

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A word of warning is necessary concerning the too ready and indiscriminating use of the word, 'materialist.' We are glad to say that it is far less applicable in the worlds of science and philosophy than many imagine. The important thing to take note of is, not the field of a man's activity, but his terminus. Thus, Tyndall used to be called a materialist, although a few of his Addresses contain passages which were, in the highest sense, spiritual, because he ardently pressed on, beyond his own field, to an inference which put his terminus far beyond it, in a higher and inner world, giving us, in effect, all we ask.

Mr. Herbert Spencer's late protest against the application to him of the word 'materialist,' has by no means received the attention it deserves. But here, the question of terminus becomes a question of supremacy which, in a way, is the same thing. Repudiating 'materialist' as applicable to him, he refers to two very significant passages in 'First Principles' and 'Principles of Psychology.' The one equally balances 'materialistic' and 'spiritualistic' as 'the antagonistic hypotheses respecting the ultimate nature of things'; the other frankly gives the preference to 'spiritualistic,' and in this way: If, he says, he were compelled to choose between the alternatives of translating mental phenomena into physical phenomena, or of translating physical phenomena into mental phenomena, he would regard the latter as the more acceptable of the two. Then he uses the significant phrases 'so-called spirit' and 'so-called matter,' and says we cannot go 'beyond our symbols.' Virtually, this is a clear case of not ending in what we call 'matter,' but of referring matter to spirit for any statement or explanation that is possible; and, of course, this is the very opposite of materialism.

'Literature,' we are pleased to say, has paid its compliments to 'Ghosts and Dreams' in a rather nice notice of both. We are pleased because 'Literature' is, on the whole, serious and respectful; and the other thing has really become very stupid and tiresome. We like 'Literature's' opening sentences:—

Ghosts, dreams, and other like mysterious occurrences have occupied during the last half century a new place in the thoughts of men. They have undergone a change which everything we are cognisant of undergoes in its turn. First we accept and wonder, then we investigate and describe. With regard to 'occult phenomena,' the second stage has only been reached by the mass of mankind within living memory.

That 'second stage' gives us great content, and we are perfectly willing to give to the Psychological Research

Society as much of the credit for it as is its due. Says 'Literature':—

The Psychological Research Society has dealt a fatal blow at the ghost of literature. It has quite altered our attitude towards supernatural appearances. We are much less credulous, and we are getting much less inclined to think of such appearances as means of imparting a thrill to a firelight audience, and much more inclined to test them by scientific canons. The age of wonder has given place to the age of criticism.

It is precisely this 'age of criticism' that we welcome. All we stipulate is, that criticism and experiment shall go on together. 'Literature' quotes the very pat saying of Mr. F. C. S. Schiller that psychical phenomena are the Dreyfus case of Science. He affirms that they have never received a fair and open trial, *coram populo*; that the evidence on which they have been condemned has never been published and could not be produced; that their banishment from the society of scientific fact and their relegation to the company of the Devil has been effected by a secret and nameless court-martial, which made no serious pretence of examining the evidence; that for nearly two centuries the authorities who professed to speak in the name of science have, when questioned, done nothing but invoke the sanctity of the *chose jugée*, and intimidate inquirers with solemn prophecies of the absolute ruin that would overtake the whole scientific order if any investigation or revision of the matter were to be attempted; and that, in spite of all discouragements and threats, a demand for 'revision' has grown up, which is supported by an increasing number of 'intellectuals,' who are not afraid of being maligned as the hirelings of 'a conspiring syndicate of all the superstitions.'

This important Article in 'Literature' closes seriously. It says:—

With predictions of the future, and appearances of the dead, we enter an entirely different field. No one can now approach them with the unreasoning scepticism of the eighteenth century any more than with the credulity of the Middle Ages. Only a serious and systematic examination of recorded experiences can satisfy those who, having reluctantly parted with the consolations of a simple faith, look wistfully beyond the path of sense and seek some light upon that momentous riddle which positive science now acknowledges that she cannot solve.

After all, it is possible that M. Flammarion has indeed given up belief in the action of 'spirits of dead people' at séances. A copy of a cablegram to the 'New York World' has been sent to us, affirming this. But a book is promised, and we prefer to wait for the book, especially as the cablegram refers us to it. We may, however, say that the cablegram looks too ridiculous for genuineness. In it, M. Flammarion is made to say that 'it is inadmissible that real spirits could err or jest.' This is so utterly absurd that it throws grave doubts upon the whole message. The alternative to action by the 'spirits of dead people' is action by the spirits of the mediums. The following sentences set this forth:—

You must understand, however, that I do not renounce all belief in spiritual manifestations, the existence of which has been proved beyond doubt. I have simply reached the

conclusion that such manifestations cannot be attributed to the spirits of dead people.

I explain them by our power to throw a part of our spirit outside of ourselves. This exteriorised spirit undoubtedly is capable of moving material bodies, emitting sounds, and otherwise affecting matters.

If M. Flammarion is really upset, he and he alone is to blame. A spirit, called 'Galileo,' 'never failed to come when summoned,' and this spirit gave him 'revelations about the appearance and manners of the inhabitants of other planets,' and these he actually incorporated into his writings, 'with the utmost confidence,' he tells us. Some of these 'revelations' are now proved to be wrong. If this is all true, no wonder M. Flammarion is disgusted: but also, if it is all true, he has acted like a child, and in ignorance of the A B C of spirit-communion.

'The Medical Press' is sometimes melancholy reading; but a week or two ago it tried to laugh. Referring to 'Christian Scientists,' it said:—

A 'Scientist' failed to make a diagnosis in the case of a cow that was *in extremis* when he arrived. However, after three sittings of profound meditation the cow made such an excellent recovery that it chased the 'Scientist' twice round the barnyard, and he was only rescued from a perilous situation by a hired man with a pitchfork. Possibly if the 'Scientists' begin to find that their veterinary department is liable to frequent developments of this nature they will decide to confine their attentions to human beings. At all events, in this instance it is quite clear that the cow had no intention of being made a fool of. We may assume that the natural resentment which it displayed was intended as a protest against making it the medium of fraudulently extracting dollars out of the pocket of its owner. Possibly, however, it expected a dose of medicine, but when it found that it was expected to get well under the influence of the 'profound meditations' of a Christian Scientist, the animal at once adopted an effectual method of showing its abhorrence of quackery. Pity can only be felt for those persons who prefer to be attended by the 'Scientists,' and who fail to show the common-sense which was apparent in the cow.

We do not quite see the point. On its own showing, the cow (*in extremis* when the healer arrived) was cured, and was *not* 'made a fool of'; and there was no question of 'fraudulently extracting dollars out of the pocket of its owner.' Moreover, we do not see that common-sense is shown by trying to kill the successful healer.

Our readers will not think we are holding a brief for 'Christian Scientists'; we are only putting a common enemy into a little pillory, and acting scripturally by answering a fool according to his folly. It may do him good.

'The Liberal Congress of Religion' will hold its sixth Session, in Boston (U.S.), from October 9th to 13th. Its organisers publish a notable list of office holders and adherents, including some of the brightest spirits in America. The Congress has for its main object the purification of the religious sentiment from accretions and survivals which rather hinder than help it, and which are especially deleterious in so far as they keep apart kindred spirits on account of doctrinal or ritualistic differences. We want a similar Congress in this country.

'The Life and Correspondence of the Rev. John Clowes, M.A.' by Theodore Compton (London: James Spiers), comes to us as a 'Third edition, revised.' We do not feel the force of the theological teachings of Mr. Clowes, whose remarkable conversion to Swedenborgianism is so well known, but, if there ever was a Spiritualist's book, this is one. Mr. Clowes was evidently a very receptive medium, with certain hypnotic powers over other people. This book is mainly useful as adding to the already extensive evidence that opinions differ as widely on the other side as on this; and that hypnotic suggestions of very varied character flow from that side to this.

'JACOB'S LADDER.'

ADDRESS BY MR. J. W. BOULDING.

On Sunday evening, 27th ult., at Cavendish Rooms, Mr. J. W. Boulding delivered an address on 'Jacob's Ladder—from a Spiritualist's Point of View,' Mr. A. J. Sutton occupying the chair.

MR. BOULDING commenced by referring to the fascination which the story of Jacob's vision had for him as a child. In later life, however, he ceased to regard the story as one of fact, and its attractiveness departed. But in the light of the newer spiritual revelation he was again enabled to regard the vision as embodying a truth, and consequently its old fascination had returned.

It was a beautiful story, that of Jacob going forth on his journey into untrodden paths, a young and untried traveller. Before him lay the future, dark and uncertain; behind him the tender memories of childhood and home. Then, as he trudged wearily onward, came the sunset, and the night falling round his way; and, lonely and wayworn, with no couch for his tired form and nothing but a stone for his pillow, he lay down to rest. For the first time in his life he was homeless, but his realisation of the bitter fact was soon drowned in the merciful oblivion of sleep. Then came the vision of the ladder between Heaven and earth, with the angels ascending and descending, God thereby revealing himself as the outcast's guide and friend.

The picture was a beautiful one; the more beautiful when we realised that it portrayed a fact. There was, indeed, a Ladder set up on earth—a Ladder whose top reached to the highest heavens, and the angels were ever descending to the weary travellers of earth, until the time came for these tired wayfarers to ascend, and in due season re-visit as angels the wanderers they had left behind.

Those who regarded the vision as an old-world story and nothing more lost all its use and benefit. To them it was only 'Jacob's dream.' That came of drawing a line of distinction between the past and the present in relation to the spiritual experiences of humanity.

It was the distinguished privilege of all who were Spiritualists that they recognised no difference between the old times and the new in these matters; between ancient people and modern people; between ancient history, so-called, and profane history, so-called; between Holy Lands and other lands. To the Spiritualist the ladder between Heaven and earth stood everywhere, and at all times, and the sky was no vast, inhospitable void, but the eternal dwelling-place of angels.

The Ladder was not visible to every eye. It was hardly to be expected that it would be. Even Jacob only saw it in a dream. But if it were no more than a dream then our lives would be but 'of such stuff as dreams are made of.' Here was the difference between the Spiritualist and the materialist. The materialist saw only empty space, the Spiritualist saw the Ladder reaching from earth to Heaven. One was engaged in searching, the other in seeing. One was a thinker only, the other a thinker and seer. One endeavoured to construct a ladder for himself, which, being wholly material, did not reach to Heaven; the other was gazing on a ladder, which he had not built, but which had been formed by mightier hands than his. And hence they found an amazing contrast between some of the lofty minds of science—who, although seemingly equipped to wrench from Nature her darkest secrets, could only utter a doubtful verdict about the world beyond—and those simple souls, who, destitute of intellectual power and learning, yet possessed the seeing eye, which gave them a greater knowledge than intellect and erudition. Too often the scientist saw only bones and dust where simple men saw angels. It had been thus through all the history of the world.

Dealing with another aspect of Jacob's vision, Mr. Boulding said it was curious how often spiritual manifestations came to those who were not seeking them. They might be seeking a new place for themselves, a new situation, a new set of circumstances, a new home, and just as they were taken up with the matter Heaven opened its gates and gave their thoughts a new direction, and their energies a higher aim. Such visions often came in the midst of some great sorrow, when the nature had become

more sensitive and more impressionable than usual, for then the angels of light, who were always watching for such an opportunity, found they could the more easily glide in, the more surely gain audience and make an impression that would last.

The fact that Jacob, in spite of his treachery to his brother and the deception practised upon his father, was yet privileged to receive communications from the unseen, suggested the reflection that sin and earthliness did not necessarily debar the soul from the consolations of the spiritual world. Doubtless the angel comforters looked beneath the mask of worldliness and moral degeneracy to the divinity that lay at the core, and were ever ready to succour even the basest of souls when overtaken by suffering and despair. From their celestial heights they could look down with stronger and clearer sight than ours, and see the causes, hereditary and otherwise, which made such souls what they were. What a world of compassion and far-seeing sympathy those angels revealed to us!

Pursuing the story of the patriarch's career, the lecturer next dwelt upon the scene at Peniel, where Jacob wrestled with the angel. It was an illustration of the career of many a soul which, while young and untried, receives the consolations of the heavenly world, but ultimately becomes strong enough to combat doubts and terrors, even as Jacob the dreamer became at last Jacob the wrestler.

It seemed at times as though the angelic vision was granted to some as compensation for a homeless and exiled state. The beatific dream came oftenest to the head which had but a stone for its pillow. Dante, the great poet and mystic, was one of these, and wonderful, indeed, was the dream which cheered him on his lonely and toilsome way. John Milton was another to whom the vision was granted, when after the splendour and dignity of a career as a servant of the State he retired, 'old and poor,' to the loneliness of a darkened life in a humble dwelling. Yet another of the favoured dreamers was John Bunyan, who found the stone for his pillow in Bedford Gaol, and who, when the heavens were opened to him, saw the shining ones across the river. His dream had proved one of the great realities of life to those who had no inspired slumbers to cheer them; his was a vision, the record of which the world would not willingly let die.

The celestial ladder was a long one, but it led up to God, albeit by countless stages and degrees of progression. In one sense, indeed, the climber would never reach the top, for that would mean a period to his progress, a pause in the felicity of continuous achievement. And the destiny of every soul was to go onward and upward through the countless age of the eternal existence. As we ascended 'higher, ever higher,' this would be the great inspiration of our lives, a source of ever-increasing wonder and felicity, that on our upward journey God would be with us, around us, and about us as we went—always before us, over us, above us, as we ceaselessly moved towards Him, gaining as we went perpetual extensions of vision, perpetual prospects of progress and possibilities of attainment. The top of the celestial Ladder reached to the Heaven of Heavens, whence there proceeded eternally strength and blessing and inspirations for every ascending soul.

A BRIGHT PROSPECT.

'There is something more in the mental atmosphere than the sound of our own coming power: the bloom of a new dawn is in the east. It is the colouring of fresh hopes born of a loftier altitude of mind than was ever reached before. . . . The discovery of the creative power of thought and its application to the every-day needs of the race, is of itself alone lifting us into the kingdom of Heaven right here on earth. It is carrying us into a region beyond the tyranny of monopoly; it is taking us from finite to infinite, from limited substances, such as land and gold, to unlimited oceans of invisible but potent forces, so abundant that no man can make a corner in them. Truly, the race is climbing onward and upward at a constantly accelerating pace. The years are bringing us salvation.'—'Expression.'

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A COMMUNICATION FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

Having occasionally read in 'LIGHT' records of experiences which seem to show the possibility of spirit communion, I have thought that the following narrative may be of interest to some of your readers.

On Bank Holiday, Monday, August 7th, I called to see my friend, Mr. Thomas Olman Todd (of Sunderland), who is well known and esteemed, not only in spiritualistic, but also in other circles. Mr. Todd was, however, from home—at Blackburn, I think; but Mrs. Todd, with two lady friends and a medium, were in the front parlour, about to hold a séance. The medium, I may mention, is a miner or pitman—a young man of unassuming deportment, and without the slightest pretension to erudition. We joined hands, and the ladies commenced some simple hymn. Previous to the medium's passing under control, he told me that there was a young lady sitting near me who appeared to be desirous to manifest her presence to me. Very little further was said at the time, for in a few minutes afterwards the medium passed under control. It was quite light, as we sat in the bay window, facing the street, on the ground floor. After the control's salutation, the following conversation ensued:—

Control: 'There is a young lady here. She wishes to make herself known to you.'

'To me? Indeed!'

Control: 'She is speaking in a language I cannot understand. She is one of your own people.'

'But I am not a linguist, although I know many words of several languages. Nor is there anyone of the description you mention, related to me, who has passed over; but perhaps, you infer that she is someone of my race.'

Control: 'Yes, yes! That is it. She says her husband lives in close proximity to this house, very near in fact.'

'But this is very vague; can you not give me something more definite, so that I may be able to recognise in some measure who is endeavouring to make herself known? Any letter or name, so that I may have a clue?'

Control (after a short pause): 'The lady gives me the letter S.'

'S? but that is insufficient for recognition.'

Control: 'S T E I N.'

This was given slowly, letter by letter, and when the control had got so far, I at once began to cudgel my brain, and then came to my mind the fact that an intimate friend, whose daughter had passed over *some years ago*, leaving, I think, two children, and whose husband, indeed, lives in close proximity to Mrs. Todd's house, might possibly be the party alluded to. On the spur of the moment I gave the letter B, when instantly the control finished with E R G. This gave me pause, as undoubtedly the whole of the letters mentioned formed the maiden name of the lady, Steinberg, who was alleged to be wishful to make her presence known. The control then resumed.

Control: 'The lady is going over to her husband's house to see her children. She will return shortly.'

The circle sat quietly for a few minutes, when the control again spoke: 'The lady has returned, and with another name to give to you.'

I was determined to give no assistance, so simply said in reply: 'Give me the name,' when without the slightest hesitation the control gave the marriage name of the lady, letter by letter, thus: 'O S T E R W I C K.' I was really so astounded at the matter-of-fact, and yet convincing, nature of the communication, that I forgot to ask if any message was intended independent of the desire, on the part of the discarnate, to manifest her presence.

Now, sir, can anyone, after giving impartial consideration to this narrative, explain the occurrence, on any other hypothesis than that of direct spiritual communication? Can any theory of telepathy, subliminal consciousness, or unconscious cerebration, account for this experience? This was no premeditated meeting; I had 'dropped in,' as we sometimes say, at my friend's house, for a mere visit, with the result mentioned. Moreover, no member of the company then present had the slightest knowledge of the circumstances with the exception of myself, and although I had in the past a strong sympathy with the departed, it was

but at rare intervals that thoughts of her sad departure had crossed the horizon of my memory.

For obvious reasons I have given fictitious names in the conversation with the control. I related the occurrence both to the father and sister of the discarnate, and they were, as may be imagined, utterly astonished. They did not for a moment doubt my account, but, 'human like,' would have wished for more information. Possibly, should another episode of a similar nature occur, I shall be more persistent in my inquiries.

Sunderland.

SYNTAX.

DEATH AND IMMORTALITY.

In his work on 'Psychism,' published by Mr. George Redway, Dr. Paul Gibier frankly declares his knowledge, as the result of continuous and careful investigation, of the continued conscious existence of man after death. He further shows, says the 'New York Herald,' through philosophical analysis and the atomic theory, 'that matter is something which we can touch and see, but it is formed of parts that have materially no existence.' In other words, matter loses, as it were, its materiality and is merged into energy:—

After claiming that even if man were composed alone of matter and energy, 'he is immortal and even eternal, for although matter and force may be transformed, they remain anatomically the same for all time,' Dr. Gibier holds that neither matter nor energy has intelligence, and, since this is true, there must be a third element, and it must be co-existent with matter. To this element he gives the name of intelligence, or soul.

Just as is the macrocosm, so is man made up of the three fundamental parts—matter (the body), energy (the soul), intelligence (the spirit). Each one of these parts may be considered under several different aspects, which would make as many subdivisions, but we will defer entering into the details of a more complicated system of hyperphysics.

When true death occurs, the spirit is the first to leave the body, leaving it in a more or less rapid way, according to the manner of death. At the same time, a certain part of the energy is dissipated, and, in a gradual way, re-enters the great common storehouse of universal energy. Another part of this force remains bound to the spirit, without which it would probably return to universal intelligence, just as the matter of the body, and a certain quantity of its energy, return to the ambient matter and energy. But it is later that this force definitely leaves the body, providing it (the body) has not been destroyed by fire, or through any other destructive cause immediately after death.

In other terms, intellectual secession occurs first, and the animic follows gradually, more or less rapidly, according to the manner of death and degree of temperature. It is, so to speak, the successive cellular death. Life, the anima, leaves the cells one by one, and the being of the new life is only definitely constituted when the animic force which permeated the various cells and globules has left them to join once more the spirit towards which it tends, in virtue of a law analogous to the attractions which we observe, but whose nature at present is equally unknown to us.

The animic force, which Dr. Gibier, and many other scientists, say resembles electricity, or a white light, is the force through which spirits manifest themselves to those of us who still live in the matter. The person who is mediumistic, and through whom the disembodied entity sometimes returns to the earth-plane, has usually more of this animic force than persons lacking the mediumistic quality. At séances where spirits are said to appear and materialise they are held to do so by absorbing or taking on, in addition to their own, the animic force of the medium, which has been exteriorised by the medium for that purpose.

'LIGHT.'

As an inducement to new and casual readers to become subscribers, we will supply 'LIGHT' for thirteen weeks, post free, for 2s., as a 'trial' subscription, feeling assured that at the termination of that period they will feel that 'they cannot do without it,' and will then subscribe at the usual rates. May we at the same time suggest to those of our regular readers who have friends to whom they would like to introduce the paper, that they should avail themselves of this offer, and forward to us the names and addresses of such friends, upon receipt of which, together with the requisite postal order, we shall be pleased to forward 'LIGHT' to them by post, as stated above?

'THE PLACE OF DEATH IN EVOLUTION.'*

In the library of the London Spiritualist Alliance there is a volume which, to judge by the unhandled appearance of the binding, has been in small demand, but the contents of which are of considerable, although of unequal, interest.

The drift of the work is disclosed in the opening chapter, in which the writer shows that the tendency of the latest researches in biology is to set the occurrence of death in a new relation to the order of the Universe. What that altered relation is can be only briefly indicated in a short notice such as this. The theology of half a century ago taught mankind to regard death as what one may almost call an after-thought, or at least as introduced as a consequence of human depravity, as a curse upon man and his sin. We do not hear this doctrine preached often now; we recognise that the 'sting of death,' when it has one, is in the mind and character of the man who dies, not in the event itself, but in his fearfulness, or in the sense of guilt which annihilates trust and peace. In a recent letter from Cardinal Vaughan to the editor of the 'Spectator' on the subject of 'The Dying of Death,' he remarks on the fact which personal experience has brought often under his notice and that of others, that those who are dying rarely fear death, that when they approach it fear disappears. In view of the facts under consideration in this work of Mr. Newman Smyth, this fearlessness causes no surprise; it falls into place as quite in accordance with the glimpse we there get of the relation of death to the universal order.

Death, as biologists are well aware, is neither a reversal of the Divine purpose, nor is it (and this is the point which may be new to some minds) of necessity an accompaniment of organic life. There are organisms, unicellular and very simple, which, 'if left to themselves under favourable conditions, do not die'; these simply propagate by subdivision. There are other unicellular organisms which also propagate by fissure, but require for their rejuvenescence occasional conjugation; these cells after conjugation separate and reproduce each separately by fissure.

This seems to have been a fresh departure in Nature's method of reproduction, a very elementary primitive hint of sex which was afterwards to become the great factor in Evolution; and, as far as can be discerned (or, at least, as far as was discerned in 1897, when this book was published), death may have been introduced into the scheme of Evolution at this juncture. If so it, too, was introduced as a factor in Evolution; as if to force the evolutionary process to proceed along the lines which ultimately developed into sex qualities. Those unicellular organisms which did not conjugate seem to have become less capable of propagation, and although it has not been actually *proved* that under normal conditions they die, they have been known to do so when isolated experimentally. Science has not made sufficient advance in this direction to enable us to speak with any certainty as to the occasion of the beginnings of death. But we see that though, of course, the possibility of death existed in the lowest form of cellular life, there was a period at which the possibility was not realised; that not until the evolutionary process had reached a certain point was the latent possibility of death actualised; and when it appeared it was apparently introduced as an expedient for eliminating those organisms which failed to adjust themselves to progressive methods.

The Universe might have been filled indefinitely with immortal amœbæ, but mortality was a condition serviceable to the purpose of Evolution; it was introduced, therefore, as a factor in the accomplishment of its beneficent ends.

'Death enters,' says Mr. Newman Smyth, 'as far as is now known, in connection with alternations between two methods of reproduction and multiplication of life; it occurs naturally in the course of the change from the asexual method of simple cell-division to the method of fertilisation, which in time comes to be Nature's dominant method, not only of preserving life, but also of giving it variety, richness, and plastic power of adaptation to different environments. With the rudiments of sex appear also the beginnings of death. With the entrance of the new method for the enrichment and diversification of selected life through sex, enters also the law of decay and death for that

* 'The Place of Death in Evolution.' By NEWMAN SMYTH. London: Fisher Unwin.

remainder of life which is not caught up into this higher potency of Nature's fertilisation' (p. 24).

When we get a little further in the process of life development we are upon more certain ground, and we find death an established fact in the multi-cellular organisms, which have, *at the cost of individual self-effacement*, attained to higher capacities and larger utility.

When the organism ceases to propagate by simple subdivision, and parental relations are prefigured in the method by which new generations are born, then we find that death becomes a normal and habitual accompaniment of existence. It is evidently introduced as an advantage to the species. We will quote again from the volume under review:—

'Biology furnishes thus to philosophy a suggestion of profound truth and of far-reaching significance. For if we recognise the adaptation and use of any factor in the organic world, we are already within sight of some rational apprehension of its benevolent function. This conception of the natural utility of death in its original working throws a new light into one of the dark places of natural theology. . . . It means that death in the course of Nature is not to be regarded as a disaster—the breaking of a wheel or parting of a belt in Nature's workshop—but rather as the introduction of a new device for turning out improved manufactures. . . . Death, as an adaptation in the divine economy of Nature, is introduced as a means of life, of ever-increasing and happier life' (p. 32).

Of course, it may be objected to this line of argument, that it applies only to the continuance of species, that it does not prove anything as regards the individual. It may be said that, granting that death is a servant to life and a factor in its gradual ascent in species and races, science is still no nearer answering the question of its import for the individual. Tennyson has voiced this question for us:—

'Are God and Nature then at strife
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life?'

The carelessness of single life is surely a mere assumption; but we freely acknowledge that the facts here adduced to substantiate the utility and beneficent end fulfilled by death for the race offer nothing like mathematical proof that death has a similar function for the individual. They do, however, afford valuable presumptive testimony for those who are deeply convinced of the homogeneity of the Universe, who recognise continually in the history of man's development, right through the embryonic condition onwards, a reproduction in miniature of cosmic evolution, and who see in every individual's growth a type and pattern of racial development. For if a man is a microsm of the Universe, or, at least, of so much of it as is known to us, one feels bound to apply the principles of Evolution which reveal themselves as working through the mass, to his individual progress. At least, this is the conviction which forces itself upon some of us with a conclusiveness and cogency which is not less impressive and effectual because it is based upon general considerations and not upon mathematically exact proofs.

The author indicates very clearly the limitations which he considers must attend all scientific testimony in favour of belief in personal immortality. They are limits which possibly he would not now assign quite as strictly, for since the recent publications of Dr. Hodgson and others in connection with Mrs. Piper's trances, we seem to be within measurable distance of scientific demonstration of man's survival; but such facts as are treated of in this volume certainly do not go beyond affording strong presumptive evidence for the belief that death is for the individual, as for the race, a beneficial necessity in the process of higher evolution. Of course, this is in complete harmony with the teaching of Spiritualism. Spiritualists have always insisted that death was not a calamity, not in itself an evil, but a necessary event in the ascent of life; and on this account some may possibly be inclined to underrate the value of these discoveries of biologists as being merely a tardy recognition of what they have long believed. But they are more than that. Just as an astronomer welcomes on the field of his telescope, the sight of a new planet, for whose advent he has long watched, and whose influence he has long detected in his study of the motions of the heavenly bodies, because he

knows that its appearance affords the physical basis for the deductions he has already made, so should Spiritualists, and all who are deeply assured of the unity of Nature, welcome these biological facts as offering, as Mr. Newman Smyth points out, the physical basis for vital truths which are shaping the evolution of the race.

Such a physical basis every true believer in the unity of nature requires, not because he waits to believe in truths of which, by induction or by intuition he is convinced, until the physical basis for them is found, but because, knowing that such a basis must exist in a universe which is one in its immanent Origin, he is not satisfied until he can intelligently discern this unity in all departments of nature and life. When we recognise that at an early stage of terrestrial life, death was introduced as a beneficent factor in Evolution, and when we also find that the altruistic principle, serving the same end, was prefigured and (as far as could be in unconscious organisms) presented in connection with advanced methods of propagation, we welcome these biological facts as supplying precisely the physical basis required for two vital truths: the one truth being, that death is no curse, no evil, but a Divinely natural mode of advance to higher conditions; the other being that Nature, even in its lower phases, is pregnant with the instinct of self-sacrifice. Individual organisms are not merely alive with appetite that they may preserve themselves, they are alive also with an involuntary tendency to self-effacement for the benefit of the species as a whole.

Such a book as this is useful if it makes us realise how important it is that those who call themselves Spiritualists (in the largest sense of the term) should keep close to science, should constantly refer their beliefs to the discoveries which are being made in physical law, referring to them not as infallible arbiters, but to compare, corroborate, or rectify. Everyone who thinks that the mission of Spiritualism to the world is of far wider import than merely to minister comfort to the bereaved, should feel the keenest sympathy with, and interest in, the methods of those who are making researches into physical law; and if some among these import the same methods into the service of psychical research, and slowly, warily, with doubt and question, seek to establish their footing firmly every inch of the way Spiritualists should surely have no other feeling towards them than that of sympathy and approval. We cannot perhaps wait to be convinced until they have sifted out the last atom of chaff from the mass of evidence before them, but we can be heartily glad that there are patient, scientific minds who feel the necessity of suspending their judgment till they have done this. Provided they really do suspend it, and do not form prejudiced, adverse conclusions, we can be heartily glad, because at the cost, probably, of some of the comfort and assurance which come to those who are at once more intuitional and less scientific, it is these patient workers who will eventually establish beyond possibility of doubt the existence of the physical basis of some of the most precious of the world's long-cherished hopes, and also they will convince even the most confirmed materialist (provided he be honest) of the reality and import of the phenomena to which Spiritualists have appealed, often in vain, as testifying to the true significance of death in relation to Evolution.

H. A. D.

WHAT POSSIBILITIES of friendship and affection does immortality open up! No force for good like personal force. Here, indeed, man must be guarded against and parried; here men strike, men pursue, men blight, men destroy. But what if each man stood over against his fellow for stimulus, balm and bounty? What if drawing near to a friend was like approaching a star that blazes and sparkles with ten thousand effects? . . . To those on whom life's burdens rest heavily, defeated, despoiled, homesick for those who have gone, comes this hope of immortality. Believe him who said, 'Death is sweet as flowers are; death is as beautiful as a bower in June.' The grave is like the gate in the old cathedral—iron on one side and beaten gold on the other. Perhaps our gravestone is a gate for those whom we have loved and lost. We say, 'A man is dead'; God says, 'A man lives.' Dying is transformation. Dying is going home, happiness, and the Father's House.—NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS.

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, 1899.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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

DIVINE INSPIRATION.

'Do you, as Spiritualists, believe in divine inspiration?' was the question put to us a day or two ago by a visitor from India. It is a question which well deserves an answer, but the answer requires a great deal of consideration. The two words 'divine' and 'inspiration' look so innocent, but, in reality, they may be the deepest of all pitfalls. Does 'divine,' for instance, mean 'direct from God'? Does it also mean, 'and therefore infallible'? Does 'inspiration' mean abnormal, supernatural, miraculous? Are we to think of the inspired one as a sort of channel, utilised for conveying a perfect stream of heavenly truth? Then how are we, as Spiritualists, to distinguish between divine inspiration and the inspiration by spirits of ever varying and almost infinitely varying grades? How, in point of fact, are we to get at what is 'divine inspiration' even when we have defined it? Such questions could be produced indefinitely; and each new question might suggest fresh difficulties, every one of which would be related to quite real distinctions.

The reply we gave was something like this:—Divine inspiration is never absent, since in God 'we live and move and have our being.' It is a vital error to suppose that divine inspiration relates only to what we are accustomed to call 'divine truth.' Inspiration simply means inbreathing. But it is the divine inbreathing which is the source or condition of all life. We live—all things live—in an infinite ocean of life-force, corresponding, in a way, to the scientist's hypothetical ether. (And, by the way, why should not the spiritual Theist have his hypothetical, all-pervading spirit-ocean side by side with the Scientist's all-pervading ether?) Hence, every inbreathing, every pulsation, of that life-force is of the nature of divine inspiration, even though its effect be no more than the growth of a blade of grass, the ripple of a stream, or a breath of mountain air. In one, that inspiration may suggest better methods of dealing with God's treasures of metal and coal, marble and stone, soil and streams. In another, it may prompt to music, poetry, or art in its many forms. In another, receptive to such aspirations, it may urge to divine discontents and eager longings, leading on to reforms in government, in education, or in conditions of toil. In another, it may manifest itself in conscience, in the affections, in religious instincts, feelings and fervours. To-day it may call a Luther or a Gladstone; to-morrow a Beethoven or a Wesley, a Gutenberg or a Livingstone, a Cobden or a General Booth.

But is it not all summed up in that fine saying in the Book of Job: 'There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding'? It is not necessary to push that unduly. In any sense in which it is true, it asserts precisely what we are pointing out, that the spirit of God works through the spirit of man, and that it is His inspiration which gives him understanding. Understanding in what and for what? Who shall limit it? Let the man in the laboratory, rejoicing over the conquest of another secret of Nature, lift up his head and be as sure as the learned divine in his study that God has helped him; and let the craftsman at his bench feel as sure of it as the priest at his altar.

But it is essential to remember that, if this is so, the inspiration can be effectual only in proportion to the instrument's receptivity. Even almighty power could not put a gallon of wine into a pint measure, or extract from a cheap concertina the majestic strains of the organ at St. Paul's. This may seem to limit God, but it is no real limitation if the limits of natural law have all been ordained by Him, or if, let us say, He is the sum total of all, and the Soul of Nature's body. It does, however, follow, that divine inspiration never, in the slightest degree, guarantees the perfect truth; it only guarantees the truth in natural proportions, and according to the instrument's or medium's possibilities. This is, of course, a revolutionary idea. But the only question we can entertain is: 'Is it true?' The answer to that question is written in every chapter of the history of the world; but chiefly in the history of the world's religions. Let anyone take a survey of the world's 'inspired' religious books, what we might almost call 'The Bibles of the world.' Let him think of all the founders of religions, of all the reformers of these religions, of their prophets, seers, apostles, psalmists. Then let him ask: Where do I see finality, consistency, infallibility, the perfect and enduring whole?

The bearing of this upon spirit-communion is obvious. In every age, and as freely now as ever, the unseen people come with their 'revelations,' and, unless we are careful, we may easily be led to regard these as 'divine inspirations.' But not everything that calls itself divine is divine: and, if it were, it by no means follows that it is to be received without sifting. We need not go beyond the Bible to see how true this is. The Bible is the greatest Spiritualist book in the world: but it has been wrongly classified. It has been called 'A divine revelation': and so, in a sense, it is; because it is an emanation from that infinite spirit-ocean to which, at the outset, we referred. The mistake that has been made is, that coming from the unseen meant the same as coming direct from God, and that coming from God meant perfection and infallibility: but we have seen that God works through myriads of media, and that, in transmission, the perfect truth of God may become the very imperfect message of man.

To some this may seem a discouraging conclusion. But we repeat; our business is not to invent encouragements but to find out the truth. And yet, why should this be taken as a discouraging conclusion? It gives us enormous possibilities of explanations: it puts into our hands a key that will unlock many seemingly impregnable doors: it unifies and clears a multitude of turbulent and apparently antagonistic facts: it brings us into contact with the divine spirit at every moment: it throws light upon Humanity's past, and gives us every reason for believing that it is moving on in a predetermined path of natural development, the end of which will bring us to true union with God and perfect mastery of ourselves.

A SUBSCRIBER writing from the Soldiers' Home, Los Angeles County, California, U.S.A., when renewing his subscription recently, said: "'LIGHT' is a very valuable paper, and I do not see how two or three of us old veterans here could get along without it.'

MISS ROWAN VINCENT.

We have pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of the following subscriptions towards a fund to be presented to Miss Rowan Vincent, as an expression of sympathy with her in her severe illness, and as a token of the grateful recognition of her valuable services to the cause of Spiritualism:—

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Coates	5	0	0
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Mr. E. Dawson Rogers	2	2	0
Miss H. Withall	2	2	0
Mr. W. H. Wood	2	2	0
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Contributions should be sent to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary, London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

THE DATE OF THE EXODUS

My article on p. 403 of 'LIGHT' contains a clerical error, doubtless attributable to a temperature of 90 in the shade! The line 'this *stela* must have been inscribed' should read 'the Exodus must have occurred.' Of course, the *stela* would not have been inscribed prior to the accession of the Pharaoh whom it was intended to honour.

I have been asked about the orthography of this Pharaoh's name; I quoted it just as it is spelled by the authorities referred to. Petrie, one of our ablest Egyptologists, spells it in syllables, thus: Mer-en-ptah.

Here is another instance of how the ancient records have been tampered with:—Exodus ii. 1-2 plainly implies that Moses was the first-born of the union there referred to; the 'sister' mentioned in verse 4 being obviously a half-sister. But in Exodus vi. 20 we are told that Amram married Jochebed, his aunt (!), 'and she bare him Aaron and Moses.' Lastly, in Exodus vii. 7, we read that Aaron was three years senior to Moses.

The fact is, that the Jews, who in later years had such a superstitious regard for their Scriptures that they counted the number of letters in each book, took so little care of them originally that they were for a long time lost; the copy found in the Temple in the reign of Josiah causing considerable surprise. This gave opportunity for priestly forgeries.

In Genesis ii. 24, it is written 'They shall be one flesh.' But Jesus quoted this verse 'they *two* shall be one flesh,' which differs from the Hebrew, but agrees with most, if not all, the ancient versions. In the Polychrome Bible, though the translation is based upon the best Hebrew text, yet all the versions have been compared, and frequently preferred in the translations; a special mark being attached to such additions or variations.

Here is also a question for the clergy. According to the Jewish Scriptures, polygamy, and even incest, were condoned if not actually sanctioned by Yahveh; in countries ruled by the Christian faith, such practices are looked upon with horror and punished by the law. And yet the Church of England declares that 'The Old Testament is not contrary to the New'!

E. W. BERRIDGE, M.D.

48, Sussex-gardens, Hyde Park, W.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,
110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

A CONVERSAZIONE

Of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., will be held in

THE BANQUETING HALL, ST. JAMES'S HALL
(REGENT STREET ENTRANCE),

On *FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6th, at 7 p.m.,*

WHEN

MR. WILLIAM LYND,

Late Principal of the West London College of Electrical Engineering, Author of 'The Practical Telegraphist,' 'Ancient Musical Instruments,' &c., Editor of 'The Telegraphist,' 'The Phonogram,' 'The Family Circle of Science,' &c., &c.,

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A Short Account of the Phenomena of Light in Popular Language The Sun and its Dimensions The Distance of the Earth from the Sun -What is Light? -Ether the Medium of Light -Light Waves The Solar Spectrum Analysed Newton's Discovery -Herschel's Experiments—Tyndall's Researches and Heat Rays Stokes' Great Discovery Fluorescence Described Professor Crookes and his Radiometer A High Vacuum -The Induction Coil and Faraday's Discovery Early Experiments with Vacuum Tubes.

Experiments with the Apparatus.

THE FLUORESCENT TUBE.

How the Skeleton in the Living Subject is Shadowgraphed.

INTERVAL FOR REFRESHMENTS.

After the Lecture the audience will have an opportunity of seeing their bones, and the contents of purses, closed boxes, &c., by means of the 'X' Rays.

Admission will be by ticket only. Two tickets will be sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 2s. each.

Applications for extra tickets must be accompanied by remittance (Postal Order preferred), addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., not later than Monday, October 2nd.

E. DAWSON ROGERS, *President.*
E. W. WALLIS, *Secretary.*

MISS READ AND THE STUFFED GLOVE.

Mrs. Clive Gordon writes to say that as a calm and critical investigator, having had considerable experience, she desires to add her testimony to that of Mrs. Browne to the genuineness of the phenomena she witnessed last summer at Mrs. Browne's house. Mrs. and Miss Read were most willing to allow any conditions their hostess wished for, and Mrs. Gordon is quite certain that the large musical box which commenced playing during the light séance, and was wound up (for which purpose considerable force was required), was not manipulated by human hands.

Miss Mack Wall, writing from Bad Nauheim, Hesse Nassau, Germany, says that, although she is greatly grieved about the stigma now attached to the Read family—as there is much about them and their mediumship which commends itself to her—she accepts Mr. Bassett's exposure of Miss Read as an accomplished fact, while the defence offered seems to her to be weak, and the extenuating circumstances she is not inclined to admit. Yet she fully believes in Miss Read's mediumship, of which she holds that she has had indubitable proofs—notably from the *tenor* of the communications written by materialised hands, and involving matters about which neither the medium nor any other person present could possibly have had the slightest information.

Mr. G. Lloyd, of 46, Crompton-road, Nechells, Birmingham, writes that in honesty and fairness to Miss Read he wishes to state that during about fifty séances that he has attended with her, since an alleged exposure last year, he has been thoroughly satisfied of her mediumship. He was permitted to sit next to the medium, and carefully watched every manifestation. He testifies to the movements of the curtain; two bells were rung at the same time behind the curtain; a violin was taken off the table and placed upon the floor and then raised outside of the curtains above the head of Miss E. Read, and again placed upon the table. Fine drapery was shown when the curtains were drawn aside, and during the occurrence of these phenomena he failed to detect any movements of hand or limb on the part of Miss Read, although there was light sufficient to enable the sitters to see each other. These facts make it all the more regrettable, he thinks, that Miss Read should condescend to wholly unnecessary deception.

Mr. Frank E. Child, of 76, Hampton-road, Handsworth, Birmingham, writes to say that some two years ago he attended a number of séances at Mr. Read's residence and subsequently at the County Chambers, Corporation-street, Birmingham, and although at first he had every confidence in the *bona fides* of the Reads, he was afterwards forced to conclude that the phenomena he witnessed were mere trickery. At one séance he was shown an ink impression of the supposed materialised spirit hand, and from the marks made by the seams it was evident to him that the impression was made by means of a glove. Thereafter he watched Miss Read very closely and failed to observe the slightest movement in her supposed hands on the illuminated card, although she moved her body considerably. He therefore discontinued attending the séances, convinced that stuffed gloves were then being used. He confirms Mr. Bassett's testimony that Miss Read was always normal. The phenomena never varied and were speedily and invariably forthcoming, no matter what the 'conditions' were, and there was a considerable charge made at every séance. He says that Miss Read has sat under strict test conditions—but no phenomena were obtained.

Mr. H. A. Terry, in reply to Mr. Read, says: 'I never, either normally or under spirit influence, opened the séances with prayer. I have made inquiries of those who were present on the occasions when I was controlled to speak, and they agree that my guides always spoke of phenomena in general and did not mention any special manifestations, either at Mr. Read's or elsewhere!' Seven of Mr. Terry's friends are prepared to bear testimony to this effect. He denies that Mrs. Terry described spirits at Mr. Read's. She is not a normal clairvoyant and has not been under control there at any time.

Mr. J. Cutler states that Mr. G. H. Bibbings was one of his informants that the Reads gave two séances a day in Blackpool, during the Conference, and charged half-a-crown fee. He notes that Mr. Read does not deny the £10 per week item, and affirms that on the night of the exposure Mrs. Read exclaimed, 'I hope you won't prosecute; we shall suffer enough for our transgressions'; and that Mr. Hodgson spoke of the harm to the cause *after* Mr. Bassett's report had been published.

Mr. J. B. Chantrill, Junr., says that he has had sittings with the Reads under all conditions of light, except actual daylight. On the night of the exposure manifestations were carried on with Miss Read's foot only, while the lamp was upon the table, but, when it was lowered and removed, she introduced the stuffed glove in place of her hand upon the card. He declares that the phenomena, such as movements out of the reach of Miss Read, touching the ceiling for

instance, occur in perfect darkness. It is useless for Mr. Read to quote what he (Mr. Chantrill) wrote some time ago, because since that time Miss Read has been caught palming off fraudulent phenomena in partial light; and that being the case, what reliance can be placed upon occurrences in absolute darkness? He denies having performed any trick at any séance when the medium was present, and says that Miss Read did not suggest a test séance, but he will certainly take advantage of the offer now it has been made and will publish the results. He confirms Mr. Bassett's statement that Mr. Brian Hodgson remarked, 'See what harm you have done to the cause by publishing.' He was in Mr. Hodgson's house when the remark was made.

Mr. G. W. Young was at first a devout believer and made careful notes of the séances he attended. In controverting Mr. Mahony's plea of temporary obsession for a few days only, he quotes from his notes made under date of July 15th, 1898, up to which time the idea of a 'stuffed glove' or 'dummy hand' had not been mooted to him by anyone nor suspected by him. His notes read as follows: 'July 1th, present at Mrs. Read's. To-night, for the first time, I noticed what seems to me a suspicious point in regard to Miss E. Read's deportment. Several motions of the body were made of a compromising nature, when viewed in regard to the phenomena which succeeded, and many times the involuntary motions of the body of the medium (whom I kept under close observation) were shared naturally by the *left* hand, but not the slightest possible movement could I detect in what seemed to me the very cramped position of the right hand, and which maintained itself perfectly motionless for quite a lengthened period. This circumstance, although not striking, perhaps, was nevertheless disconcerting to me, and requires explanation.' Mr. Young says that during the few following days a 'dummy hand' was freely mentioned by him as a possible factor in the 'materialising' phenomena at Miss Read's séances, and he urges that the absolute normality of Miss Read precludes the applicability of the quotations made by Mrs. Browne from 'Spirit Teachings.' Referring to Mr. Read's statement that the spirit hands are of different sizes, Mr. Young thinks the strange fact about them is that they are generally *right* hands! He asks how Mr. Read would explain the malformation involved in his claim that the clapping hands are two hands attached to the same limb 'at the wrist,' and points out that vigorous clapping cannot be accomplished by hands when the wrists are held tightly together, and how then could two hands attached to one wrist perform that feat? He claims to have noticed that when the bell was thrown into the cabinet beyond the reach of the medium's foot the 'spirits' sought for it in vain, and that the same thing occurred when objects were suspended on the wall within the cabinet. In his experience the grasping spirit hand was never at ceiling height, simply because the tape was not long enough. Replying to Mr. Read's contention that 'psychics cannot be worked by physics,' he says: 'Materialisations invade the domain of physics and must be reducible to terms of physical law,' and exclaims, 'Surely some tests can be devised which would, if properly applied, even in the dark, wholly prevent fraudulent manifestations!' Knowing how stoutly Mr. Bassett formerly defended the Reads, he repudiates Mr. Hodgson's imputation that Mr. Bassett is one of a 'class' of men who think the worst of human nature, and thinks that he has, by his recent action, demonstrated the qualities of moral pluck and sincerity.

Mr. H. Bassett, replying to Mr. Hodgson's charge that the sitters psychologised Miss Read, says that he had not seen her from June 26th to July 16th; Mr. Cutler had not seen her from June 27th until the night of the exposure; and Mr. Chantrill saw her for a few minutes only on her return from London. As to having 'raised a hell around the Reads,' as alleged by Mr. Hodgson, Mrs. Read said, after the exposure, 'I hope you won't prosecute; we shall suffer enough for our transgressions,' and Mr. Bassett thinks people create their own hells. He states that Mr. Hodgson spoke of the 'harm to the cause' *after* his report had been published, and therefore could not have said that it should be gone more carefully into *before* publication. Regarding his favourable testimony quoted by Mr. Read, Mr. Bassett says that he and his friends then *supposed* that they saw both of Miss Read's hands. The light was a dim one through a ruby-coloured glass at the far end of a long room, and Miss Read always sat in the shadow of her mother. They now realise that these conditions of 'luminous obscurity' are worthless for evidence, and exclaim, 'Surely it is our duty to retract when we are absolutely certain of the frauds.' He never saw the violin strike the ceiling, it was done in the dark. The bells and concertina never played together, nor were they ever played 'simultaneously with the hand-clapping.' The bell did not play at the commencement of the séances, the curtain movements came first, nor was the bell manipulated when beyond Miss Read's reach. Neither Mr. Bassett nor his friends ever saw the tape at the level of the ceiling, nor have they heard the violin being strummed while the tape was in the air. Many of these alleged

occurrences took place when the luminous cards were reversed and the room was in absolute darkness, and Miss Read was then free to move anywhere. When the 'hand' was compared with those of the sitters in the obscure light of the luminous paint, it was placed with expanded fingers beyond the ends of those of the sitters, to make it appear larger, but the comparison was reversed for a pretended small hand. Miss Read did not wear high-laced boots, but shoes; and she laughed and spoke as usual both before and after the séance when the glove was captured, and gave no sign of being obsessed or dominated by the thoughts of the sitters. Mr. Bassett affirms that he has seen more than anyone outside the family, of the phenomena at these séances, and all that he witnessed he now believes *could* have been done by trickery. Mr. Read refers to a 'form building up'; but that alleged phenomenon took place in absolute darkness when the Reads were free to move about if so minded. Mr. Read says that, 'Materialisation is exteriorisation of some portion of the medium which in the first place is the exact counterpart of the medium's body,' yet Mr. Read affirms he has seen two hands on one wrist clapping--'two hands on one wrist,' an exact counterpart of Miss Read's! The only free séances were dark ones, and when he discovered that what occurred at them was gross fraud, he (Mr. Bassett) refused to sit at them again. When requested to sit on the left side of the cabinet and away from her mother, Miss Read refused and declined to give even the bell test in the dim light of luminous cards while both her hands were held. Mr. Bassett and his friends always asked the amount of the fee at the public sittings and paid it, and they claim that they had the right to publish the facts when they had proof of systematic fraud. They claim to know that the affirmation that the glove was used but once is false. They met for weeks to discuss how to secure it, and measured the table to ascertain how far the one who pounced upon it would have to reach, and owing to the width of the table Mr. Bassett had to stand up to make sure of getting it. The glove is 'a dirty, much-used looking object,' and they feel that they have but done their duty—a painful and an unwelcome task—in publicly exposing the fraudulent practices which had deceived them and so many other sincere and truth-loving people for so long. They have heard sitters arguing as to what they had or had not seen after the sittings were over and have no doubt that people let their imaginations build upon the things they see and forget that some of the alleged manifestations only occurred in darkness after the luminous cards were reversed. Mr. Bassett asks that readers will again peruse the previous letters and judge for themselves.

[This correspondence is now closed.—Ed. of 'LIGHT.']

THE TASK OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

In an ably-written forecast of the work of the approaching century, which most thoughtful people anticipate will be more important to mankind than any one since the first of the Christian era, M. S. Dismier, writing in 'L'Humanité Intégrale,' dwells impressively upon the self-evident fact that its distinguishing feature will be the blending of ancient faith with experimental science: and that upon the latter will devolve the duty, as it alone will possess the power, of reviving our personal faith in an endless future, and of shedding a light upon the road still obscure along which mankind is now travelling towards the fulfilment of its high destinies.

'In order to bring about this philosophical and religious renovation,' observes the writer, 'we shall still further fortify our reason and our ideal, under pressure of indisputable proofs of the after life.'

'The path which the twentieth century will pursue will not be that of metaphysics, ever impotent to dissipate doubts. It will be safeguarded by the dignity of our intelligence. We do not hesitate to affirm that, at the present hour, the demonstration of the after-life is absolute for all independent and conscientious savants and experimentalists, seeking for the truth with respect to the constitutional worth of the human soul.'

'By serious and repeated studies in all parts of the world, we have succeeded in obtaining, under materially convincing conditions, phenomena of an objective character, assuming both a physical and intelligent form, which leave no possible doubt as to the certainty of these facts, which cannot have any other causes, admissible by our reason, than those of beings who offer overwhelming proofs of their prior existences upon this earth, by the persistence of their individuality in the life beyond.'—'Harbinger of Light.'

SLATE-WRITING UNDER FRAUD-PROOF CONDITIONS.

Mr. Fred Evans, the slate-writing medium of New York City, was recently challenged by Mr. W. E. Robinson, a conjurer, to produce slate-writing phenomena under conditions which he would approve, and Mr. Evans has provisionally accepted the challenge, so that interesting developments may be expected. The Editor of the 'Banner of Light' says:—

Mr. Evans has been before the public as a medium for many years. His work has everywhere spoken for itself, and has stood well the test of criticism that has been applied to it. He has made many true and tried friends during his mediumistic career, and has also made some bitter enemies. All public servants meet the same fate in life, hence Mr. Evans does not stand alone in this respect. His psychography, under test conditions, has, to us, rested upon the basis of fact, and until absolute evidence to the contrary is forthcoming, we shall continue to so state. We believe Mr. Robinson to be a gentleman in the fullest sense of the word, and an earnest seeker for truth. He is not an enemy either of Spiritualism, or of Mr. Evans; he knows, as all intelligent Spiritualists realise, that fraud is practised under the guise of mediumship. As a prestidigitator he believes it to be his duty to expose all tricks by which pretended spirit phenomena are produced. *In so doing, he casts no reflections upon any genuine medium.*

In the 'Light of Truth' for August 1th, an illustration was given of a slate, with strips of paper pasted upon it, and covered with writing. Respecting this, the Editor stated:—

No reasonable man or woman can fairly dispute the evidence of immortality, backed up by the evidence of the slate published with this article. The recipient of this wonderful and convincing manifestation was Mr. Frederick J. Thomas, secretary of the New York Steam Power Company, Liberty-street, New York City, a gentleman who has the confidence and respect of all who know him—and his friends and acquaintances are legion. Besides, Mr. Thomas has the courage of his convictions, and is willing to answer all questions, whether they be propounded by believers, sceptics or cavillers. We will not attempt to give any description of the séance between Mr. Thomas and the medium, Mr. Evans, but prefer to allow Mr. Thomas's sworn statement of facts to speak for itself, believing his testimony so plain and straightforward as to leave no room to hang a doubt upon.

MR. THOMAS'S SWORN AFFIDAVIT.

I, Frederick J. Thomas, of the City of New York, desire to make the following statement, to wit:—

On Monday, June 19th, 1899, I called at the office of Fred. P. Evans, the psychic, at 103, West Forty-second-street, New York City. The time was that of noonday. I sat at one side of a plain deal kitchen table, in a brightly lighted room, Mr. Evans sitting at the other side of the same table.

Mr. Evans then handed me an ordinary school slate, wooden-framed, size 5in. by 7in., and told me to clean and examine it. This I did to my satisfaction.

I then tore from a piece of notepaper lying close at hand three strips of paper, two pieces being about one and a-half inches wide, and the third about one and three-quarter inches wide; all three being about five inches in length. These I pasted upon the clean, upturned face of the slate, placing them—one at the head of the slate, one at the foot, and one midway.

I then took a lead pencil and wrote my name on the slip of paper at the head, thus: 'Frederick J. Thomas'; on the middle slip, 'Fred'k J. Thomas,' and then traced this signature over with ink; and on the slip of paper at the foot I wrote as follows: 'F. J. Thomas'—thus using three styles of signing my name.

Mr. Evans then placed a small piece of slate pencil, as well as a piece of lead pencil, on the table before me, and I laid my single slate over the bits of pencil, with the side containing the pasted slips of paper downward.

I then placed my fingers on the slate for about fifteen minutes, and was then directed to raise the slate, which I did, and discovered that the strips of paper previously pasted on were literally covered with messages—written with lead pencil, and written over the signatures. The two spaces of slate left uncovered by the paper pasted on the slate were also written full with slate pencil.

The messages were signed by relatives and friends, whose names I recognised, and were characteristic. There were in all, 164 words written, divided as follows: On the paper, written with lead pencil, ninety-six words; on the uncovered portions of the slate, written with slate pencil, sixty-eight words.

I desire to emphasise the statement that I cleaned and examined the slate myself; that I pasted the papers on the slate, as well as cut them myself, and then placed my signatures thereon; and that the slate never left my sight or hands from that time until I discovered it written full, as described.

I declare upon oath that the foregoing statement is true in every particular.

FREDERICK J. THOMAS.

Subscribed and sworn to in my presence this twenty-sixth day of June, eighteen hundred and ninety-nine.

MICHAEL J. MURRAY.

Notary Public (116), N. Y. Co.

INTERNAL BREATHING.

In 'LIGHT,' of August 26th, you reproduce an article by Mrs. Underwood, under the title 'Is there a Divine Spiritual Atmosphere?' In it there was a good deal said about breathing, and the suggestion was made that breathing has something to do with bringing those on this lower plane in 'rapport' with the 'crowning force of the Mind Universal.' Since Mrs. Underwood would like to know 'if any readers can throw further light on this question,' I would direct your attention to Swedenborg, and some passages in his writings. There was a peculiarity in Swedenborg's organism that enabled him to hold his breath, or to breathe internally, for a considerable time, during which he was intromitted into the world of spirits. After referring to this, one of his biographers, Dr. Garth Wilkinson, says:—

'The management of the respiration, then, with some persons, is one way to annul for the time that intercourse of the mind with the body which respiration establishes, and to enfranchise the mind in its own sphere. There can be no doubt that Swedenborg was peculiarly endowed in this respect' (p. 57).

Again:—

'So obedient had his breathing become and so correspondent with all spheres, that he obtained thereby the range of the higher world, and was enabled to be at home among spirits and angels' (p. 79).

Much is said in Swedenborg's 'Spiritual Diary' on this matter (see Nos. 3,317, 3,320, and 3,464), from which I make the following quotation:—

'My respiration has been so formed by the Lord as to enable me to breathe inwardly for a long period of time without the aid of the external air; my respiration being directed within, and my outward senses, as well as actions, still continuing in their vigour, which is only possible with persons who have been so formed by the Lord. I have been instructed that my breathing was so directed, without my being aware of it, in order to enable me to be with spirits and to speak with them.'

Swedenborg states in the 'Arcana Cœlestia,' (607-8, 805), and in many other places, that with the people who first inhabited this earth intercourse with spirits was their normal state, and this was dependent upon their breathing. In subsequent generations, when their respiration from internal became external, conscious communication with spirits became almost extinct. I am not aware that Swedenborg makes any reference to a Divine spiritual atmosphere, but these extracts may possibly be of interest to your readers.

CLAUDE TOBY.

'SOME INTERESTING SUGGESTIONS.'

There is an article in the August number of 'Le Journal du Magnétisme' which makes some interesting suggestions. The writer is discussing the necessary imperfection of man in his present undeveloped state, and he proceeds to suggest that by developing fully his capacities—the germ of life within him which is of Divine origin—he will necessarily attain at last to *consciousness* of all beings whose origin is the same, and that this consciousness will constitute man's perfection by uniting every individual with all other individuals and with their Creator. Further on this writer makes a statement which some of your readers may be able either to corroborate or refute. He states that the Hebrew word for 'In the beginning' used in Genesis is 'Barashes,' and denotes not 'the beginning,' but simply 'firstly.' He also says that the word translated 'created' in the same passage is 'Bara' and signifies 'develops.' 'The Hebrew language,' he proceeds, 'is eminently practical, and it does not contain phrases which express an impracticable and impossible process such as the formation of something out of nothing.' Are there any Hebrew scholars among the readers of 'LIGHT' who will throw *light* on these statements and tell us whether they are correct?

ZERO.

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.

Demoralising Exhibitions.

SIR,—Those who know the power of suggestion, and who believe thought-transference to be a fact of actual occurrence, can scarcely remain passive whilst the papers are recording the brutal exhibitions which, at a few miles distance from our shores, are exciting and feeding the most debased instincts of the lowest part of man's nature. If those who are deeply ashamed at and revolted by the display which large crowds (partly English) have been applauding, really believe that thought and will are active forces, and if, so believing, they will direct their mental energies silently to convey into the suggestible minds of the Boulogne sightseers their own deep abhorrence of these demoralising exhibitions of cruelty and bloodshed, who shall say that this combined mental action will not effect a revulsion of feeling which will ultimately lead to their suppression, in France, at least? The discovery of the laws of mental operation at a distance avails us little unless we apply them. Can it be done now with regard to this moral peril? For we recognise that such stimulation of brutal appetites and tastes is morally most perilous both to French and English.

Such mental action may be called prayer, or perhaps it may not. What we call it is not of first importance; that which signifies most is that the force should actively be put into exercise. Vehicles are required for the transmission of Divine Energy, and this Energy operates through the vibrations of human thought. Sensitive imaginations will find forgetfulness preferable, but oblivion produces social apathy, and it is just social apathy which is to be feared in the presence of this daring attempt to thrust back the moral evolution of humanity to the conditions of a barbaric past.

A READER.

The Bangs Sisters.—Reply to Dr. Hodgson.

SIR,—I most emphatically deny Dr. Hodgson's accusations that I have misrepresented or attempted to misrepresent matters in relation to the Bangs Sisters. It was because he was not as fair as his main witness that the extract from the 'Herald' article was enclosed with my former letter for publication, so as to enable the reader to glean for himself that there was another side to this particular case, the revealing of which seems to cause the learned gentleman much anguish of mind, which is always the case where it is a question of maintaining 'pet' theories, rather than a genuine search for the truth. The said article speaks for itself, and therein Colonel Bundy admitted his belief in the genuineness of the Bangs Sisters' mediumship for slate-writing; and, while the Doctor raised a most magnificent 'dust' in endeavouring to explain away what is in reality the most plain of admissions, and while possibly he has blinded himself to his own perfect satisfaction in relation thereto, it, to any fair-minded or unprejudiced person, is nothing more nor less than a flat refutation of his denial of the genuineness of the Bangs Sisters' mediumship. Besides, those accusations pertain to the past. The accused persons deny them. They are alive to-day, and can prove their mediumship and are proving it daily, notwithstanding the fact that Dr. Hodgson, who has not seen for himself and says he does not care to investigate, says he does not believe. Here is the point. *Positive proof of the facts can be had to-day, and requires but an investigation.* I said in my letter, in relation to the accusations made by the Doctor, ancient and denied as they are, that I believed the mediums in preference to their accusers, and his latest 'philippic' in no wise changes my belief, because I have had ample proof of the genuineness of their mediumship, and earnestly believe that the matters which he refers to are matters of persecution. And in view of the fact that they can prove themselves genuine mediums to-day for slate-writing, pictures, and other physical manifestations, I think it a matter of persecution still to bring up those ancient charges against them for the purpose of keeping anyone from making investigation. The Bangs Sisters will, for themselves, answer his charges, and have already done so here, as they have lived them down long ago. The question is whether or not slate-writing, pictures, &c., can be produced by spirit power through the mediumship of individuals. From my personal investigation, I know that it is a fact, and can be done through the mediumship of the Bangs Sisters and other mediums here, which can be verified by anyone who desires to make a fair investigation of the matter; the learned Doctor's opinion to the contrary, notwithstanding. They have offered to make the proof and ask but the opportunity, and it is not scientific, just, or right to deny this to them.

To ascertain the truth is, then, but a mere matter of

investigation. Those who have investigated, know it to be a fact, of which any amount of evidence can be had for the mere asking, or seeking that evidence of good, honest, reliable people.

Harvey, Illinois.

FRANK L. STOBBS,
City Attorney.

Mrs. Piper and Dr. Hodgson.

SIR,—The portrait of Mrs. Piper, which appeared in last week's 'LIGHT,' impresses me as that of a woman with a finely-balanced mind. I seem to see written on her face good common-sense, intelligence, health, loving-kindness, and truth; but perhaps the intuitional, mystical element does not, in an equal degree, permeate her entire being.

If Dr. Hodgson is correctly reported by his interviewer, he confesses that until lately he was 'a materialist, and that, notwithstanding his experiments for years with Mrs. Piper, he was an absolute disbeliever in her powers.'

If so, then he, in common with some other leaders in the Society for Psychical Research, must for years have been under the influence of those hallucinations which so amusingly pervert their judgments regarding the reliability of mediums and the phenomena which accompany them. This being so, I feel inclined to suspect that he may still be under the influence of a partial hallucination when he says, as is reported, that 'Mrs. Piper is the most remarkable woman who has appeared in the world's history,' for the names of Catherine of Sienna and St. Theresa and others appeal to my spiritual imagination in reply.

Then, when he says in effect, 'within two years will be given through Mrs. Piper a new interpretation of the laws of humanity, a new religion, and a new and unanswerable faith beyond all scepticism,' I find only a manifestation of that self-love which takes possession of so many mediums when controlled by ambitious spirits, and I can only answer that, not through 'Imperator' or 'Rector' (her controls), but through Jesus Christ, as the supremely God-begotten man, can come to us the absolute and eternal truth regarding the union of God and man—the one spirit, the identity of the natural and the supernatural, the demonstration that spirit is the substance of matter and of all true philosophy, science, religion and morals; for, as he says: 'Reverent love to God and pure love to man and woman is the whole of religion and morality.'

If so, then the soul has no need of more Popes, or Luthers, or Calvins, or XXXIX Articles, or any new religion through the revelations promised to us by Mrs. Piper's controls.

7, Westbourne-street.

(GEORGE WYLD, M.D.)

Looking Back.

SIR,—The recent withdrawal from our ranks, by death, of Lottie Fowler, Thomas Shorter, and others, carries me back in memory thirty-four years, and my first introduction to Spiritualism by the late Mr. James Burns. 'Human Nature,' 'Daybreak,' and the 'Spiritual Magazine' were all eagerly devoured, for 'LIGHT' had not yet dawned upon us. The recent controversy on slate-writing also reminds me of a wonderful séance I had with Slade, in *broad daylight*, the sunlight pouring into the room. Slade sat so that his feet and hands were in full view. Yet under these conditions I had direct writing on a threefold slate which I took with me, and which I *never allowed him to touch*, neither did I allow it to go out of my possession. I had all the phenomena usually exhibited in his presence, which included slate-writing *on* the table, on my head, *under* the edge of the table, spirit hands holding the slate and handing it to me from beneath the table; slate taken from me, thrown across *under* the table, and by describing an arc it turned round and, coming back *over* the edge of the table, fell in the centre; concertina playing delightful music as I held one end; furniture levitated, &c. The most startling phenomena to me was the violent oscillation of furniture, floor, &c., as I entered the large dining-room in which Slade and his secretary were sitting. They both remarked that I must be mediumistic, as it was quite unusual to get the movements so violent. I may here remark that I shall be glad to get some explanation of how this was effected without doing damage; perhaps some of your readers will oblige me.

On the day after, I called upon Lottie Fowler, and had a most interesting sitting; she not only described some of the leading incidents of my past life, but her predictions of the future have turned out too true, to my sorrow.

I had only a few weeks before lost a bright and intelligent nephew (eleven years old) by drowning; she not only described the whole scene, and his appearance, but also gave his name. I could say much more but must not take up more of your valuable space.

Llanelly.

J. F. YOUNG.

'A Coincidence.'

SIR,—In connection with the receipt of a copy of 'LIGHT' (which I suppose came to me from your office as a sample copy), I desire to relate a strange coincidence, if I may call it such. On the evening before I got the copy out of my P. O. box, it flashed into my mind that I ought to read your paper, and I then and there had a great desire to see it. I did not know your address, and do not remember ever to have seen a copy of 'LIGHT,' and as I lay in bed I asked myself the question whether you would receive a letter from me addressed simply to 'LIGHT,' London, England. You can imagine my surprise, then, the next morning when I received a copy of your paper in my mail. Except on this occasion I do not remember when I had ever felt this desire to see and read your journal, though I had seen many references to it in the 'Journal' and 'Proceedings' of the S.P.R., of which I am a member. To say the least, this was rather a remarkable coincidence.

Desiring to read your paper regularly I enclose you herewith Post Office Order for a year's subscription.

I mail you also a copy of my book, 'An Apocalypse of Life,' which I trust will reach you safely. It was published in 1893 by the Arena Publishing Company, of Boston, Mass., but since the failure of this company the book is for sale only by myself. Since writing that book my views have entirely changed on the subject of the power of a disembodied mind to commune with minds still in the body. I rather combated this view in the early part of my book. Through the work of the S.P.R. I am now convinced of the reality of this glorious truth.

Extending to you my earnest greeting in your great work,

Rome, Georgia, U.S.A.

W. T. CHENEY.

The Payment of Mediums.

SIR,—When one goes to a professional medium for 'materialisation' and not even a hand or a finger (the latter, even, would be sufficient), is materialised, I consider, and should like to know if other readers of 'LIGHT' also share my opinion, that the medium should make no charge. For what would the payment be for? The sitter comes for a specific purpose, viz., materialisation, and that purpose has not been, in the slightest degree, answered. It is idle, in such a case, to speak of the medium's time, for the time of the sitters, who may have come a considerable distance, has also to be considered. Certainly if I were the medium, I should make no charge under such circumstances. Of course, one should not expect any special spirit to materialise, but simply for materialisation to take place in some form or other; and, if it does not take place *at all*, no charge should be made. Moreover, if one visits an ordinary medium, and the said medium is never controlled at all, and shows no occult powers whatever, through 'unfavourable conditions,' then, I think, that no charge should be made. I should not be so unreasonable as to expect, in the latter instance, any especial spirit to control, or any particular occult gift to be manifested; but at least *something* occult would have to take place before I paid—or expected to be paid if I were the medium. Otherwise I should simply be paying, or be receiving money, for sitting still to see if conditions were favourable.

If things were conducted as I have suggested, it would, in a great measure, prevent materialists from making their usual assertions, that it 'is all a fraud,' or money gained under false pretences, which statements, otherwise, they have a *right* to make.

28, Tredegar-road, Bow, E.

G. W. BLYTHE.

Exposures and their Lessons.

SIR, I have followed with interest the long correspondence that has ensued upon the 'stuffed glove' episode. As in most of the previous cases of exposure which I have read of, or assisted at, no criticisms are so pronounced and no verdicts so emphatic as those of the persons who were *not* present at the time the fraud, or alleged fraud, was unmasked.

As usual, too, there is a large importation of side issues and theories, which, in the present imperfect state of our knowledge of the psychology of fraud, merely tend to 'darken counsel.'

Putting aside the particular case now under discussion, may I offer a stray suggestion, viz., that no professional psychical medium be regarded as thoroughly accredited until he or she has placed on record at least one séance held under absolute test conditions! This would form a kind of touch-stone, by which to test future reports, whether good or evil. I mean, that while such a record would not invalidate evidence of fraud at subsequent circles, it would, at any rate, show that the accused had achieved a good title to the name of medium. At the same time, it would lend strength and credibility to those enthusiastic descrip-

tions of séances which occasionally reach you. At present, in cases of exposure, confusion is rendered worse confounded by the tendency of witnesses and commentators to judge the whole career of the medium by one particular séance or series of séances. This would be greatly diminished where the medium had at one time, so to speak, been registered 'At Lloyd's.'

D. Gow.

Battersea Spiritualist Church.

SIR,—As some of the readers of 'LIGHT' contributed the larger part of the excursion fund for our Lyceum and Band of Hope outings, will you kindly permit me to lay the enclosed balance-sheet before them in order that they may see how their money was spent? Again thanking them on behalf of the 214 who participated.

H. BODDINGTON, Conductor.

99, Bridge-road, Battersea.

September 3rd, 1896.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, EXCURSIONS ACCOUNT. LYCEUM OUTING, JULY 19TH; BAND OF HOPE, AUGUST 21ST.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Contributions—			July 19th. Five Brakes	7	15 0
Per Mrs. Russell-Davies	10	1 3	„ 155 Teas ...	4	6 9
„ Minstrel Troupe ...	1	2 0	August 21st. 2 Brakes	3	5 0
„ Park Collection ...	0	2 8	„ 59 Teas ...	1	14 0
„ Mr. Driesellman ...	0	2 0	Postal and Delegate		
„ Mrs. Boddington ..	0	13 0	Expenses ...	0	5 0
„ Lyceum Fund ...	0	9 9½	Ribbon Markers ...	0	7 6
„ Band of Hope ...	0	12 6	Minerals, Fruit, &c. ...	0	3 0
July 19th. Sale of			Swings, Roundabouts, &c.	0	5 0
Tickets ...	3	17 6	Balance handed to Treas-		
August 21st. Sale of			urer ...	9	5½
Tickets ...	1	10 0			
	£18	10 8½		£18	10 8½

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'The Humanitarian,' for September, contains: 'The Problem of Feminism,' by PROFESSOR MONTEGAZZA; 'Inter-crossing and Some of its Results,' by PROFESSOR J. C. EWART, F.R.S., with portrait; 'What we Are and Whither Wending,' by COUNTESS DE LA WARR; 'The History of Hybridisation,' by DR. MAXWELL MASTERS, F.R.S.; 'Goethe's Religion,' by REV. A. T. BANNISTER, M.A.; 'Women Journalists of the Past'; 'Mind and Morals in Animals and Savages,' &c. London: Duckworth and Co., 3, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, W.C. Price 6d.
- 'Rhymes of Road, Rail, and River.' By E. DERRY. Bristol: J. W. Arrowsmith, Quay-street. Price 1s.
- 'Mind,' for September, contains: 'Evolution of Personal Beauty,' by WILLIAM SHARPE, M.D.; 'A Defence of the New Thought,' by H. W. DRESSER; 'Bodily Immortality and the New Thought,' by PAUL TYNER; 'New Problems of Immortality,' by AUSTIN BIERBOWER; 'Psychography,' by H. FORBES KIDDLE, &c. The Alliance Publishing Co., Life-building, 19 and 21, West 31st-street, New York, U.S.A. Price 1s.
- 'Force-Massing Methods; showing how to use Occult Forces, &c., in all Business and Art.' By ERNEST LOOMIS. European agent: George Osbond, Scientor House, Devonport. Price 5s. 6d.
- 'Star Lore and Future Events,' for September. London: Glen and Co., 328, Strand, W.C. Price 4d.
- We have also received: 'The Lyceum Banner,' 'The Prasnotara,' 'Banner of Light,' 'Harbinger of Light,' 'Freedom' (Sea Breeze, Florida), 'Constancia' (Buenos Ayres), 'Rebus' (St. Petersburg), 'Revue Spirite' (Paris), 'L'Echo du Merveilleux' (Paris), 'El Pan del Espiritu' (Santiago, Chili), 'Psychische Studien' (Leipzig), 'Psyche' (Berlin), 'Literary Digest' (New York).

THE 'Staffordshire Sentinel' for Monday, August 28th, contained explanatory letters upon Spiritualism from Mr. E. W. Wallis and the Rev. Charles Ware. The secular Press should be utilised in this way as much as possible. Offers of advice to inquirers generally bring applications from people who are anxious to learn more about the subject.

THERE is a spiritual being that has eyes and ears, even if we cannot hear and see—the hearing and vision that through all ages have been developed in those who have seen clearly the hidden things in the universe of spirit. We do not all have that faculty developed. Neither are we all musicians nor artists. The inspiration that governs clairvoyants is denied to the most of us. But I believe that, though dormant, the power to commune with the spiritual environment of life exists in every soul that God has made.—REV. DR. T. E. GREEN.

SOCIETY WORK.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday evening last our platform was occupied by Mr. Ronald Brailey, whose guides delivered an interesting address on 'Spiritualism and Re-incarnation,' and improvised a poem from 'Love, Light and Life.' After the rendering of a piano solo by a friend, Mr. Brailey gave very convincing tests in psychometry and clairvoyance. On Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., an open-air meeting will be held in Victoria Park; at 7 p.m., at the hall, an address and clairvoyance will be given by Mr. Alfred Peters.—O.H.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 14, STROUD GREEN-ROAD, FINSBURY PARK.—Open-air Mission.—On Sunday last Mr. T. Brooks conducted the meeting, which was addressed by Messrs. Brooks (Hackney), Clegg (Forest Gate), also by two ladies, Mrs. Clegg and Miss Helm (Exeter). The work of these mediums produced a marked effect on the audience. In the evening, at 14, Stroud Green-road, Mr. Willis read one of A. J. Davis's visions of 'Heaven,' followed by Mr. Wallace and some half-dozen other friends on the same subject. On Sunday next, in Finsbury Park at 11.30 a.m., and in the hall at 7 p.m.; Wednesday at 8 p.m.—T. B.

LIVERPOOL—DALBY HALL.—This society was favoured on Sunday, August 27th, with a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Gilbertson, of Bathgate, members of the Glasgow society, who have been present in Liverpool with the Institute of Journalists, of which Mr. Gilbertson is a Fellow. At both afternoon and evening meetings Mr. Gilbertson presided, and conducted the proceedings with great earnestness and ability, making some reference to the good work being done in Scotland. In the evening Mrs. Gilbertson supported her husband on the platform and delivered her first inspirational address in public. Addresses of great power and acumen were also delivered by Mr. Howell, the resident lecturer, under inspiration. On Monday night Mrs. Gilbertson was again present, and gave an address at the members' circle, which was well attended.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD (Near Alexandra Theatre).—The first annual outing of our Lyceum children took place at Chingford, Epping Forest, on Saturday last. The party comprised our esteemed superintendent, Mrs. Minter, and teachers, with several parents and friends, making a party of about thirty in all. Arriving at Chingford, amusements, including races for prizes, were indulged in, and each one had a present of some kind. After a well-prepared tea, the tired yet happy faces of the children proved that a day of hearty enjoyment had been spent. Our superintendent sincerely thanks the subscribers for their generosity in supplying funds sufficient to cover all expenses, and to leave a small cash balance to pass into the Lyceum funds.—W.

LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' CONFERENCE MEETINGS.—An open-air meeting was held on Sunday with our friends in Finsbury Park, when the Stroud Green Society and the Stoke Newington Society co-operated. Mr. T. Brooks presided. Messrs. H. Brooks and Clegg, Mrs. Clegg and Miss Helm, of Exeter, gave addresses with good effect, and were listened to with great attention. Questions were asked and answered, and we had a happy time. A conference was held at 3 p.m., in Blanche Hall, Stoke Newington. In the absence of Mr. Whyte, President of the Stoke Newington Society, Mr. J. D. Davis was voted to the chair. The subject of 'Our Future Work' was introduced by the secretary, and Messrs. Wright, H. Brooks, Polly, Smith, H. Boddington, Glyn, and Clegg participated in the discussion. The general feeling of the conference was that its work ought to be more effective. At night addresses were delivered by Messrs. J. D. Davis, C. Drake, and A. Peters, Mr. Peters closing with clairvoyance.—M. CLEGG.

GLASGOW.—We have recently been greatly gratified by the presence among us of Mrs. Ellen Green. On Sundays, August 20th and 27th, her inspirers gave four trance addresses on 'Spiritualism: its Message, its Consolations, its Evidences, and its Truths,'—addresses which were characterised by the loving, helpful, sympathetic, and devout spirit which is exemplified in the life of Mrs. Green herself. Impromptu poetry graced the discourses, measured in rhythm, perfect in euphony, and expressive of touching and elevating sentiments. The clairvoyance met with appreciation, some of the recipients being affected to tears. An elderly lady, on Sunday, August 27th, said she had come to the meeting 'disbelieving the whole thing,' but a clairvoyant delineation of her late husband (who had been a cripple), brought conviction to her mind, and she went away filled with joy. On Monday evening, August 21st, Mrs. Green gave public psychometry. Twenty-four articles were dealt with, with striking success. Spiritual solos were sung by Miss Gertrude Green with much taste and sweetness. We look forward with great pleasure to Mrs. Green's next visit here.—J. S. HILL.