

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Many think it mere rhapsody when we say that there is not and cannot be any isolation,—that every atom has physical relations with every other atom, that every slightest movement is propagated indefinitely through space, that every 'vagrant thought' is indeed a vagrant—perhaps 'going about seeking whom it can devour.' We know not what gravitation is but we know that every atom depends upon it, and that it depends upon every atom. We know not what God is, but we know that we are His manifestations, and that He is our Life,—that we live and move and have our being in Him, and that He lives and moves and has His being in us.

It is the same with this surging herd we call the Human Race, as 'The Independent Thinker' finely says:—

Who seeks his own success through selfishness defeats it, and by slaying others slays himself. None is happy, save as all are happy. As each human being is himself the composite of infinite lives, which unite as one in the unity of his self-consciousness, so the race is one—a single race-consciousness evolved from a multiplicity. As one heart receives the pulsations of the whole race, so one mind incorporates the universal intelligence of Nature, by which we think, through which we live. We are all moved by one impulse through the Universal Heart, and think in common through the Universal Mind. When we are moved by the race-impulse to deeds of tenderness and thoughts of sympathy; when through the One Mind we come in touch with the Infinite, and merge self-interest in the great world-wave of love and the unity of souls; then do we draw God out of the Mystery of Being, throne Him in the breast of Man, and reveal His Image in a Glorified Humanity.

An acute writer, in 'The Progressive Thinker' (Elder H. W. B. Myrick), gives us a valuable article on 'The strength of Christianity.' It almost ideally shows how Spiritualism can purify and spiritualise the crude beliefs of the earlier stages. He finds the strength of Christianity in the idea of Atonement. The so-called 'orthodox' idea of the Atonement was indeed 'crude,' but it had a precious spiritual germ in it. This germ was the heavenly truth that the higher and purer natures are always bearing, and bearing away, the sin of the world. The following, the conclusion of this thoughtful and beautiful Essay, will repay slow reading and gentle thought:—

I have had on earth many mediators, good men and women who tenderly covered my faults, patiently bore with my weaknesses, helped my infirmities. I needed them often, and I still need them. So when I pass 'over the river' may I find Jesus, or my dear daughter, or some beloved spirit who shall stand between me and the higher life, pitying my weaknesses and helping to lift me to that which is better.

A good man said to me: 'When I pray I somehow find God and Jesus slip out of my mind and I am talking to my mother whom I believe to be in heaven.' Why not? This is the genuinely human feeling out of which grew the Catholic dogma of the 'Intercession of the saints.' It is pertinent to remark also that every dogma of the Church, no matter how grotesque and wildly improbable it is, has beneath it somewhere a palpable truth, and it is the part of wisdom to inquire for that truth. If a human need has been fed upon a myth, let us not forget or ignore that need when we explode the myth, but rather attempt to satisfy it with something rational, natural, and attractive.

So of the atonement and a mediatorial sacrifice. As long as there is sin, man will need an atonement and there will be a demand for sacrifice. This is not a theological problem but a human nature problem. We may reject the orthodox theory of the atonement, but the demand of the sinful and sorrowful soul still and will remain

'As long as the heart hath sorrow,
As long as the heart hath woes.'

The strength of Christianity is that it offers a Sin-Bearer, and that an imperfect world has need of one. The strength of my life, or of yours, if we save men, is because we become sin-bearers, enter into the lives of the needy with our love, and purity, and hope, and so make a sacrifice for them, an atonement that will uplift and save.

Mr. F. J. Gould writes concerning a London rector's kindly experiment for providing a place of rest for working men who are brought to the locality, by train, too early for work. Here they may smoke in peace, and join in a brief liturgy, if they like. Says Mr. Gould:—

I appreciate neither the liturgy nor the tobacco smoke; but I pay my respect to the spirit of considerateness which has provided this simple comfort for the wayfarer. Had the Church of Christ always been so thoughtful, it would not to-day be reduced to intellectual beggary. It is too late to redeem the Church which claims to redeem. Amid its graveyard it stands, and will soon be itself the most melancholy tomb in God's Acre. Another Church is rising, of which the charities performed at All Hallows are a smiling type. This Church of the Morning will speak its welcome to all the world: 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' It will dedicate its wisdom to the problems of the economic life; its intelligence to the exposition of science; its genius to the promotion of art; its passion and soul to the consolation of doubt, sadness and suffering. The saints will no longer be its peculiar care. It will be the centre of the world's wit, industry and mirth.

Under the title 'Are you there?' the following lately appeared in a London newspaper:—

The Cunard steamer *Lucania*, which arrived at Liverpool on Saturday, reports having been in communication at sea by Marconi's wireless telegraphy on Wednesday last with the same company's outward-bound steamer *Campania*, which left Liverpool on the 21st inst. The following is the report of the captain of the *Lucania*:—

12.48 a.m. received first signals from *Campania*—asks are you there. Replied, 'Yes, here; *Lucania*.'

Campania: 'Have you got anything for us?'

'Yes. *Lucania* sends best wishes for pleasant voyage. All well.'

Campania replied: 'All right, thanks. Message for Captain McKay—'Captain Walker sends his respects to Captain McKay. We have experienced very bad weather since leaving Liverpool. All well.'

Lucania: 'Message received all right, thanks.'

Campania: 'Have you seen any ice, or have you experienced any fog?'

Lucania: 'No; have seen no ice nor experienced any fog. Have had fine, clear weather up to the present. Our position—Lat. 48.15, long. 38.39.'

Campania: 'Thanks. Our position is Lat. 48.50, long. 38.29.'

After having been in communication about one hour, Lucania at 2.45 a.m. said: 'Good-bye, pleasant passage.'

Campania at 2.50 a.m. returned compliments. Communication lasted two hours. The ships were thirty-six miles from each other when the above conversation took place, and were not visible to each other at any time.

Note that,—and were not visible to each other at any time,' that is because of distance: but why should not an invisible being do what an invisible instrument can do,—click, rap, or even suggest vibrations of thought?

We have received from America some highly instructive comments upon the Governor of Missouri's Proclamation calling for prayers for rain. He has been backed by certain divines who sniff at 'laws of Nature,' and boldly say that what we call 'law' is only sequence as far as we have gone. Prayer, they say, is anyhow a spiritual force by which we can become co-workers with God, presumably even to ending a drought. 'The Christian Evangelist' takes the plunge, and says:—

Christians believe in a personal God, who is behind all natural laws, and who is the source of such laws. He ministers to man's material needs through these laws, which are but the outgoings of His infinite will. Science has not yet discovered all the laws and the conditions which govern the weather. Meteorological conditions change and upset the calculations of the weather bureau and the weather prophets. There are unknown forces at work here which elude the investigations of science. Who is wise enough to say that none of these forces or conditions, &c.

We can imagine the rest. 'The New York Journal' will have none of it. Prayer for rain is, in its opinion, for darkest Africa, not for brightest America. The following hits hard:—

It is an insult to the Divine Wisdom of the universe to suppose that we should be deliberately allowed to suffer, if it were right or possible that a special display of omnipotent kindness could preserve our crops, our fortunes, and our tempers. On the day set apart for special praying for rain in one instance the temperature was the highest recorded, and the signs of rain were absolutely wanting—an excellent rebuke to the idea that fasting and praying AGAINST NATURE'S LAWS could produce any result.

Men have work to do on this earth, and they are put here to do it. When they came here first the earth was covered with forests, swamps, jungles, marshes, snakes, mammoths, sabre-toothed tigers, and other unpleasant things. It would have done no good to appoint an especial day of prayer for the extinction of the mammoth, another for the drying up of swamps, &c. Men had to cut down the forests, drain the swamps, destroy the dangerous beasts. They were not sent here to play the part of whining children. They were sent here to SUFFER and WORK!

But 'The Journal' acknowledges the value of prayer, in its right place and for right ends.

We have received the first number of 'The Psycho-Therapeutic Journal: a Journal of the proceedings of the London Psycho-Therapeutic Society.' It contains a number of 'Introductory Notes,' one of which fairly indicates the contents of this number:—

With regard to this, the first number of the 'Journal,' it is neither more nor less than a simple record of the formation of the society, published, as before stated, in the interests of those members and associates who have been unable to attend the meetings, and also of those intending subscribers who are desirous of knowing what has been done. Subsequent numbers, which will be issued as circumstances require, will in all probability be on a more elaborate scale; but this modest production is considered all that is necessary to satisfy the current need, and it is therefore put into circulation as an official print of what it is sincerely trusted will prove an influential and beneficial society.

We hope so, too. The offices of the Society are at Trafalgar-buildings, Northumberland-avenue, Charing Cross.

Part XLI. of 'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,' a massive volume of 649 pages (Kegan Paul, Trench and Co.), is entirely appropriated by Professor James Hervey Hyslop's 'Further Record of Observations of Certain Trance Phenomena.' In other words, it is Dr. Hodgson's story of Mrs. Piper's mediumship continued by Dr. Hyslop, and with precisely the same result,—that telepathy and hypnotism do not account for the facts. Whatever Mrs. Piper's opinion may be, these patient investigators, who know a thousand times better than Mrs. Piper what she said and did and wrote, come to the conclusion that 'Spiritism' alone can cover the facts.

ABOUT HYPNOTISM.

(Continued from page 512.)

IX.

By this time, even the enemies of Magnetism were beginning to be ashamed of the report of the Royal Commissioners of 1784; and in 1825, Dr. Foissac proposed to the Academy of Medicine to examine into the whole subject again; and a small committee of the members was appointed to look into the matter generally, and to report whether another formal examination by the Academy was advisable. I quote here the report of this preliminary committee, because it shows very well the generally recognised *status* of Animal Magnetism at that period:—

'1. The decision formed in 1784 by the Commissioners charged by the King to examine Animal Magnetism, should not, by any means, sanction you in dispensing with examining it *de novo*, because in science no decision whatever is absolute and irrevocable.

'2. Because the experiments on which this judgment was founded appear to have been conducted without the simultaneous and necessary assembling together of all the Commissioners, and also with moral dispositions which, according to the principles of the fact which they were appointed to examine, must cause their complete failure.

'3. Magnetism, thus judged in 1784, differs entirely in theory, processes, and results from that which close, attentive, and strict observers, and which enlightened, indefatigable physicians, have studied in later years.

'4. It is to the honour of French medicine not to remain behind German physicians in the study of the phenomena, which the enlightened and impartial favourers of Magnetism declare to be produced by this new agent.

'5. In considering Magnetism as a secret remedy, it is the duty of the Academy to study it, to subject it to trial, finally, to take away the use and practice of it from persons quite strangers to the art, who abuse this means, and make it an object of lucre and speculation.

'After all these considerations your Commission is of the opinion that the section should adopt the proposition of Monsieur Foissac, and appoint a special commission to direct their attention to the study and examination of Animal Magnetism.'

(Signed by the five Commissioners.)

This was in October, 1825, and in the following May, after much hesitation and debate, the second Commission was appointed (that known as the Commission of the Academy of Medicine), consisting of eleven physicians, all men whose ability and good faith were above suspicion. Two of the eleven did not attend to their duties, and therefore did not sign the report, but the other nine signed it unanimously; and they seem to have investigated Animal Magnetism very conscientiously and thoroughly, for it was not until June, 1831, that they made their report. That elaborate report fully recognises the reality of the phenomena produced by the magnetisers; but even its thirty 'conclusions' are too lengthy to be quoted here. Suffice it to say that the Commissioners left theory strictly alone, and confined themselves to the verification of facts, among which were magnetism at a distance, clairvoyance, prevision, introvision, &c.; and that the last of their thirty conclusions ran thus:—

'30. The Commission has not been able to verify, for want of opportunity, other powers which magnetisers have declared to exist in somnambulists; but it has collected and communicated facts sufficiently important to induce it to

think that the Academy should encourage the researches on Animal Magnetism, as a very curious branch of psychology and natural history.'

After two days of violent discussion, the report of the Commissioners was accepted by the Academy of Medicine, on condition that it should not be printed, although manuscript copies were allowed to be taken, whereas twenty thousand copies of the unfavourable report of the Royal Commission of 1784 had been industriously circulated by the enemy. It might have been expected that so favourable a report as this later one would have created a 'boon' in Animal Magnetism; but, although it undoubtedly lifted a weight from the hearts of the friends of Magnetism, those friends had for years so industriously belittled the Royal Academy of Medicine—the same body which, they contemptuously declared, had prohibited the medicinal use of mercury, of Peruvian bark, and even of emetics—that they did not gain much now by boasting of its pronouncement in their favour. On the other hand, the enemies of Magnetism were spurred on by the report to greater opposition. It takes some years for any important movement to grow into a practical issue; and it was only by 1830 that the efforts of Mesmer and his disciples were bearing fruit. The decade from 1830 to 1840 was the flood tide of Magnetism on the Continent of Europe; although in England Mesmerism (as it was generally called here) did not reach high water-mark until the following decade: for England lagged behind the rest of the world in Magnetism, as it now does in Hypnotism. Until the publication of Colquhoun's 'Isis Revelata,' in 1833, Animal Magnetism was almost unknown here.

It is strange now, and somewhat pathetic, to read the triumphant prognostications of the speedy and universal acceptance of Animal Magnetism in which the writers of that epoch indulged. Some countries then made a practical course of Animal Magnetism obligatory before taking a medical degree; some universities had established courses of lectures on the subject and offered prizes for essays on it; in many cities magnetic institutions had been founded; and in 1838 it was considered a moderate estimate to say that one-fourth of the doctors in Paris devoted themselves to mesmeric practice. 'Doctor's clairvoyant' had by that time become a regular profession, and hardly a town of any size but boasted its magnetic physician. There was more than one worm in this fair fruit, however. Several causes conspired to counteract the efforts of the magnetisers, and frustrate their hopes; but these causes also took time to grow and gather strength enough to operate with effect; insomuch that while Magnetism was apparently becoming triumphant, the causes that led to its eclipse were maturing.

In the first place, there was lack of agreement among magnetisers with regard to what may be called the fundamental principle of magnetic healing; for many magnetisers still thought that the *crisis* was the great curative agent, and that to abolish entirely the *baquet*, the chain, and the 'touchings' which brought that crisis on, was an immense mistake. Moreover, the new school, which relied on benevolent intention and will power, was in many minor points divided in opinion, not only with regard to the proper method of magnetising, but also with reference to the effects which it was desirable to produce: for instance, some magnetisers said you should never allow your patient to remain in the deep sleep for more than half an hour; others told you to let him sleep for a week, if he would. The very want of cohesion among magnetisers saved them from quarrelling over those points; but their differences were a source of weakness, nevertheless, and seemed to justify the assertion of the enemy, that the magnetisers were themselves ignorant of the subject they professed to teach.

As a matter of fact, cures were brought about by the systems both of Mesmer and of De Puysegur, and every operator found his own method successful; but this, which ought to have been an additional reason for listening to the claims of the magnetisers, only intensified the prejudice against them; for it was not to reason but to passion that the enemy appealed, and they spared no effort to stir up hatred against both Magnetism and magnetisers. The Commission of 1784 had sent to the King a secret and supplementary report, which said that the practice of Magnetism

would be attended with danger to the public morals. This hint was taken by the adversaries, who greedily seized upon the admission of the magnetisers themselves, that Magnetism in the hands of wicked men might be used for bad purposes—like many other things, excellent in themselves; and they did not hesitate to shamefully exaggerate the supposed danger, even affirming that Magnetism acted, in great part, by stirring up the sexual instincts of the patients—an explanation of the curative process which is not only intrinsically ludicrous, but shows complete ignorance of the subject; for one of the most marked and characteristic features of the magnetic state is the total suspension, for the time being, of those very instincts. The accusation of sexual immorality is one of the easiest to bring, and one of the most difficult to disprove, as the early Christians found out to their cost; it is the accusation that is the very first to occur to minds of a low order, and it is accepted without proof by the ignorant and depraved, who judge of others by themselves; and, although no reputable opponent laid stress on it, that accusation undoubtedly had some effect in scaring the general public away from Magnetism.

Another slander put forth about Magnetism was that it was productive of insanity. It seems strange that this should have been believed, for it had been proved that one of the specific effects of Animal Magnetism was the cure of some forms of insanity and the alleviation of others; but the evil report was believed because in ignorant hands Magnetism was sometimes productive of grave accidents. It is well-known to magnetisers that an aggravation of the symptoms of a disease is frequently a first effect of Magnetism; and the occurrence of this aggravation is regarded by experts as a 'crisis' prognostic of cure; but it occasionally happened that inexperienced persons were frightened by unexpected incidents of that kind, and allowed other people to interfere, the consequence being 'cross-magnetism,' resulting, perhaps, in a series of fits, perhaps in delirium, or coma, that lasted for hours, or even days. Of course, these unfortunate accidents were made the most of by the enemies of Magnetism; and it frequently happened that while the occurrence itself was trumpeted everywhere, its sequel was not reported at all; so that, although the sufferers invariably recovered after a short time, it was currently believed that they had become permanently insane, or were dead.

EXPERTO CREDE.

(To be continued.)

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall (*entrance from Regent-street*), on the evening of Thursday next, November 7th, when an Address will be given by

MR. PERCY W. AMES, F.R.S.L., F.S.A.,
ON

'THE SPIRITUAL ORDER.'

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

ON THE EVENING OF THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21st,

THE REV. J. PAGE HOPPS

Will give an Address on

'Professor Hyslop's Record of Observations
with Mrs. Leonora Piper.'

One or more members of the Council of the Alliance will be in attendance at the rooms, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., every Wednesday, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., and will be pleased to meet any friends who may wish for an interview.

In accordance with Rule XV. of the Articles of Association, the subscriptions of Members and Associates elected after October 1st will be taken as for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1902.

THE PHENOMENA CALLED SPIRITISTIC.

BY DR. FREDERIC H. VAN EEDEN.

AN ADDRESS READ AT THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
CONGRESS OF PSYCHOLOGY, IN PARIS.*(Continued from page 514.)*

My personal impressions have been subject to the following variations: During the first series of experiments, in November of last year, I had on two or three occasions a very vivid impression that the man whose relics I had brought with me, namely, a pair of gloves, and who died sixteen years ago, was a living spirit, and in direct *rapport* with me through the intermediary, Mrs. Thompson; a number of small details gave me a sense of the evidence being complete. When I returned to Holland I discovered that there were inexplicable errors. If I was really holding intercourse with the deceased he could never have made such errors as I found in my notes. And what was noteworthy was that these errors were always in the details that I did not myself know, and which I was not able to correct at the time.

Consequently my opinion changed. The facts were not the less certain and marvellous, and impossible to attribute to fraud or coincidence. But I misdoubted the impression I had received that I had really been associated with the spirit of a deceased man. I thought that my connection had been only with Mrs. Thompson, who might have had some abnormal power of gaining information, and who might have in all good faith impersonated a spirit. In doing this she must have been guided by involuntary indications on my part, approving or negative. How could I otherwise explain the large number of veridical facts which made up a complete body of evidence, and how could I explain the errors on matters unknown to myself?

But during the second series of experiments, in last May and June, when I brought with me a piece of the garment of a young man who had committed suicide five months before, the first impression was renewed much more forcibly. There were striking details. For a few moments it was absolutely as if I was talking to the young man. For a few moments, I say; I was speaking Dutch, and I was understood. The expression of joy and gratitude in the gestures when we had understood each other, was too suitable and too much to the point to be a piece of acting. The way in which the information was given was very remarkable. For instance, the information that he had cut his throat began thus: 'Oh! What a gentle character he has. How kind and gentle! He hides from me the blood on his throat. He does not want to frighten me by the sight of the blood on his throat. He is so considerate.' This indicated in one sentence the character of the young man who had died. 'Nelly' said also: 'Oh! Doctor, I don't see your head any more. How funny you look without a head. Oh! it is he who hides your head' (*i.e.*, the young suicide). 'He is covering your head to show me how they covered his head when he was found dead.'

Up to this point the said spirit did not speak by the mouth of Mrs. Thompson, but presented himself and spoke to another spirit, little 'Nelly,' who gives the information. But finally, after many attempts, the spirit of the young man also spoke direct (took the control, to use a technical term) and tried to pronounce some Dutch and English words. It seemed to me then that I was in a position to detect at what point the veridical information ceased and the impersonation began. Almost imperceptibly the medium takes the part of the spirit, completes the information given, arranges, adds, and finally makes the personality presentable. What is required to enable the medium to do this is encouragement. With a little encouragement and enthusiasm one can see the medium embellish such creations until nothing veridical remains. In this way may be explained the mistakes into which so many sincere Spiritists have fallen.

This, then, is my present position. It is impossible for me to doubt that for a few moments I was witness of the voluntary manifestation of a person who had died. In considering this subject it is necessary to reckon with a certain very common desire to deny subsequently any occurrence out of

the ordinary, and difficult of belief. At the moment one is very sure, on the morrow a man says to himself, 'I must have been deceived.' Hence it is only by repetition that conviction is established.

But it is also impossible for me to doubt that Mrs. Thompson, in all good faith, largely imitates the spirits. For instance, I have serious doubts about the controlling spirits (as Spiritists call them), and I prefer now at sances to act as if they were not there, without denying them, however, but maintaining the rigorously neutral attitude which befits an observer.

The education of a medium is a large factor in the product. Certainly the education of Mrs. Thompson by such a man as Mr. Myers has been excellent, and when we consider how many mediums have been spoiled by the credulous and fanatic we cannot too highly commend him. Nevertheless the subject is so delicate, and the human mind so subtle, that it is not easy to attain perfection in the handling of it. I am afraid too many preconceived ideas entered into the training of the medium which have become ineradicable. Doubtless she does not receive the original and veridical phenomena in complete passivity.* She meets the phenomena with explanations, arrangements, and completions, which disturb the observations and detract from their value.

In my opinion there is no essential difference between the visions of a medium and dreams.† In both the sensitive may be *en rapport* with the region, called supernatural, or the world of spirits, or the collective memory of the race. Prophecies and clairvoyance afford proof that we are in touch with a condition beyond time and space. Holding this conviction, and having observed my own dreams for long, I have tried to establish a connection between my dreams and the somnambulism of Mrs. Thompson. And on three occasions whilst I was in Holland, I succeeded by a voluntary effort in calling 'Nelly' into a dream. Mrs. Thompson announced in the somnambulist sleep that I had called her, the date corresponding with my notes. The third time, and this is very remarkable, I called her, by mistake as I thought, by a name which I did not know; that is to say, meaning to call 'Nelly,' I pronounced the name of 'Elsie, Elsie.' Two days later I received a note telling me that I had said 'Elsie'; that it was not a mistake because there is really a spirit called 'Elsie,' well known to Mrs. Thompson. To me the name was quite new. This little fact might suggest a long digression.

This leads to the conclusion that dreams in which one is able to call someone have a special character; that is to say, that in the dream one has sufficient consciousness of the state and presence of mind to execute a voluntary pre-arranged act. To do this practice and patience are necessary. It is possible sometimes to succeed in modifying a dream at the time, by saying, for instance, 'I wish to dream now of a church, of a certain town,' &c., and afterwards to observe them with complete presence of mind. This does not always succeed, but under favourable conditions it can be done. Nevertheless, these are true dreams in a refreshing sleep. And the successful experiment produces a conviction that nothing henceforward can shake. Unfortunately, lately the *rapport* seems to have been broken.

Time does not allow me to say more on this subject, and I am obliged to pass by many curious details, such as small prophecies and premonitions. Perhaps later I may be able to publish more detailed observations. At present I must conclude with the reflection that we have in the subject before us a region scarcely at all explored, full of interest and without discernible limits. In this region there exists

* It is difficult to conceive how a medium could be trained so as to exclude these 'preconceived ideas' entering and possessing the mind at some point in the training. A medium is not a mere machine, but a rational being, who cannot help considering the facts or avoid forming some opinion upon them. If the spiritistic hypothesis forces itself upon the medium's mind, as it does in many cases upon the investigator's, after a certain number of experiences, subsequent experiences will necessarily not find her without any preconceived ideas. Most investigators have some preconceived idea, generally one antipathetic to the spiritistic hypothesis, and if in spite of this the facts are such as to force them to accept that hypothesis, it is unavoidable that these same facts should strengthen this conviction in a mind already converted to it, as I render this 'preconceived idea' quite 'ineradicable.'—H. A. D.

† See an article in 'LIGHT,' of July 27th, on 'Dreams.'—H. A. D.

possibilities of observation, and even of experiment, on methodical and scientific lines. But therein also lie risks of error, more serious than in any other department of science. And not merely of error, scientific and intellectual, but also of moral error. It is possible to construct hypotheses, religious eschatologies, according to taste, and the passive medium will exhibit your machineries in full function. It is this consideration which should make us prudent even to exaggeration. And it is this which seems indeed to justify the orthodox religions in condemning the evocation of spirits as immoral, as infringing upon secrets hidden from man by the Eternal.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

The objection suggested in the last line seems a particularly weak one, and more especially when it proceeds from a scientist. All the mysteries of Nature are 'secrets of the Eternal' until He awakens in man the spirit of inquiry, and develops the faculties by which these mysteries may be explored and known. We do not consider that man is infringing God's secrets when with indomitable patience and perseverance he analyses and examines the wonderful composition and structure of God's temple, the human body; yet that, too, was God's secret until He taught mankind the science of physiology. How is it that we, who are so ignorant and helpless unless He enlighten and endow us, are so fearful of wresting from the Infinite Mind something He would keep from us? Dangers in this investigation there certainly are, and Dr. Van Eeden's warning is needed, but we cannot think that among them should be reckoned the risk of filching the 'secrets of the Eternal,' for why should He have bestowed on us the power to discover what He would not have us to know? H. A. D.

DR. MAACK'S 'XENOLOGY.'

Among the German psychical journals, a number of the 'Scientific Journal for Xenology' has come to hand; 'Xenology' being explained as '*Fremdwissenschaft*,' or 'The Science of the Strange.' This curious production, not only edited but entirely written by Dr. (Med.) Ferdinand Maack, of Hamburg, does not appear at regular intervals, but only now and then, when the editor has apparently something of which he desires to relieve his mind.

The present issue is called the 'Rothe number,' and is devoted to a discussion of what Dr. Maack calls the 'Rothe-Sellin Scandal.' It is not, like Dr. Bohn's book, so much a description of *facts* in connection with this remarkable case, as a rabid tirade not only against Frau Rothe, Herr Jentsch, and especially Professor Sellin, but against Spiritism itself.

The reason of its appearance at the present juncture is not far to seek. Some nine months ago an article by Professor Sellin was published in '*Psychische Studien*,' called 'A Fight for Shadows,' in which the Professor made great fun of Dr. Maack's 'Fair lady Xenologie,' as he called it. Now it is a good saying 'Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones,' and Sellin's paper has evidently rankled deeply in the breast of Dr. Maack, who writes: 'Sellin has attacked me without scruple, and has endeavoured to make me appear ridiculous; it is not to be wondered at that "he who sows the wind should reap the whirlwind."' And it is a 'whirlwind,' or storm of invective, indeed, which falls on the head of the devoted Sellin in this pamphlet!

Other persons besides Professor Sellin and his friends, Herr Jentsch and Frau Rothe, are also the objects of the writer's animadversions; amongst them being Dr. Maier, editor of '*Psychische Studien*,' to whom a chapter is devoted, and with whom Dr. Maack is very angry, not only for publishing the before-mentioned article, by Professor Sellin, but for the strict neutrality he preserves with regard to the Rothe controversy. Of him Dr. Maack writes that he is 'the slave of his publisher,' and is not fit to be editor of '*Psychische Studien*,' which post he hopes he will soon be forced to relinquish!

Little of interest, and no new facts, are brought out in this lengthy pamphlet; and the style has still less to recommend it. Rude personalities, either outspoken or implied, abound on nearly every page, and one cannot but regret that a man,

evidently of some ability, should allow his temper to so completely get the better of him. With regard to the Rothe question, I have neither space nor inclination to discuss at length Dr. Maack's views on the matter. In his attacks on Spiritism, pure and simple, it is scarcely necessary to say that he rakes up every old scandal and so-called exposure, whether proven or unproven, of every well-known medium; but one passage in this part of the book really seems to demand our thanks for the *facts* it publishes. After speaking of the decadence of Spiritism, especially as shown in the Rothe affair, Dr. Maack writes:—

'Certainly in one way the "spiritistic" movement has made progress; that is in the *mass of its uncritical adherents*, of whom in Berlin alone there are said to be 10,000, with some four hundred (?) mediums, and from fifteen to twenty spiritistic societies. In North America there are—it is said—16,000,000, and in the whole world, in the year 1894, some 60,000,000, with two hundred spiritistic journals. But the quality is in inverse ratio to the quantity. *Religious* Spiritism has increased, but *scientific*, critical Spiritism is as pitifully deficient at the present time as it was twenty, forty, a hundred, or a thousand years ago. Acevado, Aksakoff, Brofferio, Buttlerow, Crookes, Edmonds, Falcomer, Flammarion, Flournoy, Hare, Hellenbach, Huggins, Lombroso, Morselli, Perty, Du Prel, Rochas, Schiaparelli, Varley, Wagner, Wallace, Weber, Zöllner, and others, have done nothing to change this state of things. *Nothing is proved!* There is not one absolute proof or "naked fact" given of the *post-mortem* existence of spirits, or even for the existence of the spirit or soul as an independent entity, and in all probability no such *exact* proof ever will be given.'

Surely no one will grudge Dr. Maack the pride and pleasure he takes in his dear 'Xenologie'; 'A poor thing, sirs, but mine own,' as Touchstone says, in 'As You Like It'; though we unscientific Spiritualists may not be able to discern her merits; but, with such a grand array of names of men of the highest talent and scientific attainments on our side, we need not be greatly discouraged even if the great Dr. Maack is against us.

One chapter is devoted to an account of a conjurer who visited Chemnitz last May, and gave some public performances, at which, on his own hired platform and with his own apparatus, he imitated some of the phenomena witnessed at spiritistic séances; a satisfactory proof to Dr. Maack and all *scientific* occultists that there are no genuine spirit phenomena, and that those occurring in the presence of professional mediums are conjuring tricks; while, as he shows in another place, supposed phenomena with private mediums and private circles are but due to hallucination and hysteria. In fact, 'Spiritism' is really on its last legs, and the only thing which stands on a firm foundation and can never fall is 'scientific psychism'!

But surely, if Dr. Maack's 'facts' are really facts, and there are in the world some 60,000,000 of Spiritists, the majority of whom can never even have been present at a séance with a professional medium, they will scarcely be likely to abandon the belief—which brightens their lives—in the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism, even if it were clearly proved that one or more mediums had cheated and deceived the public by what were mere conjuring tricks. The book in question can do little harm to the cause of true Spiritualism; while the coarseness of its style and of many of its allusions can but repel persons of any refinement. Even skinning rapidly through its hundred and thirty-seven large pages has been a repulsive and uncongenial task; but no honest and conscientious Spiritualist can be otherwise than anxious that the truth regarding the Rothe case should be brought to light. Truth never harms any cause in the end; though it may not be such a simple and uncomplicated matter to prove it in this case as it evidently appears to the great 'Xenologist.'

M. T.

GOD THE FATHER OF MEN is not satisfied if His children simply give Him gratitude for His mercies, or the most loyal obedience to His will; He wants also, as fulfilment of their love to Him, the enthusiastic use of their intellects, intent to know about their Father and His ways. That is what is meant by loving God with the mind. 'Understand Me, understand Me,' He seems to cry: 'I am not wholly loved by you unless your understanding is reaching out after my truth, and with all your powers of thoughtfulness and study you are trying to find out all that you can about my nature and my ways.'—PHILLIPS BROOKS.

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

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd, 1901.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRIOR TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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HELPFUL IGNORANCE.

We have already noted the instructive fact that the late meetings of The British Association were remarkable for nothing so much as the chastened tone of its clever savants. Confessions of ignorance were in fashion, and in every department: in some Sections, indeed, these almost amounted to signals of distress. This is as it should be. We have had our orgies of positiveness: and now will be all the better for the wet bandage and cold tea.

We say this in no hectoring or reproachful spirit. We do not even blame the savants for their old-time assurance, and for their free use of the words 'certain' and 'impossible.' At certain elementary or youthful stages of all life, buoyancy is as inevitable as it is delightful—even though it does hustle a little the less sure. All we intend to suggest is that 'Science' ought to learn the lesson, and be extremely economical of its verdicts, especially in relation to subjects which it confessedly does not seriously study. Herbert Spencer long ago tried to teach the scientists and the philosophers that, as to the ultimate reality, they knew as little as the theists and the spiritualists; and that an atom was as unknowable as a ghost or as God. But the scientists and the philosophers did not learn the lesson, and many of them entirely misunderstood the master. Perhaps if they would read the 'First Principles' again, they might understand him now.

We need not refer again to Lord Kelvin's charmingly naïve confessions of ignorance, as many as they were naïve, nor to other confessors whom we had in mind in other references, but will here specially note that, by a route of its own, The British Association came very close indeed to The Spiritualist Alliance, in relation to that old bone (and the very dry bone) of contention, *Matter*; and that our own helpful confession of ignorance has been largely reinforced by the chastened chant of the Association in its minor key.

The old contention has, of late, resolved itself into a tug of war between Monism and Dualism; concerning which we have persistently urged that it is unnecessary or futile. What is the use of discussing that, when, all the time, we have to confess that we do not know the ultimate substance (*sub stans*) of anything,—the ultimate reality of anything? All this controversy about Monism and Dualism is the merest moonshine, especially as the Monist has to admit that he has now traced his precious *Matter* until it ends in an only inferred ocean of 'Ether,' on whose imaginary

shores he can only stand in the dark and wait. How does he know what he might find if he could go on? All he can do is to say with the great German, Haeckel, 'Whatever there is there, *must* be one with what there is here.' Well, suppose we agree! Tennyson said, 'God and man 'is.' What if we say 'Spirit and Matter is'? We do not much object. In fact, we rather like the idea. Shall we say, Matter is a manifestation of Spirit, on plane II., and Spirit is a manifestation of X on plane I.? Well, but what is X? Why, that actually lands us in a scientific Trinity. And yet, as the theologians say, 'these three are (may be) one.' Or suppose we try it another way:—Spirit is a manifestation of X on plane I., and Matter is a manifestation of X on plane II. Again we arrive at Monism, but then the Monos is neither Matter nor Spirit but an unknown X from whom all things come, and in whom all things 'live and move and have their being'; and that again lands us at The Spiritualist Alliance. But, try it any way; all roads lead to St. Martin's Lane, and eventually to 110.

On the one hand, the experimenter is obliged to find many where once he found only one; and, on the other hand, he is compelled to infer one where once he counted many. Substances, once thought to be 'simple,' have been detected as compound; and elements, that were counted like so many peas in a pod, are now strongly suspected to be only the variants of one; and even that one trembles on the brink of a precipice, or melts away, like hoar frost before a too inquisitive breath of air. 'Who by searching can find out God? who can find out the Almighty unto perfection?' asked the ancient thinker: and may we not say, 'Who by searching can find out the atom's secret? who can understand the life-source unto perfection?'

We say 'atom,' and know not what we mean: we say 'ether,' and know that it is only a word which cloaks our ignorance, or a hypothetical hook on which to hang the latest ghost of a fact. And then what is the supreme fact—not the 'ghost of a fact' but the fact which grasps and dominates all?—this, that when we have got beyond all traces of matter and all mere vibrations, we come up with the tremendous suggestion of mind beyond matter, and purpose within vibrations; and then we hear, with a new thrill of meaning, the ancient proclamation;—In the beginning was the Logos: in the beginning was the Word.

Here also The British Association was true to its vocation this year, in giving us many indications of 'helpful ignorance.' In the Section of Physiology, for instance, the President, Professor M'Kendrick, discoursing of theories of Life, said generally, and not only of the origin of life, 'In no domain of science, except in mathematics, is knowledge absolute: and physiology shares with the other sciences the possession of problems that, if I might use a paradox, seem to be more insoluble the nearer we approach the solution.' That is not a real paradox; it is a serious and stately fact; for the farther we go on the farther do we see along and beyond the mountain ranges, which stretch away like the stern waves of an illimitable sea, dying away by slow gradations into a dream of haze.

Sir John Burdon Sanderson, in moving a vote of thanks, modestly said that the physicist was, at the present moment, principally engaged with the study of elementary questions, and that he and his fellow-workers were 'humbly following the footsteps of the natural philosopher in endeavouring to apply, or, rather, in preparing themselves to apply, physical laws to those elementary questions relating to life, as soon as the physicists would give them those laws':—every suggestion in that really amazing sentence being as good a specimen of wholesome modesty and helpful ignorance as we have ever seen, giving us hope that the physiologist and the spiritualist will run in double harness some day, with great advantage to the world.

CONVERSAZIONE OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

MRS. LEONORA PIPER.

MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, the President, in opening the proceedings, said :—

On Thursday evening, October 24th, the London Spiritualist Alliance held its first assembly of the impending winter session, in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall. There was a very large gathering of Members, Associates, and visitors, the company including :—

Mr. & Mrs. B. F. Atkinson	Miss Eavery	Mr. E. Nixon
Mrs. F. Atkinson	Mr. H. E. Francis	Mr. H. S. Holmes-
Mr. & Mrs. T. H. Angerer	Miss O. Findlay	Pegler
Mr. T. A. & Miss Amos	Mrs. Goodall	Mr. A. G. Pike
Mr. Chas. Adamson	Mr. David Gow	Mr. and Mrs. Puckle
Mrs. Aspinwall	Captain J. W. Carrington	Mr. & Mrs. G. H. Paine
Mr. J. H. Andre	Madame M. Godfrey	Mrs. Powell
Madame Annan	Mr. G. E. Gunn	Miss Porter
Miss E. Allen	Mr. and Mrs. B. D. Godfrey	Mr. Alfred V. Peters
Miss E. M. Alexander	Mr. & Mrs. T. F. Godden	Miss A. Pattinson
Mr. Jas. Archer	Major and Mrs. T. G. Holbery Glynn	Mrs. Parker
Mr. A. Anders	Mrs. W. Gordon	Mrs. W. Paulet
Mr. & Mrs. W. P. Browne	Rev. A. H. Gray	Miss M. Phillips
Mr. and Mrs. Brencley	Miss Adelaide Groves	Mrs. Phillipps
Mr. and Mrs. Gambier Bolton	Mrs. Chas Grant	Miss F. Powell
Mr. and Mrs. H. Bodington	Mrs. S. Gunn	Miss Pursell
Mr. & Mrs. J. Bowskill	Dr. Berks T. Hutchinson	Mrs. Prangley
Mr. & Mrs. H. E. Bell	Miss Grace F. G. Hutchinson	Mrs. Padfield
Mr. and Mrs. Butcher	Dr. and Mrs. Stenson	Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Rushton
Mr. and Mrs. Bowley	Hooker	Mr. W. R. Ray
The Misses Bowley	Mr. W. Homewood	Mr. E. Dawson Rogers
Mr. and the Misses Blyton	Mr. Humphrey Hankey	Miss Dawson Rogers
Mr. and Miss Bertram	Mrs. Hooper	Mr. Dawson Rogers, jun.
Mrs. and Miss Barica	Mrs. and Miss Hett	Mr. G. J. Randall
Mrs. Col. Burton	Mrs. E. M. Hawkins	Mr. J. H. Regan
Miss Bower	Miss E. Heighton	Mr. J. C. Round
Miss Berrill	Mr. Hawkins	Mr. B. V. Rowe
Mr. A. J. Bywaters	Mr. N. S. Hawkes	Mrs. G. W. Rowe
Miss Bain	Mr. T. D. Hill	Mr. R. Rowe
Mrs. Brinkley	Mrs. and Miss Home	Dr. and Mrs. Washington Sullivan
Mrs. A. B. Lewis	Miss M. Hine	Mrs. Snell
Miss V. Bell	Mr. Hoile	The Misses Snell
Miss M. Butterton	Mrs. Heigham	Miss Simon
Madame Bolzani	Rev. J. Page Hopps	Mrs. J. Stannard
Mr. F. Blackman	Mr. C. M. Trelawny Irving	Mrs. Chas. Snowdon
Mr. L. Bristol	Mr. Bernard James	Mrs. Stecher
Mrs. Bell	Miss Johnstone	Mrs. C. R. Stanesby
Miss Bond	Mr. A. Owen Jones	Mr. W. Schon
Mr. Paul Berthon	Mr. A. F. J. Johnson	Mrs. Steintal
Mr. H. R. Boyden	Mrs. S. E. Jenkins	Mrs. H. M. Sweetman
Miss E. M. Beeby	Mrs. and Miss Jackson	Miss Symonds
Miss L. G. Browne	Mrs. Johnson	Mr. & Mrs. W. F. Smith
Miss Bodenham	Mr. Robert King	Dr. Edward Silva
Mr. W. Bensley	Mr. and Mrs. Kingston	Messrs. K. E. & H. Silva
Miss E. K. Bates	Mr. J. Knowles	Miss A. Silva
Miss Florence Ball	Miss E. King	Mrs. Macleod-Smith
Mrs. Banister	Mrs. Kitchener	Mrs. Schindler
Mr. H. W. Bell	Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lucking	Mr. Geo. Spriggs
Mr. & Mrs. C. Cutler	Mrs. C. Laney	Mr. E. W. South
Mrs. F. Clarke	Mr. R. A. Lloyd	Mrs. J. Strewing
Mr. S. Cowper Coles	Miss Florence Legg	Mrs. Simpson
Miss J. L. Crawford	Mr. E. Lucas	Mr. J. Johnson Smith
Mr. H. W. Chambers	Mr. C. Lacey	Mr. Frederick Shaw
Mr. Jas. Cawson	Miss E. Lyndon	Mr. Ernest A. Tietkins
Mr. A. Cuthbert	Miss Linde	Col. G. Le M. Taylor
Miss Coles	Miss Long	Lt.-Col. J. H. Taylor
Mr. H. M. Collison	Mr. L. Loewenthal	Lady Torrens
Mrs. H. B. Chambers	Miss T. Leete	Mr. F. W. Thurstan, M. A.
Mme. Sylvania Costa	Miss M. Ludlow	Miss Agnes Tinworth
Mr. A. Clarke	Miss Ling	Mrs. K. E. Townsend
Mr. W. Laws Caney	Mrs. Lindsay	Miss E. C. Taylor
Mrs. Carr Shaw	The Misses Mott	Miss Tebb
Miss M. Clarke	Mr. J. Martin	Mons. and Mme. C. L. Valentin
Mrs. and Miss Clegg	Miss F. Minchin	Mrs. E. A. Walker
Mr. C. E. Clifford	Miss MacCreddie	Dr. Geo. Wyld
Mrs. L. A. Clifford	Miss Lily MacCreddie	Mr. F. Walker
Mrs. Damer-Cape	Mrs. L. H. Manks	Mrs. Chas. Willsher
Mrs. Chas. Crutchley	Miss Mason	Dr. A. and Mrs. Wallace
Dr. Ellen Colyer	Miss Maddock	Mr. E. W. and Mrs. Wallis
Mrs. M. Couchman	Mrs. Martinez	Mr. E. W. Wallis, jun.
Miss A. Davies	Miss Mills	Mr. & Mrs. Hy. Withall
Mr. & Mrs. J. T. Davis	Mr. Leon Mills	The Misses Withall
Mr. J. Dobson	Mrs. and Miss Manara	Mr. W. H. White
The Misses Dobson	Mrs. Marquis	Miss A. Willmott
Mr. H. P. Dommen	Miss Florence Morse	Mr. Wiseman
Mr. & Mrs. Dawson	Miss A. Marshall	Mrs. Walters
Miss Dawson	Mrs. Murly	Miss E. S. Windsor
Miss Dyson	Mr. M. Montague	Miss Wade
Rev. Dr. Maurice Davies	Miss McCallum	Mr. Sidney V. Webb
Mrs. J. Daviss	Miss Marshall	Mr. E. Martin Webb
Miss H. A. Dallas	Mr. C. McBride	Miss Woolf
Miss E. D'Odinardi	Mrs. A. C. Morgan	Mr. J. A. White
Miss Jessie Dixon	Mrs. C. H. Morgan	Miss N. K. Whitney
Mrs. Davis	Miss Nordheimer	Mrs. M. E. White
The Misses Davidson		Mrs. Whileher
Miss E. S. Evans		Mrs. Waldron
Mr. E. J. Edwards		Miss Muck-Wall
Mr. H. S. Evans		Mr. Wall
		&c., &c.

Ladies and Gentlemen—Friends : Once again, as the years roll on, I have the pleasure of welcoming you to the first meeting of a series which will take place during the coming months, and I should have been content to-night to leave you in the hands of our friend, Dr. Washington Sullivan, who will presently address you, without any further remarks on my part, but a little event has occurred during the past few days which it is thought calls for a few words from myself. As many of you know, our friends of the Psychical Research Society—or some of them—have come over to our camp ; I do not mean to say they have joined the London Spiritualist Alliance—but I mean that some who laughed and scoffed at us a few years ago now proclaim themselves as adherents to our creed (hear, hear) ; that is, adherents to the hypothesis or theory that man continues to live after death, and that under certain conditions it is possible for him to communicate with those he has left behind.

Well now, I have a somewhat painful memory of the early history of the Society for Psychical Research. I was, fortunately or unfortunately, a member of its first Council, as was also our dear departed friend, W. Stainton Moses. We sat together and we were sadly distressed by the way in which the Council of the Society for Psychical Research received any suggestion about the possibility of demonstrating the continued existence of man after so-called death. The result was that, being unable to endure it any longer, Mr. Stainton Moses and I resigned our position on the Council. However, time has had its revenges. At that time our friends professed to be anxious to discover the truth, but they hoped, and strongly hoped, that the truth would be that Spiritualism was a fraud. They reminded me of an old friend of mine, a devoted and devout Methodist. He told me that as a young man, when he thought of getting married, he was distressed by anxiety lest he should make a mistake in his choice, so he prayed that he might be directed to a wise selection. But he said he always found himself winding up with the unexpressed but very sincere prayer, 'Only do let it be Polly Jones !' (Laughter.) Well, the attitude of our friends of the Society for Psychical Research was in the early days very much the same ; they were anxious to get at the truth, but they seemed to entertain the earnest desire that it would be conclusively shown that Spiritualism was either a delusion or a fraud ! Happily that time, and that attitude, have passed, and we can now regard the Society for Psychical Research as an excellent friend. It has gone assiduously and sedulously to work, and has proved our case—if it needed proving—up to the hilt. First of all we had our good friend, Mr. F. W. H. Myers, whose memory we all cherish, and we do not forget that Mr. Myers stated plainly that he had come to the conclusion that the spiritualistic hypothesis alone accounted for the phenomena he had himself witnessed. Then there is Dr. Hodgson. You will remember, those of you who have been long acquainted with the subject, how earnestly he pursued all who professed Spiritualism. He was a very Saul persecuting the Christians. Yet he himself, by virtue of his investigations of the phenomena occurring in the presence of Mrs. Leonora Piper, came over to our side, and honestly and fearlessly declared himself a convert to the spiritualistic hypothesis. And now within the last few days we have had a notable volume by Professor Hyslop, of the Columbia University, New York, and published by the Society for Psychical Research—a book of 650 pages, which shows that he, too, a vice-president of the Society for Psychical Research, is convinced that the spiritualistic hypothesis is the only possible hypothesis to explain the phenomena he has witnessed. They are all coming in, and I am beginning almost to have a hope of our good friend, Mr. Podmore. (Laughter.)

Now it so happens that the publication of this notable book has been followed almost immediately by what is termed in the 'Daily Telegraph' 'The Curious Confessions of Leonora Piper.' I think when you look at these confessions you will certainly admit that they really are 'curious.' Personally, I regard them as so foolish that I should not have deemed them deserving of serious consideration were it not

that suggestions have reached me that something should be said about them to-night, from this platform, for the sake of our weaker brethren, or those who have not had sufficient experience in Spiritualism, to see how utterly absurd these so-called confessions are. So I propose, for a few moments, to look at these 'confessions,' instead of passing them by altogether. They were ushered into the world with a flaming placard bearing the words, 'A Blow to Spiritualists,' and it was said that the psychical people of London had been put into a flutter by them. Well, I venture to say that none of us have felt that fluttering. (Hear, hear.) I certainly have not. The 'confessions' have not disturbed me in the slightest degree, and I venture also to say that our friends of the Psychical Research Society are equally undisturbed.

Now what are these confessions? Mrs. Piper begins by saying that she is not a Spiritualist. Well, she was never charged with being a Spiritualist, therefore I do not see why she should 'confess' that. But even if you take it as a confession, and if it means anything at all, it is all in our favour, for if she had been a Spiritualist the enemy would have said she favoured the sitters, or deceived them, as they wished to be deceived. Moreover, when these investigations were commenced, now some years ago, I cannot but think that if at that time she had proclaimed herself a Spiritualist she would not have been deemed a fit subject for the experiments, for the Society for Psychical Research were then like the Jews in their dealings with the Samaritans, as far as Spiritualists were concerned.

Again, Mrs. Piper goes on to say, 'I consider I have been only an automaton.' If that is a confession it is only what we expected. We have always regarded her as an automaton: she wrote automatically, so that she confesses to have been just what we thought she was. Then she says, 'I never heard of anything being said by myself during a trance which might not have been latent in my own mind; or in the mind of the person in charge of the sitting; or in the mind of the person trying to get communication with someone in another state of existence; or of some companion present with such a person; or in the mind of some absent person alive *some-where else in the world.*' (Laughter.) Well, now, if that is her confession it doesn't amount to much, so far as we are concerned. It does not disturb our equanimity in the least. But the very paper, the 'Westminster Gazette,' which asked the question 'What will the Spiritualists Say?' has itself answered the question. Let me say at once I am somewhat surprised at the 'Westminster Gazette,' seeing that that paper has, as a rule, been extremely fair to us; has shown a decent appreciation of our position; and has treated us with something like civility, which is a good deal for a newspaper to do nowadays. (Laughter.) The 'Westminster Gazette' asks, 'What will the Spiritualists Say?' and then replies to its own question, thus:—

'Putting the question of fraud aside, two theories present themselves. One was that Mrs. Piper in her trance state was a transcendent telepathist; the other that she was really controlled by the professing spirit. The first was not less miraculous than the second, for in this case it would be necessary to suppose that Mrs. Piper was not merely a thought-reader, but, so to speak, a brain-sucker, with power to ransack the brains of persons absent as well as present, and to fish up from them matters which had long been forgotten. Yet it is this *incredible theory* that has now been adopted by Mrs. Piper herself.'

Just so. We say the same—we say the theory is absolutely incredible. And Professor Hyslop, in his report of his experiences, extending over 650 pages, discusses this question of telepathy. The idea of telepathy was, I believe, first invented by the Society for Psychical Research, and yet Professor Hyslop attacks it strongly, and shows that it is impossible that telepathy could account for his experiences. Therefore the suggestion of Mrs. Piper that it must have been telepathy goes for nothing.

As for her 'confession,' the only thing she has really confessed is that she goes into trances, and as she does not know what happens when she is entranced, what claim has she to express an opinion on the experiences of the sitters? Indeed, Professor Hyslop expressly says in his record:—

'Mrs. Piper's normal consciousness, as the best evidence goes to show, knows nothing of what she has done or communicated in the trance. She also remains in ignorance of the

communications until they are published in some form, except, of course, when a sitter chooses to tell her something, which, I need hardly say, in my case was nothing.'

One might refer to other flaws in her alleged statement, but it is sufficient to point out that she has in reality made no confession whatever, that she simply expresses an opinion, and that her opinion is not worth the paper on which the reporter has written it. Her statement, which appeared in the 'Daily Telegraph' of Monday last, had been telegraphed from New York by its special correspondent as the report of something which had appeared in the 'New York Herald.' Since then I have seen the London representative of the 'New York Herald.' He called upon me on Tuesday afternoon, and he sent to the Paris edition of the 'New York Herald' an account of his interview with me, and also with the secretary of the Society for Psychical Research. That account appeared in the next morning's issue of the Paris edition of the 'New York Herald.' I have it here, and I am glad to be able to say that I have never seen a more fair, candid, and impartial report of an interview. I can only hope that the New York edition will copy the Paris edition; and I recommend any other newspaper man, who chooses to do so, to read that report in order to learn how it is possible to write an account of an interview on such a subject without showing malice, or predetermination to exhibit bias in some shape or other.

The only other point in Mrs. Piper's 'confession' to which I need refer is the statement that she has left the Psychical Research Society. If that were a fact I do not suppose the Society for Psychical Research would regret it, seeing that they have made their investigations and formed their conclusions. But it may be well to note that even this statement by Mrs. Piper (if she really made it) is incorrect, for I see that Mr. E. T. Bennett, secretary of the Society for Psychical Research, assured the London representative of the 'New York Herald' that it was impossible for her to have left the society, for the simple reason that she never belonged to it! So much for the alleged 'confessions' of Mrs. Piper, in which the Press has been glad to find some excellent copy. (Applause.)

I have now the pleasure to introduce Dr. Washington Sullivan.

DR. SULLIVAN then delivered an able and eloquent address on 'A Spiritual Interpretation of Nature,' a report of which will be given in our next issue.

An excellent musical programme was performed during the evening. The items included trios, 'Sigh no more, ladies,' and 'Queen of the Night,' charmingly rendered by Miss Margaret Dobson, Miss Florence Snell, and Mr. F. Blackman. Miss Margaret Dobson sang 'The Jewel Song' from 'Faust,' her rendering of which was at once brilliant and artistic, and was much applauded. Miss Lucy Dobson gave a violin solo, 'Salut d'Amour,' played with considerable grace and finish. Miss Florence Snell sang 'Carmina' (Lane Wilson) in a voice showing great range of tone and expression. Miss Heighton was an efficient accompanist, and gave, in addition, a pianoforte solo, 'Home, sweet Home'; and Mr. Blackman was heard to advantage in his songs, 'Love, the Pirate,' and 'Ho, Jolly Jenkin!' from Arthur Sullivan's 'Ivanhoe.'

The grand piano used on the occasion was kindly lent by Messrs. Brinsmead.

MR. G. E. BISHOP, of 31, Caversham-road, N.W., wishes us to state that he is at present in Londonderry, carrying out some successful work as a healer, in the treatment of paralysis and sciatica, and that he will not be back in London till the New Year.

SAVED BY A DREAM.—A Dumfries correspondent sends a story of a dream being the means of saving the lives of two girls at Creeton, on Solway side. Two children, daughters of Mr. Dodds, blacksmith, disappeared at nightfall, and search parties scoured the neighbouring country throughout the night, but without success. One of the searchers, Mr. W. Scott, Cassencary, who went to bed early in the morning, dreamed that he saw the lost children in a hole at a certain part of Larg Wood. He, along with others, had passed by the spot in their search without finding the little wanderers, but such was the impression which the dream made upon him that he got up and proceeded to the place. He found it covered with brushwood, and on pushing this aside he found the children sound asleep. The girls were numbed with the wet and cold, but soon recovered.

OLD MEMORIES.

III.

BY JAMES ROBERTSON.

PERSONAL.

An important event in the history of Modern Spiritualism was the visit of Dr. Slade to England during 1876. This circumstance made such a change in my own life's current, breaking down prejudice, scattering doubts, and bringing about a tranquillity regarding the 'great question' which has been permanent, that I desire, before telling the story of Dr. Slade, to unroll some pages of my own biographical scroll. William Allingham says that a man's true life and history is like the bottom of the sea, where mountains and huge valleys are concealed, but for the time I will seek to get under the waves and bring to view the early thoughts on religion which darkened my young life, and the liberation from which has made me so enthusiastic in my proclamation of Spiritualism. Fifty years ago, in all Scotch country towns, the Shorter Catechism wielded an influence which to-day could hardly be thought possible. To say it was only second to that of the Bible would scarcely be a correct statement, for the Bible was usually read and interpreted from the Calvinistic Catechism. Its teachings were inculcated almost every minute of the child's life. At week-day and Sunday school and at home, the great problems of justification, predestination, the decrees of God, Adam's first sin, &c., were continually ground out. It was a terrible nightmare to many, no part of it arousing either love or cheerfulness. Happiness was indeed a great sin which had to be avoided, as if anyone had any right to be happy when our future destiny was likely to be so miserable! According to the Divine plan only a very few could draw the prize of heaven, seeing that Deity, to use Burns' naked rendering of the position, 'Sent one to heaven and ten to hell all for His own glory, and not for any good or ill done by His creatures.' No one questioned the infallibility of this Catechism, and when the Bible was read it never reflected anything but Calvinism; and the texts which seemingly contradicted it, never suggested an idea, or received a moment's attention. The preachers seemed to have a genius for only pointing to the dark and terrible. The fire that was never quenched, the worm that died not, the wide gate and the many which passed through it, the terrible corruption of the human heart, these were what we continually heard. It might be very sad, but who dared to doubt that this was the Divine plan? We did hear faintly sounded at times the names of Thomas Paine and Robert Owen as being men who did not believe the Bible, and we felt it was dreadful to contemplate the awful fate which must be theirs; for what sin could be greater than that of *unbelief*?

It might be thought that those dreadful doctrines of wrath and curses so brutal and cruel were not realised, or people would have gone mad; but the young mind was infected with them at many periods, and any instinctive natural cheer was soon submerged when these awful realities were faced. I suppose some taint of free thinking must have been born with me, and at some moments I would feel an inward protest arising against something harsh in the plan of salvation; but if this feeling dared to come into the open it was soon crushed out, and a prayer offered that all such sinful scepticism would be removed. Brought up with such beliefs, it was only natural that I should seek to get myself enrolled amongst the saved, use all the methods to become one of God's minority; and so for years when revival excitement came round, I attended meetings late and early to try and catch the magic salvation which was walking around; but all brought me nothing. The change of heart, the overmastering power, which struck down some, was never mine, and thus there would come to me at some moments the frenzied thought that I must have committed the unpardonable sin. I got tired of making efforts, and with all the fear that lurked within, I became indifferent. For years I neither believed the creeds of my youth nor disbelieved them. One day a friend placed in my hands the very scarce volume, Proude's 'Nemesis of

Faith,' which I read with fear and trembling. Much of it appealed to my reason, many of my own doubts were there expressed, but with the great weight of authority which surrounded me, I could not trust myself to lean upon the volume. No doubt it made some impression, but the old faith or fear was too strong to allow me to trust myself to such heresies. Later I read extracts from Renan's 'Life of Jesus,' which were printed in a newspaper, and after this I looked at the church standards in a critical vein, and boldly said to myself that such and such statements I could not believe. And yet in spite of outbursts of free-thinking the old horrors would continually come back and dominate me. There seemed to dwell within a mixture of opposing forces. I attended the Secular Hall, and read much of secular literature, but neither this nor the creeds satisfied me; there was a satisfaction with some special speaker, like George Jacob Holyoake, who ever seemed to touch the better side, but permanent peace there was none. I was reading for the first time Paine's 'Age of Reason' when a dark shadow came into my home. A boy of bright parts, round whom my affections were closely twined, was taken from our sight. Sore was my battle. Sorrow and care sat beside me while hope had gone; the old creeds could give me nothing, and secularism as little. Fog rested on my heart. At moments would return the old tyranny and I felt that the blow I had received was God's punishment for reading such a book as 'The Age of Reason.' I went to hear John Page Hopps, then located in Glasgow, and bought at the close of the service his 'Life of Jesus,' but at that time it brought me no peace. I was charmed at times with his luminous thought, which suggested more than I then could grasp. He touched my emotions, and was the instrument in pointing me to some brave book, but oftentimes the thought came, 'What warrant has he for his optimism regarding God?' Soon afterwards, I found myself an adherent of the Unitarian church which Mr. Hopps started in the East End of Glasgow. I got to read Carlyle, Emerson, and Theodore Parker for the first time, and with Unitarianism I thought I must be satisfied—that nothing had been or ever would be known regarding the future; that all was but speculation. Amongst the volumes in the church library was Home's 'Incidents in my Life,' which I tried to read, but there was no place then in my mentality to fit such claims. It seemed vapour only. As Emerson says, 'Our eyes are holden that we cannot see things that stare us in the face, until the time arrives when the mind is ripened; then we behold them, and the time when we saw them not was like a dream.' I had never come into touch with anything of an occult nature, never had any prophetic dreams; what stories I had heard dealing with the supernatural were without any basis of fact to me. It was a surprise one Sunday night after service, when some of us followed the minister, Rev. William Mitchell, to his home, to find this subject brought up, wonderful dreams and other experiences related, which somewhat startled me, coming from the quarter they did. The subject of Swedenborg came round, and I heard about his claims for the first time. The next day I secured his life, by William White, and read it through, but it failed, like Home's book, to impress me in any special way. I might have heard of Spiritualism, but I had only contempt for those who would seek to trifle with the sacred affections of people. I had loved and lost, and had only the memory of my dead left, and was without expectation that the veil would be lifted, and yet I was nearing the point when the clouds would shift and the believing heart be mine. One summer day in 1876, I was crossing the Firth of Forth in a steamer, when I read in the 'Scotsman' newspaper what was called the exposure of Dr. Slade by Professor Lankester. The fraud seemed so very palpable that I rejoiced that this silly and degrading superstition had been put to an end. I seemed to myself to be far away from finding a light to guide my path, and yet I was on the borders of a land which has enchanted me for years. While thinking on the Slade matter, there arose within me the thought, 'What if anything can be behind these repeated exposures? Why does the thing live at all? Is there any natural force at work which people don't understand, and are they building from this the claim that the dead can return?' I determined to get

to the bottom of the mystery. I would investigate all that could be presented and have satisfaction. Some day I may detail my spiritual experiences; sufficient now to say that light came to me in floods. My ideas were not modified so much as changed; the stone was indeed removed from the sepulchre, and my dead who had only been a memory became living presences. I was filled with gratitude for the rich blessing that gave a new colour to life, and so, with this bright illumination, my enthusiasm for its beauty has not abated, but each day I am more and more impressed by its deep import and its power to quicken and renew the world.

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

By 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

(Continued from page 507.)

III.

My third séance with Mrs. Treadwell took place on the afternoon of Saturday, September 28th last. As our clairvoyant relative was then on a visit to the country, the circle was composed only of the medium, my wife, and self. Mrs. Treadwell passed under control very quickly, and the first 'communicator' who took possession of her vocal organs was 'Sophy,' who welcomed us again in her usual sprightly and vivacious fashion, and discoursed for some time regarding one of my sons, as to whom she made a forecast of something which would happen to him about eighteen months hence, and which at present seems not to be very probable. Thereafter the medium was controlled by (1) the ex-Lancashire Doctor; (2) my son; (3) Mr. J. S. R., a business colleague, who has thrice before manifested himself since his demise eighteen months ago, at my sittings with this medium; (4) Mr. S., who was killed by a quarry explosion some ten years ago, and to whom reference has been made previously in narrating my séance experiences; and (5) by 'Geordie,' Mrs. Mellon's control, who in the course of a lively conversation told us of a curious episode they recently had at one of Mrs. Mellon's séances, and which I shall endeavour to verify the first time I have the pleasure of renewing my acquaintance with that lady. 'Geordie' also most successfully mimicked the way in which our clairvoyante sometimes speaks to him when he stays too long in her room, and prevents her getting to sleep. It was so well done that we had no doubt 'Geordie' had been scolded by her often enough during the ten years he has visited our home, and has so frequently spoken to the clairvoyante in his genial and amusing style. Regarding the rest of the communicators above specified, I have only to say that one and all gave us continued proofs of their identity and personality; and we *knew* we were conversing with each of the persons above indicated just as if they had been in earth life, and that there had been little or no change in their character and proclivities by their transition to another sphere.

The medium was next controlled by a person who used her hand to grasp mine with a quick, nervous clasp, and who sharply cried out my name. I replied, 'Who are you?' The answer came at once in the sharp, abrupt way in which he used to speak in earth life, 'G.,' and then the voice uttered the words 'My wife.' I at once recognised this to be my departed young friend, Mr. G., who had passed on so suddenly last spring, and whose first utterance after announcing his name was as to his young and beautiful wife, who, I know, is still lamenting his premature removal. All doubt on the subject, however, was removed by his gestures and voice, as he proceeded to dilate on the wonderful gift which spirit return is to those bereaved of their loved ones, and how sorry he was that he had known nothing regarding it in earth life. He spoke of it as the true Gospel of Christ which should enlighten the world, and thanked me very fervently for taking means to open up communication with him so soon. I then inquired why he had been unable to communicate sooner with me through my clairvoyant relative, and the reply was, 'I was not allowed to do so as I was informed by a spirit doctor who is guardian to Miss ——' (the clairvoyante), 'that

her state of health all the summer was such that no stranger could successfully control her' That was quite accurate; although I had hoped he would at least show himself to her and I could then have completed the chain of identity by showing her his photograph, to which I could have got access through a source known to me. G. then alluded to his sudden transition, stating that he was seized with such sudden agony that no thought of death entered his head owing to the pain, and he could not realise that he was out of the world till he emerged from a sleep into which his spirit body had fallen immediately after becoming incarnate, and that then the control of this medium ('Sophy') had come to him with my message. G. again alluded most sorrowfully and affectionately to his widow, regretting that I could not communicate with her regarding his reappearance; but agreeing with me that that was out of the question. By this time, all dubiety as to his personality had gone, because, as I have said, voice, gestures, and mode of speaking had all been reproduced, and for the first time in all the séances I have had, the hand of the medium was clasped firmly in mine throughout the whole period of our conversation, as if he was afraid to lose hold of me. The whole of his conversation was conducted in the lofty and beautiful style which I used to admire so greatly when he was incarnate, and as I knew he was a very religious man in the *best* sense of the word, I was not surprised to hear him deplore the creed-bound condition of so many so-called religious people, and to rejoice that his entrance into the other life had opened up to him such avenues and vistas of the grand realities of the spirit world. Before he ceased controlling the medium I asked if he had met B., another member of his profession who had passed on recently, but who, I said, was not suddenly removed but had passed over after an illness. 'Yes,' was the reply, 'and B. tells me he was ill about four months.' That statement was quite accurate as regards the illness (phthisis) which resulted in death, but there had been a prior local malady which brought on the later complication. My friend then bade us an affectionate farewell, promising to write me a message at the earliest opportunity, by the hand of the clairvoyante. Should he do so, details will be duly furnished to the Editor of 'LIGHT.'

I have only to add that the internal evidence (if I may so call it) of identity here was overwhelming, and to me most unexpected; his reference to the agony which preceded his demise was particularly striking, as it was the fact that while engaged reading the morning paper he was suddenly seized with *angina pectoris*, and before medical aid could be got had passed on in a period of about ten minutes. This detail was given me after the funeral (at which I was unable to be present), by a near friend who had just called at his house at the moment of his sudden removal.

I have only to add that regarding Mr. G., his life history and all other details, Mrs. Treadwell was in complete ignorance; but her control 'Sophy' was not, for on her again speaking through the medium after Mr. G.'s departure, she told me the nature of his profession, and that he was, when on earth, very clever and a very good man. It is certainly matter of great satisfaction to me to have again been able to take 'sweet counsel' with such a pure and earnest soul, who, I have no doubt, will go onward and upward in the new sphere to which he was so unexpectedly called.

(Conclusion.)

THE HUSK FUND.—In response to the appeal on behalf of Mr. Husk, we have received the following additional contributions: Lady Torrens, £1 1s.; G. Davis, £1 1s.; 'A.B.,' 10s. 6d.

BOURNEMOUTH, BOSCOMBE, AND CHRISTCHURCH.—Will Spiritualists in these districts unite to guarantee the hire of the Assembly Rooms, Grand Theatre, Boscombe—licensed for music and dancing—as a Spiritual Hall? There is seating room for four hundred, a large platform and piano, and the place well lighted with electric lights—in all respects an ideal hall. It can be obtained, I am assured, on a lease at about £70. Many Spiritualists who are visiting these centres have been to me, asking where a Spiritual Hall can be found. I am certain the place would quickly pay for itself, and I am willing to give lectures to inaugurate and sustain the venture. Those willing to assist may communicate with me.—W. H. EDWARDS, Sea Cliff View, Boscombe.

MATERIALISATIONS: 'SCIENTIFIC CONJECTURES.'

Will you allow me briefly to thank Mr. E. J. Clifford for kindly responding to my inquiry respecting the possible connection of ionised atoms with materialisations, and at the same time to disclaim altogether any knowledge concerning electricity. I mis-worded my inquiry if I conveyed the impression that it was based on the possession of knowledge; on the contrary, it was prompted by the desire to acquire it. I am, in truth, aware that I am on dangerous ground, that is to say, that such inquiries from an unscientific person cannot but betray a state of ignorance which to a scientist may seem quite absurd. I am willing to risk this probability if I can elicit from those capable of giving it some information which may suggest even a hypothetical clue to the *modus operandi* by which these phenomena are produced. Anyone who has witnessed materialisations and is convinced that they really occur, will scarcely find it possible not to speculate as to how they are effected. The speculations will doubtless be often wide of the mark, but the facts are too amazing not to arouse inquiry.

I gather from Mr. Clifford's remarks that my suggestion that a current of electricity may be generated in the circle is unwarranted, since no scientific instrument has detected it. (Professor Dolbear does, however, say: 'Both mankind and animals in general can give rise to electrical currents. . . The physiological effect is always extremely minute.') Would the suggestion have been more scientifically reasonable if I had substituted the word 'stress' for current? I see that Professor Dolbear says (in his book: 'Matter, Ether, and Motion') of an electrified body suspended freely in air: 'Evidently the body has in some way modified the physical conditions of the space about it, so that another body in that space is affected somewhat as it would be if touched by an electrified body.' And further: 'Electricity has not been conducted by the ether, but a stress has been, and the ether stress has electrified the second body' (pp. 196, 198).

Mr. Clifford tells us that electricity may be generated by the activity of the brain cells; is it possible that the *stress* thus produced ionises the atoms, which thus become centres round which gaseous matter accumulates, much as water vapour is known to do round ions? And is it not possible, even probable, that the medium serves to collect the minute quantities of electricity generated in the organism of the sitters, and to focus them, somewhat as a lens collects rays of light and heat?

All this may appear foolish enough to a scientist perhaps, and it requires a little courage to venture upon these questions, which may seem much too daringly speculative from a lay person. But lay persons cannot help thinking, and it is better to think erroneously than not to think at all, and still better to take an opportunity of getting erroneous thinkings corrected by bringing them to 'LIGHT.' I am aware that the abstruseness looks like a cover for ignorance; it is a cover which is not, however, intended to conceal. I am profoundly ignorant both concerning electricity and the mode of production of materialisations.

H. A. D.

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.

Musical Phenomena.

SIR,—You will be interested in hearing of the recurrence of the musical phenomena of which I was the subject last February. They commenced yesterday (Sunday) morning, and continued all day almost without cessation until twelve o'clock at night. They were in some respects more remarkable than those I experienced at the beginning of the year, as related in 'LIGHT.' A friend who, like myself, is clair-audient, sits and listens by the hour to the wondrous music, from which he derives great pleasure. The music is still going on. I hope to send you a fuller account in due course.

Grove-road,
Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

Mrs. Mellon's Séances.

SIR,—It appears from a letter in your issue of the 19th inst., that some doubt exists as to whether materialisations really took place at these séances. Whether they did so or not is a question I do not propose to discuss, but I beg to offer some evidence in favour of the affirmation.

A relative of mine has been for some years in the habit of speaking to me through a lady medium at a private circle I attend, and promised to manifest at one of Mrs. Mellon's séances (in Manchester) if permitted to do so. She had so manifested in my house through another medium about two years ago, so she was not unacquainted with the process.

She did appear as promised, and at our next circle asked me if I had noticed a certain peculiarity in the arrangement of a portion of her hair which she had been particular to reproduce, so that I might be convinced of her identity. I had to say that I had not been able to see her face sufficiently clearly to notice that peculiarity, but I asked her, if she manifested again, to make a certain gesture with her arm which I should be able to recognise.

At two séances held about three weeks later (after Mrs. Mellon had been to Liverpool and Southport), my relative appeared, and on each occasion *made the gesture agreed upon*. No other form made, or attempted to make, any similar gesture at either séance.

Subsequently at our circle my relative told me of her experiences on these occasions, and stated that the lack of power, through Mrs. Mellon's frequent sittings, prevented the manifestations from being so convincing as they deserved to be.

Mrs. Mellon was not acquainted with the lady through whom my relative spoke with me, so collusion was impossible.

A. W. ORR.

'The Spiritualisation of Mediumship.'

SIR,—I have delayed replying to Mr. Joseph Clayton's letter, in yours of August 17th, on the chance of someone else discussing the subject.

He says that I regard the mission of Spiritualism in a wrong light; that 'Spiritualism has not come to promote intellectuality, or to found a new sect; it has come purely to *prove* to people that there is life after death; that we can, under certain conditions, commune with the departed; and that many so-called orthodox beliefs have no ground-work in fact.'

Is not this a very low estimate of the mission of Spiritualism? If I were asked to give my conception of its mission, I should say it is to spiritualise man, and render him fit to meet the life that awaits him in the spheres; to transform man the animal into man the angel.

The knowledge of the continuity of life after so-called death, and the ability to commune with our departed friends, are the foundation stones of Spiritualism, as Mr. Clayton says, but the superstructure is a glorious temple, not a mud hut. It is nearer the truth, I think, to say that mediumship is the gateway to the outer courtyard of the Temple of Spiritualism, necessary to pass through, but one should not linger there when the beautiful building within awaits one's attention. The lower phases of mediumship may be the backbone of Spiritualism, but they are not the vitalising nerve current. I would remind Mr. Clayton that I was careful to state that my remarks were addressed to spiritually-minded persons. I was writing for the presumably progressed readers of 'LIGHT.'

With regard to mediumship as ordinarily recognised, I would divide it into physical and mental, the latter including all phases where information is imparted. The former, physical mediumship, alone, I believe, never has and never can permanently convince anyone. It may catch a few for a time, a few that in any case are not much credit to the cause when caught, but doubts will always creep in. This is to be expected when we remember how easy a thing it is to deceive the physical senses. Real conviction, knowledge, comes only to those whose mental senses are satisfied.

If this is all true is not the position which physical mediumship is allowed to occupy amongst Spiritualists somewhat surprising? Still more so when it is recognised, as it surely must be, that practically *all* the fraud of which we hear so much, and which has done so much to degrade Spiritualism, is connected with physical mediumship.

Taking all this into consideration, I would say to Spiritualists, get rid of this incubus of physical mediumship at all cost and set the good ship free from the heavy burden that is doing its best to sink it.

Suppose mediums could be double-locked in patent steel safes, and forms materialised or flowered, &c., produced, what does it all amount to? It is wonderful as an example of psychic power, but does it do anything towards ennobling

and elevating mankind? As far as I am concerned I would not go into the next room to see it. A sitting with a good trance medium is worth all the physical mediumship ever exhibited, in my opinion.

If it rested with me I would do away not only with physical, but with all commercial, mediumship. Mediums should be regarded as sacred persons, above reproach, the real priests and leaders of the people, and should be carefully guarded and provided for as they were in olden days.

I see in the 'Fortnightly' a critic writes of Spiritism: 'There is something intrinsically degrading in the notion that our departed dear ones can still communicate with us, continue to be interested in us, and are watching us all the time. It is the notion of this espionage which is intolerable and constitutes the unpardonable offence of Spiritism. . . . It forms a temporary anodyne for overcharged feelings; it cannot give permanent satisfaction because it arouses the opposition of feelings which in the long run are more powerful. And in any case its interest in the future life is emotional and not scientific.'

This amused me so much that I give it for the benefit of those of your readers who may not have seen it. The writer evidently imagines that heaven is to be conquered intellectually!

Los Angeles,
Cal., U.S.A.

A. K. VENNING.

Inquirers into Spiritualism.

SIR,—With reference to the paragraph in a recent issue of 'LIGHT,' inviting interested people living in the district of Wood Green, to write to me, I desire to state that the result has been to place me in communication with a few persons, some of whom did not know of the existence of Spiritualists in this part of London.

I shall be glad, therefore, if you will kindly insert this letter in your next issue, with a view to letting the friends know that I shall be glad to hear from any others who may desire to meet for study and assistance in the Great Truth.

'INQUIRER.'

SOCIETY WORK.

SOUTHALL.—1, MILTON-VILLAS, FEATHERSTONE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Millard gave an able address on the 'Development of Mind,' which was much enjoyed by those present. A séance followed. These meetings are free, and visitors are cordially welcomed.—M.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—The monthly conference of the above Union will be held on Sunday, November 3rd, at 73, Becklow-road, Shepherd's Bush, at 3 and 7 p.m.; speaker Mr. George Cole. Tea at 5 p.m., 6d. each.—D. J. DAVIS, Secretary.

BRIXTON.—PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTITUTE, 8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last, Mr. Hough gave a fine address on 'Spiritualism.' Good clairvoyance was given by Mr. Ball. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Checketts will give an address. A circle will follow.—A. MILLER.

THE SPIRITUALISTS INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—List of members and literature posted free to any inquirers into Spiritualism on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. The Registrar will also be glad to hear of Spiritualists willing to help in the work of the society. Address Percy Smyth, 66, Thornton-avenue, Chiswick, W.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last, Mr. H. Boddington gave a stirring address on 'Spiritualism and the Church.' He urged all to be honest and sincere in purpose in all they undertook. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., an open-air meeting will be held in Ravenscroft Park; at 3 p.m., conference; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. G. Cole.—C.

CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday last, at the morning public circle, very striking clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mr. W. E. Long, also practical advice concerning mediumship. The evening address upon 'The Spirit of the Church' was received with deep interest and satisfaction. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 3 p.m., children's school, and at 6.30 p.m., an address by Mr. W. E. Long, upon 'Christian Spiritualism.'—J. C.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, DR. FLOOD'S SCHOOL, HIGH-ROAD, SOUTH TOTTENHAM (NEAR SEVEN SISTERS CORNER).—On Sunday last Mrs. Minter related her experiences prior to and after becoming a Spiritualist. The experiences proved very interesting, and were listened to with close attention. Mr. E. Whyte felt that the time at his disposal was too short to do justice to his advertised subject, so it was postponed, and he only supplemented Mrs. Minter's remarks.—A. E. S.

DUNDEE.—On Sunday, October 6th, Mrs. Rutherford; and on the 20th, Mr. J. Walker, both of Glasgow, delivered very acceptable addresses, and Mr. Walker gave successful clairvoyance. On October 22nd, Mr. J. J. Morse, of London, gave us a night with the 'Strolling Player'; and on the 23rd, 'Tien' discoursed brilliantly, to a large audience, on 'After this Life—What?' We think that on this occasion the speaker outshone all his former efforts.—J. MURRAY, Sec.

THE LONDON PSYCHIC SOCIETY, STEINWAY HALL, LOWER SEYMOUR-STREET, PORTMAN-SQUARE, W.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. George Jackson delivered a highly instructive address on 'Inspiration' before an appreciative audience, and Mr. Montague answered questions to the evident satisfaction of all present. On Sunday evening next Mr. W. Banyard (of the United Empire Press) will lecture, and Mr. Montague will answer questions. Doors open at 6.30 p.m.—E. J., Secretary.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—A circular has been issued by the Union of London Spiritualists, setting forth the aims and methods of that body, with a view to secure the co-operation of those societies of Spiritualists in London which are not yet affiliated with the Union. Propaganda meetings, both indoor and outdoor, have been held in many districts, which have been successful in arousing interest in, and a desire to know more of, the teachings of Spiritualism. Information concerning the Union will be furnished by any of the officers, or by Mr. G. T. Gwinn, the president, of Eastbourne House, 63, Carnarvon-road, Stratford, E.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKES NEWINGTON, N.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. E. W. Wallis gave a beautiful discourse upon 'The Three F's of Spiritualism,' and we look forward to a full report of this in one of our local journals. Mrs. Bunn kindly sang a solo, 'Hosanna in Excelsis,' with rare charm. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Florence Morse will make what we understand to be her first public appearance as a speaker, and we feel assured that the kindly sympathy which Mr. Wallis bespoke for her will be forthcoming. Our next 'social' will be held on November 13th.—A. J. C., Cor. Sec.

THE SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION, QUEEN'S HALL (NEAR CROWN THEATRE), 1, QUEEN'S-ROAD, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last Mr. George Cole delivered an intellectual and instructive lecture, dealing principally with the ancient writings discovered from time to time in Eastern countries, all demonstrating clearly that Spiritualism, under another name, was practically known by them. There was a large and appreciative audience. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., service as usual, address by Miss A. V. Earle; at 8 p.m., a public circle will be held. Members are invited to apply for books from the lending library. 'LIGHT' on sale.—VERAX.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Adams and Mrs. Boddington gave able addresses, and Mrs. Boddington sang a solo in her happiest style. Mr. Thomas presided. On Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., discussion on vivisection continued by Mr. H. Springfield; at 3.30 p.m., meetings in Battersea Park and on Clapham Common; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 5.15 p.m., anniversary tea (tickets 6d.); at 7 p.m., Mrs. Russell-Davies will give an address. On Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope. On Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., a public circle will be held. On Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., social evening.—YULE.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. G. Taylor-Gwinn gave a reading from Longfellow, and delivered a very earnest all-round address. On Sunday next, Mr. J. A. White will give an address and clairvoyance. On Friday, October 25th, a large gathering of members assembled at the society's annual general meeting. The accounts for the half-year showed a substantial cash balance in hand, and the prospects generally for the ensuing year appear good. But one change was made in the staff of officers, viz., the secretary, Mrs. Standing (37, Avenue-road, Hackney Downs) being elected in this capacity, to whom all communications should in future be addressed.—O.H.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last, Mr. A. V. Peters gave a short address, full of good advice, followed by clairvoyant descriptions. Nineteen spirit people were described, and, with two exceptions, readily recognised. The majority of these descriptions were given to entire strangers, and great interest was aroused. The executive of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists regret that so many friends who journeyed from a long distance were unable to obtain admittance, but at 6.40 every available seat was filled. Miss Morse again kindly and effectively rendered 'A Dream of Peace.' Mr. A. J. Sutton ably fulfilled the duties of chairman. On Sunday next, Mr. J. J. Morse will deliver a trance address upon 'The Spiritual Philosophy of Godliness.' Doors open at 6.30.—S. J. WATTS, Hon. Sec., 2c, Hyde Park Mansions.