

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

'A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics of the fourth century B.C.' is an arresting title. How modern it makes Christianity seem! for a 'Manual of Psychological Ethics' could not have grown at one venture, and, besides, this manual 'is itself a book of reference to earlier books.' The wonder is increased when one turns over these learned pages, only to note how subtle and thorough is the philosophy, and how pure and practical are the ethics of this impressive book. There is a great deal of childlike repetition in these 1,366 paragraphs, but the child behind the repetition is a thinker and an observer. There is also much that is technical in the book, which is full of verbal boulders and pebbles not conducive to smooth reading, but an attentive and patient reader will soon get used to that. Even as a most valuable lesson in the discrimination of words, the work is precious.

But, beyond all, there stands the wonder of an advanced psychology, of a thoroughly ethical nature, beyond which, for all the practical and essential purposes of life, we have not advanced. Of course, the Eastern forms of thought are not always ours, and the ancient doctrines of existence often seem unreal to us; but we are greatly helped by the modernness of the spirited translation and by the fortunate form of the text which consists entirely of questions and answers.

The translation, 'now made for the first time, from the original Pali,' is by Caroline A. F. Rhys Davids, M.A., Fellow of University College, London, who contributes a scholarly Introductory Essay; and the book is published by 'The Royal Asiatic Society,' London. It perhaps ought to be further explained that the translation is that of the first Book in the Abhidhamma Pitaka, entitled 'Dhamma-Sangani' (compendium of States or Phenomena).

'Freedom,' from an unnamed paper, quotes the following highly-flavoured dog-story:—

Bozzie is a beautiful black Scotch collie, with white breast, white feet, white nose and white tail tip. She is the daughter of Boz, a famous collie that amazed the kings and queens and princes of Europe a few years ago. She belongs to George B. Clason, of Chicago, who exhibited her recently to a representative of this paper. Four men were sitting in the room. 'Bozzie,' said Mr. Clason, 'how many men are in the room?' In response came four sharp barks. The sceptic was requested to think of a number and ask the dog to tell it. He thought of '4' and Bozzie gave four barks. Then he thought of '2,' and Bozzie barked twice.

John Lick, a bright office boy, had observed Bozzie's performance with admiration. The collie's master invited the little fellow to place his hand on Bozzie's head and think of his own age. Now, no one but John knew John's age. That is, no one but John and Bozzie, and the latter, strange

creature, immediately began to bark until she had counted fifteen. John admitted the collie was correct. That was his age. Then the sceptic placed his hand on Bozzie's head and thought of the number four, but instantly changed it to three. His hand had scarce touched the dog before she began to bark. She first counted three, then hesitated a moment, and added one bark more. A longer pause, and three were counted in sharp, loud barks, with every expression of certainty.

'You thought of seven,' said the master.

'No,' replied the sceptic, 'I thought of four first and then of three. The dog knows.'

Mr. Clason himself trained Bozzie, but he was in total ignorance of the dog's occult propensities until a well-known professional telepathist saw her, and a few experiments proved instantly that Bozzie could 'read minds' as well as any man or woman. It is understood that Nicola Tesla, the electrician, will see Bozzie, and his opinion will be awaited with interest.

We should like to associate with that dog!

We often think that we are not as responsive as we ought to be to the virtues of the toilers, especially on the score of patience and endurance;—real *virtue* in the fine old Roman sense of the word. The poor dress, the rough face, perhaps the unmusical voice, the very uncomplainingness, tend to hide the solid, the beautiful '*virtus*' of the toiler. The Spiritualist ought to cultivate the habit of looking behind the outer rind to the inner self. The result of our own observation is that amongst cabmen, omnibusmen, costermongers, dockers, washerwomen, news sellers, colliers, street sweepers and dustmen may be found some of the most heroic and admirable human beings. These facers of the wind and weather, these bearers of the heat and burden of the day, encounter difficulties, face dangers, plod through or stand patiently under provocations that would madden the 'nice' people most of us are so fond of. We are indeed led astray by seemings.

Dr. Thoms, of Chicago, got converted in this sense lately; and this is what converted him, after watching a gang of black men spread the hot asphalt in front of his beautiful house:—

It has made me wish more than ever that I might be in close touch with that under-world of labour. In this work I have seen some of the stuff that goes to the making of men.

When the asphalt leaves the furnaces it registers 285 deg. It is dumped into the street at a temperature of 250 deg. With boards bound to their feet these negro experts begin spreading the stuff. Their feet have become calloused to the heat in great measure, but occasionally a workman would leave his task, take off board and shoe, and discover a long, pouched blister along the bottom of his foot. With a pen-knife he splits the skin, lets the water out, and rubs salt into the opening. Then putting on his shoe and his plank sole, he goes to work again on a hot surface that would disable any ordinary man who would stand on it for five minutes. And all this is done in the utmost good nature, with no houndings by a captious boss.

This work has been a great lesson to me. It has been a source of strength to my belief that the church has a mission in reaching out to such public servitors. For whatever may be said of paving in the city at large, this particular piece of work has been well done.

We have much to learn here. What is the good of being a Spiritualist if it does not help us to see the simple, patient, beautiful soul beneath the grimy jacket or the dusky skin?

A writer in 'The Sheffield Independent' whose insulting letter does not deserve notice, and whose signature ('Sanity') is necessary information, suggests that Spiritualism is responsible for much of the increase of insanity. In the first place we doubt that increase, notwithstanding Lunacy statistics. There is a large increase in the lunacy trade, we admit: but that is a very different matter, and needs looking into; and we believe that the more it is looked into the less will it be confounded with an actual increase in lunacy.

Still, there probably is an increase in lunacy of a certain kind, but we think it is mainly due to the frightful speed at which we are living, the strange upgrowth of sordid selfishness on almost every hand, and the want of Spiritualism. For our own part, we believe that Spiritualism, by taking away the fear of death, by putting out the fires of hell, by teaching us to expect happy meetings with those who have gone forward, and by generally making us rational, tends to keep the mental balance true: and, where the reverse is the case, we think the reason usually is that people, like this wretched writer, turn a good gift into a terror, and drive the sensitive into a morbid state.

Are we mindful enough of the need of heart-sunshine there is in the world? And yet it would be so easy to give it! 'O, mamma, smile on me!' cried the little four-year-old who saw the grave faces when she came down late, and 'the blessing' was being asked. It is one of the heart-weary cries of the world, though pride often smothers it.

In a certain Report from the Theosophists of America, the following passage occurs:—

And so our little band of American Theosophists may approach the twentieth century with colours flying, hearts elate, ranks coherent. There are not very many of us, but that fact is of no moment whatever. Size is not the criterion of function. The heart is not a large organ, yet it propels the living blood to the remotest part of the body. And so we, instinct with force, suffused with the true spiritual philosophy, and vitalised with earnest purpose to do the master's work in humanity, may in such wise send throughout this great land currents of truth and life that in time every city, every hamlet, shall be reached. Not at once, but perhaps at no distant era, there may come a day when no man shall say to his neighbour, 'Know thou Theosophy,' for all shall know it, from the least even unto the greatest.

PITY AND PROXY.—This, from an American journal, is as good as many sermons, and better than some:—

There was a piece of cold pudding on the lunch table, and mamma divided it between Willie and Elsie. Willie looked at his pudding—then at his mother's empty plate. 'Mamma,' he said earnestly, 'I can't enjoy my pudding when you haven't any. Take Elsie's.'

HE who has most of heart knows most of sorrow.—BAILEY.

It is by studying little things that we attain the great art of having as little misery and as much happiness as possible.—JOHNSON.

THE 'SPIRITUAL REVIEW,' for August, opens with a portrait of 'Tien Sien Tie,' the well-known spirit teacher who inspires the utterances of Mr. J. J. Morse. This is followed by some copious notes of one of the addresses given by 'Tien' through his medium, at Cavendish Rooms, upon 'Crime: Its Physical Circumstances and Spiritual Consequences'—an important subject truly, and treated with the usual humanitarian eloquence of the speaker. 'Taoism and its Tenets' is the title of an appropriate article at this time when China and Japan are occupying the attention of the world. Astrologers will find something of interest in 'An Italian Oration on Astrology in the Fifteenth Century'; and the editorial notes and gleanings 'from all points,' and the 'Miscellany,' &c., deal with current topics in a thoughtful and suggestive fashion. No. 4 of the 'Review' maintains, and improves upon, the standard of the previous issues.

MENTAL HEALING: A SUGGESTION.

The majority of thinkers are agreed that matter is not the cause of mind, but mind of matter; and since scientists teach us to regard all physical phenomena as the result of vibrations in a medium, we may assume that mind is the immanent cause of all these vibrations, whether they occur in free ether, or in what we call matter, *i.e.*, ether which has been impressed with vortex motion. All have originated from the Infinite Mind, as Principal Source, acting through individual finite minds as agents: all vibrations, therefore, are subject to, and capable of being controlled by, mental force, that is, by thoughts.

If we were to take this statement as it stands, without supplement, we should conclude that a thinking being ought to be able to entirely control his physical sensations. But the facts of life do not bear out such a conclusion; it is very evident that disease becomes more complicated in proportion to the intelligence of the creature, and that man, even when normally healthy, has considerable difficulty, to say the least, in acquiring complete control over his organism—more difficulty apparently than have the lower animals.

Mr. F. W. H. Myers suggested in a paper which he read recently before the Society for Psychical Research, that the difficulty which spirits have in controlling the organism of a medium may help us to understand our individual relation to our own organism and the difficulty we each experience in gaining complete control over it.

The question arises, What is the cause of this difficulty? Why cannot we, by thought, direct all sensory vibrations? And why is disease so difficult to eradicate in the organism of the most intelligent being on this globe, in mankind? To these questions the following answer suggests itself as a possible explanation:—

No individual comes into this life with a body entirely his own; his human organism is not, or at least can only be in part, the result of his own mental activities. It is always the result of mental force, but this force has been projected from various individuals. We all come into this state of existence under the law of heredity, with organisms vibrating from the effects of the mental activity of our ancestors; and it may be because our relation to our physical part is thus imperfect, because our bodies are only partly the expression of ourselves, and are largely the expression of our forefathers, it may be on this account that it is so difficult completely to control the vibrations of the atomic body, to regulate this or that disturbing activity, and to bring the whole into harmony with the will. Moreover, another set of influences has to be contended with and regulated; we are not only inheritors of bodies which are to a considerable extent formed by the mentality of our predecessors, but we are liable constantly to respond to the thought vibrations of our fellow beings. The right thinking and the wrong thinking of innumerable minds are continually impinging upon one another, acting through mental contact upon each other's organisms and affecting them for good or evil. Such are the complex conditions which are involved in the theory we are considering, conditions which may be in no small degree the cause of the health and disease which prevail.

We should not then expect to find that any single individual is able to claim total exemption from disease, or that any can venture to affirm: 'If I can order my own thoughts into healthy channels, I am sure *never* to suffer from disease or pain.' For Humanity is one, and all the members are liable to be affected by the weakness or wrong thinking of the less developed, and these effects may reveal themselves in organic disease. Whether the disease is simply caused by disturbing mental vibrations or is due to physical vibrations produced by insanitary conditions, does not affect the point, which is, that the defects of others, both in thought and action, are continually affecting each individual mentally and physically, and starting vibrations both ethereal and atomic which do not originate in the personality of the person so affected, and which render the task of controlling our organisms very difficult for everyone.

Much may, however, be done by those who recognise the power of thought and who believe that both health and disease have their ultimate origin always in *mind*, not in

matter. Health may be acquired or strengthened, and disease may be resisted or pain banished, by the steadfast cultivation of the exercise of mental control, first over ourselves for our own physical benefit, and then in co-operation with the minds of others for theirs.

If control over our own organism and consequent exemption from disease is not entirely in our own power, a large measure of it is within our reach. There have been some who have gained it in a remarkable degree; there was One in whom we believe it was more complete than in any other; but even He was content to share with Humanity its imperfection so far as to experience pain.

The advantage which this theory has over others lies in this, that it relates all the different methods of cure, and (as far as we know) it is contradicted by no fact. It is merely a suggestion, it claims to be nothing more than a slight contribution towards a possible solution of a problem.

We have at present a very large variety of curative systems. An American journal, called 'Suggestive Therapeutics,' recently produced a list of these various systems. Besides the ordinary medical mode of treatment, there are hypnotists, Christian Scientists, faith-healers, magnetic-healers, mental-healers, &c. Reason suggests that if cures are effectual in connection with all these systems of healing, they must bear some relation to one another, there must be some truth common to all. Of course there are those who will deny this; partisans will maintain that the system to which they personally adhere is the only one deserving of credence; but those whose tendencies are more catholic (in the true sense of the word) will not be able to accept so sectarian a position in relation to the science of healing.

To those who think along the lines indicated in this article, it is not difficult to accept the fact that medicine stays disease and effects cures. Drugs presumably do this, by introducing into the organism fresh matter, the vibrations of which are such as to counteract disturbing influences. Clever men have been experimenting through many generations with a view to discovering what substances have these beneficial effects: why should those who exalt the power of mind hesitate to recognise that it is capable of making such discoveries and of discerning how to effect true relations between the living human organism and the environment in which it is placed, in which they both act and are acted upon? Mind is still the discoverer and the disposer and the controller. Magnetic healing similarly falls into place; for if an aura proceeds from the magnetiser it too must be vibrating, and if it is efficacious it is so, presumably, because its action alters the vibrations of the atomic body of the patient.

Whilst thus acknowledging the value of all physical methods of effecting a change in the vibrations of the atomic body, we must, however, recognise that direct mental processes are more fundamental; are likely to be more powerful, because they deal with causes rather than effects.

A mental-healer's aim is to act upon his patient's organism, not directly, but by strengthening the healthy thoughts and desires in his mind, thus enabling him to effect his own cure. Certain remarks were made in an able address delivered two or three years ago by Dr. Milne Bramwell before the Society for Psychical Research, which showed that in his opinion the cures which he effected by hypnotism were secured by a co-operation of his will and thought with the desires of his patients, desires which their unaided wills alone were not strong enough to execute.*

The capacity for control, and therefore for health, exists in each individual mind; but being, as we are, only in a preliminary stage of our development, this capacity is mostly latent and can only be exerted by effort and education, and

often requires assistance. The difficulty which we have in exerting it is *not an accident*, it is an intentional part of our training. If it had been desirable the Infinite Spirit, who orders all things in heaven and earth, could have related us so completely to our bodies and to matter that control would have been easy. He did not see fit to do so; therefore, presumably, He knew that our spiritual perfection could be better manifested by the overcoming of obstacles; the difficulty exists for the purpose of stimulating the effort to overcome. Our spiritual education on this plane is one long course of overcoming: the result will, without doubt, justify the process. We are becoming aware of the oneness of our Humanity by this process; we are discovering that our progress must be together, that we act and re-act consciously and unconsciously upon one another, that we can strengthen and weaken each other's powers of control.

The greatest service which any man can render to Humanity is to think nobly. True deeds, where there is opportunity, inevitably accompany true thought; but thinking is of chief importance, for thoughts that are pure, vivifying, strong, are producing healthy conditions, morally and physically.

Prayer is Godward thinking; prayer is thoughtful desire in the realised presence of Deity. Dr. Franz Hartmann, in his work on the life of Jacob Boehme, thus speaks of prayer:—

'True prayer is not a mere wishing, desiring, but an action within the power of the omnipotent God.'

Then he quotes from Boehme the following:—

'The will necessary to accomplish prayer is far too weak as long as it is in our own powers that we pray, but if acted upon by Divine power it becomes awakened, fiery, and full of desire. *Within this desire God Himself is acting.* . . . He who truly prays co-operates with God internally, while externally he produces good fruits.'

H. A. D.

'A WONDERFUL DREAM.'

A writer in the 'Manchester Evening Chronicle' lately gave a rather racy notice of M. Flammarion's recent book, entitled, 'The Unknown,' respecting which he said:—

The author examines the scientific possibilities of coincidence, of chance, of illusion, of trickery, showing that not one of these things accounts for the mass of the phenomena. His conclusion—whether right or wrong is not for me to say—is that the soul exists; that it has at present unknown faculties; that it is possible to transmit thought from one mind to another; that there is a well-defined psychic current between souls in sympathy; and that the religion of the future will be founded on a knowledge of psychical facts. The latter portion of M. Flammarion's book deals with dreams. I have only space left for the reproduction of one dream. And it is a wonderful dream. The teller is M. Regnier, a French sergeant-major, who, in 1869, had pictures painted 'with perfect exactness on the soul's retina of the sleeper a year before the events they figured occurred.' When no one was thinking of war M. Regnier dreamed that he was one of a French infantry company in a village, and that they were attacked by Prussians, Bavarians, and dragoons from Baden. At that time he had never seen the uniforms described:—

'At one moment (the narrative runs) I saw one of our officers climb into the church steeple with a field-glass, to observe the movements of the enemy; then he came down, formed us in column to attack, sounded the charge, and rushed us forward at double quick, with fixed bayonets, on a Prussian battery. . . . On October 6th, 1870, this dream came true—village, school, mairie, and church were there where I had seen them. I saw our major going up into the steeple to reconnoitre the position of the enemy; I saw him come down, heard him order the charge to be sounded, and we rushed with fixed bayonets on the Prussian cannon. In my dream at this moment I had had my head split by a stroke from the blade of a Prussian. In the real fight I expected this, but I only received a blow from a rammer, which possibly was intended for my head, but only hit me on my right thigh.'

How to dream profitably is a most extraordinary gift. Some literary people, I am told, make a fair living by dreaming dreams. Journalists are less fortunate. 'The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream when sweetest.'

* We speak from memory, but under the impression that this is a correct presentation of Dr. Bramwell's opinions. In this connection it is deserving of observation that the approach of death is usually accompanied by the absence of the instinct to live. Of course there are exceptions, but it has been often remarked that this mental condition usually accompanies death. There was a correspondence on this subject about a year ago in the 'Spectator,' and a little experience will convince anyone of the fact. It is possible that this is something besides a merciful adaptation of the creature to circumstances. If thought and will can control the vibrations of the body powerfully, as they seem able to do, some people might be able effectually to struggle with death, even though their life story on this plane was really ended, and their work completed. Such an undue prolongation of existence is prevented by the withdrawal of the instinct for life when the tent should be taken down.

'THE NEW THOUGHT OF IMMORTALITY.'

BY HACTENUS.

No. I.

The Rev. R. Heber Newton, of New York, has been writing a series of valuable articles in that excellent new monthly magazine, 'Mind,' issued in New York by the Alliance Publishing Company, and he contributes to the August number an instructive paper on the 'New Thought of Immortality,' which will interest the readers of 'LIGHT.'

After pointing out that from the time of Jesus there has been little or no development in men's faith concerning the hereafter—that 'for nearly eighteen centuries there has been no progress whatever in the thought of immortality'—Mr. Newton says that Swedenborg, who died in 1772, gave to humanity 'the first really new conception of the character of immortality. He reconstructed the whole idea of the hereafter. One might almost say for the first time in the history of humanity it took on sane and sensible forms, and became rational and conceivable, natural and necessary.'

This is high and merited praise, and the fact cannot be gainsaid that Swedenborg's thought has acted as a leaven, and under its influence the world's conception of immortality is unconsciously changing. This new thought, says Mr. Newton, 'has been fed during the latter half of our century by Spiritualism. Whatever our judgment of the nature of the sources of the ideas that are current in Spiritualism, those ideas themselves are remarkable. There is a certain underlying unity among all spiritualistic communications concerning the hereafter'; and further, 'the fact remains that the nature and character of the hereafter, as outlined through mediums, strangely confirm the visions of immortality that came through Swedenborg.'

Proceeding to refresh the memory of the reader concerning the traditional conception of immortality, Mr. Newton gives a perspicuous summary of the old time ideas with which we are all familiar, which, however, it is well should be occasionally restated in all their baldness and badness, and he then turns to the more congenial task of setting forth the new thought. Dealing first of all with death, he affirms that it is no real break in life. It is a conjunction, the link that binds the lower with the higher form of life. It is not a divorce between the soul and the body, needing to be annulled by the soul's reunion with the body. Nature knows no such backward process. She is not so poor that she has to stoop to pick up discarded clothes. As the Infinite and Eternal Spirit is for ever changing the living garment wrapt around his true self—the garment which we call Nature—so the child of the Infinite and Eternal Spirit casts aside his outworn garment. Let there be no mistake, however; death is not a mere *unclothing* of the soul, but a *clothing* again of the immortal spirit. No life known to us exists disembodied. The body always grows around the life. Each cell is an embodiment of mind, and is grown by that mind. The intelligence that grew it can grow it again in a higher form. The elements out of which our body is composed exist in the air about us, in finer and subtler forms. From that atmosphere can be drawn the materials to reclothe the spirit at its will. If orchids, hanging from the tree boughs, suck from the air the materials that build their beautiful forms, cannot the spirit of man do as much? Death in reality frees the real body. Within this outer form there must be an inner formative something that holds these coarser elements in abiding identity of form. It is the psychical body, within the physical body, which is the true principle of form. The touch of death frees this psychical body, and man, passing out from the habitation of flesh, finds himself not unclothed, but clothed upon. Death, then, is the true resurrection, no other is conceivable.

We have endeavoured in the above summary of Mr. Newton's argument to give his own words as far as possible, but we feel that we must quote the following passages in their entirety, at the same time expressing our regret that the writer qualifies, and almost destroys the value of, his statement by a doubting 'if.' 'If there is any such testimony whatever to be trusted.' Clearly he is of opinion that there is trustworthy testimony, or why does he quote it at all?

But let that pass; we are thankful for the clear and explicit recognition of revelations which have been made from the other side regarding the naturalness, beauty, and progressive character of the human life beyond the incident of death. Mr. Newton says:—

'All testimony from the unseen world—if there is any such testimony whatever to be trusted—confirms the conviction that he who passes through death, so far from finding himself in a state of unconscious slumber, finds himself wide awake, instantly. The dead have found it hard to realise that they have died. Again and again, if any such testimony is to be trusted, those who have, as we say, died, only became conscious of the change that has passed over them in their inability to communicate with the forms around them, so well known and loved. They speak, and no one hears them. They touch familiar forms, and there is no responsive thrill. Thus they come to know the change that has passed over them. "I am he that liveth and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore!"

'He who dies awakens into consciousness—the same being as of old. He is conscious of his continued personal identity. He knows himself to be himself. The threads of the old existence are not cut at the touch of death. They spin on and on into the new being, weaving the old framework of memory and association and habit—of all that constitutes personal identity. Every touch in those beautiful stories of the after-life of Jesus reveals the continued identity of the Man of Nazareth. He was one and the same in the glorious form that he was upon the earth.

'The dead are, therefore, recognisable by one another and by the living, if ever communication is established. This follows, inevitably, from the continuation of personal identity. The question of our recognition of friends in heaven is not one that should ever be raised by a thoughtful man. Despite the changes that take place in our visible bodies, as they renew themselves altogether every seven years, the personal identity continuing, we are recognisable, one by the other, through all disguises. Voice and look will betray the friend whom we have not seen for decades—how ever changed the form may be. As it is here, so is it there. "Jesus said unto her, Mary! And she said, Rabboni [Master]!"

'Death ushers us into no foreign world. We will be at home in the hereafter, as we are at home here. All that is essential to human life here will be found there. The activities of our being on earth will be the activities of our being in heaven. They are the continually abiding activities of our nature. They cannot change. We must find room for them in any conceivable form of existence. Life's finest joys and highest ecstasies would be stolen from us in a heaven where there is no play for these powers. The occupations of earth must, therefore, shadow and type the occupations of heaven. In higher and nobler forms, we must go on doing there what we are doing here. There must be ample room for these occupations in the universe revealed to us nowadays, the outer vestibule alone of which we enter in this earthly life.

'If homes are necessary here, homes are necessary there—the centres of family life, without which the truest "bands of a man" would be broken. Those truest "bands of a man," apparently broken on earth, must be re-knit in heaven. The associations that group themselves naturally here must, in higher and nobler forms, group themselves in the hereafter. Life without association is death. In Milton's swelling phrase, there must be there "noble troops and sweet societies."

THE LATE EARL OF AIRLIE.

A WEIRD STORY.

The London correspondent of the 'Manchester Guardian' is responsible for the following:—

'I heard a curious story of the "coincidence" kind to-day in connection with the death of the Earl of Airlie. The Earl, for five years, held the position of adjutant of a Yeomanry cavalry regiment. This regiment has just been out for its annual training. One day last week the attempt to hoist the colours of the regiment before the tent of the commanding officer was attended by failure. Again and again was the attempt made, but the flag persisted in flying half-mast high. This attracted so much attention that messengers were sent from neighbouring camps to know if anything had befallen the regiment. Before night fell news came of the death of the regiment's old adjutant, the Earl of Airlie.'

MISS MACCREADIE desires to intimate to her friends and visitors that she will be out of town until September 9th next.

IS FRIDAY AN UNLUCKY DAY ?

In an article which I sent you, entitled, 'Fateful Friday,' and which appeared in 'LIGHT' of January 21st, 1899, I said that there are persons who regard Friday as an unlucky day for them, and I mentioned some, within my own knowledge, who scrupulously avoided travelling on that day, and who on no account would undertake any important business on a Friday, believing that to do so would bring them misfortune. I also said that Prince Bismarck believed firmly in the 'fatality' of Friday, and declared more than once that the day always brought ill-luck with it. 'The Psychical Science Review,' of San Francisco, advertizing to my article, says :—

'What is an unlucky day for one is, often, the best day for another ; and this is as true in the history of nations as of individuals. To prove that the supposed unlucky day, Friday, is lucky in the history of America, the question was brought up in the "Norfolk Beacon," and the following replies show how little Americans have to dread the supposed "fatal day."

'On Friday, August 21st, 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed on his great voyage of discovery. On Friday, October 12th, 1492, he first discovered land. On Friday, January 4th, 1493, he sailed on his return to Spain, which, if he had not reached in safety, the happy result would never have been known which led to the settlement of this vast continent. On Friday, March 15th, 1493, he arrived at Palos in safety. On Friday, November 22nd, 1493, he arrived at Hispanola on his second voyage to America. On Friday, June 13th, 1494, he, though unknown to himself, discovered the continent of America. On Friday, March 5th, 1497, Henry VIII. of England gave to John Cabot his commission which led to the discovery of North America. This is the first American State paper in England. On Friday, September 7th, 1565, Melendez founded St. Augustine, the oldest town in the United States by more than forty years. On Friday, November 10th, 1620, the "Mayflower," with the Pilgrims, made the harbour of Provincetown ; and on the same day they signed that august compact, the forerunner of our present glorious Constitution. On Friday, December 22nd, 1620, the Pilgrims made their final landing at Plymouth Rock. On Friday, February 22nd, George Washington, the father of American freedom, was born. On Friday, June 15th, Bunker Hill was seized and fortified. On Friday, September 7th, 1777, the surrender of Saratoga was made, which had such power and influence in inducing France to declare for our cause. On Friday, September 22nd, 1780, the treason of Arnold was laid bare, which saved us from destruction. On Friday, October 19th, 1781, the surrender at Yorktown, the crowning glory of the American arms, occurred. On Friday, July 7th, 1776, the motion in Congress was made by John Adams, seconded by Richard Henry Lee, that the United States colonies were, and of right ought to be, free and independent. Thus, by numerous examples, we see that, however it may be with foreign nations, Americans need never dread to begin on Friday any undertaking, however momentous it may be.'

JOSEPH DE KRONHELM.

Gajsin, Podolia.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË'S INSPIRATION.

In reviewing Mrs. Gaskell's biography of the author of 'Jane Eyre,' the 'Academy' says :—

'Charlotte Brontë knew to the full how the artist both masters and is mastered by his art, and that in the very act of creation there seems to be, and is, a "something not himself making for righteousness," for artistic rightness and justice. So she writes to Lewes :—

"When authors write best, or, at least, when they write most fluently, an influence seems to awaken in them, which becomes their master—which will have its own way—putting out of view all behests but its own, dictating certain words, and insisting on their being used, whether vehement or measured in their nature ; new-moulding characters, giving unthought-of turns to incidents, rejecting carefully elaborated old ideas, and suddenly creating and adopting new ones. Is it not so ? And should we try to counteract this influence ? Can we, indeed, counteract it ?"

When a sovereign of men objected to a sovereign of music that there were too many notes in a certain passage, the answer was : "Sire, there are just the right number." That was the kind of reply that Charlotte Brontë made to her critics : "It happened so and not otherwise. I saw it, heard it, and refuse to lie about it."—'Manchester Dispatch.'

PRESENTATION TO MR. W. H. TERRY,

EDITOR OF THE 'HARBINGER OF LIGHT.'

The 'Harbinger of Light,' which has been edited and published by Mr. W. H. Terry, of Melbourne, Australia, for upwards of thirty years, is a monthly journal of which any movement might be proud, and we are pleased to see that a presentation has been made to Mr. Terry by the members of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, of which body Mr. Terry is the president, in recognition of his many lengthy and self-sacrificing services to Spiritualism in Australia. The matter was kept perfectly quiet, and Mr. Terry experienced a genuine surprise when, on June 18th last, he was presented with a handsome escritoire, a suitable chair, a reading lamp, and an album containing the photographs of the various subscribers. The desk bore the inscription, on a silver plate : 'Presented to W. H. Terry, 18th June, 1900, by many admirers of his labours in the cause of Spiritualism.' After a highly eulogistic speech by the chairman, Mr. Waschatz, the presentation was made by Mr. R. C. T. Morgan in terms expressive of high appreciation of Mr. Terry's arduous and unselfish labours on behalf of Spiritualism.

Mr. Terry, in acknowledging the handsome gift, said :—

'Dear Friends,—This evening has been an entire surprise to me ; and while I highly appreciate the handsome present you have made me, and still more so the kindly feelings that have prompted you, I do not realise what I have done to deserve it and the high eulogiums bestowed upon me by the speakers. I was fortunate enough in my first investigation of Spiritualism to obtain early and convincing proofs of its truth, and, realising how much it meant, enthusiastically introduced it to my friends and acquaintances, whilst ignorant of the difficulties and dangers that beset the path of those who have not studied the road. Experience taught me wisdom, and made me more careful to see that the ground was prepared before the seed was sown. The initiation of 'The Harbinger of Light' was in and by the spirit world : the paper, with its title and motto, being shown in a vision to a sensitive whom I had magnetised, and who stated that the noble-looking spirit who exhibited the scroll said that I was to edit it. This I could not at first credit, not having had any literary culture or experience beyond the writing of a pamphlet ; yet within a year of the vision the first number of the paper was issued under my editorship. Although the work in this and other directions for the introduction and furtherance of Spiritualism has been onerous, the realisation that it was appreciated and productive of good was a sufficient compensation. Many letters reach me, showing that the contents of the paper have brought comfort to some and edification to others, whilst the commendation of many more cultured than myself endorsed the fitness of the work. I had hoped that someone would come forward to relieve me from the responsibility of the editorial duties, but no one is in view, and I am told by my spirit friends that I must still stand at the helm and, whilst I have health and strength, continue the work, which is not without its pleasures, your sympathy being not the least of them. I thank you for the handsome and useful presents you have made me, which in use will continually awake pleasant emotions, whilst the album will remind me of you personally.'

Mr. Terry was deeply affected, and sat down overwhelmed with emotion.

A number of other friends bore testimony to the value of Mr. Terry's work and the esteem in which he is held for his 'straightforward and manly character,' and the meeting terminated with the singing of 'Auld Lang Syno' amid much enthusiasm. We congratulate our Melbourne friends as well as Mr. Terry, for in honouring him they have honoured themselves ; and while his long and devoted labours have met with such spontaneous and cordial recognition at home, we can assure him that he has friends and well-wishers in this country who appreciate his valuable 'Harbinger,' and trust that he may long be spared to continue his praiseworthy services on behalf of our common cause.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. B.—Thank you for cutting received.
'Ariel,' F.H., H.W.W., A.G., A.B., and others.—Next week.

THERE may be more joy in anticipating gratitude than bestowing that which inspires it. Therefore to make a friend let him do a good turn to you.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25th, 1900.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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TÉLÉPATHIE À TROIS.

We have read, with considerable interest and some care, Dr. T. J. Hudson's 'Harper's Magazine' critical study on 'Evidences of life after death.' It is typical, very typical—and depressingly amusing. Dr. Hudson is quaintly serious and desperately sure: he is also pathetically candid and suspiciously slippery: he protests he will not ask for an inch, and he proceeds to take a mighty ell: he is a lovely blend of the serpent and the dove.

He sets out to prove that the whole of the phenomena on which Spiritualists rely have either no evidential value or are palpably the products of Suggestion, started by persons 'in the flesh,' to the utter exclusion of the disembodied. Under the head of 'phenomena which can by no possibility prove or disprove the claim of Spiritualism,' he includes 'all of the physical phenomena, such as rapping, table-tipping, levitation of ponderable bodies without physical contact or mechanical appliances, slate-writing *et hoc genus omne*.' This seeming extravagance is not relieved by the suggestion that a magnet can levitate its armature. Where is the magnet that levitates the ponderable body at the séance, or that writes messages on a tied slate? Dr. Hudson concedes honesty and admits that the wonders occur. But if we are not conscious of producing them, who is?

Attention is fixed, however, upon the intelligence behind these phenomena, and to this Dr. Hudson properly applies himself. This intelligence he admits. It *does* converse, see, hear and report: but it is all Suggestion or Telepathy, and possibly 'Télépathie à trois.' Dr. Hudson is sure of it. He has 'no difficulty'; he has 'a perfect answer,' 'a perfect solution,' 'a perfect explanation'; everything is 'easily explicable'; he can give 'an obvious and easy telepathic explanation of every alleged spirit communication that has ever been recorded,' and he proceeds to do it! It is a tremendous claim. Let us see how he does it.

Of course Dr. Hudson takes us over the too familiar ground, and makes everything turn upon the 'secondary personality,' the 'subliminal consciousness,' the 'sub-conscious mind,' the 'unconscious mind,' the 'subjective mind': (he uses all these terms). The poor medium, perfectly honest but entirely deluded, attributes to a spirit the subtleties which are purely personal to himself and the sitter. Unconsciously, he is receiving suggestions from the sitter, and setting them forth as communications from a supermundane sphere; and, equally unconsciously, the sitter is pouring forth these suggestions which, perhaps, he does not remember!

But it is not necessary that he should remember: it is not even necessary that he should know: he can suggest all the same,—or the other fellow, down in the cellar, can suggest unknown to him, and even he may not know he is doing it, so intricate is this process. For have we not Andrew Lang's chaffing bridging over the gulf with his 'Télépathie à trois'?—a bit of chaff which Dr. Hudson gravely accepts and urges. He says: 'If A is aware of a fact and is in telepathic rapport with B, he can communicate that fact to B. When that is done, the information henceforth constitutes a part of the mental equipment of B, who can, in turn, transmit the information to C (the medium) by the same means by which he received it from A.' That sounds like a very pretty game: but let us look at it.

Luckily Dr. Hudson gives us a case. It turns upon hypnotism, but Dr. Hudson says that is the same as Spiritualism: so it will do. He tells us that he once hypnotised a lady and asked her to describe his home, of which she knew nothing. She did so, describing everything correctly, with one exception. A library desk was described as being covered with a white cloth, and a lady was said to be at the desk 'doing something.' But, as ladies seldom if ever worked at it, and as its covering was black, this was put down to guessing. On his return, however, he found that his wife had been 'doing something' with pulverised sugar, and had temporarily covered the desk with a newspaper. This then, he says triumphantly, is a case of 'Télépathie à trois.'

But let us turn to his propounded theory. A is aware of a fact and can 'communicate' that fact to B, which fact then becomes 'a part of the mental equipment of B.' But *did* his wife 'communicate' that fact to him? Certainly not. He knew nothing about it. And *did* the fact about the sugar and the newspaper become a part of his 'mental equipment'? Not a bit of it: he had to go home in order to be aware of it. But perhaps Dr. Hudson identifies B with the other fellow in his cellar: and perhaps what he means is that the 'secondary' B, the 'sub-conscious' B, the 'subjective' B, the goodness knows what B, got the fact about the sugar and the newspaper, and passed it on to the medium, while neither the Doctor nor his wife knew anything about sending, receiving or transmitting it. We very highly value both American and British freedom, and have no wish to interfere with anyone's enjoyment of either, but, in the circumstances, the less said about 'no difficulty' and 'a perfect solution' the better.

Of this 'Law of Suggestion,' Dr. Hudson says: 'This law is known to every psychological student, except perhaps a few scientists who are committed to the spiritistic hypothesis.' That is a foolish suggestion, and foolish in several ways. Do all psychological students know and admit this law? and are scientific Spiritualists alone unacquainted with it? The reverse is the case. We have been pelted with this 'perfect explanation' from the first day it dawned upon the world's Hudsons, and we know every virtue assigned to it. And, to tell the truth, we always knew it and respected it, while now we quite accept it, even including 'Télépathie à trois,'—with a difference. Take a case which Dr. Hudson notices but which obviously floors him,—the communication to a medium of a fact known only to a deceased person, such as the hiding place of a will. All that Dr. Hudson can say is, that it 'may' have been known to some one other person on all the face of the earth, or, at all events, it could not be proved that no one knew it but the deceased: and so, if he can only get that tiniest seed of a 'may be,' he can grow his big tree of Mundane Suggestion. But why not Suggestion from the Unseen? If a fact is known to, say, one person on the earth, it is tremendously difficult to account for his

knowledge being tapped unconsciously by a stranger, also unconsciously, perhaps a thousand miles off; whereas it is easy (to use Dr. Hudson's favourite word—quite easy) to account for the suggestion of a fact by a disembodied person on the spot,—spirit to spirit, and mind to mind.

Dr. Hudson seems to enjoy contrasting communication by such a person and the operation of a natural law. But a disembodied person lives, thinks *and suggests* in a sphere of natural law. Dr. Hudson is quite sure that Suggestion accounts for everything. For peace's sake we agree with him; only we do not limit Suggestion to people 'in this muddy vesture of decay.'

SEANCE WITH MRS. CORNER.

The August number of 'Revue Spirite' contains several articles of interest. Among them there is one giving an account of a remarkable séance for materialisation held with Mrs. Corner, in Paris, on July 7th, at 9.15 p.m., at the house of Mme. de Laversay. The record is signed by M. Fernand Le Rendu de Longueval, Prince Wiszniewsky, Princess Wiszniewska, and Mme. B. de Laversay.

The medium was enclosed in a padlocked sack, so that her head only was outside it. A red light such as is used in the development of photographic plates lighted the large hall, in which one window was open. The light was sufficient to enable those present to distinguish each other as well as the curtain, behind which the medium sat. After the lapse of a few minutes, a white figure emerged from behind this curtain. It was the control 'Marie.' She wished them 'Good-day,' advanced to a table where were some roses, took some, and threw them to those present. She then requested the princess to approach, and putting a rose into her right hand, said: 'Take this rose.' She seized the hand of the princess and caressed it. After this the princess returned to her place, but was called back by the words: 'Touch my dress.' Princess Wiszniewska noticed that the hands were warm and life-like, and that the material of the dress seemed to be woolly and soft.

The voice of the 'Captain' was heard distinctly giving instructions about the medium; and finally this voice said: 'You will not see "Marie" any more; the force is exhausted, the medium must not be fatigued any longer. I am going to awake her.' He was then heard tapping the medium in a friendly way, and calling: 'Florrie! Florrie! wake up!' The medium awoke. The lights were turned up and the medium was liberated; the flowers were visible scattered about the room, and on a paper upon which during the séance 'Marie' had written, were found inscribed the following words: 'Je présente mes remerciements à M. D. et à Mme. W. Signé, Marie.'

This account is concluded by assurances of the recorder (who signs himself Fernand Le Rendu de Longueval) that the medium was safely enclosed in a strong black sack provided by himself, closed at the top and secured by six padlocks, of which he himself kept the key.

The signatures of the other witnesses follow.

'CHEIRO' DECORATED BY THE SHAH.

We are informed by a reliable correspondent that a prediction of the recent attempt to assassinate the Shah was given by 'Cheiro,' the celebrated palmist, to an important member of his Court about a week before the event happened. The Grand Vizier of the Shah the next day introduced 'Cheiro' to the Shah at the Palais des Souverains, when the Shah conferred upon him the decoration of the Lion and the Sun of Persia, which decoration (the green ribbon of Persia) 'Cheiro' has now the pleasure of wearing.

AUTO CLUB.—The followers of Prentice Mulford, or rather, the believers in his teachings, have inaugurated a movement in Chicago to perpetuate the philosophy which he taught, viz., that self is capable of ruling absolutely the body and spirit; that self is the spirit and may shape its own career; that the body is fair or ugly, well or sick, according as the spirit is pure or impure. The organisation is incorporated as the 'Auto Club,' and already has 200 members, mostly young men and women.—'Religio-Philosophical Journal.'

AUTOMATIC WRITING.—INTERESTING EXPERIENCES.

The article in 'LIGHT' for July 28th, under this heading, led to considerable inquiry and awakened so much interest that we are pleased to be able to supply more details regarding the manner in which the messages are given. The writer states that the quotations which were printed in 'LIGHT,' and others which we have in hand, were selected from amongst a great deal of perfectly distinct matter of purely personal, as well as much of a more general, interest, and that the constant references to the 'incapacity' of the communicator seemed, for various reasons, bound to be presented. The medium continues:—

'That this condition should exist was most decidedly *unexpected* to me—for my own rather hazy ideas on the subject of the soul's position apart from the body, would have amounted to its perfect freedom and capacity from the moment of separation.

'That the condition of extreme difficulty experienced through the power of *involuntary* thought* was possible, is a doctrine utterly beyond my own thought, as is that of loss of personality (and under what conditions), together with the thought, or testimony given, upon the actuality of vicarious suffering; all of which important subjects were briefly referred to *when occasion brought them laterally into connection*—as unexpectedly given to my consideration as the whole of the matter, and not points I had devoted thought to myself.

'After the statements were given me—as in the case of "Isolation of thought"—(more usually the following day), it was natural to do as I was told, "view the matter in the light of reason," and see how one statement fitted the others. But at the time of writing there was no opportunity to think, as the *pre-occupation* of taking down the suggested thought in the mere mechanical consideration of spelling and the like, gave no such possibility. The principal difficulty was, at first, more so than now at the present time, the absence of indication as to punctuation. Writing straight on, word after word, and often barely "taking it in," I found in looking through the writing that the *sense had been given*, only I had sometimes failed to render it, until I had revised the punctuation.

'As an instrument I was faulty, but when wrong in the actual writing of the matter, I was told of it, and in one curious instance I was informed that it was wrong "because it would not match *with what was to follow*," the purport of which was not then in my power to write.

'The theory of "expectancy" in thought was overthrown very many times by what I class as 'opposed personality'; the thought I wished answered or explained being ignored completely for different subjects, of more interest to the thinker.

'The pauses, failures to complete sentences, varying very much in their frequency at different times, I found, after comparing such occasions for some while, depended just as much on the capacity and intention of the thinker as on myself as the writer: and the interruption of "others" wishful to interfere and of involuntary thought that was suppressed, together with what seemed to amount to failure of memory, and so on, gave sufficient explanation for my not being able to "hear," or receive. On the other hand, my pausing was a distinct annoyance and hindrance, as it appeared to let the contact of unformulated energy cease—or what was referred to as "thought in the making"—as if there had to be *passivity*, but distinctly not *apathy* of condition. To feel inert and exhausted was fatal to the reception of the writing.

'It was a considerable puzzle to me for some time, as to why writing at all should be necessary; why the thought could not pass and be registered mentally without any such labour. Apart from the question of remembering it conveniently, which would be a distinct advantage, there seemed to be two reasons *why* the actual writing is possibly necessary. 1. The first I should call, for want of any scientific training as to the best expression for the purpose, the need for "getting up the steam" for the engine-driver (pre-occupation of low order). 2. That thought is made objective by the writing of it. One of the strongest points for the consideration of "opposed personality" is when direct appeal is made to me to "settle thoughts" of difficulty to the thinker, *but not to myself*.

'In two instances where the statements were given that "future rest was a myth," and that it was "impossible to destroy communications with the powers of darkness," the conditions then existing for the thinker made it perfectly comprehensible that these thoughts should exist. But for myself, although I had then written for some while *of the*

* Quoted in 'LIGHT,' April 28th.

conditions, I had never realised them to the extent of working out a reasonable problem as to their *ultimate results*.

'In short, a difficulty was brought to my consideration that, until so presented, had not existed to me.

'MINIMUM.'

The following quotations bear upon the points referred to by the writer, in the foregoing statement of her experiences:—

'Write whatever you can feel and I will follow on, for you see it is like this, the more you try to construct out of nothing* the more you are helpless to begin anything at all. I can guide your thought but you must originate the commencement with some power of thought for me to turn into my words—of course you do not understand.'

'Repeating is a check, and does not keep the effort connected without the break; that is the great thing to contrive.'

'I was not quick enough to prevent your stopping; it is so baffling to me to be brought to a halt suddenly.'

'If you can get the first thought from me, why not the second? . . . Everyone knows you are trying to join the conditions between us and they try and cross the—† They are devils, let it all go then. They can turn this to account in their fashion. I fear for you—whatever can be the meaning of life for you if they can —†'

'Out of mind for a time, if needs be, for your sake. I am quite at a loss then; it was merciful that you came, but take care, it is not safe for you; others can govern‡ if you do not know when I am there—it is the brain they can control if you see the thought.'

'And there is another thing for you to learn—that we govern the thought of others at a cost of all their own thought power. There is not room for two at once. If you see this I will show you why I am in trouble here with it, a prey to them round me, as they corrupt others like themselves with part, as it were, of their own malice and wickedness.'

One day when no question had been asked, the writing commenced with the following:—

'Just convince yourself that I live in the making of you visible to myself as a man in heaviness of mind—trying to make out why you lead and I govern§ the thought-principle between us.'

'If ever a man is taught to pray for his own betterment I am that man in your eyes, believing the cause pure of selfishness to govern to my liking. Concentric circles|| can meet in the middle; wider and wider they fly at a tangent; then we join them and establish unity—of purpose. Silvery threads—burning gold more like—culminate in effort of mind. Compass the thought for me. Why—a change coming soon. Suffice it then to prove me a liar if I lead you wrong in one thing of consequence.'

(In reply to question as to what he was doing:—)

'Nothing in fact, only plenty in reality, because only facts live and realities die.¶'

'It is the most extraordinary thing that I never knew all this when I was in your world: it is so easy to see now, though, how people influence each other's lives. It is not the care and caution of men that regulate their affairs as they think.'

'I am just the same at heart, or whatever you like to call it; there's no difference in the slightest between the first state and the second, only you are tied and bound by the first to think and do** just what you made a habit of doing.'

'I am not the man I was in one sense because there is just no chance of continuing in the same grooves of action; all you can do is to thresh out the—.' (The failure to continue suggestion here was made up at later dates.)

'We are in the dark; we gather out of it all that constructs the meaning of life.'

(In answer to my not finding references to 'being blind,' logically compatible with 'seeing':—) ††

* Expenditure of will-force?

† Abrupt stop in both instances.

‡ I argued with myself that I *should* know and entertained no intention of giving up writing; but once I got out of my reckoning.

§ The consideration of there existing any difference between 'leading and governing' was absolutely foreign to me; when touched on at first it was incomprehensible.

|| To find myself writing, over my own head, of 'concentric circles' was surprising.

¶ Query:—'Facts' demonstrated materially in this world, versus 'realities' of idea in the thought-world of the soul? In the first reading of this, in rough fashion, it seemed meaningless.

** 'Do' suggests *action*, and an apparent contradiction. The difficulty, however, is reconciled by the consideration that thought objective appears in various statements to pass from the initial stage of *thought-vision* to *thought actually realised*.

†† Have since grasped that absence of old faculty of *seeing all the time* would appear as blindness—alternating with visions created by thought objective. *Involuntary* thought is plainly stated to exist as a personal difficulty; does it not follow, then, of necessity that *voluntary* thought is *not continuously existent*—hence periods of blankness, 'blindness,'—the return of the 'eternal heaviness' or 'weight' referred to?

'It is not sight exactly—that is the funny part of it all; only I must talk to suit what you are used to;* but it is more feeling really.'

'The colour shocks are different to us. If I am talking to you and they are violent, I see red, or think of red at least; now you see pale green, because that was in my mind to tell you; it is the colour of ill health.'

'I am not worse off than lots of others. I hear them sometimes and it is cruel to think how life has mocked them in their ways of living hereafter. I am never at a loss if you go straight on—for I am never so blind as not to feel that you are there to help me if you will.'

'It is not righteousness that is the meaning of life, but always the outcome of the things you do that build the wall round you. I cannot explain any better, for you do not know the strangeness of it all, and yet to be your own self all the same.†'

(Question asked *why* he could give mental help to a mutual friend when apparently in such difficulties himself:—)

'That's easy enough, because I was sorry for him; it gave‡ me the power to act in that way. It is not so easy to frame prayers when there is nothing to turn to in your own mind, as it were.'

'It is the law of things to discover first of all how many there are who never pray for themselves or others; and then, you see, the power of helping themselves or any other soul is not there to work with. It is foolish to live on and not care what you have to construct out of the future.'

'I am troubled that you do not see my meaning, however hard I try to tell you without saying more than I need on a certain head. I wish I could give you an idea of the amount of effort it takes to steer clear of them. That is what I have got to do—fight in the dark and win for life's sake; and God's sake,§ they say. What can a man do but be what he is?'

'You cannot tell the depression it is to see the poor wretches longing for sin, and yet they are out of it now as to action.'

'You don't know a bit what is to happen to you when you come to die; it's a lottery where you will be; because there is no knowing why there is nothing left to build on, when you are busily preparing for life in the sense of action.'

'I am amazed sometimes at the revelations that come out of men. They cannot help thinking things, and then I see the thoughts.|| It is ghastly work, and yet good for me, I dare say; it teaches—and I have to learn too. It seems as if the more you try to escape the thoughts of others, the more they pursue you like real things, and then, come what may, you just dare not give in to them, because you construct the temptation of another soul yourself. Cannot you understand a little? It is not a bit like life as you know it, when you do not see others' minds. . . . Give me the best thought you can for combating all this in Christ's name. I wish I could do it myself. It is the memory that does it all—it builds the cage round men, and then they live in it and loathe it.¶ What do you care for such as these? I cannot believe it possible that God will have men to perish; but, rooted like this, how can they be turned? I was watching once, and there seemed to be no power to stop,** it was all poured out. He was crippled too, and he grew worse with it—not better—for it came through him in vast clouds of murky air and then formed—I will not tell you what, it would shock you too much—it is horrible. Sometimes I see the very worst of men, and wonder how it is they passed muster with us on earth. It is nothing to hear them blaspheme and swear sometimes—I am used to that now—but the revelations of interest and greed and uncleanness are revolting—it is life in the slums.†† I cannot believe that God will leave me here long, for it would be worse for me than life.'

THE advanced thought of the age brings the universe of matter, mind, and morals within the domain of natural law, which is only another name for God's law, or mode of working.—'Religio-Philosophical Journal.'

* A fine theory for reconciling the anthropomorphism of the Bible with Inspiration.

† All through, cropping up upon all sorts of occasions, the pathetic self-congratulation that the personal identity remained. I had no idea when my friend was living that this was so strong a fear.

‡ Quite in accordance with teaching on subsequent matter—my own wish to help—'it is the wish that does it.'

§ As meaning that every soul having fought its own battle with evil, adds to the sum total of good—and God's glory, as triumph of the Divine principle in them?

|| When thoughts were projected?

¶ A touch that I recognise here and there as soliloquy.

** Involuntary thought.

†† To a nature refined by education and association in general, this graphic summing up of the situation now existing is painful to think of.

'EMINENT EXPERIMENTERS.'

In his article on 'The Opinions of Eminent Experimenters on Mediumship,' in the August number of the German 'Psyche,' Dr. Bormann continues his enumeration of the various men of science who have spent much time in critically examining the phenomena of Spiritualism. The first of these mentioned in the concluding portion of the paper is the Russian State Councillor, Alexander Aksakow, whose well-known work, 'Animism and Spiritism,' is the subject of some remarks. Of the German philosophers who have devoted some attention to this subject, Dr. Bormann mentions Schelling, Baader, Beckers, Franz Hoffmann, Fichte, Ulrici, and Huber; after which he speaks of the experiments with Henry Slade by Professors Weber, Zöllner, Fechner, and Scheibner. The names of Baron von Hellenbach, Carl Kiesewetter, and Carl du Prel, all of whom have spent many years and much labour in the study of mediumistic phenomena, and have published many and important works on the subject, conclude the list of German scientists devoted to occultism. Dr. Bormann then turns to Italy, and speaks of the experiments made by men of science with the remarkable Neapolitan medium, Eusapia Paladino. The first of these is Professor Lombroso, from whom he quotes at considerable length. This gentleman writes that no one living was ever more prejudiced against Spiritism than he was before he was persuaded, much against his inclination, to investigate the matter; and he mentions the names of several men of science who have joined in his experiments, among whom are those of four 'mad' doctors and several professors. Others who have also devoted much time likewise to experiments with Eusapia Paladino include the late Professor Angelo Brofferio, whose book on Spiritism has been translated into German; and a great number of naturalists and savants of every country, such as the Russian zoologist, M. Wagner; the eminent French physiologists, Ch. Richet, De Rochas, Ochorowitz of Warsaw, and the English physicist, Oliver Lodge, as well as Mr. F. W. H. Myers, Dr. Richard Hodgson, &c.

A good deal is written about the experiments of the latter with Mrs. Piper, and perhaps among investigators of 'occultism' no names are of more importance than those of the two last gentlemen, because, though they have long been convinced of the reality and genuineness of mediumistic phenomena, it is only within the last few years that they have reluctantly, to some extent, abandoned their theories of 'Telepathy' and 'Animism' as explaining everything, and have been brought to confess 'that the communications really come from those departed spirits who profess to make them.' The following words written by Oliver Lodge shall conclude this notice: 'I became personally convinced of the certainty of a future life by proofs which rest upon a purely scientific foundation; I might not, perhaps, be able to formulate them in a way to convince others, but they are perfectly sufficient for my own self. I know as surely as many other persons besides myself do, that the death of the body does not include that of the intelligence.'

M. T.

THE home circle should not be neglected. It is to Spiritualism what the family altar was to the Protestant Church in the days when it was a spiritual power in the world. The importance of these home circles cannot be over-estimated.—'Religio-Philosophical Journal.'

SUCCESSFUL PREDICTION.—The 'San Francisco Examiner,' of July 31st, says: 'Six months ago the assassination of King Humbert of Italy was prophesied by Dr. Max Muehlenbruch, the seer of Alameda county, in his bulletin of coming events. Incidentally, he threw out a few hints about the trouble in China and the fate of the prominent people connected with the row. 'The King of Italy,' he wrote, 'will pass out very rapidly. It looks like an assassination.' In commenting on the death of the King to-day the doctor said: "It was one of the clearest visions that I ever experienced. These things come to me right along. I have been seeing all sorts of strange sights since my childhood. My life has been a continuous experience of visions. To me coming events always cast their shadows before. I read the future just as plainly as you would read a book. My publications will show that I prophesied the blowing up of the Maine twelve days before that tragic event occurred."

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

In the course of a private letter received from a valued correspondent, the writer informed us of some striking experiences which had recently transpired in his home and in a private circle of which he is a member. Deeming them worthy of being placed on record, and likely to interest the readers of 'LIGHT,' we have obtained the consent of our correspondent to the publication of the following excerpts from his letter. He says:—

'Barmouth, of which you speak, reminds me of a somewhat unique experience in conversing with my wife since her passing over. One evening she told me (through Mrs. X., a private medium) that a female spirit had come to her and spoken to her, and said that she had known her in earth life and that my wife ought to be able to remember her (which she didn't). She gave her name as "Mrs. W." My wife asked me who the lady was, and described her appearance, which tallied with that of the Mrs. W. in whose house we had stayed during our visit to Barmouth. When I said so, my wife recognised (or recollected, rather), and at a subsequent sitting told me that it was the Mrs. W. referred to. This is rather a reversal of the usual process of clairvoyance, but it was an interesting case.

'By the way, I had a very good case of pure spirit message about three weeks ago. L., a young natural sensitive (undeveloped so far as regular sittings go), was busy with her work in my house during the afternoon, and went into the kitchen for a minute and sat down, saying she had toothache—but she immediately went under control. Miss A. came to me and asked me to see L., which I did. I could not get any word, or sign, or other manifestation from the spirit, so I told *him* (as it turned out to be) that he must leave and come again when he was able to give proof of his identity, &c., and after some trouble he went, first taking my hand and wringing it in quite a friendly manner. At the next meeting of my "circle," at which Mrs. X. is the medium, I asked if any information could be given me about the spirit who controlled L., and my wife said she was told that it was an old man of about eighty years of age, a relative of L.'s, who had died from the effects of a kick from a horse. Subsequently I asked L. if she knew anything of any such relative, and at first she said "no," but afterwards she remembered to have heard her mother speak of such an occurrence, but she had not paid much attention, and therefore could not tell me anything further. But she asked her father when she saw him, and from him she ascertained that the old man was her mother's father, and that his death had been caused in the way my wife had mentioned.

'There was no possibility of brain wave, mental telepathy, sub-conscious self, or any other way of accounting for the communication than that of spirit intercourse. It is as pure a case of supra-mundane intelligence as ever I heard of.

'In "Harper's Monthly," for June (I think), there is an article in which the writer says that all alleged spirit communications are attributable to mental telepathy of a triune nature, or, rather, in which three persons are affected. Thus a medium tells a sitter some fact outside the normal consciousness of either, but that fact is known to some other person, possibly unknown to both medium and sitter, and the sensitive mind of the medium receives the information (which is like "mental," or "thought jetsam"), and gives it as coming from the spirit side of life. It seems to me there may be some cases of that kind, but there are others, such as the foregoing, for instance, in which it would be a greater strain upon one's faith to accept that theory, rather than the claim of spirit communication, as a full explanation.'

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'The Review of Reviews,' for August. London: 125, Fleet-street, E.C. Price 6d.
- 'The Astrological Magazine,' for August. Madras, India. 6s. per year.
- 'The Theosophist,' for August. London agents, 3, Langham-place, W. Price 2s.
- 'The Spiritual Review,' for August. London: J. J. Morse, 26, Osunburgh-street, N.W. Price 4d.
- 'The Isiac Tablet of Cardinal Bembo.' Re-drawn and printed from a new line block, and privately published, principally for friends, by Robert H. Fryar, Bath.
- 'De l'Identité des Esprits.' By A. ÉRNY. En vente aux Bureaux de la Paix Universelle, 5, Cours Gambetta, Lyon, France. Price 50 centimes.
- 'Bulletin de l'Institut Psychique International.' No. 1. Félix Alcan, Editeur, 108, Boulevard Saint-Germain, Paris.
- 'The Gateless Barrier.' By LUCAS MALET. A Novel. London: Methuen & Co., 36, Essex-street, Strand, W.C. Price 6s.

IMMORTAL IN THE FLESH.

Your leader in 'LIGHT,' for August 18th, on Helen Wilmans' idea of physical immortality was very good reading. It does not do to take these extremists too seriously. The undesirability of an indefinitely prolonged life here is well set forth in a little work by the Rev. N. D. Hillis, on 'Immortality.' He asks: 'What would be the result if great men lived on for centuries?' and answers his own question by showing that very probably in two hundred years a Newton would make a complete map of the heavens, squeeze all the truths from the stars, and leave to young astronomers only a worn and beaten track; in two or three hundred years a Scott or a Dickens would fill the libraries of the world; Edison, if he could go on for a few hundred years, would be likely to concentrate most of the discoveries in his hands and the accumulations of wealth would make society the vassal to a few families. The young need the atmosphere of opportunity and the stimulus of the unknown. But, overshadowed by these enormous aggregations of wisdom, and wealth, and power, young men would shrivel, and pine, and perish. Under such conditions, the new ideas of youth could only be introduced by an earthquake shock or a revolution. If, on the other hand, the reins of power and government fell into the hands of a Nero or a Napoleon for several hundred years, freedom would perish, personal liberties would be strangled, and free institutions would be impossible. Death was ordained 'to wrest the incubus from the breast of dying nations,' and is God's chief boon to humanity—both to those who march on and those who follow. We complain now of the weight of precedent and tradition, of conventionality, vested interests, and heredity; of the 'dead hand of the past' which oppresses us; but what should we do if it were the living hand of the past that held us in its grip?

AN INTERESTED READER.

THIEVES ALARMED.

I find in the Russian journal 'Rebus' (No. 28) two articles headed 'Interesting Facts,' which I translate for the benefit of the readers of 'LIGHT':—

'A few days ago a thief was arrested in St. Petersburg. In a very short time he had effected sixteen robberies; during one of them he was taken on the spot. This is what he related in court:—

"Once I got into a richly furnished house which the family had evidently left to go into the country. Amongst other things I was tempted to take the mounting of a very large and valuable icon. (Icons are almost always covered with gold and silver plates, often inlaid with precious stones, so as to leave visible only the head and hands of the Saviour, or Saints represented.)

"I had but just begun my work when a very loud bell-ringing resounded through the whole of the apartment. I stopped and listened; everything was perfectly quiet—nobody anywhere.

"Having waited a little while I returned to the 'resa' (or mounting) of the icon in order to resume my work. I had barely touched it when the loud ringing began again. I felt exceedingly frightened, for I believed that that ringing was not caused by natural means. Since then I have never attempted to touch an icon again."

'Another similar case, related in the 'Svet,' happened in St. Petersburg not so long ago. A thief had got into a closed apartment and having already made a good harvest of things, began to remove the mountings of an icon, when he saw an officer pass him, walking slowly from one room into another. This vision was so real that the thief was completely awestruck by it. He was convinced that the apparition was a superhuman one, for on coming into the house by the back-stairs and finding everything locked up, he had had time to closely examine the whole of the apartment at his leisure.

'The thief made his escape, leaving behind him the bundles he had already prepared for carrying away.'

Some icons are very much revered in Russia, and almost every family has its own family icons, descending sometimes from father to son for many generations. The parents bless their children with them at their marriages and also often leave the icons to them with their last blessing before their death.

Faith is young and warm in Russia, and as confiding as a child, and why, it is thought, should not the dead protect the representations of the Saviour they adore, or the Saints they ask for help?

ZHORA.

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.

Thought-Language.

SIR,—'H.A.D.' advises all to practise the use of 'thought-language.' Will he kindly advise us how to set about it?
W.

Correction.

SIR,—Please correct a mistake in your last issue (August 11th). It is *not* M. Aksakow who is the author of the letter (describing an experiment with Sambor) printed on p. 380, but M. Greditch, as all who refer to my article in 'Annales des Sciences Psychiques,' 1899, No. 6, will see. M. Aksakow had only prepared the cord.

St. Petersburg.

PETROVO-SOLOVOVO.

Spiritualists and Men of Science.

SIR,—Complaint has often been made that scientists very unreasonably neglect the phenomena of Spiritualism, as either non-existent, or if actual, of no significance.

Now unless Spiritualists return the compliment, and entertain the same contempt for all other sciences but their own, is there not a very simple remedy for a state of affairs which must debar spiritualistic phenomena from those exact methods of investigation and observation of which all the physical sciences enjoy the advantages?

Surely experimental psychology, with human physiology and Spiritualism, ought to throw light on each other; indeed, all true sciences ought to help each other.

If Spiritualists would distinguish themselves in other sciences besides their favourite one they would deliver the latter from a certain reproach, namely, the comparatively small proportion of men of science in their ranks.

Hawarden.

CHARLES G. STUART-MENTEATH.

Clairvoyance or Thought-Reading.

SIR,—The exceedingly interesting experiences of the Rev. H. R. Haweis which you published in your issue for July 21st, have confirmed me in the belief that very much of that which is accepted by Spiritualists as clairvoyance is nothing more than thought-reading. I had a rather remarkable experience recently which strongly suggested his explanation.

I was present at a Sunday evening service of a spiritualist society, at which Mr. Peters, the well-known medium, gave clairvoyance. After giving a number of descriptions to various members of the audience, which were nearly all recognised, his attention was given to me, and he described in careful detail a man, a clergyman he believed, standing with a large book, apparently a Bible, in his hand, reading. He then gave me a name, both Christian and surname, which he said he got with it. The surname was my own, which was rather striking, seeing that I am a stranger to Mr. Peters.

Following the lead of the name I was quite unable to recognise the description, but, apart from that, I found that it tallied exactly with the portrait of a late pastor of mine, which I had been looking at that same afternoon, and which had considerably impressed me. The attitude mentioned in the description, and the general appearance, were exact.

After reading the peculiar experiences of Mr. Haweis in his relations to his audiences, I was strengthened in the belief that Mr. Peters was reading a mental impression, and not describing an objective reality.

It would be interesting to know if any others among your readers have had similar experiences.

A. G. YOUNG.

206, Acre-lane, Brixton.

Is Spiritualism a Religion?

SIR,—In your issue of August 11th I read with surprise that some of your correspondents seem to regard with dismay those Spiritualists who object to Spiritualism 'being brought indiscriminately to the knowledge of everybody.' They even add: 'And yet our critics are Spiritualists. Strange! One never hears a Christian protesting against the Gospel being preached to every creature.'

Apparently those correspondents, judging from these remarks, hold Spiritualism to be a religion, which it is not.

That the great majority of Spiritualists regard Spiritualism as a branch of science, and approach it accordingly in a spirit of due investigation, prompted by a sincere desire for fuller enlightenment on the great mysteries of life and death, is well shown by the different creeds to which they belong.

Every member of the London Spiritualist Alliance is *de facto* both a critic and a student, and while many are desirous of imparting the attained knowledge to worthy neophytes, they well know how necessary it is to bring to those researches a mind full of seriousness, so different from the general light and superficial curiosity displayed by outsiders.

Spiritualism as a *science* has to be dealt with carefully. What would you say of a professor who, having lectured on chemistry or electricity, and experimented before a few selected people, suddenly opened the door of his laboratory and invited the 'man in the street' to come in and manipulate his instruments; it would be unwise as well as dangerous.

And the danger here is real—danger to body and mind. The Catholic Church well understood it when she prohibited occult practices. She does not deny Spiritualism but keeps it within the bounds of her own jurisdiction.

Let us do the same, remembering that those who want it will always come to us, their minds already prepared by a genuine desire of getting at the truth. Those only we want, and as for attracting them, there is already quite enough publicity in the daily papers on this subject.

Porchester-gardens, EDOUARD ROMILLY.
Bayswater.

Mr. Thaddeus Hyatt on Materialisations.

SIR,—If by 'miracle' Mr. Thaddeus Hyatt means an effect produced contrary to laws, natural, astral, or spiritual, then we may make up our minds at once that 'materialisations' are not miracles any more than they are frauds. They are phenomena, which, although it may be said that they are scarcely normal, it is quite certain are absolutely in consonance with the physical and astral laws of our being.

As has been so abundantly proved by almost unlimited experiment and research by men of the highest mental calibre, there is one *sine qua non* for such phenomena, and that is the peculiarly sensitive medium, whose vibratory powers can be borrowed by the 'spirit' desirous of manifesting itself to friends present. As is well known, the medium is placed under control by spirits, with precisely the same effect as is produced by a living mesmerist. The medium is then at their complete disposal; and it is only automatic and spontaneous thought which does the rest. To my mind it is only one of the many evidences we have of the creative power of thought.

I may be allowed the term 'vibratory powers,' by the bye, correct or otherwise; for by it I mean those natural forces from and by which our physical appearances are built up.

There is one other thing I should like to say before closing, and that is: these materialisations, be they of living beings or of flowers or other things, can only take place at the, at least, temporary cost of the medium's vital powers. As a rule, for instance, it will be found that the medium's body has very palpably shrunk during such materialisations; and, more than this, should any portion of materialised substance, such as a lock of hair, a piece of dress material or flowers, &c., be taken away, it could be only to the more permanent injury of such medium, just as the building up of the unborn child can only be at the expense of the mother's vitality.

J. F. DARLEY.

New Haw, Addlestone, Surrey.

Is a Spiritualist Church Needed?

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of June 30th, a communication was published signed 'Verax,' the writer of which suggests the establishment of a spiritualistic church. Reasonable and philosophical Spiritualists must necessarily regard a scheme of this sort with great disfavour. It is only the unthinking that can be massed together in a flock like sheep and goats. Intelligent people who are intellectually honest insist upon thinking for themselves and do not readily subscribe to formulated creeds and dogmas. All rational Spiritualists should resolutely oppose the attempt to convert into a religion what is really—in its present stage at least—a scientific investigation. Spiritualism—though professing no religion itself—yet gives to all the churches the ground on which to build; or, as Mr. F. W. H. Myers puts it, 'psychical research may prove the preamble of all religions, but not of their clauses.' 'Verax' laments the absence of the special kind of church he desires to see inaugurated, yet seems to indicate that Mr. John Page Hopps does in fact preside over just such a religious association as is required at the present juncture. Spiritualists, then, to whom such an institution seems a necessity can find accommodation either at Mr. Page Hopps' church or at some other similar place, and need not strive to pledge the whole body of Spiritualists to their own peculiar views. If Spiritualism is formed into a church then it will cease to be an ethical philosophy—a transcendental science,

and sink at once to the level of a sect, and as there are already about one hundred and eighty Christian sects in existence it can hardly be deemed advisable to add another to the list. 'Verax' speaks of a church as 'a union of like-minded people for fellowship and growth; for sympathy and co-operative helpfulness; and for *psychical development and spirit communion*.' But those who have had sittings in large and promiscuous circles are well aware that good results are not obtained under such circumstances. It cannot be truly asserted that psychic faculties are developed, or spirit communion established, by bringing together numbers of incompatible personalities, whether in churches, chapels, or other places of assembly.

W. H. SIMPSON.

Grahamstown, South Africa.

SIR,—I hope that 'Verax' has ere this met with a wide response to his wish for a spiritual church. If so, he could not do better, to save time and discussion, than to give 'a local habitation' to 'Our Father's Church' which, as 'the Ideal' was originated some years ago by Mr. Page Hopps, and I believe numbers many adherents of various nationalities, and in some countries has a material existence. 'It is not a new sect but a society of kindred spirits who testify to universal facts and truths.' One of the seven guiding principles is 'the constant communion of kindred spirits in and between the unseen and the seen.' Another is democratic—'the establishment of the kingdom of heaven everywhere upon the earth.' It unites the Spiritualist and the Christian Socialist, and would gather in those who do not care to identify themselves with, or require something higher in the form of worship than, the ordinary routine of meetings at the spiritualist halls. This church and a psychic hospital are the two great needs to raise Spiritualism to a higher plane. I hope the latter scheme has not dropped but that subscriptions and help are coming to its realisation.

ELNOR OLDHAM.

Whalley Range, Manchester.

SIR,—I think it well that some Spiritualist should reply to the communications of 'Verax,' J. Clarke, and others. These correspondents seem to be unaware of the fact that Modern Spiritualism existed for over twenty-five years from its inauguration at Hydesville, without any serious attempt to associate it with religion in the sense of religious worship; and that the effect of its advent was strongly in the direction of assisting in the spread of earnest rationalism, and distinctly in opposition to churchianity of any kind. Gradually a change was brought about by the influx of religionists of various kinds who had become dissatisfied with their own beliefs and were in search of better ones. These persons earnestly deprecated the idea of the original Spiritualists who put their trust for the life now and hereafter in the guidance of their own reason. The rationalist Spiritualist felt satisfied that all religions sprang from the one source, Human Reason; whereas these religionists insisted on Inspiration as the true source, and imported into their new faith the old catchwords, such as 'spiritual life,' 'spiritually minded,' 'spiritual upbuilding,' and so forth, derived from their old religions. But one of the oddest contrasts is between the views of the rationalist Spiritualist and the religious Spiritualist on the subject of the so-called spiritualist philosophy. The rationalist has all along believed that there never was a spiritual philosophy revealed by those who have passed on to those who are here, and they know that the whole creed of the religious Spiritualist and all of his philosophy are derived from the speculations of rationalist philosophers on this side. These speculations, mainly of German philosophy, have been stolen without any acknowledgment, and trance speakers, Sunday after Sunday, repeat these old speculations as Divine truth sent to man by the agency of spirits. Now rationalist Spiritualists, who are still the salt of Spiritualism, regard this kind of thing as simple dishonesty, and look forward earnestly to the day when the religious spiritualist society of every kind will be swept away, and Spiritualism will then resume its proper duty, viz., of providing proof to all mankind of life beyond the grave, and leaving philosophical and religious speculations strictly alone.

VIR.

SIR,—The above question is a very vital one at this particular stage of the growth of our movement. As a worker I have found friends scattered here and there in our different societies around London, who, having left the various sects, go regularly to the nearest society or wander about on the hope of hearing something that will enlighten them on their conduct of life, or some words of comfort that will encourage them to be more brave, more wise, and more steadfast.

What is needed by many after a hard week's toil, is to meet together with kindred souls, to feast on the good

things that may flow from those who, *having a message for their fellows*, may be instruments for the uplifting of their fellows, so that at the close of the meeting the one note sounded shall be, 'It is good that we have met.'

But alas! as your correspondent, Mr. J. Clarke, very truly says, the methods used by a large majority of societies are to make Spiritists rather than Spiritualists, to make the hall pay by the collections, by engaging those who can attract an audience, regardless of what they talk about or do, so long as they are able to fill the hall.

Spiritually-minded men come to our meetings; men who would be an acquisition to our cause, but as they see nothing and sometimes hear nothing of any spiritual benefit to them, they simply look in and go empty away, content to search the Scriptures, digest the advice of the old pioneers, or read their 'LIGHT' weekly, assured that they will thus at least receive some good.

Now the question is, 'Are we in earnest? Are we enthusiastic enough? Are we broad enough?' We should do well to look into these things. Some societies, it is true, have endeavoured to keep a broad platform, but too often societies are content with offering phenomena to suit a particular class of investigators, or with providing speakers who do nothing but pull down, while those who would be builders-up of the spiritual movement have few chances of speaking, or very few to speak to. This is a very unhealthy state of things, hence the necessity of asking 'Is a spiritualist church needed?' I say, 'Yes!' emphatically 'Yes!' What will others say?

HENRY BROOKS.

55, Graham-road, Dalston, N.E.

SIR,—Mr. J. Clarke's suggestion has brought me some half dozen responses from those who approve of a spiritualist church. I am pleased to know that such a church already exists at Salford, where, I am assured, 'for three years past the devotional aspect of Spiritualism has been presented by the best exponents procurable, and where it may truly be said that "Divine Service" is regularly held.' The church in question has a trained choir and an organ, a cultured and earnest gentleman presides, and everything possible is done to secure and maintain a reverent atmosphere and spirit. I hope this effort will meet with such recognition, support, and success as will prove that it *does* supply a felt want.

One correspondent complains that 'the clapping and talking and utter lack of reverence repelled me' (at a meeting of Spiritualists that shall be nameless), and further states that some friends who were taken there were 'shocked and would not go again. The ethical societies put us to shame by the quiet, dignified and solemn way in which they conduct their services.' Now, I feel that the 'fitness of things' should be studied, but it will be as necessary to avoid the extreme of 'solemnity' and deadly dullness as of levity. Surely religion should be bright and make us joyous and thankful. Applause, where it is spontaneous and natural, only indicates approval and sympathy, and an occasional manifestation of appreciation must be helpful to an earnest speaker. But where it becomes a matter of *habit* it is to be deplored. The difficulty in all these matters is to strike the happy medium between the extremes. I am not in a position to undertake the responsibility of attempting to found a church, nor do I think it wise at present. My purpose will have been served if the attention of those who are already bravely conducting Sunday services is called to the evident need for greater decorum and reverence at *some* of the meetings. I hope those who have responded to my question, although but few in number, will endeavour to prevail upon those who manage the existing societies to provide for the wants of those whose religious sentiments and aspirations lead them to desire spiritual worship. May I suggest that Spiritualists should show their sincerity by supporting the existing societies financially, and by attending the public services, and in *that* way bring about the desired spiritualist church?

VERAX.

INFANT PRODIGY.

The Paris correspondent of the 'Morning Leader' reports that on Tuesday, August 21st, 'At the International Psychological Congress a wonderful infant pianist was produced by Professor Richet as his contribution to the day's proceedings. The boy, who is the son of Spanish parents, though only two and a-half years old, plays Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin, and a march of his own composition, dedicated to the King of Spain. It is claimed that the boy plays entirely by supernatural obsession, as he cannot read.' This, in all probability, only means that the boy is a medium, and plays under spirit control!

SOCIETY WORK.

WORKMEN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—Madame Montague will occupy our platform on Sunday, August 26th, at 7 p.m.—T. McC.

MERTHYR SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, CENTRAL HALL, MERTHYR TYDFIL, WALES.—A highly useful and elevating address was delivered through Mrs. M. H. Wallis (London) on Sunday evening last, to an appreciative audience, the subject being 'Can Spirit People Help Us?' Many successful clairvoyant tests were afterwards given.—W. M. H.

BARRY SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, ATLANTIC HALL, DOCK VIEW-ROAD, BARRY DOCK.—On Tuesday, August 14th, a large audience gathered to hear the inspirers of Mrs. M. H. Wallis, who gave a splendid address on 'Inquiries into Spiritualism,' followed by clear clairvoyant descriptions, nearly all of which were recognised. Mr. E. Adams, of Cardiff, presided. On Sunday last the guides of Mr. E. S. G. Mayo gave a powerful address on 'Spiritual Architecture,' which was highly appreciated and thoroughly enjoyed by a crowded audience. These were two of the best meetings ever held in our room.—E. J. T.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, S.W.—A most enjoyable meeting was held last Sunday evening. Speaking on the 'Parable of the Prodigal Son,' Mr. Adams, with all his usual vigour and earnestness, claimed that if the parable taught us anything it is individual responsibility. He said that there is no excuse for want of knowledge to-day and if all could realise that God is our Father, all discord would pass away. Mr. Penfold and Mr. Fielder also spoke on the same subject briefly. Mr. Boddington presided. On Sunday, August 26th, at 3 p.m., Lyceum and meetings in Battersea Park and on Clapham Common; at 7 p.m., the usual workers; on Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope; on Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., public circle; and on Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., social evening. The Band of Hope outing to Court Farm will take place on Saturday, August 25th. Visitors' tickets (brake fare and tea inclusive) 2s. 6d., children 1s. 6d.—YULE.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD (Near Alexandra Theatre).—The president's address on 'God is Love' was a power for good and prepared excellent conditions for the clairvoyant descriptions given by our co-worker, Mr. J. A. White, who was again very successful. Eight out of the nine descriptions given were recognised; several being accompanied by a wealth of detail. On Sunday, August 26th, at 7 p.m., trance address by Mr. E. W. Wallis, subject, 'Back to Christ, or Forward?' Special attention is drawn to the fact that our esteemed vice-president, Mr. H. Belstead, will deliver an address and conduct the service on Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., at the Unitarian Church, Newington-green, N. Spiritualists are cordially invited to be present to foster the effort being made by our friend to effect a closer interworking of the Christian Church with the Spiritualists. The committee hope in the near future to open an institute for week-night meetings, also for the conducting of circles, instruction classes, &c.—A. CLEGG, Secretary, 18, Fleetwood-street, Stoke Newington, N.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—Mr. E. W. Wallis, on Sunday last, delivered a trance address entitled, 'The Word of God: Where Found and How to Read It,' Mr. W. T. Cooper presiding. The speaker dealt first with the existence of God as demonstrated by the evidences of intelligence in Nature. He described the universe as a scientific, rational and purposeful existence, and claimed that inasmuch as it needed the intelligence of man to understand and interpret its manifestations, the universe must be itself the product of intelligence, which intelligence we denominated the Supreme Being. Taking next in order the nature of God's 'Word,' the lecturer defined a 'word' as 'an intellectual counter that passed current in the thought exchange of the world'; a 'word' was a symbol to convey some idea of a thing, a means whereby an individual sought to embody his conceptions in order to express to another individual his intelligence. Words themselves were of comparatively recent origin. The earlier races of man had to learn to think and converse by the aid of symbols and signs. If God had ever expressed His word to man, it had been to embody His thought, to reveal His purpose, to demonstrate His being and to display His intelligence. His Word was, therefore, seen in the order and beauty of Nature, in the operation of her laws, and in the monitions of the human soul. The Word of God was thus actually revealed in man; in one sense, indeed, man was himself the Word of God. A pianoforte solo by Mrs. Cooper, violoncello solos, 'Lament' (Dene Scott), and 'Home Sweet Home,' by Mr. R. C. Craven, and a reading by Mr. E. W. Wallis (preliminary to his address), agreeably diversified the proceedings of the evening. Next Sunday evening Mr. A. Peters will give clairvoyance, when early attendance is requested.—G.