

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—*Goethe.*

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

No. 1,071.—VOL. XXI. [Registered as]

SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1901.

[a Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	337	Is Consciousness a Unity?	343
The Automobile and Typewriter foretold by A. J. Davis	338	Old-Time Experiences	343
Editor of the 'Banner of Light' to the Editor of 'Light'	338	A Trinity in Unity	344
Visions of the Dying	339	Songs of Christine	344
'The Christ Life in Practice.' By J. C. Kenworthy	340	Remarkable New Medium	345
'Subliminal Consciousness'	341	The Feeble-Minded	346
Stance by Mrs. Mellon	341	Gulf of Death Bridged	346
Life's Precious Ointment	342	M. Desmoulins' Mediumistic Drawings	347
		Progression or Reincarnation—Which?	347

of an outraged sheep, or as it would be to seek to improve a deaf doctor's understanding by tacking to the sides of his head a pair of ears removed from a jack-ass.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have just been giving a final look at an Essay (from 'Freedom') by Paul Tyner, on 'Immortal Protoplasm.' It is, at all events, entertaining: but there is some science in it, too. It is a fact that Protoplasm 'in its primal material manifestation' is in a way immortal, and it does seem absurd that when Protoplasm climbs up to man it should kill itself in the strain. That seems a ridiculous anti-climax. But it does not follow that the remedy is to be found in getting behind death, and attaining physical immortality. There is another way; and a better.

We recommend Mr. Tyner and the lively editor of 'Freedom' to keep clear of this desire to clutch immortality through the body. Man is immortal right enough, but the consummation will be reached by sublimation, not by earth-propping.

We cordially join with Mr. Tyner in his ridicule of Brown-Sequard and other concoctors of filthy compounds for infusing 'the elixir of life' into decaying human bodies. Not that way is immortality to be won. But why should he look for it by way of the body at all? The following is not a bit too cutting:

Perhaps the most notable of modern attempts to conquer or, at least, indefinitely defer death, and to prolong life by purely physical methods, is that which ten years ago or so blazoned into fame the name of Dr. Brown-Sequard of Paris. As the result of exhaustive and prolonged experiments on the lower animals and in hospital clinics, it was announced that he had succeeded in producing a veritable elixir of youth in the shape of a lymph made from the tissues of the reproductive organs of various animals—the bull, ram and goat, more especially. Injections of this lymph were said to be effective, not only in retarding decay, but also in the cure of senility, paralysis and other characteristic accompaniments of 'old age.'

Only fifty years ago prominent physicians in New York cured the toothache with doses of baked and powdered cockroaches. There never was a 'pathy' or an 'ology' so wildly absurd as in all cases prevented mind from getting in its healing work.

The fact that the reproductive protoplasm is immortal in the same sense that the protoplasm of single cells is immortal—the reproductive cells forming a living and continuous chain that connects the animals and plants of to-day with the animals and plants of the remotest past—is probably the assumed basis for all this line of investigation in search of the 'Elixir vitae.' Sex, in some way yet to be definitely ascertained—we feel instinctively—holds the key to the perpetuation of life, individual as well as social. But to imagine that the life of the sex-cells may be preserved and perpetuated in tissues obtained by the maiming and mutilation of an innocent and unfortunate goat, and transferred to an old man's blood, is really as unseemly and unlikely a process as would be the attempt to restore a blind man's sight by transferring to his sightless sockets the eyes

We do not often care to read the so-called 'Religious newspapers.' We do not know why, but somehow they make the head or the heart ache, though they all the time seem to be trying to be good. But a few days ago we were tempted into reading a report of certain speeches by ministers of a breezy order, and we halted at two lines with a good deal of pleasure:—merely this, 'I am trying, week by week, to do what little I can to show people what I think is the most beautiful and the most inspiring thing in this world.' It does not matter now what, in this minister's judgment, was the most beautiful and the most inspiring thing in the world: any way that is not the point of this note. The thought which struck us was that this wise teacher has found an ideal vocation. And then, beyond that, it occurred to us that this was everybody's vocation—or that it will be some day. What a lovely programme of a life,—just to help to make people see what, so far as we know, is the most beautiful and inspiring thing in the world!

This same teacher, looking back, said:—

The nineteenth century opened with a distinct and determined onslaught upon the great ethical and spiritual principles for which religion stands, and that onslaught came in the name of science. It came in the name of that great pre-occupying body of industrial science, which was pre-occupying because the world was in a state of industrial tumult and revolution. And it set up a new and extremely simple rule of life over against the complicated rules of morals and of religion. It said to the world that at last reason had discovered that it needed but one thing to live the most successful life as an individual and to get the best results for society; and that was that you should do the thing that it paid best to do, and trust yourself to decide what that was. It announced the new 'Rule of Gold' instead of the 'Golden Rule.'

So much for the nineteenth century. What of the twentieth? 'The tendency,' he says, 'is away from the rule of gold.' We hope so. At any rate, it is good to look steadily at the beautiful and inspiring things.

Another of these breezy ministers wound up his speech with a great strong claim upon God, on behalf of the human race. We too often talk of 'The Creator.' This man is restive under it: he wants 'Father.' We are not His creatures, he says, we are children:—

And we are going into the twentieth century with the power of the sons of God and the daughters of God, not creatures of God. We are not crystals. We are not acorns. We are not bits of ice made by the power of God. We are children of God. We are born of God. We inherited God. God is in us, if we strive to be in Him. We are partakers of the divine nature. It is God who worketh in us both to will and to do.

And now we may as well be honest and make a clean breast of it. All this happened in Boston, United States,

[July 20, 1901.]

Mr. J. C. Kenworthy's new book (1s.), 'The Gospel on Commerce, State and Church' (Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.), is, properly speaking, an old one. The five lectures contained in it were delivered in London some years ago, and were afterwards printed in magazines: but they well deserve to be printed in this useful book form.

Mr. Kenworthy thinks 'we are in the midst of a vast revolution in thought,' and that it is a revolution which necessarily most affects Religion, 'the highest and widest concern of human thought.' These Lectures, he says, 'are meant to focus all that is happening in that revolution, and to make plain the central movement of it, namely, the convergence of religious truth and economic necessity to their union in a new doctrine and practice of life.'

We do not quite respond to Mr. Kenworthy's thrill of horror at 'the miserable chaos of our society.' That is bad enough, we know, and it needs and will need a good shaking, but there are splendid centres of order, and strong tides of sanity. Nevertheless we welcome him. He is wanted; and his teaching is sweet and good.

'A. K. C.,' in his question respecting theatres, misses the point. There is all the difference in the world between newspaper reports of séances, and newspaper reports of plays. The first are usually not written from knowledge and are certainly not written from sympathy; the second are written from both knowledge and sympathy. We need not go to a theatre to know the plot of a prominent play. It is fully given in the newspaper by a professional critic.

THE 'AUTOMOBILE' AND 'TYPEWRITER' FORETOLD BY ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

In the 'Harbinger of Light' for June the Editor draws attention to the fact that among the many foreshadowings given by Andrew Jackson Davis are the two following, which were first published in the 'Penetralia' in 1856, and of which the Editor of the 'Harbinger' says that they are 'unmistakable prophecies of inventions evolved into form and use in the present generation.' They are to be found in the section of the 'Penetralia' on Utilitarianism, pages 357 and 370:—

'Will utilitarianism make any discoveries in other locomotive directions?'

'Yes; in the almanac language, "look out about these days" for carriages and travelling-saloons on country roads—sans horses, sans steam, sans any visible motive power—moving with greater speed and far more safety than at present. Carriages will be moved by a strange, and beautiful, and simple admixture of aqueous and atmospheric gases—so easily condensed, so simply ignited, and so imparted by a machine somewhat resembling our engines, as to be entirely concealed and manageable between the forward wheels. These vehicles will prevent many embarrassments now experienced by persons living in thinly-populated territories. The first requisite for these land locomotives will be good roads, upon which, with your engine, without your horses, you may travel with great rapidity. These carriages seem (to me) of uncomplicated construction.'

'Do you perceive any plan by which to expedite the art of writing?'

'Yes; I am almost moved to invent an automatic psychographer; that is, an artificial soul-writer. It may be constructed something like a piano; one brace or scale of keys to represent the elementary sounds; another and lower tier, to represent a combination; and still another, for a rapid re-combination; so that a person, instead of playing a piece of music, may touch off a sermon or a poem! Every note, while discoursing sweet sounds, may catch the type and put it in its place; so that, instead of going through the inevitable mechanical drudgery of the superior short and beautiful phonetic method, ideas may be printed upon the surface of paper prepared for publication. There will then be but little time necessary, and little physical labour required, for a man to tell all he knows, and more too! Men of utilitarian habits will soon have confidence in this psychographer; it is not more surprising than daguerrotyping, or photographing, or ambrotyping. These are within the domain of utilitarian discoveries which will awaken the psychographer.'

FROM THE EDITOR OF THE 'BANNER OF LIGHT,' BOSTON, U.S.A.,
TO THE
EDITOR OF 'LIGHT,' LONDON.

It was with much pleasure and profit that I read and re-read your excellent leader, 'Heart Searchings in America,' in your splendid issue of June 15th. From the view-point of a casual observer, or even that of a deeply interested visitor, I am aware that my ideas with respect to the condition of our cause in America must appear decidedly strained, if not wholly at variance with the facts. In making the 'Banner of Light' speak as I do, I argue solely from my personal experience, obtained through three extended tours of our nation.

Our local societies are in a state of decline. There are not more than twenty-four of them that are prospering. Within forty miles of Boston, I can name town after town in which, in other years, strong spiritualist organisations flourished. To-day scarcely one outspoken Spiritualist can be found in any one of them.

This same statement will apply to nearly every State in our Union. I recall the State of Maine where, in the early days of our movement, scores of live societies existed; to-day there are perhaps ten societies in the whole State, and four of these are camp meetings. Other States tell the same sad story. Societies spring up, flourish for a year or two, and then pass out of existence. It is a constant ebb and flow in the tide of spiritual events, and the presentation of Spiritualism is in consequence sporadic, rather than permanent in its nature.

In the early days of Spiritualism, the brainiest men and women of our nation spoke from the platforms of our movement. Untutored boys and girls, ignorant labourers upon the farm or at the washtub, were impressed by the spirit, and fed the multitudes with the bread of Heaven directly from the tables of the angels. Thousands flocked to hear these able speakers. Receipts were generous in the matter of finance, while those of spirituality and mental illumination were simply marvellous in extent.

The listening thousands then did not have, neither did they want, any phenomena outside of the inspiration that was manifest in the eloquent utterances of the gifted speakers. When platform tests came in, the character of our audiences changed; the people who were in search of instruction stayed away, and their places were filled by those who wanted amusement. We all like to be amused, but, when enjoyment is made the be-all and end-all of our aims, we seldom accomplish anything of value in the direction of soul illumination.

It proved so in respect to our platform. The introduction of phenomena to it has led the people in the audience to demand greater and greater marvels in the way of 'tests,' until the unscrupulous frauds and tricksters, ever on the alert to catch a penny, have come to the front, presented counterfeit manifestations, and have literally driven our genuine psychics from the platform. Many of the test mediums now upon our platform in this country are possessed of genuine psychic power, yet they do not scruple to resort to fraud when they can do so undetected. There is however, a faithful minority who are true and loyal at all times. They are in Spiritualism to stay, for they love Spiritualism too well to give up the fight, even though it means a constant battle between them and the frauds, with heavy odds in favour of the latter.

It is not true that Spiritualism is declining in America, nor have I ever made any such statement. The Spiritualism that was formerly offered the world by Spiritualists is now being preached from the pulpits of such men as George H. Hepworth, R. Heber Newton, Newell Dwight Hillis, Minot J. Savage, Lyman Abbot, and dozens of others like them. Spiritualists, investigators, and seekers after truth will go where they can be instructed. Our platform no longer offers them the food they require. Can we blame them for going elsewhere? It is hardly fair to the present-day workers to make comparisons, yet I am constrained to ask my critics to point to an array of platform luminaries equal in brilliancy and inspiration to Joel Tiffany, Jesse B.

Ferguson, Selden J. Finney, Achsah W. Sprague, Judge Edmonds, and dozens of others.

In England you have not yet felt the force of the weakening of the platform instruction as some of us have and do in America. Paradoxical as it may appear, Spiritualism is a topic of greater popular interest to-day throughout this nation than ever before, yet our local societies are all weak and unstable. Spiritualism is in the air men breathe, but it is in the abstract form, rather than in the concrete. My contention is that the concrete is far more helpful for practical purposes than the abstract ever has been or will be.

Take our recent mass gatherings in different sections of America—with the exceptions of Maine and Kansas these meetings were largely attended. In Pittsburg, Pa., and a few other places, goodly additions were made to the membership of the local societies there. But it is a most unpalatable truth that the vast majority of the Spiritualists and onlookers cared nothing for Spiritualism in itself, but were present for the purpose of being entertained, just the same as if they were at a theatre. In some cities I received many requests to call our most eloquent speakers to order, so that the ‘tests’ could be presented! And in some instances the medium had only such test power as a good memory, a little scrap-book, and a confederate could furnish him.

It is no sign that a society is prospering either spiritually or financially to have two or three hundred people attend its meetings for one month, whose duty ends with paying a ten cent admission fee at the door. The membership of that society, and the results of the united labours of that membership, are what count. Examine the books of our most active societies, and our friends will be surprised to learn that the number of members ranges from seven to seventy-five. Hundreds attend the meetings, but withhold their support from the society. A society is prosperous when it exerts an educational influence, morally, socially, and intellectually, upon the municipality. It is doing the work of the angels when it opens free soup houses to the starving poor of the town—when it clothes the naked in its own parish—when it frees the schools from sectarian instruction—when it has a home of its own with a good library attached, open every day in the week throughout the year, for the good of the people. Measured by this standard, how many societies really are flourishing? But they are not necessarily declining because they do not come up to that standard; by no means. Yet I contend that it is not progress in any sense to do the same things over and over year after year. There is a better way than travelling in a circle—it is to go straight ahead.

Perhaps my illustration with regard to ‘mediocre talent’ was inapt. But it does make the soul of an intelligent man burn with the flame of indignation and righteous shame to have ignorance exploited from the rostrum. The speaker, controlled by Daniel Webster, may be highly inspired by that great orator when she makes him speak of the dictionary he ‘writ.’ Such inspiration may be spiritualistic instruction, but I don’t appreciate it. She and all of her kind simply start a fire that kills budding vegetation, and leaves the earth scorched and seared. We *do* need fire of the right kind to enthuse and inspire our people, but we first need a copious shower of spirituality to revive the parched fields over which the fire of fraud, illiteracy, and too often sensuality, has passed. We need to come together as a people, then collect all of our *débris* and submit it to the purifying influences of the fire of spiritual truth.

In my plain references to the condition of Spiritualism in America, I am by no means scolding the Spiritualists nor chanting the swan-song of dissolution, nor proclaiming the decline of Spiritualism itself. I am only calling attention to the prevailing ills, and asking for a remedy. Spiritualism is in the world to stay; it is in the hands of the angels, and is perfectly safe, even though every Spiritualist forsakes its standard. I believe its followers will yet rally under the glorious flag of co-operation, and march on to higher altitudes of thought and purpose. Through organisations properly formed, every ideal for the relief of humanity’s needs can be easily realised. ‘In union there is strength,’ and by agitation, which is the best kind of education, people

will be led to realise their duties more than ever before, and they will accord their religion a generous, devoted support. They will also give to mediumship, that rare and beauteous flower, the protection it should have, and remove it for ever from the blighting, destroying influence of the counterfeiter and trickster.

My denunciations of fraud have never been aimed at genuine mediums. Were there no counterfeitors, the word medium could and would stand alone as the most honoured term that can be applied to a spirit incarnate. Spiritualism will yet inspire true men and women to enter its ranks to fight the good fight, until victory perches upon the standard of truth and justice.

Yours for pure and undefiled Spiritualism,
HARRISON D. BARRETT.

Needham, Mass., U.S.A.,
July 1st, 1901.

VISIONS OF THE DYING.

The ‘Journal of Magnetism,’ of Chicago, U.S.A., publishes the following interesting article from H. W. Worthen, D.D., of ‘St. Johnsbury Centre,’ Vermont:—

‘It has been noticed by many writers, by many physicians, and by many clergymen, who have had opportunity of attending the dying, that in very many cases the vision of those about to die is sharpened to an unusual degree, so that they become, as we say, clairvoyant, and while apparently in perfect possession of their senses they see forms and hear words invisible and inaudible to the onlookers. Such an experience as this is here related by a clergyman of Vermont. He writes: “I am a clergyman, and a few years ago was the pastor of a large church in a New England town, where I served for several years. One of the members of this church was a young woman about thirty years of age, of fine mind and character, whom we will call Alice. She was genial, beautiful, and greatly beloved throughout the community. One summer time she was attacked with fever of a malignant type, and this was followed by a lumbar abscess, of which she died after a sickness of several weeks. The night before her decease she sent for me, as her pastor—at about two o’clock a.m. I lived but a short distance away, and was soon at her bedside. I found three ladies with her, who gave me very little attention as I entered, and seemed to be under some strange spell which forbade speech. I felt very awkward under the circumstances, but finally seated myself in a chair near the bed where the sick one was lying. I inquired of her how she was, and she replied, ‘I am very weak,’ and then came a perplexing silence as before. Finally one of the attendants said to me, ‘Alice has seen an angel,’ and I discovered that those women present were hushed by fear, and felt that they were standing upon the threshold of the spirit world, and that silence was more befitting than speech. I made no reply for a little time, but thought the patient was insane. Finally I said to her, ‘Alice, have you had a heavenly visitant?’ And she answered, ‘I have.’ I next inquired, ‘When did you have this experience?’ She answered, ‘At midnight.’ I asked, ‘Where did you first see him?’ She replied, ‘I seemed to possess new powers of vision, and as I looked out into space, I saw a star that seemed to be coming towards me, and soon I saw in this a human form which presently entered my room.’ ‘How was he dressed?’ I inquired. She replied, ‘In spotless white.’ ‘Where did he stand?’ I next asked, and she answered, ‘Between my bed and the piano,’ which occupied the opposite side of the room. Her attendants said that she seemed to be conversing with someone at the time of the vision and I asked, ‘What did this visitor say to you?’ She answered, ‘He said a good many things, and among others he said that he would come again in twenty-four hours and take me with him.’ I then inquired of her, ‘Can you tell me what day of the week it is?’ She replied, ‘It is Friday.’ (It was then about three o’clock Friday morning.) I then asked her, ‘Can you give me the day of the month?’ She gave it correctly. She then cried out, ‘O pastor, you need not ask me those questions; I know what I am saying.’ She now became very tired and I left her to sleep and returned to my home. I spent much of the next day in thinking of the events of that night, of the woman and her vision, and of what might prove the outcome of the matter. Like all others, the day passed on, and as it closed in the midnight hour Alice ceased to breathe and changed the earth life for immortality. I attended the funeral on the following Monday in the home. A sweet smile rested upon the pain-worn face of the clay in the casket, but she had gone out from us. The house was crowded with friends of the deceased, many of whom seemed to think that they were permitted to occupy a place made holy by an angel’s presence and a true woman’s beautiful life.”’

'THE CHRIST LIFE IN PRACTICE.'

ADDRESS BY MR. J. C. KENWORTHY.

At the residence of Dr. Wyld, on Sunday afternoon last, Mr. J. C. Kenworthy delivered an address entitled, 'The Christ Life in Practice.'

In the course of some introductory remarks, DR. WYLD, who presided, said that the purpose of the meeting was to hear from Mr. Kenworthy his views as to the practical outcome of the teachings of Christ. Mr. Kenworthy was known to those present as a poet, an artist, and a musician. His object was to bring together those who took the view of Christianity that it was not a creed or set of dogmas, but that it contained essential spiritual truths the possession of which was most important to the human race.

MISS BACON then read from Ruskin's 'Sesame and Lilies' some passages germane to the subject of the address.

In commencing his discourse, MR. KENWORTHY referred to Ruskin's perception of the wide separation that existed to-day between the profession and practice of religion. He wished first of all to say, while thanking the chairman for the opportunity of meeting the friends present, that it was a common recognition of a most important truth that had given him the good fortune to know Dr. Wyld—a recognition of the truth that there is about us a world of spirit, that the soul is not an abstraction, and that our thought of heaven is no dream that we have created for our amusement, to quiet our consciences and our fears; that there is a life for us beyond the grave, and that the way we live here and now will determine the character of that life for us. These things they believed, not as abstract doctrines, but as matters of sufficient knowledge and experience to feel that they should make it their life's business to live in accordance with them.

Society might be roughly divided into three classes of people. There was the average class, the people below the average, and those who were above it. It was to this latter class they had to look, because in them lay the only hope for the others. They might regard themselves as people discontented with society as it is, for if their own lives did not make them discontented their knowledge and experience compelled them to see in the lives of others a vast amount calculated to produce dissatisfaction. The world's history had turned on this very discontent; religions and all that made for progress had been the expression of the life's concern of the spiritually discontented. Out of the vast mass of human discontent had grown the ideal, the conception of a higher and better life. But it was necessary to avoid the idea that the Christ life was known only to the religion called Christianity. The Chinese, the Hindus, and the Persians had built up religions, the staple and power of which had been exactly such a concept of the ideal human life. They might take, for instance, the Chinese ideal of Confucius, or the Hindu ideal realised in Krishnu, who was regarded by the Hindus as the embodiment of goodness and wisdom. The same idea was at the root of the Persian religion, and reached a high expression amongst the Greeks and the Hebrews. Jesus Christ had gathered to Himself the whole force of these ideals; He became their living embodiment. It was well for them to think of Him, not merely as embodying this ideal, but also as He appeared to the men of His day. To them He probably appeared to be extraordinary only by the superior power of His personality. But it would be remembered that He began His ministry by asking two men—Peter and Andrew—to visit Him; and when, after staying with Him a little while, they returned to their friends it was with the statement, 'We have found the Christ,' by which they meant the ideal man.

In this great world-ideal embodied in the life of a man walking on earth they had the extreme of idealism, and it was their duty by contemplation, by thought, and by practical work to draw that ideal and example into their very inmost being, so that their spirit and life became patterned on that example.

This might be done, the speaker suggested, by detaching one's mind from all bibles and scriptures, by resting on all that one had already experienced in mind and thought, and resorting to meditation as long as one could profitably do so

for the time, asking oneself the plain question, 'What is the Christ spirit in my inmost soul? And if this spirit is to grow and expand in me, what does it necessarily mean?' If the union of Christendom had been sought by such methods it would have been accomplished long ago. It was by the individual's recognition of the Christ in himself, by himself, for himself, that the truth was entered into and humanity became one.

The simple and clear and swift outcome of all meditation on such lines was the recognition that the ideal was first of all an ideal of love; it could have nothing of enmity, hate, malice, or suspicion; and that this spirit of love could only express itself in interior truthfulness, clearness, openness of mind and life, straightforwardness. Now that was very simple; but anyone who had thought about it for a moment knew what an enormous task it was to realise this ideal; to live it, not merely to receive it. But we did not really live until this ideal had awakened within us and thus summoned us to its service. Such was the Christ life which we might consider as brought down into ourselves and involved in our daily practice.

This ideal was exemplified in the lives of some of the great leaders of religious thought, and in the lives of the saints. Such men as George Fox and John Wesley, for example, were simply expositions in practice of lives in which this Christ spirit had been realised.

Referring to the exclusion by the Church of politics and other secular matters as being outside its scope, the lecturer said the result of this policy had been that instead of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth which Jesus proclaimed, they had the present condition of things. The teachings of John Ruskin in this regard had been laughed at by those to whom he spoke because they thought it impossible that the conditions of life he described could actually prevail. The very classes of people to-day to whom are committed culture, education, and the power of government, were entirely in ignorance of the dreadful facts which they had the power to set right—the facts of the slum, the facts of overwork and wage-slavery in our midst, and the facts of suffering and social corruption.

A rational consideration of the teachings of Christ, Mr. Kenworthy considered, would inevitably lead to the conclusion that His teachings applied to and embraced all phases of life. 'I know,' he continued, 'what a vista opens before the sincere and earnest soul that contemplates these facts—this quite clear and quite simple position. We are really invited, in a sense, to take our lives in our hands, and for the sake of this Christ life put all at stake. The effort after the Christ life is not limited to creeds and sects, and everywhere about us in the world you will find individuals in their limited ways striving after a better life, but somehow the full ideal does not get itself expressed, all its applications and conduct do not get realised. People go a little way in pursuit of the ideal, but to put the whole life at stake upon it is, how rare! Why is this? It is because the Churches have failed to point out the full sphere of Christian duty. It is because the Churches, failing to do this, have made a double error—not realising the full truth concerning the life that now is, they have lost sense and knowledge of the life beyond.'

Referring to the growing recognition of the spiritual laws of the universe, the lecturer spoke of the rise of Spiritualism and Theosophy and of the recovery by scholars in England and Germany of the old teachings of the East, which were no longer scouted as superstitious, but regarded as high levels of truth attained by the human mind in the past. These things were amongst the most hopeful facts of modern life. Their gathering that afternoon was one of the results of this change of thought, and his hope in calling that meeting was that it might lead them to serious study of the questions raised. He hoped during the coming winter to take up various aspects of the spiritual truth in literature, philosophy, history, and the practical affairs of life. One thought which he wished to insist upon was this: that when a new truth appeared in the world, it never spoke to classes or sections; it spoke to men everywhere. He had often found occasion to point out to his friends that social reform was not a class war, it was not a war of poor against rich. It was a war between the right and the wrong.

In the course of his concluding remarks, Mr. Kenworthy

said: 'It is by men of spiritual life and mind who feel this truth within them, by the coming together of rich and poor, side by side, in the one spirit and the one faith—it is by such means that results will be gained and energies developed that will enable the same work to be done again that was performed two thousand years ago.'

Some discussion followed, in which the Chairman, Mr. G. Cole, Miss Bacon, Mr. A. St. John, and Mr. Norman Wyld took part, and the proceedings terminated with some closing remarks by the lecturer, who claimed that life to be truly understood must be studied in its interior philosophy and metaphysics, as well as in its external expression.

THE 'SUBLIMINAL CONSCIOUSNESS.'

AS AGENT OR MOTOR?

I was reading the number of 'LIGHT' for July 6th, 1901, about 10.30 a.m., out of doors, sitting under a tree. I seldom begin at the beginning of the paper. On this occasion I read:—

1. 'A Dream, a Death, and a Vision.'
2. 'Spiritualism in the "Referee."'
3. Letters to the Editor.
4. 'From Poverty to Power,' by A. S.W.

As I read the concluding paragraph of the last named article on page 323, and the words, 'A book which should help men and women' . . . to 'find within themselves the source of all success, all happiness, all accomplishment, all Truth,' I paused to let this statement be accepted or rejected interiorly when reviewed in the light of my own life, and its individual circumstances as experience.

From somewhere at that moment the 'idea' came to me in definite words: 'Turn back a few pages—look at the bottom of the third page, in the right hand corner —'

I 'jumped to the conclusion' that there was probably something to be found there in connection.

My instructions sounded plain enough, but when I began to act upon them there and then arose a difficulty. Was the cover to be counted as a page? This was negatived somehow, by 'supra' or 'subliminal'? I then looked at the right hand bottom corner of the page numbered 315, and caught sight of something about 'a shilling in the pound' (Mr. Thurstan's article on 'Psychic Prediction and the Law'). This did not appear at all in connection with the point in view. I really had no desire to annoy my 'subliminal self' with stupidity, but this must have been a trying moment for somebody. I, or 'sub,' repeated again 'the third page.' What did the term mean exactly? I then turned over two separate sheets, excluding the cover, and looked at the bottom of the third in the right hand corner (numbered 317), and read:—

'This is, I think, one of the truths taught by all the great spiritual teachers, and it also seems to me one of the axioms of the great law of affinity, that, *as we become more potent in our spiritual natures, we draw to ourselves all that we may require.*' ('The Reality of Idealism,' by A. K. Venning.)

Really as an endorsement of 'A.S.W.' it couldn't have been better. But does my 'subliminal self' read one part of the paper, whilst my active, or 'supra-liminal self' is keeping my eyes on another?

If my 'sub-self' is myself, acting as the originating force, and not merely as an agent, why did I not understand my own directions? why did I blunder about so obtusely?

Is it not even possible that I was mentally somewhere near that mysterious strata of 'sub-consciousness' in the effort to put an exterior truth of another mind ('A. S. W.'s') into touch with my own inner truth of being, and that somebody else just got a chance to be heard under these favourable circumstances?

Now for the other side of the question, the 'unconscious cerebration' side.

I began by cutting my paper. I cut it from beginning to end quite methodically. I glanced at some headings of the long articles to see what was to be read presently. I admit I *may* have caught that of A. K. Venning's article, though it comes low down on the page when the eye is running over the tops of the columns. Only, the headline is not the point in question.

Do the holders of the 'unconscious cerebration' theory

assume that it can absorb the contents of an article, and have it ready for reference at a moment's notice, without the deliberate application of the intent to absorb on the part of the conscious will?

If I *had** read that article with sufficient attention to recollect the matter of it, and its position in the paper, and its position on the page, I should have 'known' I had read it, and *remembered* this main fact.

Not to understand your own instructions on any point must argue something very wrong indeed, for instructions are necessarily based on knowledge. You must know that such a thing is in such a place before you can tell anyone else about it.

I am uncertain as to the accepted meaning of the term 'page'—if it has two sides to it or one; my uncertainty caused the blunder. A page has two numbers to it; it is page 1 on one side, and page 2 on the other; this will make two pages on one sheet of paper, as *I* understand it. But obviously, whoever wished me to read the passage in A. K. Venning's article used the word 'page,' as meaning the *third sheet of paper* (numbered 317).

Of course we can, and do, read matters and quite forget when and where we have done so, but I had not 'read' this article in the ordinary acceptation of the term; the paper had not been many hours in my possession.

I cannot entertain the theory that my 'subliminal self' knew all the time that I had read the article, brought it to my notice when reading the other article, could give me detail of its position in the paper *accurately*, and that I (as including both 'subliminal' and 'supra-liminal' portions of my mentality) was having a little joke with myself and pretending I could not understand where to find it, nor *would* recognise the passage indicated, when found.

In all honesty, I was intensely interested and surprised at the clear parallelism of this passage of A. K. Venning's with that of 'A. S. W.'s.'

'MINIMUM.'

SEANCE BY MRS. MELLON.

The first séance given by Mrs. Mellon since her return to England took place on Saturday evening, the 13th inst., in the house of Mr. Stoddart, at Hirst.

Mr. W. H. Robinson, of Newcastle, officiated as chairman of the meeting, twenty sitters constituting the circle. The sitters were arranged by Mrs. Mellon in horseshoe form, the poles of which were about eight feet distance from the cabinet. Altogether the manifestations numbered thirteen, eleven of which were recognised by their friends in the room. An ordinary photographic lamp emitting a red light was used, which enabled all the sitters to distinguish each other. Some of the forms were brighter than others, and in most cases the features were quite distinguishable, and the names were given in every case. A pleasant feature was the fact that most of the manifestations were given as tests to the most sceptical of the company.

The subject of spirit return was new to a few of those present, but all expressed their satisfaction with the genuineness of the phenomena, and the pleasure it had given them to meet Mrs. Mellon, who had established the conviction in their minds of the continued existence of those friends who had passed from their midst into a fuller and more real life.

On the Sunday evening, in the society's hall, Mrs. Mellon being present, Mr. W. H. Robinson spoke effectively on the question 'Do the Dead Return? or Studies in Spirit Materialisation,' the subject being treated in a manner which was highly appreciated by a large audience. Mr. J. J. Curry, the society's chairman, gave four psychometric readings.

Mrs. Mellon is looking very well and her guides intimated that she would resume her séances after her domestic affairs were settled. Along with her sister, Mrs. Robinson, of London, Mrs. Mellon intends remaining in the North for a few days.

'PRENTIS.'

* As a matter of fact I have not read it now—not the whole of it. When reading the last paragraph, as quoted, I looked for the heading of the article, and at the same time caught the name of Kenworthy at the beginning. I have purposely abstained from reading it.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, JULY 20th, 1901.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—'LIGHT' may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance. To United States, 2dol. 70c. To France, 13 francs 86 centimes.

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

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

LIFE'S PRECIOUS OINTMENT.

Certainly, whether Judas was a traitor or only a zealot who wished to force a Messiah's hand, it is manifest that he was a very poor specimen of a disciple. The story of the precious ointment shows that: and a beautiful story it is, except for Judas' share in it.

Jesus was at Bethany, in the house of Lazarus; and Martha served, but Mary, as was customary with highly honoured guests, sat at his feet, unloosed his sandals, and anointed his feet with 'ointment of spikenard, very precious: and the house was filled with the fragrance.' And Judas, instead of being pleased with this tribute of respect to the Master, and glad to think that he should have the comfort of it, began to grumble, and wanted to know why this precious ointment was not sold for 300 pence, to be given to the poor. But the writer of the gospel seems to have had a bad opinion of the man, and apparently revels in his chance of getting in a shot at him, for he immediately adds: 'This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and carried the bag.' Another treasurer gone wrong!

Every way, Judas comes very badly out of it—a cad, a hypocrite and a thief, and ending as a traitor:—a cad, because he disparaged love's offering to his friend; a hypocrite because he threw over his meanness the cloke of philanthropy, and a thief because he pilfered his comrades' funds. But it is all of a piece; for the man who wants to sell precious ointment for pence, in grudging it to love and admiration and goodness, is always a bit of a fraud, or even a traitor in his heart.

By the way; what a curious thing is this queer intrusion of Judas into the very Holy of holies,—into the innermost circle of the friends of Jesus: and the treasurer too! But Tennyson, in his legends of the Court of King Arthur, gives us the same glimpse of heaven beset by hell. Alas! it is so strangely, so pitifully, true of this conflict of forces we call life. Under the weight of that sorrowful burden and mystery, the world staggers and moans to this day: as Thomas Moore makes the 'pitying spirit' say:—

Some flowers of Eden we still inherit,
But the trail of the serpent is over them all:

Life's precious ointment is always being put up for sale, and bartered away by the bearers of the bag.

Love itself,—indeed the precious ointment of life,—is made marketable: and the love and loveliness of womanhood have been grudged to love alone. How sharp a watch that Judas eye keeps on this heavenly incense! 'She threw

herself away!' croaks Judas, meaning by this, that love gave itself to love. 'What a waste!' thinks Judas; it might have been sold to a millionaire, or even to a member of the House of Peers! 'A bad match!' cries Judas, meaning by this that the banking accounts are unequal.

But, even if we drop the Judas strain out of it, what a dreary desert of readiness there is to turn beauty into pence! For instance, it may be necessary to make yearly encroachments upon the country with our bricks and cinders and chimneys and backyards; but why glory in it? why quote with pride 'the growth of our town' and 'the signs of prosperity indicated by the highly satisfactory increase in the number of its inhabitants'? In London, if we have forgotten to kick against it, it is because we have forgotten what there is to kick for, or because kicking is such obvious waste. But what a sign of gracelessness it is that we have almost ceased to mourn! and what a shameful procession of sinners it is,—from the great landowner who is on the look-out for his 300 pence, and is willing to sell his ancestral trees and streams to the despoiler, to the silly woman who can, and who can even with pride, wear the pretty feathers of slaughtered birds, or stick half a sea gull in her hat!

What a beautiful world it is! and how eager we are to despoil it! and yet, in spite of us, how hard God tries, this lovely summer weather, to save us from and in our sins! How pitifully He bends down, like another Mary, in pity if not in admiration, to anoint our feet with the precious ointment of His grasses, buttercups and daisies; and sometimes so near the boundaries of our despoiling!

The flush of life may well be seen

Thrilling back over hills and valleys;

The cowslip startles in meadows green,

The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice.

And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean

To be some happy creature's palace.

Every clod feels a stir of might,

An instinct within it that reaches and lowers;

And, groping blindly above it for light,

Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers.

Think of spoiling all that—and with a light heart! The Corporation may dine over it, and boast of it. From a finer race it might call rather for a funeral service. What a means of grace, what a spiritual help on the dusty road of a workman's life is the smallest 'allotment,' especially if the toiler can afford to forget the 300 pence, and climb so high as to grow, not potatoes and onions for the pot, but roses and sweet-peas for the soul!

Thinking of life, from the anchorage of the spirit, what have we to say of toil, especially in relation to the beginning and the end of life? A precious ointment to the harsh creaking wheels of the world is childhood, wherewith the dear God accomplishes His loveliest creations and His choicest miracles. Everything in childhood is beautiful;—its very helplessness, its lovely ignorance, its exquisite inexperience, its gradual unfolding:—and, to a great extent, the world has felt and appreciated this, and protected the child. But there, sure enough is Judas and his bag and his grudging croak: 'Why this waste? Take this little lassie, and make its head ache with exams, absorb its attention all day and give it home-lessons at night': or 'Take this laddie out of the fields or the schoolroom, and make a half-timer of him before his brain is settled or his muscles have hardened: then make a full-timer of him as soon as you can, and grudge him his half holiday. Sell this precious ointment of a young life; and think of the 300 pence.' And then, because the children who go to work get their Bank holidays, complain of the encroachments of the working classes; and divide the Town Council over the audacious proposal to give the toilers three extra free days a year. Then notice that hair now turns a little grey at forty, and give the culprits notice—guilty of grey

hairs!—and chevy youngsters into their places, and hasten on the day when parents will exist to farm out their boys and girls, and live on them,—if they can.

If we go to the other end of life's tether we find Judas is still there with his bag and his plea for the 300 pence. The ideal is to toil long enough to enable a man to leave his drudgery, and then to enjoy the world and mend it. There are probably fifty thousand men in England to-day to whom God is saying, 'Give over that, and go and see my wonderful world; then come back and help to mend your bit of it.' But how few will listen or obey! Of course the vast majority are sentenced to imprisonment and hard labour for life, but we are not thinking of them: we are thinking only of those who have at their command the precious ointment of an experienced manhood which has earned the right to be free to spend a happy but unselfish life in the open world. There is a sense in which the sinister question of Judas is pertinent and desirable here. Why is not this precious matured manhood sold for all its worth, on the higher reaches of life, and given to the poor?—that is to say, devoted to the service of the less happy, the less fortunate toilers. But this man who goes on grinding to the end is himself likely to be poor,—poor in memories, poor in imagination, poor in ideas, poor in spiritual wealth. He would indeed enrich himself if he made up his mind to cease serving himself, and be free to serve others.

Is all this one-sided and exaggerated? Be it so. But think of the one-sidedness and the exaggeration on the other side!—of the splashing of human hoofs in God's precious ointment of natural beauty, of the wicked waste of childhood for the sake of the 300 pence, of the heart-breaking absorption of the whole life in grinding at the mill, of the mistaking wealth for happiness, splendour for success, and the acreage of chimnies for the rate of progress. If we do take this into account, we may be disposed to admit,—especially on these lovely July days—the desirability of discounting Judas, even in his modern alluring dress, but with his old 300 pence and his bag.

IS CONSCIOUSNESS A UNITY?

Replying to a correspondent who desired information regarding 'sub-consciousness,' the Editor of 'The Light of Truth' said:—

'There are grades of consciousness as there are degrees of sensibility to phenomena, but in order to have a sub-consciousness we must have a sub-sensation. There is nothing in physics or metaphysics to postulate a sub-sensation, hence a sub-consciousness is a chimera.'

Commenting upon the above Dr. J. M. Peebles affirmed:—

'The intelligent spirit of man is a unit, a definite, uncompounded entity—a conscious individuality, which conscious individuality cannot be split up into "subs," something as the housewife splits up her peas for peasoup. It is amusing to study the pen-gymnastics, the brazen assertions and the astounding miracles invented by sturdy non-believers in miracles, to get rid of the most natural and palpable proofs of a future existence through spirit phenomena—an existence in perfect conformity with the law of evolution.'

'In my extensive occult studies, observations and psychic experiments I have never seen any plausible reasons for believing in these metaphysical "subs"—these semi-human personalities, parading as distinct individualities, alternately affirming and denying as ego or homo, thus avoiding all moral responsibility by such shuffling explanations as "I did not deceive, I am not guilty; it was my "sub,'" or it was telepathic, suggested sub-consciousness, sufficiently potent to temporarily paralyse the moral consciousness of the spirit—the very God within. Away, away with these double-and-twisted subtleties that no more account for automatic spirit writing than a sub-watch spring would account for irregular time-keeping.'

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Several communications—some of which are already in type—are necessarily held over for another issue.
'SEARCHER.'—We cannot use your communication because you do not give us your name and address.

OLD-TIME EXPERIENCES.

(Continued from page 332.)

There are two kinds of evidence, the legal and the scientific, and it has always struck me that 'the common or garden' variety of inquirer (like myself) is more likely to come to true conclusions than the so-called scientific investigator (who generally suffers from 'swelled head' and 'stiff neck'), because the scientific inquirer depends for his judgment almost wholly on what he considers to be 'scientific' evidence, which requires that any phenomena shall be repeated at his request. We do not know the exact conditions under which any phenomenon is produced, and even if we did, it does not altogether depend upon us to furnish them. It is true that legal evidence is, at the most, evidence of probability; but in other matters we are content to accept that kind of evidence as sufficiently conclusive to warrant us in hanging a man.

These reflections are *apropos* of an old Polish gentleman, a very learned man, and a retired member of the medical profession, whom I constantly met at the séances of various New York materialising mediums some eighteen to twenty years ago. Although scientific evidence does not enter into the matter, I consider the case of that old Polish gentleman a 'good specimen.' It is a good specimen because he used to converse in the Polish language with his friends who materialised, especially with one young and beautiful female form who (as he said) was a girl to whom he was engaged once upon a time, but who died when young. Now I do not know a word of Polish, and their conversation was carried on in a whisper, near the cabinet, and out of earshot of the sitters; but on one occasion I was permitted to come close enough to hear mortal and spirit talking to each other in a language I did not understand. Either this old gentleman was talking Polish to a materialised form, who replied in the same language, and who gave him reason to believe that she was an old lover, or else—what? Why, that for at least two years, during which I used to meet him, he kept up a childish, ridiculous, and utterly useless deception, which needed several confederates and to which several materialising mediums must have lent themselves! There may be unutterably silly people who would do this kind of thing if they could, just as there may be 'scientific' investigators who would believe that explanation probable; but from what I know of this very erudite, unassuming and serious old gentleman, I consider it more likely that he would dance a can-can in church than that he would act out such a pitiful farce.

It has often seemed to me that the atmosphere of the séance room produces a real effect on the minds of some people—it seems to weaken or pervert their reasoning powers. Indeed, I had not been long an attendant at séances before it struck me that my fellow investigators furnished mental problems as interesting in their way, as those I had come to study. A friend whom I took to one of the Caffreys' séances affords 'a specimen' of this kind. He 'fancied himself' considerably on account of his knowledge of chemistry; and he disbelieved in the existence of forces which are at present unrecognised by science. I had to excite his curiosity for some weeks before he would consent to do anything so much below the dignity of an analytical chemist as to attend a spiritual séance. Mr. Caffrey was a slate-writing medium, and he usually gave a short exhibition before his wife's materialising séance began. A table was brought in with a pile of slates, a basin of water, a sponge and towels, and a ball of cord; and anyone who liked could wash and dry a couple of slates and tie them together (the light, of course, being full on). Caffrey sat in a chair some eight or ten feet away, and from beginning to end did not touch the slates. When the experimenter had tied his slates together, Caffrey told him to lay them on the floor, directly under the chandelier; and then he came up to the slates and stood over them, his feet being from four to six inches from them. Presently a scratching was heard in the slates, and Caffrey told the experimenter to go down on his knees and put his ear close, so that there should be no mistake about it. As soon as knocks were heard on the slate, Caffrey went back to his chair and the experimenter took up the slates,

[July 20, 1901]

opened and examined them ; and in every instance I ever witnessed, or heard of, he found them covered with writing—generally short sentences in different handwritings and in different languages (the Caffreys themselves were anything but well educated). My friend, the chemist, went through this performance, and was extremely puzzled and very much impressed. He wanted to go away before the materialising séance, which he had made up his mind was ‘utter rot’—much as one would like to get away before the sermon—but I persuaded him to stay ; all in vain, however, for he told me afterwards that he was really not attending to what was going on, as those slates were ‘quite enough for him.’ When I said ‘good night’ to him, I advised him to try whether he could not get some writing himself, and he said he would—he had told me that he ‘got raps’ when alone. I met him a week afterwards, and he said he could not yet make out how the slate writing was done. ‘I suppose not !’ I replied ; ‘but have you tried it yourself ?’ ‘Yes,’ he said, ‘and I think it would be easy enough to make invisible writing on a slate, which would appear after a determined number of minutes ; but the previous washing of the slates bothers me.’ ‘But Caffrey did not touch the slates at all !’ I said. ‘I have not got so far as that yet,’ he replied ; ‘a problem of this kind must be taken step by step.’ I have thought since what an invaluable member of the S.P.R. he would have made !

There was a curious box-like structure in the Caffreys’ séance room, which I think served a useful purpose. It stood against the wall on one side of the cabinet. It looked like a big packing case, covered with black cloth, and was perhaps four feet cube. This was simply a dark chamber to help the spirits to materialise. It had no opening, but it evidently assisted the manifestations, because the spirits that materialised outside the cabinet generally came up out of the floor in its immediate neighbourhood. First came a little ball of gauze ; this grew and grew with a wavy motion, assuming a human form, and either rose a few inches from the floor and came down solid, or else rose in the air and floated about near the ceiling for a minute, and then when about six inches from the floor came down ‘plump,’ fully materialised. One evening a female spirit came out of the cabinet and said ‘Wild Rose’ ; and forthwith two gentlemen, on opposite sides of the circle, jumped up, saying ‘For me !’ Wild Rose stood as if puzzled, and one man said, ‘Beg pardon, but I came from Boston by appointment to meet Wild Rose, my guide, here.’ ‘And I came from Illinois to meet Wild Rose, *my* guide, this evening.’ Wild Rose made no sign of ‘throwing the handkerchief’ ; but there appeared, close to the dark chamber, the well-known little bit of moving gauze, and a second ‘Wild Rose’ very quickly materialised and ran over to one of the claimants, while the other claimant paired off happily with his own Wild Rose. Presently, the two Wild Roses were formally introduced to each other, and they disappeared into the floor together. ‘CHRONOS.’

(To be continued.)

A TRINITY IN UNITY.

Writing in the ‘Light of Truth,’ Dr. J. M. Peebles says :—

‘Theosophy, Spiritualism and Christianity constitute a trinity in unity. Properly understood, they are in essence one—one in purpose to educate, uplift, and redeem humanity. When I say Theosophy I have no reference to Madame Blavatsky’s ‘Isis Unveiled’ ; when I say Spiritualism I do not mean Spiritism with its angularities, divisions, and criminations. When I say Christianity I do not mean churchianity with its sectarian creeds that blight and blast the noblest aspirations of humanity. Spiritists, listening to all kinds, classes, and conditions of spirits, with their contradictions, can never organise to stay organised. They have no central standard—no one cohesive truth to gather around.’

‘But Spiritualists can organise, and they can organise permanently, upon this broad and almost universally conceded platform of principles :—

- ‘1. The Fatherhood of God.
- ‘2. The brotherhood of man.
- ‘3. The present ministry of angels and spirits to earth.
- ‘4. The unfoldment and eternal progression of the human soul.

‘There is no mysticism in these plain, rational statements, and it is my honest conviction that ninety-nine hundredths of the Spiritualists of this country could and would accept of them.’

‘THE SONGS OF CHRISTINE.’

The readers of ‘LIGHT’ will, I hope, give a warm welcome to this exquisite little volume of genuine poetry by Effie M. Holden. She is her own publisher, and the volume, costing two shillings and sixpence, may be obtained from Mr. Carl Heath, Limpsfield, Surrey. The poems are regarded by the authoress as inspirational, and some of them refer to conditions of the unseen life. These songs, while richly poetic, are invested with a mystic glow in which light is sometimes more apparent than form. Yet as one broods over them, radiant forms seem to emerge from the diffused light, and the hidden sense is revealed. Still, I cannot help thinking that, for unilluminated readers, a little prosaic interpretation would be very acceptable and very helpful. And, doubtless, as the gifted poetess develops her very decided gift, the rich melody of her strains will become clearer. Meanwhile, we who dwell in the outer courts, while we find delight in the poetic beauty of the most mystic outpourings, are more attracted to many of the other poems which nestle more natively in the hearths and homes of those who have no upsoaring winged Pegasus to carry them above the homely levels of daily experience, and yet are glad of opening vistas of the other world. The following poem is a fair specimen of the eloquent utterance that abounds in this volume. The poem is entitled—

‘REASSURANCE.’

Sweet ! and why sighest thou, left in a world of reproaches ?
Hearts of the hero, the sage, and the martyr are there,
Yea, and wherever the life of the spirit encroaches,
Demons descend and make dark the inviolate air,
Vultures of doubt and of dread and of fatal despair.

What are the tears and the sighs of the souls that have striven ?

What are the doubts that assailed or the foes that defied ?
Like a pale army of ghosts they for ever are driven
Back from the faith that affirms of its God and its Guide,
Back from the faith that affirms, howsoever denied.

What are the years of our life in the countless Forever ?
What is the span of our infantine effort and pain ?
What are our steps in the fields of a finite endeavour,
That we should faint on the threshold nor rally again,
Faint on the threshold of light ere the spirit attain ?

Heed not alone what the multitudes round thee are crying,
Listen once more to the voice that is still at thy side,
Yearning thy soul to uplift from its earth-gotten sighing,
Singing the songs of the spheres where our spirits abide,
Swelling the prayer of thy life to a full-flowing tide.

What, is there never a chink whence the sound of our singing
Reaches the soul that is wrapt in its robe of the clay ?
Never a touch from the hands of the messengers clinging,
Never a flame from their feet as they go or they stay,
Never a breath nor a dream from Eternity’s day ?

Yea ! then arise, nor be covered with idle confusion—
Thou who hast seen and hast heard and must ever declare,
How round the world of the sense with its subtle illusion,
Lieth a world that emergeth from chaos and care,
Pressing more close to the breast of the Infinite Fair.

There is sadness in these verses, as of a soul, with high endowments, chained to a dark and chilly abode, struggling with poverty and circumstance and pain, yet ever conscious of radiant Presences, whispering words of cheer and consolation. Other poems sing of the rapture which natural beauty awakens, and the hopes and visions which it seems to embody and inspire.

The poems are grouped in collections, each of which is preluded by a flower poem, such as : ‘Lily-queen,’ ‘Merrie-Marsh-marigold,’ ‘Bell Heather,’ ‘Daffy-down-dill,’ ‘Forget-me-not,’ ‘Briar Rose,’ and others. The last, Briar Rose, seems to represent a spirit which has found love on earth to be encompassed with thorns and snares, and gathers better blossoms of love and beauty in the world where the stings of earth-born delights are forgotten in the gladness of ‘brighter worlds and purer pleasures.’

I have a strong persuasion that Effie Holden will take a place, high in rank, among the lady poets of England.

R. M. T.

A REMARKABLE NEW MEDIUM.

The 'Spiritistische Rundschau,' for June is rich in accounts of phenomena and mediumistic séances, among which are two, translated from the Italian, with the Neapolitan medium, Eusapia Paladino. But the most interesting, because possessing some quite novel features, is one contributed by Herr Rosali, of Berlin, who gives an account of a newly-discovered lady medium for 'apports.' This is followed by two 'protocols,' describing experiments made with this medium—which are quite out of the common. As Herr Rosali's account will interest many of your readers, I give a translation of it, slightly condensed. He writes:—

'After investigating experimental Spiritism for two years with great zeal and patience, without any noteworthy success, my courage was nearly exhausted, though I had become convinced of the fact of life beyond the grave, and of the possibility of communion with our departed friends.'

'Recently, however, my long cherished wish to obtain some striking and undoubted phenomena has been gratified. In a spiritistic society, I last year became acquainted with a lady whom I will call by the pseudonym of "Emmeline Stillfried." This lady complained to me one day that in the house in which she occupied a situation, rappings and disturbances occurred, and asked me if I would come and listen to them.'

'On my way thither I felt somewhat excited, having so long hoped to meet with some ghostly manifestations. The house in which the occurrences I am about to describe took place, is a villa belonging to people of distinction. I obtained entrance with some difficulty, and proceeded to the kitchen, and with Miss Stillfried and the cook formed a chain at a small table. There was a zither upon it, on which I played some lively tunes. But nothing occurred, the table did not even move.'

'When, however, I laid the zither on the large kitchen table, and played a tune upon it, the table reared up away from me. I tried to move it with my hands but succeeded only with difficulty, on account of its great weight. Then there came raps on the tin utensils hanging on the wall; the door of the cooking stove flew open and pieces of charcoal were projected into the middle of the room. On this evening no intelligible communion was established, but after several experiments with the same two persons, I became convinced that Fräulein Stillfried must be a medium of great physical powers. After some time, when the medium became under the control of a spirit who was versed in the technicalities of "apport" bringing, and who understood how to develop the medium's powers, I received the most wonderful apports. In order to dispense with painful bodily constraint, I arranged the following conditions with the control:—

'A room which adjoined that in which we held the sittings was examined, then darkened and the door locked. In this locked room were brought, as apports, a little object representing Cupid, a smartly-bound book called "Heart and Spirit," and a copper kettle weighing about twenty pounds. These objects came from a kitchen near at hand, and had, of course, to be returned. The medium received a writing-case, and her friend a china cup. The latter reproached the control with giving the medium so much more valuable a present, and so the controlling intelligence took the china cup away from her, and the same was brought to me in bright lamplight, over my bed. I saw distinctly something fall on the white coverlet, and there lay the china cup! The writing-case contained a water-colour picture of the year 1854. It was a jubilee gift, and had to be returned.'

'Besides this, I received—and this is very remarkable—a photograph of the control taken in his life-time. This he had apparently taken from an album belonging to a relation in Silesia. I wrote the next day to this relative, who in her answer expressed the greatest astonishment as to how the photograph, which occupied a place of honour in her album, could have come into my possession. The most remarkable thing is that the medium, during the 'apport' of the heaviest objects, is not entranced. She only notices a quivering in her hands, lasting about a minute. I will give further particulars later on.'

This account is followed by two papers by Herren Kuhaupt and Schenck, the first-named gentleman being secretary, and the second president, of the society called 'Psyche zur Wahrheit.' These give 'protocols' or minutes taken of two experiments in the passing of matter through matter, through the mediumship of Fräulein Stillfried. Herr Kuhaupt states that some time ago, Herr C. Rosali, of Berlin, called upon the president of the society 'Psyche zur Wahrheit,' Herr C. Schenck, and told him that he had discovered a wonderful medium for 'apports,'

in the person of Fräulein Emmeline Stillfried. The members of the society, therefore, decided to make some experiments as to these powers, and the following is a brief account of the first experiment. A member of the society, Herr Cabinetmaker Lauterbach, was commissioned to make a small and strong deal box—about eight inches in length—which on Friday, May 10th, he brought to a meeting of the society, at which were present, besides himself and Herr Rosali, nine members, whose names and occupations are given. These are, I notice, all of the male sex, and among them are several well-known names of contributors to psychic journals. After the box had been thoroughly examined, the treasurer took the lid, placed it on the empty box, and requested Herr Lauterbach to nail it on, which he did with strong nails. The box was then shaken about by those present to convince themselves that there was nothing in it, and was handed to Herr Thalwitzer to do the sealing. The heads of the nails were covered with sealing wax, and altogether there were eighteen seals on different parts of the box, to stamp which four different seal rings, belonging to different gentlemen, were used. After another examination when all were convinced, by shaking it, that the box was quite empty, it was confided to Herr Rosali, with the request that at his next séance with Fräulein Stillfried the 'intelligence' should be asked if the phenomenon of passing matter through matter could be accomplished by passing one or more objects into the box.

'Herr Rosali went to the residence of the medium on Saturday afternoon between four and five o'clock, gave the box to her, and she placed it under her bed. About ten o'clock she felt a peculiar trembling in her limbs, which, she says, always accompanied these phenomena, and soon afterwards she ascertained, by shaking the box, that there was something in it. Herr Rosali called at the house very early the next (Sunday) morning and handed the box, uninjured, at nine o'clock to the president.'

'OPENING OF THE BOX.'

'The opening of the box took place on Friday, May 17th, at the public meeting of the Psyche Society, by the cabinet-maker Lauterbach. Before the box was opened it was examined by the members, and all declared that something was inside it, and that the seals and fastenings were untouched. Herr Lauterbach, amid universal suspense, broke all the seals, and then extracted the nails. The president then, in the presence of everyone, carefully took off the lid, and inside was a head of Christ, painted in oils, on thick paper. The box with its contents was then handed round.'

'(Signed) KUHAUPT,

'Secretary to the Society.'

The second experiment of a similar nature is then described in great detail. A commission of four gentlemen—not members of the society—whose names and addresses are given, was appointed, to avoid any suspicion of collusion, and another box of larger dimensions, thirty centimetres in length (which I think would be about ten inches), was constructed by Herr Lauterbach. After all possible precautions had been taken, and all present were satisfied that the box was empty, it was fastened by Herr Lauterbach with sixty-six nails, about an inch long, and was then sealed with thirty-six seals, stamped with four seals belonging to the commission. The box was confided to Fräulein Stillfried on the Saturday, returned to the president, and opened in the presence of the commission and members, on the afternoon of May 21st, having previously been on view, when, through shaking it, it was evident that it contained something of a metallic nature. The contents, when it was opened, proved to consist of several coins—a French franc-piece, a Swiss franc-piece, a twenty-centimes piece, and one of five centimes. Herr Petzold, in the name of the commission, declared that the box was perfectly uninjured, and that after the opening there was not the slightest sign of its having been touched, and an expert in parlour magic, Herr Svengali, who had examined the box both before and after the experiment, declared it to be impossible that anything should have been introduced into the box without its being injured. Another experiment with another box was then determined upon.

Herr Schenck then writes:—

'On the evening of Ascension Day, I had the opportunity of making the personal acquaintance of the young medium,

The interview took place at my house, and at it my own family and our treasurer and his wife were present.

'The medium justifies strong hopes. With her modest appearance and tranquil character, it is to be hoped that we Germans may find in her a new "d'Espérance." The phenomena are wonderful, considering the short period of her mediumship.'

M. T.

THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

Spiritualists, of course, regard the physical brain, not as the *cause* of consciousness and intelligence, but as the *instrument* by which these are externally manifested, and our readers therefore will note with satisfaction the full concurrence with this view clearly expressed by a distinguished medical man. We learn from the 'Eastern Daily Press' that on the 9th inst., at Norwich, at the annual meeting of the Eastern Counties Asylum for Idiots, the Duke of Norfolk presiding, Sir Frederic Bateman, the consulting physician to the institution, made an eloquent appeal to his hearers for a practical sympathy with 'the feeble-minded.'

There had, Sir Frederic said, been several definitions of an idiot. He had spent a great deal of time in the investigation of abstruse points of cerebral pathology, and the question of the idiot had not escaped his attention. He submitted the following definition: An idiot is a human being who possesses the tripartite nature of man—body, soul, and spirit—but who is the subject of an infirmity, consisting anatomically of a defective organisation and want of development of the brain, resulting in an inability, more or less complete, for the exercise of the moral, intellectual, and sensitive faculties. It would be observed that he had described an idiot as a human being. Time was when this would have been challenged. A great theologian of the sixteenth century, on being asked by a father what he should do with his idiot son, replied, 'Drown him, he possesses no soul.' Times were happily changed. We did not drown idiots in these days, but taught them to swim against the adverse currents to which they were exposed; we buoyed them up on the tempestuous waves of life; we piloted them through the rocks and shoals of their ill-starred careers till their chequered race was run, and they were safely landed into the haven of everlasting rest. (Applause.) Philosophers of even a later date than the sixteenth century had questioned the idiot's place in creation, and had gone so far as to pretend that the brain of the microcephalic idiot was so far removed from the human type as to constitute him a connecting link between man and the anthropoid apes. He admitted that all animals of the vertebrate type were constituted on a similar plan, and that man was an animal, but he maintained that the brain after all was merely an instrument by which the high psychological attributes became externally manifested. These philosophers had fallen into the common error of confounding mind, thought, and consciousness with the material instrument by which these attributes became externally manifested.

A reference to music would illustrate his meaning. The music could not be said to be in the instrument, but in the soul of the performer. If the instrument were in good order the inspiration of a Thalberg or of a Liszt would become apparent, but if the instrument were damaged nothing but discordant strains would be produced, although the musical faculty of the performer remained the same. Idiocy might be considered as a disease of the instrument rather than of the performer. The idiot's brain was damaged, and he became an unfit instrument for the outward manifestation of the powers of the mind, but the lowest idiot possessed the germs of intellectual activity and of moral responsibility, and within his malconstructed organism there lay concealed, in its fragile fleshly casket, a precious jewel of immortality—an imperishable essence that was destined to live on for ever and for aye, through countless aeons of time, when the dicta of the dreamers of whom he had been speaking would have 'melted away like streaks of morning cloud into the infinite azure of the past.' (Applause.)

In old books on medical nomenclature idiocy was classed amongst the varieties of insanity, and idiots would be seen skulking in the corner of the lunatic asylum courtyard, chained to a staple and lying on a litter of straw. . . . Nowadays idiocy was not regarded as a form of insanity. The distinction between the idiot and the insane was clear and marked. The madman suffered from an abnormal development of the brain, the idiot from an ill-developed brain. The mind of the madman was not in proper balance; in the idiot it was not in proper power. The idiot was alone in the world, isolated, as it were, from the rest of Nature; he saw, but did not perceive; he heard, but did not understand or appreciate; the organs of sight and hearing might

be perfect and yet useless; the impressions formed upon the optic and auditory nerves were duly transmitted to the sensorium, but no idea was there excited; he cared for nothing; he was indifferent to the grandeur and beauties of Nature; he stood unmoved at the thunderclap, the foam of the rushing cataracts, or the roar of the mighty ocean; he heeded not the hum of the insect world, or the song of the early lark, that winged chorister of the air; the star-bejewelled canopy of Heaven; the mountain landscape lighted up with all the purple splendour of the setting sun—all these were nothing to him—he was a soul shut up in imperfect organs. Idiocy knew no distinction of rank; it invaded alike the palace of the peer and the hovel of the pauper, but the greater number of idiots were to be found in the cottages of the poor, where the trouble of providing for one such member often reduced the family to pauperism. It was formerly thought that an idiot was beyond the power of help, but the results obtained in this Asylum showed that much might be done for him, and that under the proper training he might become sensible, affectionate, and happy. They had proved that in the majority of cases the idiot might not only cease to be a source of annoyance and danger to those around him, but be made able to contribute to his own sustenance by obtaining a knowledge of simple trades of a mechanical kind, such as those of the carpenter, shoemaker, or tailor, and by following household and industrial pursuits. Science in the twentieth century gave an emphatic denial to the statement that nothing could be done for the idiot. Science had done much, science would do more. The idiot had the germ of intellectual activity and of moral responsibility, and this germ, cherished and nourished by the genial warmth of human kindness, fenced round and protected from the blasts and buffeting of the world by the cords of true philanthropy, watered by the dew of human sympathy, although possibly only permitted to bud here, is destined hereafter to expand into a perfect flower, and to flourish perennially in another and a better state of being. (Applause.)

THE GULF OF DEATH BRIDGED.

In a recent issue the 'Chicago American' gave an illustration of the new spirit in which thoughtful writers are dealing with psychical matters. The article in question will be useful if only because of the writer's testimony to the value of the evidences which indicate the existence of the 'psychical bridge across the gulf' of death:

'Speculation on the nature of that misty and wonderful land which we enter through the gateway of death must, perhaps, always be mere speculation. Yet it is not wholly certain that at some time the mists that conceal it may not be in some measure dissipated, nor is it demonstrated that there is no psychical bridge across the gulf. We have now evidence, not to be lightly set aside, of a measure of communication between the dying and their loved ones at a distance, and evidence less weighty, but still not inconsiderable, of communications with the dead. Perhaps all the evidence is a tissue of lies—but perhaps there is in it the fabric of a great truth.'

'Surely there can be no thought more worthy of speculation, more worthy of thought, more fit for scientific investigation than this of the sequence to death. It is perhaps the one thing to which every man must look forward. Let the shallow and the scoffing sneer if they will at the endeavours of those who are striving to penetrate its mysteries. The man or woman to whom a great and stimulating thought is not a rarity and a shock will wish them Godspeed.'

'Something more than eyes is needed to see—something more than ears to hear. There must be a living spirit, an active intelligence behind them.'

'Because death comes suddenly to ear, and eye, and nerves, and muscles, it does not mean that this spirit that directed and employed them is dead. It has been driven from the body which so long housed it by shock or violence. Homeless it may wander among us, impalpable to our blunter senses, but viewing us with even a keener vision than in life.'

'During the Reign of Terror in France, when the heads of the wise and thoughtful were dropping under the knife of the guillotine by hundreds, repeated efforts were made to determine whether death was instantaneous; whether any will power, any individual consciousness, remained after the stroke. Promises were made on the scaffold that if life and volition remained it should be signified by the quiver of an eyelid, the curl of a lip. In no case, though the severed head was quickly and tenderly caught, was any sign ever given.'

'And yet can one believe that the brilliant, active minds, the bright, alert, inquiring spirits that ascended that bloody platform were instantly annihilated by the swift blow of the knife—the most sudden death, perhaps, that man has invented? The idea is as repugnant to reason as to sentiment.'

M. DESMOULIN'S MEDIUMISTIC DRAWINGS.

'Le Mouvement Psychique,' for June, records a meeting held at the request of the Institute for the Study of Psychic Science, in Paris, in which Dr. Moutin, after discoursing on hypnotism and magnetism, showed experimentally the results of magnetic hypnotism on certain persons present. This article is followed by one by M. Jacques Brieu, on the drawings of the painter, M. Desmoulin, which appeared first in 'La Nouvelle Revue' (June 1st); from this we summarise the following:—

Although M. Desmoulin (whose mediumistic drawing powers have only developed within the last twelve months) had occasionally assisted at séances before his own initiation into mediumship, he was rather unfavourably disposed towards Spiritism, having on several occasions witnessed flagrant fraud in connection with séances.

On one occasion, however, when he was in a circle of friends, the table rose and remained motionless: in the vain attempt on the part of someone present to push it down into its normal position, the table was broken. M. Desmoulin was not sitting at the table as one of the circle, he was merely present as an observer.

He was much impressed by what he had seen, and on returning to his own house, whilst smoking his cigar and reflecting on the matter, he took up a pen mechanically and to his surprise saw that it moved. He raised his hand from the paper and when he put it down again it began to draw strange lines. The first seven or eight productions were little more than scrawls, incipient designs, vases, chairs, &c., then caricatures of heads, and the thoughts of the painter were responded to by "yes," or "no," scribbled here and there on the sheet. A sort of mental intercourse was thus initiated between the unseen intelligences and the painter.

One evening the words were written: "Take a pencil." M. Desmoulin obeyed, and from that time the drawings developed more fully. These drawings were signed: "Instructor." M. Desmoulin urged that a more explicit designation should be given, but in vain. He was told: "Call me Spinoza if you like." Once he was told: "I am Botticelli," evidently in raillery.

The style of "Instructor" is unlike M. Desmoulin's own style, as also is that of "The Old Master," and "Astarte," who have taken the place of "Instructor." And the style of the three differs from one another considerably and unmistakably; "Astarte" draws landscapes, which M. Desmoulin and the other intelligences do not.

The drawings of "Instructor" are less clever than the others, but they are powerful and affecting. "The Old Master" is more delicate and graceful; some of the sketches in colour are full of grace and fantasy. "Astarte" often attains extraordinary intensity of expression. The landscapes done with three pencils—red, blue, and yellow—are remarkable. One of these is a sunset; earth, sky, and water are dyed in colour. These automatic delineations generally betray faults in drawing of which M. Desmoulin would not himself be guilty. The effect aimed at is always given; expression always well suggested. The brows are disproportioned, the chins generally prominent. These exaggerations seem to be intentional; but what is their signification?

These dream heads do not seem to belong to earth; their sex cannot be determined; they are sad, with a sadness indefinable; some of them are terribly sad and profoundly intense.

M. Desmoulin accomplishes one of these drawings with extreme rapidity. Some are executed in five minutes, the longest in about three-quarters of an hour. He changes his pencil constantly. Sometimes the movement of the hand is so violent that the pencil is thrown down. If others are present the painter's mediumistic faculty is in some way affected; either the force will not operate, or, more usually, its movements are much accelerated.

He holds his pencil in various ways, often in the left hand. Whilst this drawing is proceeding he talks, smokes, or reads. Sometimes he is directed not to smoke, or not to talk much; he is told that it exhausts him too much. He is sometimes told not to notice what he is drawing. If he disobeys, his hand writes: "I have forbidden you to look." Often he works in the dark, or the work is upside down. Sometimes the design is begun where it would ordinarily end. The pencil, moving from a corner of the sheet, begins with the shading and then proceeds with the outline. M. Desmoulin's hand does not always work with equal facility; sometimes an unfinished drawing will be violently torn up. Among the three hundred faces in his studio some few have been recognised.

Occasionally he derives assistance from this automatic method in the carrying out of his normal work. On one such occasion, when he was trying vainly to get a satisfactory likeness of a young girl who was sitting for her portrait, his hand wrote: "Fool! take a pencil." He did so,

and obtained a good sketched likeness, but in a different position from the one he had chosen.

M. Desmoulin has had many written communications which he intends to collect into a volume some day. The handwritings differ in character, both from the painter's and among themselves.

M. Brieu's article concludes with references to other artists who have exhibited this automatic faculty, among them M. Victor Sardou.

Can any reader of 'LIGHT' inform us whether we are correct in thinking that a lovely picture called 'La Bienheureuse,' which was exhibited in the Guildhall about three years ago, was the work of M. Desmoulin? We shall be obliged if anyone can corroborate or correct this recollection.

H. A. D.

PROGRESSION OR REINCARNATION : WHICH ?

The Rev. Minot J. Savage in a recent discourse declared his conviction that in the life beyond death we simply go on just what we make ourselves by our lives here, and that we shall possess 'psychical bodies a thousand times more real' to us than those we have left behind. He believed that there is a real world which, to its inhabitants, corresponds with what they were familiar with here, and that they have some sort of clothing, houses, environments; a world with mountains, trees and rivers that will be an improvement upon this and which will afford to its occupants opportunities for infinite progression; a world in which we shall awake 'with a cry of joy—not that we are disappointed, but that it is something better even than we anticipated.'

But, if we are to progress in the other world what necessity is there for reincarnation in this? Mr. Savage dealt with this problem in his usual clear and sensible fashion. He said:—

"There are a great many wise people telling us at the present time that it is necessary for us to live every conceivable kind of life here, and go through every conceivable experience, from the prince to the pauper, from the saint to the wildest and worst sinner. I will stop simply long enough to say that I do not see why. When somebody gives me a reason for that opinion, I will try to understand it."

"There is another thing that the believers in reincarnation are accustomed to say to us,—that we must have it to explain the injustice of the world. To me it does not explain the injustice of the world one single particle: it only pushes it back out of sight. If it was a sin in the life before this one which led to the suffering I am going through in this, what led to the suffering I went through in the last? Why, the sin in the one that preceded that, and so on back; you simply keep on pushing it back through countless millions of years, and never get anywhere. They say all the evils are to be explained by what happened in the life preceding; but, if you live over again, you get to the end of it some time, and then you have the same problem facing you as you have now. Either we were always just alike, if we have been living forever, or else we were always different, or else we were made alike in the first place, and given different environments which caused the differences in us. In either case God is ultimately responsible for all the diversities and differences of character, so that this does not explain things any more than if you take a puzzle which I do not understand and hide it behind a curtain. When I go behind the curtain, it is still there; and I do not understand it, and a million curtains would make no difference. It would be the same thing when you came to the last one; it would be the same old puzzle."

"If it were proved to me to be true, my objection would be worth nothing; but still it would not be desirable to me. Suppose the person that I love best in all the world should die, and I live on for twenty-five years. By the time I got there that person might be reincarnated. Instead of looking forward to meet her, I would have to be waiting for her. By the time she got back I might be reincarnated. From anything I can see we might be missing each other in this way for several millions of years. It seems to me a hopeless kind of doctrine any way you take it; and the curious fact is—and this, I confess, does puzzle me beyond expression—all the Hindus, all the Buddhists, twice over as many Christians as there are on the face of the earth, are engaged with their utmost power—all their philosophies, all their religions exist—to the one end of getting rid of being reincarnated, while here we are picking it up as though it were a new find, and something very delightful. The one object of all their religions is to escape it. Before we take it up too readily, I

think it would be worth while to find why they are working so hard to get rid of it.'

If the life after death is really *life*; a state of consciousness in which the individual can think, remember, regret or rejoice, learn, love, act, and improve; if it is a condition of being where objective surroundings reflect and reveal the subjective states of the thinker, and where scope and opportunities are afforded to him for the expression of his innate powers and the satisfaction of his ideals—if, in short, the life beyond *is life* in any real sense, where man's social, intellectual, moral and spiritual powers are exercised, and the work of his evolution is continued, and if his experiences and associations over there are educational and beneficial, what possible necessity can there be for reincarnation in this rudimentary sphere? What use can there be in repeating the painful pilgrimage of earth?

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.

La Paramnésie.

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' for May 4th, there was a review of the French 'Revue des Etudes Psychiques,' of which the article 'La Paramnésie' especially interested me, so that I much regret we were not given any account of the next number in which M. Ernest Bozzano was to give his own hypothetical explanation of this experience of having seen a place before, when this was out of the question normally. There occurred to me at once, as of great importance with regard to any such explanation, a story I had recently heard of a lady dreaming of a house, recognising it afterwards and being herself recognised as the figure that had haunted it. I wrote to my informant hoping to have names and dates before sending the story for publication.

Meanwhile, in 'LIGHT' for June 22nd, I read what seemed to me to be the same story, quoted from the 'Spectator.' Having now received my friend's reply, I think there must be at least two distinct stories of similar character. One is related by Millais in his 'Life,' and the other by Augustus Hare. I have not read them at first hand. As told to me, in the first a lady went to a house she had seen and often been into in her dreams, and was recognised by the caretaker as the ghost who haunted the place. In the second, Augustus Hare gives the name of Mrs. Butler, who lived in Ireland, came to England and bought a very desirable house cheap and then found it had the reputation of being haunted. She also recognised it at once as the house of her dreams, but commented on some change, which the caretaker then said had been recently made. The caretaker recognised Mrs. Butler as the ghost.

It would be interesting to know if this is a distinct story from 'G. P. H.'s' version of the house in Scotland where 'Lady B.' is the person to recognise the ghost.

C. J. VESEL.

[Our correspondent will perhaps notice the statement in last week's 'LIGHT' that M. Bozzano has expressed the opinion that 'the impression of "déjà vu" ("already seen"), experienced by so many, is due to premonitory dreams.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

Organisation.

SIR,—Allow me to endorse every word of Mr. Harte in your issue of June 29th. I wish every Spiritualist of a different opinion would find an hour for properly pondering what Mr. Harte says.

In some back number of 'LIGHT' I have read something to this effect: 'When will these people understand that we are no cult, no creed, but science, investigation, study?' I follow the spiritualist Press of different countries fairly well, and wish to say, you are right. The Americans deplore that their organised societies decline. This is no sign of weakness in Spiritualism, but of strength.

Spiritualism *will* not and need not, and ought not, to be organised! How could electro-magnetism, or astronomy, or psychology, or any other science be 'organised'? Spiritualism is no creed, no congregation, no religion that dogmatises about old facts it cannot demonstrate. Spiritualism wants facts, and its *raison d'être* is facts—is knowledge. It is to be made a science; and then true religion will come out of it without any nursing whatever by churches, priests, creeds, or other hypnotising accessories, which leave people in the cold when they live and when they die—and especially when their beloved ones die!

A SUBSCRIBER IN DENMARK.

Reincarnation.

SIR,—The other day I read a line by Goethe, which again brought the question of reincarnation before my mind. Goethe says, '*The greatest happiness is personality.*' Now I should like to know what becomes of our personality if we are constantly coming back to earth and taking upon us new personalities, new family ties, and new *rapports* with mankind. The idea is hopelessly bewildering.

At the same time I have noticed that Theosophists and Reincarnationists have made this idea as complete a dogma as any made by orthodox Churchpeople. For instance, heredity of character and moral propensities, &c., is everywhere accepted as a fact, but Theosophists and Reincarnationists have, in my presence, denied the possibility of hereditary moral and intellectual qualities, 'because this does not agree with their conviction about reincarnation.' Now to deny a generally accepted truth because it does not agree with some self-formed doctrine is *dogmatical*, a thing with which we justly reproach the clergy of some orthodox churches, thereby lessening the reverence we all want to feel towards the fountain of the different churches—pure Christianity.

MAD. DE CHRISTMAS.

Denmark.

'Spirit People and Astrology.'

SIR,—'J. M. P.' in his letter to 'LIGHT' of the 6th inst., says he is satisfied with our test horoscope, and is anxious to know what 'the other side' have to say on the question of the influence of the stars on human life, action, and destiny; and if any of your readers can give us helpful information from the 'spirit world on astrology' we shall be very grateful. It has often occurred to me that, while everybody can see the lines in the palm and the faculties of the brain (palmistry and phrenology), the workings of the 'starry orbs,' with their magnetic and ethereal vibrations, are unseen; and it is naturally easier to believe in what can be seen objectively. Thus, while most persons believe in phrenology and palmistry, the root of both, astrology, is often ridiculed in just the same way as the phenomena of 'ghosts, visions,' &c., are doubted by the majority. But readers of 'LIGHT,' Spiritualists who know of 'unseen witnesses' and of 'living forces' out of material sight, are the very people who will most readily accord a hearing to a 'science that deals' with the agency of 'advanced spirits,' those whom Christians call the 'Seven spirits before the Throne,' the rulers of this Universe under the 'solar logos' whose shining glory we call 'the sun.'

BESSIE LEO.

Remarkable Musical Control.

SIR,—At the charming 'At Home' of Captain and Madame Montague, last Sunday, when a very pretty programme, including a song by Miss Florence Morse, was rendered, the numerous company had the opportunity of witnessing one of the wonders of mediumship, 'the musical control.' A young lady, Miss Groves, was entranced, and, with tightly-closed eyes and automatic movements, moved towards the piano, where she produced the most wonderful weird music, almost awful in its pathos and solemnity. Her body the while swayed in straight and rigid lines, and the expression of the face was rapt and ecstatic.

Why is this phase so rare?

A CONVERT.

SOCIETY WORK.

SOUTHALL—1, MILTON-VILLAS, FEATHERSTONE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Millard gave an interesting address on 'Infinite and Finite Realisms.'—E. B.

PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTITUTE, 36, VICARAGE-ROAD, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Holgate gave an instructive address upon 'The Great Beyond,' to a good audience. On Sunday next an address will be given by Mr. Adams. A public circle will be held on Thursday, at 8 p.m.—S. OSBORNE, Secretary.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BEGLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Brooks (of Hackney) gave an address on 'The Necessity for and Significance of Spiritualism.' A discussion followed which showed that keen interest had been taken in the subject. On Sunday next, July 21st, at 6.30 p.m., Mrs. H. Boddington will give an address and name a baby.—C.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—Under the auspices of the above Union a series of open-air meetings were commenced at Ilford-lane, Ilford, on Sunday last, at 11 a.m. There was a large and attentive congregation. Mr. J. Kinsman presided. The speakers were Mr. J. Adams, Mr. D. J. Davis, and Mr. Greary. There will be another meeting at the same place and time on Sunday next.—D. J. Davis, Secretary.