing out this fact to my unseen correspondent I was informed that the intention was to 'show how careful we should be in making a difference between spiritual and earthly communion, and that the false messages were intended to be a warning to me.' However this may be, my ordinary intelligence teaches me how true it is that the very greatest caution should be exercised in dealing with an unseen correspondent.

Southbourne, Hants.

C. BAKER.

Mrs. Russell-Davies' Letter.

SIR,—May I be allowed space to express my gratification at the admirable letter from Mrs. Russell-Davies? I feel sure that all those who, like myself, have been fortunate enough to meet with exceptional opportunities for investigating, in a thorough and natural manner, the possibility of communicating with friends passed away, must have greatly enjoyed Mrs. Russell-Davies' clever satire. Why is it that there seems such an irrepressible desire to explain these matters by cumbrous, unproven, and improbable hypotheses, when there exists so simple, natural, and probable an explanation?

A. M.

Prayer.

SIR,—Would it be considered *wrong* to pray to one's mother? To my mind there seems to be a great difficulty in praying for guidance in our little fussy affairs to the great undefined and undefinable Power who rules the universe. If it is not speaking too lightly, there is a certain ludicrousness in the idea that we poor little mites of human beings should send out our puny appeals to this great, unknown Cause. We seem to need someone to appeal to, of whom we have a more definite

knowledge, and to whom we have a distinctive kinship; one who we know is able to sympathise with us.

My mother passed to the higher life when I was three years old. Having been in many perplexities lately, I have directed my thoughts to her, earnestly desiring her help, protection, and guardianship; and I have felt a distinct sense of restfulness and satisfaction after doing so, which, apparently, justifies my action. Yet I should be glad to have an outside opinion on the matter. (I have, otherwise, no acquaintance with the phenomena of Spiritualism, except from having read about them.)

G. W. R.

A Correction.

SIR,—I am sure you will excuse the liberty I take in directing your attention to the fact that the author of the excellent book, 'Unsere Schutzgeister,' spells his name as 'Von Langsdorff'—the name is given without an 's' in 'LIGHT' of September 25th.

I also wish to direct your kind attention to the fact that Dr. von Langsdorff's medium was a young man (not a 'she') who undertook that wonderful journey to St. Petersburg.

I regret so much if my handwriting has been unreadable to the printer, and I tender hereby my excuses.

MADAME DE CHRISTMAS,

Denmark.

née BARONESS DIRCKINCK-HOLMFELD.

SOCIETY WORK.

102, CAMBERWELL-ROAD.—A meeting of Spiritualists was held on Sunday evening last, when Mrs. Bingham delivered an inspirational address upon 'Psychic Healing.' Various articles were psychometrised by Mrs. Bingham, and spirits were described, who were recognised by those present.—A. B.

BOW, 193, BOW-ROAD.—On the 29th ult. we were favoured by a visit from Mr. Swindlehurst, who gave an interesting address, followed by Mrs. Place, of Leicester, who gave clairvoyance. A developing circle is held every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m., and a public meeting on Wednesdays at 8 p.m.—H. H.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last 'Evangel' gave us a very interesting address on 'The Good We Derive from Spiritualism.' We had a good attendance. On October 28th Mr. E. W. Wallis will address us, and we should like a full hall.—WM. A. RENFREE, Secretary.

DAWN OF DAY SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 85, FORTRESS-ROAD, KENTISH TOWN, N.W.—The Harvest Festival and Thanksgiving Services on Sunday were much appreciated by a good audience. Mr. H. Colman presided at the organ. The society will hold a second harvest thanksgiving on Sunday next, commencing at 7 p.m.—M. W.

BATTERSEA PARK OPEN-AIR WORK.—Mr. Adams speedily gathered an audience on Sunday last. Mrs. H. Boddington, Mr. Peters, Mr. J. Swindlehurst, and Mr. W. O. Drake followed in the order named. All the speakers made good use of the time at their disposal. Next Sunday, at 3.30 p.m., Battersea Society and friends.—H. B.

CARDIFF PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ST. JOHN'S HALL.—Mr. G. H. Bibbings gave two able and eloquent addresses on Sunday last in his usual unique and forcible style, which were received with rapt attention by the large audiences which he always commands. On Sunday next, both morning and evening, Mr. G. H. Bibbings will again occupy our platform.—M. A. S.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—The Sunday morning circles continue to be well attended. On Sunday evening last Mr. W. E. Long delivered a trance address, the subject chosen being 'Haunted Houses.' Next Sunday morning, at 11 o'clock, public circle and clairvoyance; door closed at 11.15; 3 p.m., children's Lyceum; 6.30 p.m., trance address by the guides of Mr. W. E. Long, 'Revelation of the Spirit' (the first lecture of a series of three). At 8 p.m., election of candidates and general assembly of members. On Sunday, 17th inst., 'Baptism by the Spirit.' 'LIGHT' always on sale.—VERAX.

MERTHYR TYDFIL.—On Sunday last the morning service was conducted by Mr. C. Hemmings, whose controls invited questions from a fair gathering of young men. In the afternoon a discussion was held on the question of the immortality of animals. In the evening the hall was crowded, when Mr. Hemmings again took the service and spoke on 'Man: Whence, Why, and Whither?' treating on the origin of life from the protoplasmic cells, through the various forms of life to man, and the purpose of his existence for the unfoldment and perfection of character, so that when earth life is ended man may be fitted for the higher spheres and reap the reward of his labour. At the close Mrs. Billingsley gave a large number of clairvoyant descriptions.—W. B.