

Light.

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,340.—VOL. XXVI. [Registered as] SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1906. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The Rev. George Batchelor, one of America's leading Liberals, has just published a brief and thoughtful Essay on 'The Infinite Energy of the Holy Spirit.' He first of all takes his stand upon the Spencerian doctrine of the infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed:—

There is no motion visible in the outer world, there is no manifestation of force anywhere, there is no form of consciousness within ourselves, which is not a form of this omnipresent and omnipotent energy. There is no form of life nor any mode of thought or feeling which has any other source than this energy which wells up in human consciousness. Out of this energy, which is common to all men, came the miracles, the wonders, the revelations, the moral laws, the oracles of faith, the divine wisdom which made men friends of God and prophets, the spiritual power which came to expression in apostles and martyrs, which has inspired heroic men and women, and which shone in the face of Jesus, the Son of man. If all things proceed from a source of energy which is common to all men, then it must be that every form of conscious life, including all our moral and spiritual experiences, must come out of this all-inclusive energy.

The vital question is, Whence comes this 'infinite and eternal energy?' From without or from within? The old answer was, 'from without.' The new answer is, 'from within.' The immanence of God means that God is involved in Man and in the energy which causes all things to be. To-day's science teaches us that the infinite and eternal energy in the world of matter, which is variously manifested as heat, electricity, light, &c., is involved in what we call 'Matter' and only needs to be called out. So, in the world of mind, of soul, the spiritual energy pervades all minds, all souls, all spirits, and only needs calling forth. In the sphere of the natural world, the infinite and eternal energy is the creative spirit: in the sphere of the soul it is the holy spirit. All that is needed is its awakening, its predominance, its enthronement in the inner self.

'The Light of Truth' publishes a long communication, as from Henry Ward Beecher, but does not tell us how it has been obtained. The leading thought of it is that the spirit people are the dominant force in government and in society. 'The Union of Souls' behind the veil, we are told, have their programme, and temper it to mortal exigencies, not always to alleviate but sometimes to intensify distress, and this for certain desired ends. 'Heaven's field marshals' are 'placing an awful cost on selfishness, pride and suspicion.' Their object is to 'pile up the cost of selfishness and thus make it impracticable.' 'Things are just as they ought to be,' misery and strife included.

The lessons must all be learnt. A 'benignant spirit' sends this message—'Appalling things beset your pathway.'

On the subject of the presence of spirit people amongst us, the communication says:—

We are in your world because we have never gone out of it. We preach your sermons because we have never gone away from your pulpits, and never intend to go away. We are combing down the asperities and rectifying the mal-adjustments of church organisations, because it is our province to do so. Behind every minister of the gospel who speaks anything to his congregation above the platitudes of conventionalism, there stands a spirit man or woman imparting ideas and teachings which gradually make over and round out the body of the congregation. Get out of your mouldy minds the notion that you are the playthings of erratic and sporadic elements and forces. There is not a move made with respect to any action in life that does not possess its proper cause and sequence. You are played upon, yes, but the action of that play is as exact and unerring as the revolution of the planet. We are in the councils of the nation, and spirits have always been there. They are there for the best good of the nation. They are there because they love the nation. And they are endowed with great patience and fortitude. For observe what you load on to them! You flout at them, calling them 'ghosts' and 'spooks,' if you refer to them at all. And the most melancholy flights of a statesman's oratory are his apostrophes to death and the grave, as though a hole in the ground could ever hold a man. Your confusion will continue, my brethren, until you awaken to the realities of this the spirit life, the real life. And not alone that, but furthermore and above all else, your kinship with the great nerve centres of the celestial realms where dwell the holy ones.

'Now' is called 'A journal of affirmation,' and, as a San Francisco publication, it certainly lives up to its name, though its 'affirmation' about the late earthquake surprises us. We are assured that we have been unnecessarily miserable about it. We ought to love 'the gentle rocking mother earth gives,' and not over-mind if she 'once in a while throws us out of our cradle.' The mischief done is attributed rather to fire than to the actual earthquake. 'Now' says:—

The whole Pacific Coast has been temporarily injured by the unwise, the fake and lying, reports sent from this city, in response to an irresponsible and unreliable press competition that seeks to feed the sensational and morbid in the masses. The injury due to the earthquake was small. We who were in it and who love the city, the State, and the coast have no more fears of earthquake than those of the Atlantic borders have of the occasional heavy snow and wind storms. We do not live in one half the terror in which those in the cyclone belt lived when I was with them.

Do not think the true Californian has any less faith or love for his State. We do not live in fear. The imagination of Eastern friends is a thousand times worse to endure than is our reality. 'Now' folk would not remove to any other State, for California with its earthquakes is preferable to any other State without them. We have been pained at letters from our friends because they fear for us. Disappointed are we that some who were coming, now will not come, because of their idea that the earthquake destroyed the city. No! Come! Fear not! We are more safe here now than any other portion of our land, for we have had our settlement with Mother Nature.

'Now' is one of the organs of the 'All is good' brotherhood. We are glad to see that in dire tribulation

The Recent Séance with Mr. Eldred.

SIR,—During this month I have been absent from town on holiday, but have now read with surprise and interest in 'LIGHT' of August 18th 'A Recent Séance with Mr. Eldred.' It is stated that it is a short report of one of a 'few sittings under test conditions.' The conditions reported may have satisfied Mr. and Mrs. Letort and the other sitters, but they are not, in my opinion, test conditions. Notice, for instance, the dodging with the light, characteristic of Mr. Eldred's previous methods, and the statement, 'Then he withdrew into the cabinet, turned the gas a little higher up, and came out again. However, even then the light was too low to allow us to distinguish his features from our seats.' This form was assumed to be 'Arthur,' but the only observation made was, 'We all saw the tall form, entirely draped in white from head to foot. He dematerialised in the opening of the curtains, sinking down before our eyes.' I am satisfied that any trained trickster could produce the same results under such conditions, but if Mr. Eldred be the materialising medium claimed, then I assert that it is his imperative duty to endeavour to demonstrate his powers to sympathetic and experienced critical observers under mutually arranged test conditions. I am quite willing even now to form one of a circle selected by you, Mr. Editor, to investigate and report, and being anxious to do justice to Mr. Eldred I am prepared to go to Havre or Paris if he is so nervous that he will not sit on this side of the Channel.

If the results were satisfactory, I am perfectly certain that his mediumistic powers, if these exist, would, in consequence, improve. Thereafter I will guarantee to get him a situation in a commercial life, if he has not already got one, and thus render him independent of paid mediumship, which, I regret to say, is, at its best, but a precarious and very often a thankless business.—Yours, &c.,
August 30th, 1906.

A. WALLACE, M.D.

National Union Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—Will you allow me to draw especial attention, through 'LIGHT,' to the needs of the National Union Fund of Benevolence? During August no money has been received, and the sick and poor ones in receipt of help have had to accept considerably less than the usual remittances. Should this continue, I can only promise two more payments to anyone. I trust that your readers will be generously inclined and, during September, pass on to me whatever they can spare and thus cheer the hearts of many who cannot help themselves. The following contributions were received during July: E. C., 5s.; G. H. B., 2s.; Rev. A. Rushton, 10s.; London Spiritualist Alliance, £5. Received during August, a present of curtain holders (for sale).—Yours, &c.,
JESSY GREENWOOD.

Ash Leigh, Hebden Bridge.

'An Ideal Fund.'

SIR,—Sir Oliver Lodge sets forth in the July 'Contemporary' an idea of the utmost interest and suggestiveness.

Under the title 'Squandering a Surplus,' he suggests that any surplus in the nation's finances should be employed in future in national improvements, instead of being frittered away, as is usually the case, in insignificant adjustments of taxation, of little value or benefit to anyone.

Why should not the richest country in the world go even farther than this and voluntarily tax itself for high aims and the betterment of life? Two millions a year devoted to this purpose would be comparatively a trifle that would scarcely be felt, but what incalculable good might it not accomplish!

One million might be set apart for meeting current exigencies, such as the purchase of national parks, open spaces, endowment of research, and counteracting generally the ugly, demoralising, competitive commercialism of the age; the other million might accumulate at times for more ambitious enterprises—for instance, the gradual transformation of the London slums into garden cities, and the same with our other large towns. Little imagination is required to conjure up schemes of improvement that would be of vast benefit to the people generally.

There might be appointed a permanent committee of ten of the leading men of the day; men of broad minds who can think imperially and see well into the future—it might be, perhaps, under the chairmanship of the Prince of Wales—to devise a well-thought-out scheme of action. The longer one thinks over this brilliant idea the more fascinating it becomes!

A mere day dream! some may exclaim. On the contrary, nothing is more practicable, I think; it only wants a little courage to take the first step and start it. The chief difficulty would be in deciding what reforms to place first.

Think of what might be accomplished in the physical, ethical and spiritual regeneration of the people between now and a hundred years hence, with two hundred millions carefully expended on such objects! One would hardly know the country! And after the scheme was in working order the Colonies would probably follow suit and have each its own 'Lodge Ideal Fund,' and foreign countries the same.

It is to be hoped that this idea, so promising for the world's development, will not be allowed to drop out of sight. Those interested should read Sir Oliver's article.—Yours, &c.,
A. K. VENNING.

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

SOCIETY WORK.

Notices of future events which do not exceed twenty-five words may be added to reports if accompanied by six penny stamps, but all such notices which exceed twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. A. Thomas gave a fine address on 'Spiritualism, Pure and Simple.' On Sunday next, Mr. Stebbens; 12th inst., Mrs. Podmore; Sunday, 16th, Mr. D. J. Davis; 23rd, Mrs. F. Roberts will name a child.

BRIGHTON.—COMPTON HALL, 17, COMPTON AVENUE.—On Sunday last the ministrations of the controls of Mrs. A. Boddington were very acceptable and well received. On Sunday next, at 11 15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. F. G. Clarke. Hall open on Thursdays, from 3 to 5 p.m., for inquirers.—A.C.

STRATFORD.—LIMSTON ROAD, FOREST-LANE, E.—On Sunday last, at our harvest festival, Mrs. Webb and Messrs. Smith and Walker gave short addresses. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion; at 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Roberts. Thursday next, Mrs. Webster.—A.G.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Effie Bathe gave a highly interesting lecture on 'Auric Colours and their Psychic Significance,' illustrated by thirty original paintings. Madame Cope kindly sang a solo. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Ronald Brailey, address and clairvoyant descriptions.—N.R.

OXFORD CIRCUS.—22, PRINCE'S STREET.—On Sunday last Mrs. Fairclough Smith gave an interesting and helpful address upon 'Spiritual Healing,' followed by lengthy clairvoyant descriptions, all but one being recognised. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton on 'Holiness and the Absolute.' Please note change of time.—P.E.B.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM ROAD.—On Sunday morning last an interesting discussion was held. In the evening Mr. Williams presided and Mr. W. Underwood gave a rousing address, and, at the after-circle, some sound advice. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Agnew Jackson. On the 16th, Nurse Graham.—L.D.

CHISWICK.—110, HIGH ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Moore conducted the circle. In the evening Mrs. Podmore's address on 'Some Conceptions of God' was followed by interesting discussion. On Sunday next, at 10.45 a.m., choir; at 11.15, circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. Samuel Keyworth on 'Revelations from Spiritual Sources.'—W.T.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 26, FERNHURST ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last an address by Mr. D. J. Davis, of Canning Town, was much enjoyed. On Sunday next Mr. G. H. Bibbings, of Leicester, and on the 16th Mr. G. Taylor Gwin, will give addresses. Inquirers are cordially invited.—M.

ULAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. H. Boddington gave an eloquent and convincing discourse on questions sent up from the audience. Solos by Miss Nita Clavering and Mr. Pierce were much appreciated. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Lyceum and circle; speaker at 7 p.m., Mr. Abbott. Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., psychometry and clairvoyance. Silver collection.—H.Y.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mr. J. W. Boulding's admirable and brilliant address on 'Our Temple Home' greatly pleased all present. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided, and Mrs. W. T. Cooper, R.A.M., ably officiated at the organ. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss MacCreadie will give clairvoyant descriptions. Doors open at 6.30. Silver collection.—A.J.W.

BALHAM.—19, RAMSDEN ROAD (OPPOSITE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY).—On Sunday morning last Mr. G. Morley spoke of the difference between the teachings of the Nazarene and Christianity, and in the evening on 'Have the Faithists heard Jehovah's Voice?' Clairvoyant descriptions were given at each meeting, those in the morning being by Mrs. Bryant. On Sundays, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., and Wednesdays, at 8.15 p.m., public services for Faithist teachings and clairvoyant descriptions. Questions answered.—W.E.

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'Now' is one of the organs of the 'All is good' brotherhood. We are glad to see that in dire tribulation

it can keep the flag flying. As the Denver 'Graphic' says:—

'Tis easy enough to be pleasant,
When life flows by like a song,
But the man worth while
Is the man with a smile
When everything goes wrong.

A posthumous work by H. Demarest Lloyd, on 'Man, the social creator,' is attracting a good deal of attention. It is a sign of the times. The book is a pure bit of Humanitarianism. In the Human Race itself is the germ of all its hope of progressive salvation. That is the keynote of it. 'Redemption' is equivalent to Evolution:—

The 'Redemption of the World' did not begin at the beginning of our era. It began with the beginning of the very first of the eras, and has never paused. This redemption is a drama whose scenes include every step of evolution, every act of emancipation, every discovery of science and every deed of goodwill since time was. Redemption was already old when amphibian man struggled out of the mud and began creating for himself better respiration than his fish-gills. Redemption is still young, now that our society feels leaping in its womb for joy the new man coming to add a new peace, a new goodwill, to the long list of those which his elder brothers of history have established before him.

Religion itself is being transformed, because the spirit of man is being transformed. 'The spectacle of a new religion in the making,' says this writer, 'we can see to-day':—

In the co-operative literature, in the speeches of strike leaders, and new party men, the lectures of scholars, the sermons of the clergy on the mount, in the church and outside, in the trades union and socialistic press, in the magazines, in the conversation of all sorts of men, in the successful books of the year, and in the action, social and personal, which is embodying this thought, a new theory and practice of life are being worked out before our eyes.

We are often tempted to complain of the hindrances of our environment; and this is not always bad policy. He who does not hit out, to change or escape from his surroundings, is, as often as not, either a wastrel or a coward. But there is truth in this too,—that sometimes environment is unalterable. We must try to recognise this, even while we wrestle with fate, lest our wrestling result in mere bitterness or despondency. A little breath of poetry, by A. P. Rittenhouse, puts this winsomely:—

Why beat with futile strokes upon the bars
Of the environment that cages thee
And blinds thine eyes uplifted to the stars?
Thou canst not change the tide of what shall be.
Thy tiny boat is on the shoreless sea
Of universal Life; a Master's hand
Controls its course, and shapes its destiny;
Thou must sail on and on, thou canst not land;
Possess thy soul in patience, God is in command.

'The Light of Truth' prints the following significant Note at the end of one of its weekly batches of 'editorials':—

We want the thinking portion of the Spiritualist fraternity to study these editorials. They bear no appeal to the rank and file amongst Spiritualists, any more than they can reach the child minds in any other cult. They are not for the masses, because the masses do not think; the mass is the stuff with which the gods force conclusions. But there are thinking, inquiring minds everywhere, and to these the gods are appealing as never before since the mighty prophets of Israel tried to interpret the will of the gods.

Look ye into these matters.

KINDNESS.—'The best cosmetic for the complexion and to prevent wrinkles is the milk of human kindness.'—'The Messenger.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A CONVERSAZIONE

Of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held

IN THE THRONE ROOM OF THE

HOLBORN RESTAURANT, HIGH HOLBORN

(Entrance in Newton-street),

ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4TH, AT 7 P.M.

Short Addresses at 8 o'clock.

Music, Social Intercourse, and Refreshments during the Evening.

The Music by Members of Karl Kaps' Viennese Band.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Members and Associates may have tickets for themselves on payment of the nominal charge of *one shilling each*, and for their friends at the rate of *two shillings each*.

It is respectfully requested that Members and Associates will make application for tickets, accompanied by remittances, not later than October 1st, to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

In accordance with No. XV. of the Articles of Association, the subscriptions of Members and Associates elected after October 1st will be taken as for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1907.

Article XVIII. provides that 'If any Member or Associate desire to resign, he shall give written notice thereof to the Secretary. He shall, however, be liable for all subscriptions which shall then remain unpaid.'

The following meetings will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, S.W. (near the National Gallery):—

1906.

Oct. 26.—A. WALLACE, M.D., on 'A Critical Survey of Modern Spiritualism, Theosophy, and Psychical Research, and their Inter-relations.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

Nov. 8.—J. STENSON HOOKER, M.D., on 'Christo-Spiritualism and all that it means.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

Nov. 22.—THE REV. JOHN OATES, on 'Tennyson, the Man, and his Message in relation to Evolution, the Divine Immanence, and a Future Life.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

Dec. 6.—MISS MCCREADIE, MRS. FAIRCLOUGH SMITH, 'CLAIRIBELLE,' MR. RONALD BRAILEY, MR. J. J. VANGO, and MR. ALFRED V. PETERM will give brief narratives of their most noteworthy Mediumistic Experiences. At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

Dec. 20.—MRS. PAGE HOPPH, on 'Cross Currents in Passive Writing.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

[Particulars of subsequent meetings will be given in due course.]

Admission to the above meetings will be by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

MRS. ELLEN GREEN.

A friend in Cape Colony kindly sends us the following:—

'Mrs. Ellen Green, of Manchester, has held a very successful mission in Queenstown on behalf of Spiritualism. Two public meetings, held in the Town Hall, were presided over by the mayor. The second was to have been held in the Council Chamber, but the crowd was so large that a move had to be made into the large public hall. The lectures given by Mrs. Green, under the inspiration, it was believed, of Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, were listened to with close attention, and a profound impression was made upon the people of Queenstown, to whom the gospel of Spiritualism was formerly a mystery. Several sances were held during Mrs. Green's stay, and although the results are as yet difficult to estimate, the torch has been lighted which will never be put out.'

UNSOUGHT PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES.

I have been wondering for some time if my experiences, as one who has never attended a séance or sought for manifestations through mediums, would be of use or interest to your readers.

I have very slowly ascended the gamut of spiritual knowledge. In childhood, in spite of my Calvinistic training, I was an instinctive believer in spirits manifesting near me, but unseen, and in youth, believing that intellect rules all, I cast out all that savoured of the unseen and miraculous, and ridiculed the idea of the dead returning. It was when I had, as a reading, thinking adult, cast all 'superstition' (as I called it) aside that a spirit manifestation presented itself which was too real and strong to be gainsaid, though I tried hard to explain it away. The evidence of others left no doubt that my eyes had not deceived me, and there was neither cabinet nor medium to search and question. It happened thus, and I have now before me a manuscript, written soon after the incident occurred, wherewith to refresh my memory.

In 1892 I went one afternoon to call on some relatives, not in an old house connected with the history of many human lives, but in a middle-class villa standing in a new road, 'a desirable residence,' not long out of the builder's hands, such as is common in Suburbia, and as unromantic as common. After tea, and a merry chat, without any reference whatever to occult matters, I went upstairs to replace my hat before going home. I left my friends chatting in the bedroom and stood a moment at the head of the stairs for the purpose of putting on my gloves. Then I saw—standing on the landing opposite me, down a short flight of stairs, and at the door of a small room—a female figure, tall and straight, dressed in ordinary feminine garments, the date of which would not be easy to guess, as her head and shoulders were shrouded in a long shawl or cloak which reached to her knees. I could not see her features clearly, but a strong lambent light came from her eyes and they appeared to be intently fixed upon me. The figure was so human-like, and my disbelief in what is called the supernatural so strong, that I did not for a moment think that it was anything but flesh and blood like myself, and I spoke to it at once, supposing it to be a member of the household who was of the same height and build. I supposed she had thrown a shawl lightly over herself as a shield from the evening air, intending to walk up the quiet road with me. Accordingly I said (calling her by name) 'Oh! —, are you coming with us?' I looked full at the figure in perfect good faith, and awaited her answer. To my surprise no answer came, but still I waited, carelessly pulling on my gloves meantime. As I stood thus the figure suddenly came towards me with a swift and gliding motion and, as it passed me, I was conscious of a peculiar shivery sensation down the spine and became suddenly conscious that I had been interviewing an inhabitant of the spirit world of which I had ceased to think. My scepticism soon rallied, however, and I went at once to investigate, with a view to an explanation of the phenomenon as an optical illusion, but it resulted in an acknowledgment that a closed wooden door behind the figure, and another beside it, gave no play to reflection. Still, unwilling to be convinced, I did not mention the matter to anyone for two years. Probably I should have consigned it altogether to the limbo of things forgotten had not my relatives left the house and then told me what they had not mentioned before, viz., that they were aware of the presence of my spirit friend. One member of the household had met her in a similar way several times and found that the door of the room I have mentioned was her favourite haunt. Once she spoke, imploring the strange visitor to tell her sorrows, but failed to get an answer. This lady was the only member of the family who ever saw her, but her daughter was at one time awakened night after night by hearing footsteps in the entrance hall so distinctly that mother and daughter simultaneously rushed out of their rooms to reconnoitre, fearing burglars had entered the house. Then, at the end of the same year, the daughter was awakened one night by a ringing scream, so awful that it was always called to mind with a shudder. Neither of these ladies believed

in Spiritualism; in fact, their creed was entirely against it as displeasing to God. The elder lady, a cultured and intellectual person, also told me of the strange four-footed animals she saw occasionally in the rooms, animals like cats and rats, which would be seen darting under beds and furniture and, when sought for, could not be found. Another and younger member of the family, who knew nothing of these manifestations, slept in a top room and often complained that although she always carefully latched her door on retiring, it was invariably off the latch in the morning. I was unaware of this also until the family had left the house, and then remembered that I had had a similar experience when occupying the same room for one night, and had been awakened in the dark by the sound of stealthy movements which I knew were not of human origin. After the convincing evidence of these experiences I had to return to the faith of my childhood and acknowledge that the spirits (good and bad) which I believed in then, were not the myths I thought them. Some of your readers may suggest that it was only the double of my friend that I saw draped in the shawl or cloak. The answer to that lies in the fact that my friend saw and spoke to the spirit lady herself several times.

Since that time I have never seen a *materialised* spirit, though I have seen the white mists and spirit lights which proclaim spirit presence, and have been touched and firmly grasped so that I could not doubt that the grasp was by spirit hands. I have had spirit messages by dreams and clairaudience and intuition. To spirit raps I have become quite accustomed, though I have never been one of a 'circle' in my life. I have much to learn yet, but the evidence I have so far gathered (whether convincing to others or not) has been secured quite apart from mediums and séances. I have refrained from such help as they could give, not because I would condemn, or say aught derogatory to, any conscientious, sympathetic medium, but because I must by nature think for myself, and, in my struggle to keep as near the great All-Father as I can, I desire to be content with such teaching as He sends me, knowing that if I guard the citadel of my soul, He will send me only the highest and such as I can assimilate.

Before I close, may I refer to the subject recently spoken of by one of your correspondents, viz., that of animal return. He tells of a favourite dog and cat which came back to visit the family, so he may be interested in a little story which is a personal experience. We had until lately a beautiful Chinchilla cat, which was always with the family and grew to look wise. He was a lazy and sleepy animal, but at times would rouse himself and run round the kitchen and neighbouring rooms for a couple of hours, gambolling with what appeared to be an unseen playfellow. One night, after the house was shut up, I had occasion to go into the kitchen, and was annoyed when I found our cat (as I supposed) rush past me and run away. I fully expected to have to hunt for him before he could be returned to the kitchen, but on lighting the gas, great was my surprise to see our own cat coiled up on the table asleep! The other one was *distinct*, and my son afterwards saw a similar shadowy cat on the stairs and told me he had seen pussy's playfellow wending his way upstairs.

Trusting I have not taken up too much space with this long letter, and taking this opportunity to tell you that I find your paper both helpful and straightforward, I enclose my name and address for the information of the Editor, but for publication prefer to subscribe myself.—Yours, &c.,

'HEATHER AQUARIUS.'

TRANSITION.—In 'LIGHT' of April 28th last the 'passing' of Mrs. Pool, of Merthyr Tydfil, was recorded. Mr. Pool, at that time, was too unwell to leave his bed, and on Saturday, September 1st, he also passed to spirit life. Mr. Pool, who was in his sixty-eighth year, was an earnest Spiritualist and reformer. The 'Merthyr Express' says that Mr. Pool bequeathed £1,000 to the Merthyr General Hospital for the endowment of a bed (to be called, in memory of his late wife, the Sarah Panel Pool Bed), £200 each to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and a large number of valuable books, together with several pictures, to the Corporation for the Free Library. His mortal remains were privately interred in the family grave on Tuesday, the 4th inst.

A COMFORTING VISION.

While I have, for some time, been in full sympathy with the teachings of Spiritualism, and have derived great spiritual benefit from the writings of Stainton Moses and others, my attitude towards all spiritualistic phenomena has been one of negation and unbelief. The phenomena I witnessed in a small private circle, where my husband was the medium, rather strengthened my disbelief. All my efforts to shake off my scepticism availed not. Last week I had a vision, which is, perhaps, too insignificant to be recorded in your columns, but which gains peculiar significance from the sceptical and negative frame of mind which was mine when it occurred.

On Wednesday, August 20th, I retired to rest at my usual hour, and after sleeping soundly awoke at 2 a.m. The night being hot, I sat for a long time at my open window. I heard the clock strike four before I went to sleep again. A deep sleep came over me, and I dreamt I was standing at the entrance of a tunnel, tiled in white, and flooded with light. At the far end I saw a basket rising from the ground and moving slowly towards me until it was only a couple of yards away. I distinctly saw that it was filled with beautiful white roses.

Somehow I was fully conscious that I was dreaming, and felt sorry it was only a dream. Then I awoke. The room was light, the windows being open and the blinds up. I looked round and saw the tunnel stretching away from my room; there was the basket with flowers rising from the ground and moving towards me. It came close up to my enchanted yet bewildered eyes. Suddenly, all vanished. I lay awake for a while meditating over this vision, but soon was again overcome by sleep, and then I dreamt that a girl of about ten years was sitting on my bed, looking intently at me, and fanning me with a little toy windmill. She wore a cream-coloured dress; her long, fair hair fell loosely down her shoulders; her face shone brightly. What struck me in her appearance was that she wore a small wreath of field flowers, which was a replica of one I had myself made for a little child of three a few days previously. Again I knew I was only dreaming and at once awoke. It was daylight. I raised myself, and beheld sitting on my bed a real, live girl—so she appeared to me—looking quietly at me. 'But I was not dreaming, here she is,' I said to myself. How did she get in my room? I saw the little windmill lying close to my hand, I saw the girl's blue eyes, her radiant face, the simple little wreath standing clearly out against the light; and moreover I felt the weight of her body on my feet. I was awe-struck and opened my eyes as wide as I could; still there sat the lovely girl for perhaps twenty seconds.

By this time I did not care for any more visions and tried to keep awake, but the peculiar drowsy feeling returned, and I went off to sleep again, only to be disturbed by the commotion of air which was caused in the room by what I fancied to be a sparrow. I dreamt that a little bird was descending from the ceiling to my bed; I seemed to hear the beating of its wings, and again woke up. To escape from any dream I sat up and was startled to see a young white dove at the level of my eyes, not more than a few inches from my face, suspended in the air, and beating its wings to keep its poise.

Still sitting up I watched the graceful bird, which remained almost stationary with rapid flappings of his wings. It seemed frightened by my movements. There it remained for twenty or thirty seconds, when, without shifting its position, it suddenly vanished. After the dove had disappeared a voice seemed to come to me from very far off, so that I could scarcely hear it, but I distinguished a few words which were in the nature of a comforting message bearing on matters which are at present a source of deep concern and anxiety to me.

What is the purport of these 'visions' I know not. But my scepticism is gone, my unbelief has been shattered, and in their place there came a feeling of unreasoning beatitude permeating my whole being. It has not subsided, and I hope it will remain with me.

M. E. W.

ASTROLOGY NOT FATALISM.

William E. Towne, in 'The Nautilus' for September, says:—

'Astrological predictions in the form of a personal horoscope may show us certain *tendencies* which exist in regard to our present earth life. If our faith in the All-Good is not strong, these *tendencies* may all become fixed facts in our lives. They may result in seeming good and apparent evil, exactly as the average astrologer lays them down in your chart. But, if you are imbued with a living faith in the Infinite Principle of Life, if you believe that all the experiences of life are working for good, if you give yourself over more and more fully to the guidance of Infinite Wisdom each day that you live, then you will find these tendencies will all become crystallised into good things, into good results, into experiences that help you up higher.

'This is not because your mental attitude brings about any change in Nature's laws, or because you can produce any change in the planetary influences, but because you *open your eyes to the good* and work *with the good* instead of yourself creating "evil" by recognising it and *resisting* it.

'Seek to work with the Law of Life, trust this Law, and only good can result! Ignore "evil" and it will disappear. Desire good, centre your thoughts upon it, and you open the way for its manifestation.'

Mr. Towne is right, and also when he says that nothing in nature or fate is bad or good, but only as we make and use it. We know an astrologer who always tries to make the indications of a horoscope a text for encouraging his subjects to bring out all the good qualities they possess, and who tells them that if they keep a firm hold on the principles of right life, bad 'directions' and 'aspects' will have no evil effect on them, but simply give them an opportunity of overcoming difficulties by fortitude and self-control.

MORE ABOUT MENTAL HEALING.

Mrs. Alice C. Ames, in 'Broad Views' for September, brings to a conclusion her articles 'Concerning Mental Healing.' We are sorry for the conclusion itself at which she arrives, for it is one which must strike the reader as strained and inconsequent. After giving several further incidents of cures by hypnotic suggestion, including the relief of almost unbearable agony, which afterwards proved to have been caused by cancer, Mrs. Ames says:—

'This was one of the last of my healing experiences; there is no standing still in intellectual life, and I had passed from mental science to another school of thought that opened a wider outlook, involving deeper issues, and discountenanced the use of occult power in healing. Pain, I was instructed, was only the outer expression on the physical plane of a force that worked itself out in that manifestation, and could rarely be thrown back into the subtler bodies with impunity. Hypnotism, under any circumstances, was specifically condemned as weakening the barrier beneficent Nature had interposed between us and worlds invisible. It is as if, in a box closing sharply with a spring lock, something should clog the wards, and the lock become feebler, so that into the mind that has been submitted to a similar process, entities, unknown to science, can force an entrance, and the terrors of obsession may result. This I know to be true, as one of the worst cases of possession I ever treated originated in an involuntary hypnotising of the man concerned by the doctor attending him. It was my happy fate to rescue him from the madhouse with which he was threatened, and restore him to the world a useful and capable member of it again. I trust it may be allowed to counterbalance any occasion, if such there be, when innocently I may have done evil that good might come.'

Mrs. Ames has also been taught that in this world only a certain amount of power is at our disposal, and that if it be diverted into such work as she has described, the higher vehicles inevitably suffer. Not a bit of it. No 'higher vehicles' ever suffered from the use of the psychic powers to alleviate bodily pain or weakness. This is a case in which second thoughts are not always best, and we fear that this good and sympathetic lady has had 'Bogey' talked to her by those who cannot bear to see others draw upon the unlimited stores of power which are at the disposal of those who faithfully believe in and use them. No, it is not a wider outlook, but a painfully narrowed one, which is revealed in the grotesque assumptions and metaphors quoted above. Look again, Mrs. Ames, look searchingly and clearly, and you will find yet deeper and broader truth.

IS THE SPIRIT HYPOTHESIS UNSCIENTIFIC?

The 'Literary Digest' for August 25th quotes a review in 'Cosmos' of Colonel de Rochas' recent work, 'The Externalisation of Motricity,' in which the writer, Dr. Battandier, takes the Colonel soundly and seriously to task for his persistence in refusing to consider the spirit hypothesis on equal terms with rival ones, on the ground that it is unscientific. The writer says:—

'Colonel de Rochas mentions this hypothesis, but he refuses to take it into consideration because, he says, it is not scientific. He states in a foot-note that he has nearly always disregarded everything that appeared to reveal an intelligence different from the medium's, in order not to complicate the problem, and to concentrate the reader's attention on the purely physical agent that serves for its manifestation.

'This note, in my opinion, lacks logic. We desire to explain a phenomenon; taken in its complexity it reveals an intelligent force different from that of the medium; this is no reason for neglecting it, but the contrary; the hypothesis adopted should take account of this special fact, which completely modifies the data of the problem. What should we say of an astronomer who should limit himself to a single series of observed facts, discarding others because they contradict the hypothesis previously based on the former series? In another note Colonel de Rochas says: "The phenomena are really more complicated than I have indicated in this scheme. Materialised human forces may, in fact, appear successively or simultaneously in quite large numbers, and each of them may appear to be animated by a different intelligence." And again: "Spirit photographs would appear to be due to the action on the plate of the subject's double, moulded by a foreign intelligence, but still invisible in this state to ordinary eyes." Thus De Rochas, loyal observer as he is, is forced, despite all scientific repugnance, to speak three times of intelligences foreign to the medium.'

We have always contended that true science has no preferences, and must follow implicitly the dictum of facts. It is certainly unscientific to reject, from prejudice, any hypothesis which furnishes as good an explanation of the facts as another which is accepted. But, after all, this rejection of the spirit hypothesis is only apparent; its acceptance shines through the loose joints of the argument, as Dr. Battandier well shows.

WEIRD STORIES FROM INDIA.

A collection of stories illustrating many phases, especially the tragic ones, of Indian life, by Alice Perrin, has been published by Messrs. Chatto and Windus under the title of 'Red Records.' The beliefs which form the mainsprings of action among the natives are set forth by one who apparently knows India and its people intimately, and although many of the stories turn merely on lack of mutual comprehension between Europeans and natives, the existence of superhuman entities and supernormal occurrences is freely taken for granted. In 'The Evil Eye' and 'Powers of Darkness' the fatalities narrated may be, as is hinted, set down to the result of auto-suggestion; but there are three or four stories which deal with phenomena well known to Spiritualists.

'Moore' is the narrative of an army chaplain's experience; staying the night at an out-of-the-way rest-house for travellers he hears himself called by his own name 'Moore'; the voice finally succeeds in giving an address in England, at a town in which an elder brother of the chaplain resides. On inquiry the next day Mr. Moore learns that a broken-down, delirious Englishman had recently died in that room, and on afterwards visiting his brother in England he finds the house indicated by the voice, and learns that a family of the same name as himself, who live at that house, had lost a relative in India about the time of the event referred to; a cross tattooed on the deceased man's wrist completes the chain of identification.

'The Sistrum' is a story dealing with psychometry, in which strange rites are apparently enacted in the presence of anyone who sleeps in the room in which a curiously carved ivory instrument is kept. 'The Bead Necklace' has a similar power of conjuring up the representation of savage deeds. In 'The Packet of Letters' the scene is laid on a steamer going out to India, where the narrator shares the same cabin with a

lady who seems deeply interested in looking over a packet of old letters. The lady dies of sunstroke at Aden, and the next night the narrator, now alone in the cabin, sees her figure apparently searching for the box containing the letters, which has been removed by order of the captain. The figure begs that the letters may be destroyed, but the captain insists on delivering everything to the deceased lady's husband. The result is tragedy. Those of our readers who are fond of Indian themes and who do not object to the tragic note running through the book, will peruse these stories with interest, for they are well told, and with evident knowledge of popular beliefs and currents of thought among the natives of India.

KAISER AND DIVINING ROD.

On p. 343 of 'LIGHT' we mentioned that the German Government had decided to send a gentleman to South-West Africa to try to find water there by means of the divining-rod, and in our last issue we gave a short report of some experiments before the Kaiser. An esteemed correspondent has now sent us a paragraph from a German newspaper relating to these experiments, which shows that the Emperor William is personally interested in this branch of the occult, or, as we might phrase it, in this method of furnishing the sub-conscious perceptions with a means of revealing themselves outwardly. The paragraph is substantially as follows:—

'The Kaiser, during his stay at Wilhelmshöhe, received Prince Hans von Carolath, formerly commander of the seventh regiment of Cuirassiers, and asked him to demonstrate, in the park there, the method of finding springs with the divining-rod. After a discourse on the subject, Prince Carolath gave a practical demonstration. The Empress hid various objects, and the Prince found them at once by means of the divining-rod, as well as a diamond pin hidden in the sand by Princess Victoria Louise.

'Then the Kaiser went, with the Prince and other gentlemen, to the Philosophers' Way in the park, where the Prince soon declared the existence, at the depth of about 160 feet, of a spring of fresh water. At the Emperor's wish he also followed the course of this underground stream upwards and downwards, and found that it ran towards the castle and lake. The Prince also said that he had ascertained that there were several mineral springs not far from the park at Wilhelmshöhe, and the Kaiser expressed the desire to have them found by boring. After lunch, further experiments were made near the castle, and another spring was discovered. The Kaiser, in thanking the Prince, expressed the wish that the mysterious power of the divining-rod might become generally known, as it was capable of leading to many useful results.'

Commenting on the above, the 'Dresdener Nachrichten' remarks: 'The belief in the divining-rod is apparently unshakable,' and publishes a letter from a correspondent who says that he has an uncle who possesses the power of finding water by means of the rod, and whose services are in requisition far and wide when a well is to be dug. The letter says: 'In the long period during which my uncle has practised this extra occupation, it has not happened one single time that no water was found in a place where the rod had indicated its presence.' The writer continues:—

'I used to laugh incredulously and make derisive remarks about the rod, but the following occurrence taught me otherwise. One Sunday last summer I was visiting my parents, and my uncle went out that same day to "strike" with the rod. I told him, with a laugh, that I should like to see an experiment of this kind. He "struck the rod" in my parents' garden, and it bent down to the ground at the place where the spring was. I then tried my luck, but the rod did not move at this place. My uncle then took me by the right arm with his left, and thus linked together we each took one side of the forked rod in our free hands. We then went back to the same spot, and the rod bent downwards to the earth with such force that there was a decided indentation made in my left hand, with which I tried with all my might to prevent the rod from bending, and I felt the pain of it for some time afterwards. Since this experience I have been entirely cured of my incredulity with regard to the divining-rod. The learned men who deny its efficacy should first assure themselves whether there are not really persons who have this power. I should also remark that although my uncle has several children, only one son has inherited this peculiar faculty.'

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The 'Literary Digest' for August 25th quotes a review in 'Cosmos' of Colonel de Rochas' recent work, 'The Externalisation of Motricity,' in which the writer, Dr. Battandier, takes the Colonel soundly and seriously to task for his persistence in refusing to consider the spirit hypothesis on equal terms with rival ones, on the ground that it is unscientific. The writer says:—

'Colonel de Rochas mentions this hypothesis, but he refuses to take it into consideration because, he says, it is not scientific. He states in a foot-note that he has nearly always disregarded everything that appeared to reveal an intelligence different from the medium's, in order not to complicate the problem, and to concentrate the reader's attention on the purely physical agent that serves for its manifestation.

'This note, in my opinion, lacks logic. We desire to explain a phenomenon; taken in its complexity it reveals an intelligent force different from that of the medium; this is no reason for neglecting it, but the contrary; the hypothesis adopted should take account of this special fact, which completely modifies the data of the problem. What should we say of an astronomer who should limit himself to a single series of observed facts, discarding others because they contradict the hypothesis previously based on the former series? In another note Colonel de Rochas says: "The phenomena are really more complicated than I have indicated in this scheme. Materialised human forces may, in fact, appear successively or simultaneously in quite large numbers, and each of them may appear to be animated by a different intelligence." And again: "Spirit-photographs would appear to be due to the action on the plate of the subject's double, moulded by a foreign intelligence, but still invisible in this state to ordinary eyes." Thus De Rochas, loyal observer as he is, is forced, despite all scientific repugnance, to speak three times of intelligences foreign to the medium.'

We have always contended that true science has no preferences, and must follow implicitly the dictum of facts. It is certainly unscientific to reject, from prejudice, any hypothesis which furnishes as good an explanation of the facts as another which is accepted. But, after all, this rejection of the spirit hypothesis is only apparent; its acceptance shines through the loose joints of the argument, as Dr. Battandier well shows.

WEIRD STORIES FROM INDIA.

A collection of stories illustrating many phases, especially the tragic ones, of Indian life, by Alice Perrin, has been published by Messrs. Chatto and Windus under the title of 'Red Records.' The beliefs which form the mainsprings of action among the natives are set forth by one who apparently knows India and its people intimately, and although many of the stories turn merely on lack of mutual comprehension between Europeans and natives, the existence of superhuman entities and supernatural occurrences is freely taken for granted. In 'The Evil Eye' and 'Powers of Darkness' the fatalities narrated may be, as is hinted, set down to the result of auto-suggestion; but there are three or four stories which deal with phenomena well known to Spiritualists.

'Moore' is the narrative of an army chaplain's experience; staying the night at an out-of-the-way rest-house for travellers he hears himself called by his own name 'Moore'; the voice finally succeeds in giving an address in England, at a town in which an elder brother of the chaplain resides. On inquiry the next day Mr. Moore learns that a broken-down, delirious Englishman had recently died in that room, and on afterwards visiting his brother in England he finds the house indicated by the voice, and learns that a family of the same name as himself, who live at that house, had lost a relative in India about the time of the event referred to; a cross tattooed on the deceased man's wrist completes the chain of identification.

'The Sistrum' is a story dealing with psychometry, in which strange rites are apparently enacted in the presence of anyone who sleeps in the room in which a curiously carved ivory instrument is kept. 'The Bead Necklace' has a similar power of conjuring up the representation of savage deeds. In 'The Packet of Letters' the scene is laid on a steamer going out to India, where the narrator shares the same cabin with a

lady who seems deeply interested in looking over a packet of old letters. The lady dies of sunstroke at Aden, and the next night the narrator, now alone in the cabin, sees her figure apparently searching for the box containing the letters, which has been removed by order of the captain. The figure begs that the letters may be destroyed, but the captain insists on delivering everything to the deceased lady's husband. The result is tragedy. Those of our readers who are fond of Indian themes and who do not object to the tragic note running through the book, will peruse these stories with interest, for they are well told, and with evident knowledge of popular beliefs and currents of thought among the natives of India.

KAISER AND DIVINING ROD.

On p. 343 of 'LIGHT' we mentioned that the German Government had decided to send a gentleman to South-West Africa to try to find water there by means of the divining-rod, and in our last issue we gave a short report of some experiments before the Kaiser. An esteemed correspondent has now sent us a paragraph from a German newspaper relating to these experiments, which shows that the Emperor William is personally interested in this branch of the occult, or, as we might phrase it, in this method of furnishing the sub-conscious perceptions with a means of revealing themselves outwardly. The paragraph is substantially as follows:—

'The Kaiser, during his stay at Wilhelmshöhe, received Prince Hans von Carolath, formerly commander of the seventh regiment of Cuirassiers, and asked him to demonstrate, in the park there, the method of finding springs with the divining-rod. After a discourse on the subject, Prince Carolath gave a practical demonstration. The Empress hid various objects, and the Prince found them at once by means of the divining-rod, as well as a diamond pin hidden in the sand by Princess Victoria Louise.

'Then the Kaiser went, with the Prince and other gentlemen, to the Philosophers' Way in the park, where the Prince soon declared the existence, at the depth of about 160 feet, of a spring of fresh water. At the Emperor's wish he also followed the course of this underground stream upwards and downwards, and found that it ran towards the castle and lake. The Prince also said that he had ascertained that there were several mineral springs not far from the park at Wilhelmshöhe, and the Kaiser expressed the desire to have them found by boring. After lunch, further experiments were made near the castle, and another spring was discovered. The Kaiser, in thanking the Prince, expressed the wish that the mysterious power of the divining-rod might become generally known, as it was capable of leading to many useful results.'

Commenting on the above, the 'Dresdener Nachrichten' remarks: 'The belief in the divining-rod is apparently unshakable,' and publishes a letter from a correspondent who says that he has an uncle who possesses the power of finding water by means of the rod, and whose services are in requisition far and wide when a well is to be dug. The letter says: 'In the long period during which my uncle has practised this extra occupation, it has not happened one single time that no water was found in a place where the rod had indicated its presence.' The writer continues:—

'I used to laugh incredulously and make derisive remarks about the rod, but the following occurrence taught me otherwise. One Sunday last summer I was visiting my parents, and my uncle went out that same day to "strike" with the rod. I told him, with a laugh, that I should like to see an experiment of this kind. He "struck the rod" in my parents' garden, and it bent down to the ground at the place where the spring was. I then tried my luck, but the rod did not move at this place. My uncle then took me by the right arm with his left, and thus linked together we each took one side of the forked rod in our free hands. We then went back to the same spot, and the rod bent downwards to the earth with such force that there was a decided indentation made in my left hand, with which I tried with all my might to prevent the rod from bending, and I felt the pain of it for some time afterwards. Since this experience I have been entirely cured of my incredulity with regard to the divining-rod. The learned men who deny its efficacy should first assure themselves whether there are not really persons who have this power. I should also remark that although my uncle has several children, only one son has inherited this peculiar faculty.'

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ZODIAC.

Dr. Carus' instructive and beautifully illustrated Paper, on 'Zodiacs of Different Nations,' in the August number of 'The Open Court,' is specially significant because of a confession that he has been obliged to give up the theory of the independent origin of the great ancient traditions of the world. He has, instead of it, arrived at the theory of an interconnection of primitive mankind, and not because he sought it, but because he sought the contrary. He says: 'Having gone in quest of unequivocal evidences of the independent development of the universal, I found myself everywhere baffled by a possible historical connection, and now I am forced to concede that an interconnection of prehistoric mankind in its remotest corners can no longer be doubted.'

Sir Wm. Jones, so far back as 1792, in his Calcutta Asiatic Society lectures, went so far as to say that the ancient Persians, Indians, Goths, Egyptians, &c., had a common language and a common cult. Brennard, in his 'Hindu Astronomy,' says that most Oriental scholars have come to the conclusion that the Sanscrit, the Zend, and all European languages are related to each other, and that the differences observed between them have arisen from the admixture of races, caused by great migrations from Central Asia.

Brennard's important work, published ten years ago, grapples learnedly and most painstakingly with the Zodiac problem, but especially from the point of view of India. He argues, however, that the various forms of the Zodiac signs in different parts of the world indicate a common origin. He says: 'The Solar Zodiac, with figures representing the twelve signs, has been in use in all historical periods, having nearly the same characteristics among the Greeks, the Egyptians, the Persians, the Hindus, the Chaldeans, and the Chinese.' It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that the idea of the Celestial Sphere and of the Solar Zodiac was a common possession of all the migrating tribes before they left their central homes. Apart from the boundless and monotonous plain, their only object of interest was the wonderful, the beautiful, the rhythmic sky, at once their picture book, their time recorder, their providence, and their sacramental mystery. Brennard,

feeling his way to the full significance of this, thus lucidly sets forth the natural origin of the Zodiac:—

The Nomadic tribes of Asia, who watched their flocks by night, must, as they themselves wandered over vast plains in search of fresh herbage, have had abundant opportunities of observing the Sideral Sphere which was apparently in incessant motion. Night after night, with an unobstructed view, the same stars would be seen to rise in the East, and to pursue an even course through the sky, but to set a little earlier each succeeding night. From childhood upwards, every individual of the tribes must have become familiar with the forms in which the stars were constantly presented to their view. What, then, would be more natural than that they should speculate regarding the nature of celestial orbs; that in fancy they should have pictured to themselves outlines among them; and in imagination given them the forms of objects with which they were most familiar?

The ram, the bull, the goat and kids, the virgin reaper or gleaner of corn, the archer who in defence of the flock must have had conflict with the lion, the bearer of water to the cattle, the crab and fish of the lakes and rivers which they frequented, the poisonous scorpion, and the balance designating the time when the days and nights were equal, all indicate the common objects of the wild and restless people of the plains, and emphasise the probable fact that the signs of the Solar Zodiac originated with the Prehistoric Nomads of Central Asia.

Dr. Carus, in his brilliant Paper, works on the line of this suggestion, and gives intensely interesting illustrations of the varying Zodiac signs in different nations, all, however, indicating their common origin, which he assigns to Babylon: 'but back of the interconnection in historic ages there must have been a very intimate exchange of thought between the incipient civilisations of primitive China, of Babylon, and also of the American Maya.'

Dr. Carus' Paper, with its valuable suggestions as to the varying Zodiacs, goes beyond them all to what he believes is their occult source. He holds that we have in the Zodiac and its names a great religious world-conception which regards the entire Cosmos as dominated by divine law, finding expression in divine power dominant according to a fixed constitution of the universe, with a central king of kings governing other celestial powers; all earthly events being controlled by celestial conditions. 'Occultism may now be an aberration,' he says, 'a survival of antiquated views, but there was a time when it was the stepping-stone of primitive man to a higher and deeper and truer interpretation of the world.'

The wise men of the prehistoric ages in Babylonia and Egypt, in China and Central America, says Dr. Carus, troubled themselves about the heavens and the Zodiac because they thought that the universe was dominated 'by conditions which were predetermined by the events that took place in the starry heavens, and would in some way be repeated in this and the nether world.' In fact, the starry heavens were the Bible of prehistoric man, who literally 'looked through Nature up to Nature's God.' He saw, in the heavens, the laboratory of the gods: and the movements of the stars, resistless as Fate, mysterious as Life, were to him as the executive mechanism of the inexorable powers. Thus, ancient astronomy was more than a science; it was a philosophy, a religion. It was to prehistoric man what 'Revelation' is to us—and more; and it enthroned order and law in the heavens that ruled the earth. Dr. Carus says that but for ancient astrology we should have had no astronomy, and he wisely adds, 'In the same way all our science, philosophy, and religion has grown out of the past, and we are more indebted to the half-truths of the antiquated world-conception than we are commonly inclined to admit.' But the truly instructed Spiritualist is fully prepared to admit it.

LOOK NOT MOURNFULLY into the past; it comes not back again. Wisely improve the present; it is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy future without fear, and with a manly heart.—LONGFELLOW.

THE SPIRIT OF REVERENCE.

We have already written at some length on the long correspondence which has lately appeared in the 'Daily Express' on the question, 'Are We Becoming Less Religious?' and it is not, therefore, our present object to add yet another opinion as to the answer that should be made to this question, but rather to consider what are essential elements of a religious mind, and how far they are encouraged or discouraged by spiritualistic studies.

Religion has been defined as the bond that binds the soul to God; perhaps it might be even better defined as the means whereby it becomes possible to the soul to realise the bond which exists between itself and God. Any development and anything which facilitates this realisation is religious in character, and everything that strengthens belief in the Unseen ought to do this.

Now, the quality of primary importance in the evolution of souls—of primary importance, that is to say, for the development of religion—is the spirit of reverence. Do spiritualistic studies tend towards the development of reverence? The question cannot be answered off-hand. Those who have ignored the revelations of the spirit world which have been made through Modern Spiritualism have often maintained an attitude of almost superstitious reverence towards the dead. The dead have, to some extent, become in some minds de-humanised; they are thought to be no longer interested in the affairs of this world, no longer cognisant of the joys and sorrows of those they have left behind; they have passed into an unimaginable heaven, and those who still remember them on earth speak of them with bated breath as of a higher order of beings. This has not, of course, been universally the case, but it truly represents, in a general way, the attitude of a great many persons towards the departed. It is a dreary conception, and, as we believe, a very false one, but it tends to encourage a kind of reverence towards the spirit world, and reverence, as we have said, is an essential constituent of a religious mind.

Spiritualism, on the other hand, has broken down fictitious notions, and the messages that come from the Beyond reveal a world of intelligence, good, bad, and indifferent, and very human in thought and feeling, and also in the admixture of these conditions. This is, as we believe, true to facts, and therefore it is a distinct gain to have made the discovery. But just as every good quality has its accompanying defect which has to be guarded against, so, in every fresh discovery of truth, there are dangers of exaggeration, or of losing sight of some complementary aspect of reality. Along with the closer sense of intimacy and sympathy which is awakened by spiritualistic experiences, there is risk, and it is not a trifling risk, of loss of reverence. Spiritualists are liable to become familiar and flippant in their intercourse with unseen beings, and instead of learning to treat all men with deeper reverence by virtue of having learned to apprehend the true spirit nature which is incarnate in flesh and blood, some transfer their careless superficiality in relation to mankind incarnate to their intercourse with spirits incarnate.

Ancestor worship bears witness to and encourages a most important element in human development. We note with admiration that the Japanese are virtually, as a nation, sharers in the faith for which Modern Spiritualism stands. That the so-called dead are living is their undoubted conviction—that they are living in sympathetic relations with those still in the body, and that they are cognisant of human affairs. We remember how Admiral Togo addressed the spirits of the dead soldiers after the victories of the Japanese arms. But, in the case of the

Japanese, this intercourse with the unseen is safeguarded by ancestor worship.

We do not, of course, advocate precisely this form of reverence, but if it is faulty by excess, we think that the fault is on the right side; better this than the familiarity of commonplace minds who turn spiritualistic séances into triviality, and draw aside the veil between the incarnate and the discarnate without reverence and without spirituality. Such intercourse may even injure the 'dead,' and it certainly must degrade the 'living.' Earth-bound minds, with paltry interests and money-grubbing thoughts, hail the visitants from a hidden sphere to satisfy their idle curiosity, or to help them to achieve their petty ambitions, not realising that they are drawing upon themselves the judgment of God, which will work itself out by inexorable law. By the methods intended to purge their sight and spiritualise their minds they are barring their own way to the apprehension of the spiritual world. The very sphere into which they penetrate becomes materialised in their understanding of it.

A poet has expressed for us the consternation of the soul who awakens to discover how it has thus worked its own loss:—

'I have reached the goal—
"Whereto does knowledge serve!" will burn
My eyes, too sure, at every turn!
I cannot look back now, nor stake
Bliss on the race, for running's sake.
The goal's a ruin like the rest!'

Yes; it is possible to reach this goal, to prove survival, to open up communication with the unseen, and, at the same time, to materialise the hidden spheres by importing into the intercourse low aims, unworthy frivolity, and we may find it impossible to retrace our steps and again to cross the threshold with the reverence and aspiration which serve as calls to the purest and best of the departed. The goal attained, intercourse achieved—but the goal a ruin! a prize not worth the effort. 'Impossible to retrace our steps,' we have said; but the same poet corrects us:—

'But Easter-Day breaks,
Christ rises! Mercy every way
Is infinite,—and who can say?'

GHOSTS OF ANIMALS.

The 'Occult Review' has been interesting itself in stories connected with apparitions of animals, and publishes this month the result of a prize competition on this subject, which, it confesses, 'has been somewhat disappointing as regards the number of competitors, but still more so as regards the evidential value of the stories sent in.' It is noted as 'a somewhat curious fact that quite half of the competitions sent in have reference to cats,' which is perhaps not purely accidental, for, as the Editor observes, 'the association of cats with witches and nightmares are doubtless not undeserved tributes to the "occult" attributes of the domestic pet.'

The two stories which divide the prize are testified to by the same person, who confirms the first as told by others, and relates the other independently. The first is that of a group of friends who were waiting for the grey Persian cat to come in for the night; the cook called it, and suddenly another cat, 'dark and shadowy, yet unmistakably a cat,' rushed in through the open French window. It resembled a cat formerly belonging to the same family, but, on search being made, it could not be found in the house. A minute or two afterwards the real cat walked slowly in.

The other story appears to relate to the same cats, living and ghostly, and occurred within a few weeks of the former incident. The cook complained that Kitty behaved strangely when she opened the cupboard; 'stretching out his neck, and looking with big, frightened eyes into the cupboard corner, he turned round, and, struggling out of cook's hold, and rushing over her shoulder, he flew out of the kitchen.' The cook

afterwards remembered that when Ruff, the former black cat, was ill, 'he would creep into dark corners,' so his basket was put into that cupboard, where he died, and she 'pointed to the very corner which caused such horror to Kitty.'

Captain Humphries tells of a boy of four whose favourite cat was drowned, and he had not been told of this. The child asked 'why his cat only came to play with him at nights, now-a-days,' looking much as usual, but thinner. The same child saw the figure of his grandfather standing at the foot of his bed at the time when the grandfather lost consciousness through a seizure from which he died. Mrs. E. J. Ellis, who was brought up in Germany, tells of a cat belonging to an old woman, which had been devoted to her, and watched her body after she was dead. Her young husband drowned it, and was haunted by its ghost for years afterwards whenever he walked near the river.

Still another cat story is related by our correspondent 'Arjuna,' whose experiences at Whitby will be fresh in the memory of our readers. This lady, when reading, suddenly saw on her knee a cat she had formerly had in India. The phantom cat purred and rubbed his head against his mistress, giving signs of delight at seeing her again. Her son also noticed the cat, which went to him to be petted. 'Arjuna' continues:—

'Then he returned to me, and walked along the sofa to where our present cat, "Kim," was asleep. The spirit cat, with a look of almost human fun, patted Kim's head, the latter awaking with a start. Rufie-Oofie (the spirit cat) continued to make playful dabs at Kim's ears, Kim following each movement with glaring eyes, distinctly seeing and realising that another cat was invading his sofa, but not in the least angry with him and quite ready to play. After a few minutes the spirit cat came back to my knee, whereupon the earth cat displayed jealousy which Rufie-Oofie resented, but before they came to "actual words" the spirit cat retired "behind the veil."

Some stories of spectral dogs and a phantom horse are also given, which we will not spoil by abstracting.

'WORK: A MEANS OR AN END?'

'The Light of Reason,' for September, is devoted largely to 'Work,' or 'Labour,' as 'a thing happy and noble in itself,' as the Editor somewhat inaptly terms it, seeing that work is neither a thing, nor can it be happy or noble, although the worker may be happy in his work and ennobled by it. This is recognised by the Editor in his notes when he says: 'Pure-hearted, healthy-minded people love work, and are happy in their labours. They never complain of being "overworked." It is very difficult, almost impossible, for a man to be overworked if he lives a sound and pure life.' But a man who works from twelve to sixteen or eighteen hours a day, as many do, is overworked, and cannot be healthy and sound because he is overworked. And further, many a man who loved his work has worked so ardently and unwisely that he has broken down under the strain. Some have died, and others have suffered life-long injury by their intemperate devotion to their labour. 'Let us rejoice in our work,' and because we 'have the strength and capacity for work' by all means, but we very much doubt the wisdom of the advice to 'increase that strength and capacity by unremitting labour.' It is well, if one cannot do the kind of work which he likes, to like what he has to do, and there is much significance, too, in the saying 'Blessed is the man who has found his work, let him ask no other blessedness.' But work is not the whole, or only thing in life. It is a means to an end—that end being the development of manhood—of character.

A great deal depends upon the kind of work which one has to perform, whether it is useful or useless; whether it is such as contributes to the good of the world, or merely to the insatiate desire to make money irrespective of the use or quality of the article produced. Further, there are many who do not 'find their work,' but are compelled to engage in distasteful occupations to secure the means of subsistence. They are hirelings and can never love their labours. Necessity is a hard taskmaster, and they resent the sting of the lash—how then can such people be 'happy in their labours'? It is useless to sing

the praises of work—as work. It is true that the healthy man must be doing; that he delights in an active life and that labour of some kind is a necessity, for if not usefully occupied men get into mischief for lack of something to do; but we need to discriminate and recognise that work as a means to an end—and that end the development of body, mind, will, and spirit—is to be recommended, sought after, and engaged in heartily, but we should also recognise that there are many forms of work which are worse than useless, for they are demoralising and injurious.

Happy is the man who takes pleasure in his employment; who loves the work he has to do, who sets himself to improve upon his best work and who finds in change of occupation his rest and recreation. Happy is the man who delights in service and feels that his work will prove useful—that someone will enjoy the fruits of his toil. Happy is the man who gains self-knowledge and self-mastery; who finds his labour helpful in the development of both muscle and mind, and who can put his best into his work and take pleasure and pride in the results of his efforts, the products of his hands and his brain; but the bow must be unbent sometimes or it breaks, and there is wisdom in the advice 'work while you work and play while you play.' For the full, all-round healthy development of manhood one must have opportunities for self-culture, for æsthetic gratification, for change of scene and surroundings, for recreations and social communion as well as spiritual pleasures, so that work becomes a pleasure and pleasure contributes to happiness.

F. H.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

The sweetness and joy of life can be found by those only who are spiritually alive; into whose whole-souled natures the Spirit of Love infuses tender compassion and sympathy, and leads them on to forbearance and generous helpfulness.

Spirituality is love and wisdom in operation. It is evidenced in the gracious quality of soul which, like a pleasant aroma, pervades the whole atmosphere with hope and cheer, until gladness becomes habitual and life is filled with charm, and all associations are sweet and harmonious.

How true it is, then, that each soul gets back what it gives. Give distrust and condemnation, give mastery and domination, give intolerance and discontent, and the world will rasp, and grind, and fret thee. 'The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small.' Give faith, and hope, and love, and cheerful sympathy, and service, and the world will be lit with glory.

Spiritual culture does not mean refusal to fulfil the duties of this life; on the contrary, it should dignify the 'common things' of daily existence. True spiritual progress, as a thoughtful writer says, is evidenced in—

'the buoyancy and tireless energy of the body in which the beautiful, expanding, highly destined spirit is for a time appointed to work. It is seen in the brightness of the eye, and in its serenity, in the absence of all depression, and in the contentment and tranquillity of the disposition and temper. True spiritual progress is above all things healthy, and it places the human being in a fearless attitude towards both God and man, and nothing but good can come of it.'

There is danger sometimes in trying to become too spiritual, to 'keep the wings of our faith and our love out of the world,' that we may be 'clear of all pollution . . . ready to take our flight to heaven.' Is it possible? Are we justified in condemning this world? Should we not manifest our faith more fully by bringing our love into the world and discovering all the good there is in men and women here? It is true that 'spiritual things must be spiritually discerned,' but is it not a mistake to 'soar away from sordid clay' in search of the spiritual? Is not *this* world God's world? Are there not spiritual states here? Is there not 'good in all,' and beauty everywhere? Is not the best and truest spiritual culture secured by healthy, active, sympathetic life? By service to humanity? By the discovery of the truth and beauty which God has implanted everywhere?

There are hours of exaltation, seasons of transfiguration,

brief intervals of divine ecstasy which come to us, in which the spirit is thrilled with delight, uplifted and crowned with glory and strengthened to perform our daily duties; but these seasons of refreshing are not secured by retirement from and erasion of the responsibilities and cares of life; rather are they the consequences and rewards of faithful effort and loving labour exerted in the world and for humanity.

Our conception of religion is that it consists in a life expended in continual endeavour to be good and do good. It is the spirit within prompting us to love all that is true, pure, and beautiful, and to express that love in good, true, pure, and beautiful thoughts and purposes. The higher Spiritualism is revealed in us when we strive to live the spiritual life in this world and to help others to do the same. M.

BE HAPPY TO-DAY.

A correspondent, writing in the 'Sunflower,' points to the mistake which too many of us make of postponing our happiness instead of enjoying life's blessings as we go along. This writer in the 'Sunflower,' who uses the appropriate *nom de plume* of 'Cheer Up,' tells the following story:—

"It is not so much that we cannot be happy as that we think we have not time to be," said Aunt Hannah, reflectively. "We just will not let ourselves be glad, because we have so many fears and worries which we think we must get rid of first. We treat our joys as one of my neighbours did her choice currants.

"'Let's have a pie,' said the children, when the new bushes began to bear; but the mother wouldn't hear of using such fine fruit green; it must ripen. When the currants were ripe the children begged them for the table, but the mother had decided to save them for jelly. When jelly-making was proposed, she wanted to wait until other work was out of the way and she could 'do it as it ought to be done.' And so, when she was fully ready, the sun, the birds, and an unexpected storm had all been before her, and there was little fruit left on the bushes.

"That's the way we do with our blessings and gladness—the mercies that are 'new every morning.' We say, 'Oh, how I could enjoy this if'—and then we let the trial, foreboding, or tangle crowd it out of place. Some day we expect to be ready to really enjoy our health, our home, our friends; but who can promise us that the fruit will still be on the bushes?"

Be happy to-day! There isn't any other time for being happy.

As Ella Wheeler Wilcox forcibly sings:—

One looks behind him to some vanished time,
And says, 'Ah, I was happy then, alack!
I did not know it was my life's best prime—
Oh, if I could go back!' "

Another looks, with eager eyes aglow,
To some glad day of joy that yet will dawn,
And sighs, 'I shall be happy then, I know;
Oh, let me hurry on! "

But I—I look out on my fair To-day;
I clasp it close, and kiss its radiant brow.
Here with the perfect present let me stay,
For I am happy now!

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.—'Protestants as well as Catholics pray for the dead, and why not? They who object to prayers for the dead do not know what the essence of true prayer is. We are told that all faithful prayer avails, and an apostle advises us "to pray without ceasing." Then why should we try to confine the prayer to the narrow limits of our own knowledge? The people we speak of as "dead" may be more alive than we at present know of. Where they are, or what their state, we cannot tell, but this we know: they are not lifeless. The natural body decays and passes to earth again, but the spirit lives, it is the breath of God. And if "good acts our angels are," so are good lives. The holy ones who have passed to the beyond may pray for us, may be our constant defence, and when we ask for divine guidance they are the messengers who bring the answer from the throne of heaven. When we pray "Thy kingdom come," we need not limit the scope of the soul's expression; our highest thoughts, hopes, and prayers are all effectual.'—'The Journal of Culture.'

EVOLUTION OF MIND.

In an interesting article on 'The Evolution of Mind,' which appeared in a recent issue of Mr. Charles Brodie Patterson's magazine entitled 'Mind,' T. W. Topham, M. D., claims that the evolution of man is made very plain 'when we understand that there is no break in the ascent of any separate mind that received from the Infinite its first impulse in the mineral kingdom, up to the present time.' Mind, he thinks, advanced through untold ages 'under all the diversified environments that were necessary for the mental growth of the different species of both plant and animal life until it attained the stage of conscious reason in man.' This stage, however, he regards as anticipatory of a still higher phase of mentality (the super-conscious mind) which, he says, belongs to another condition of life, or the next stage of evolution, and will continue to improve after our bodies die.

Our individual mind is a real entity, according to Dr. Topham, and forms part of the enduring reality:—

'Its identity cannot be separated from the Infinite whole without destroying the unit which comprises the all. The separation of a self-conscious mind from the one all-mind would make two, or a divided power, and a divided power is not Infinite.

It would be folly to think that the Divine Wisdom, acting through natural law, would supply man with the qualities of mind, which have come to him through such a laborious process of infinite change, and then destroy him.'

Dr. Topham thinks that man is passing through a transitory stage of evolution and forming a connecting link between the sub-conscious mind of the animal (which can only develop while it inhabits the material body) and the higher mind of the spirit self which will develop to perfection in the after-death life. Man possesses a sub-conscious animal mind and faculties of conscious reason, and the latter are frequently so developed in some people, in this life, that they anticipate the higher order and, in a crude and imperfect way, use some of their super-conscious faculties. Because these powers are far removed from their normal sphere of action, every manifestation of them in this life is necessarily hampered by physical conditions and imperfect. The clairvoyant cannot always see with the eye of the spirit. The clairaudient may hear the whisperings of the spirit, but the messages are frequently indistinct and incoherent, and any exhibition of super-conscious intelligence in this state of being is extremely difficult, because these mental powers belong to the life beyond this. But we should not lose sight of the fact that many people can, and do, in this life, use the powers of their higher mind sufficiently to give it character, and thus indicate the stepping-up process of mind in evolution, and prove that our present mental attainment is but the forerunner of a more profound wisdom that will be ours in another condition of life—where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary find rest and agreeable occupation.

WHY INTEREST IN CHURCHES WANES.

The Editor of the 'Harbinger of Light,' Mrs. Charles Bright, in the August number of that journal says:—

'From all parts of the world, and from every section of the Church, come wails from the highest dignitaries of the Church of Rome and the Church of England, from Nonconformist ministers and lay preachers alike, as to the fast waning interest in the services of the Church. Strange it is to note also the utter blindness of these leaders of the blind to the real cause of the indifference to so-called religion and of the lack of noble ideals in daily life.

'At the outset, I would like to say that frenzied attempts at driving people into better ways or making society virtuous by Act of Parliament are, in my opinion, alike futile. It is well that the laws made by the people should be strictly enforced, that, at least, an external decency of conduct should be maintained; but this is all that the law can do. . . Neither clergy nor newspaper critics dare to hint at the true cause, namely, that the world has outgrown the old beliefs, and turns away from a system that gives its followers a stone when they are asking for the living bread.

'I can speak from a bitter experience. One of the fundamental truths of the world is that religion—in its true sense—is a natural impulse of the human heart. Vainly did I strive

in early days to satisfy myself with the creeds of the churches in that time of spiritual unrest when the writers of "Essays and Reviews," Rev. Charles Voysey, Bishop Colenso and others, set all the world thinking, with the result we see to-day of a general distrust of orthodox teaching. There was nothing but blank materialism left when what seemed a supernatural religion had to be given up, but Carlyle's grand gospel of work—*Laborare est orare*—fortunately gave me some interest in life. It was not until my eyes were opened, in what seemed a marvelous way, to the fact that we are in a spiritual world now, surrounded by "the cloud of witnesses," that the meaning of Life came upon me with a flash of inspiration almost as blinding for the moment as that wonderful vision of St. Paul's on his way to Damascus. I could understand then what Jesus meant when he said to that unbelieving generation, "Having eyes see ye not? and having ears hear ye not?" "How is it ye do not understand?" And I said, "Here is the truth that the churches try in vain to impress on their bearers." Intuition will not suffice. How I had wished that all the spiritual verses of Longfellow and other poets could be true as I sadly closed their books! It is only by the discovery of some subtle link between the spiritual world and this that assurance comes, and spiritual phenomena, of some kind, prove the door through which most of us have to pass. On that basis will be built a religion that will eventually cover the world—a church not made with hands:—

"O priests who mourn that reverence is dead!
 Man quits a fading faith and asks instead
 A worship great and true.
 I know that there was once a Church where men
 Caught glimpses of the gods believed in then;
 I dream that there shall be such church again;
 O dream, come true, come true."

UNSEEN HELPERS.

That many persons have been, and still are, helped from the unseen, although they were but dimly conscious of the fact, is generally admitted by Spiritualists, and therefore the following instances of 'unrecognised mediumship,' taken from the 'Messenger,' will be of interest to the readers of 'LIGHT':—

* Thomas Paine expresses himself thus: "There is no one studying the human mind who has not made this observation that there are ideas and thoughts, two very distinct things; those which are produced within ourselves and those which produce themselves in one's mind. I have made it a rule always to receive these unannounced visitors with courtesy and with all the care of which I am capable to learn if they merit my attention. I declare that it is to these strange guests that I owe all the knowledge I possess."

* Ralph Waldo Emerson confirms this law of inspiration, which he analyses thus: "Thoughts do not come to me, successively, as in a problem of mathematics, but they force themselves into my intellect like a light in a dark night. Truth comes to me not by a process of reasoning but by intuition."

* The ease and celerity with which the Bard of Avon wrote his plays was, to his contemporaries, a source of astonishment.

* Here is an explanation which Sir Walter Scott gives of himself: "Twenty times after composing my plot I have put myself to work and never in my life have I followed it. . . . My fingers work independently of my thoughts. . . . Thus it was that after I had written the second volume of 'Woodstock' I had not the least idea that the story would end in a catastrophe in the third volume."

* In speaking of the "Antiquary," Scott said, "I have a general plan; but as soon as I take up my pen, it runs so rapidly over the paper that I am often tempted to let it go alone in order to see if it would not write as well as with the aid of my thought."

* The eminent composer, Handel, wrote his oratorios in a month, then rested eight to ten months, during which he would not write a single note. After an examination of his manuscripts one would suppose that each of them had been improvised or composed without premeditation.

* Rev. Robert Collyer, the American Unitarian preacher, in speaking of the best sermon he had ever delivered, said: "I had no need to compose it; it came itself, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, division by division. Never in my life have I been more convinced that a sermon comes from God."

* Newton tells us that he let his mind rest when he had a subject to treat and that the thoughts came of themselves.

* One remembers that the first great discovery made by James Watt was an inspiration which came to him in one of his walks. He was suddenly struck with the main idea of his

discovery with such a spontaneity that, according to an English author, he later attributed it to a supernatural influence.

* We will close by a very remarkable piece of testimony, that of Sir Charles Napier. In speaking of his campaign in India, the illustrious warrior made this confession: "Ought I to be proud of my success? No. I am guided by a power which, although real, is invisible."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

'A Pertinent Inquiry.'

SIR,—In your last issue I note on p. 413 'A Pertinent Inquiry,' and I would like to say a few words on the subject.

I have no quarrel with modern seers, modern philosophers and so forth, *qua* modernity, but I confess that I constantly deplore the undeniable fact that much, very much, of the present mental darkness and utter confusion of mind concerning religion, would be removed if the writings of the Master Seers were not, to my thinking, so foolishly disregarded. I call those Master Seers, the study of whose writings promotes clarity and logical sequence of thought, unity of idea, and more and more *illumination* concerning the great problems of life. Moreover, the more exhaustive the study, the more does one find that the inspiration is at one with the sacred writings, our own Scriptures, the great Vedanta of the Hindus, the Platonists, Neo-Platonists, Gnostics, and so forth. Of course I am not meaning anything so foolish, as to infer that all is exactly parallel, and every detail corresponding. Certainly not, but Ariadne's clue is unquestionably in the world for modern philosophers to grasp; and consequently giving us *rational* theories and *intellectual* hypotheses. Instead of these, I submit that those distinguished men, let us say the leaders and conductors in the 'Annals of Psychical Science,' Colonel de Rochas, &c., are simply guiding students upon a most dangerous and unsteady ground, and upon a very false foundation; and thus, practically speaking, helping on and forwarding *insanity* and human disintegration.

Had I space beyond what is proper for a communication to your journal, I would enter into details proving my point that the scientific curiosity by which these investigators are instigated, is certainly as remarkable as it is dangerous. Would they on their own ground approve of partially uninstructed minds proceeding to chemical experiment, *merely to see what would happen?* I think few people will disagree with me when I claim Jacob Boehme among those Master Seers who have appeared in the Western world, to unravel the great mysteries of life as well as to expound Christianity. Now Jacob Boehme held that man only attains to true manhood so far as he has harmonised in himself what he teaches as the Seven Forms of Nature, and that man is an epitome of Nature in all ways. Mrs. Penny, in her most admirable 'Introduction to J. Boehme's Writings,' compiled from her letters to 'LIGHT' during many years, says: 'Blinded as we are by the specious powers of reason, we are slow to imagine that anything of importance can happen in our inner world unknown to what we call *ourselves*; as little can we believe that a number of subordinate spirits act in that hidden sphere, building up the existence we suppose is all our own.' By this she meant to say that the aim of life is the full integration of man into the perfect harmony of all the Seven Spirits of God. To enter on this vast subject would be as impossible as it would be fairly to epitomise. Now we are all of us 'legion,' and the grand thing is to obtain mastery of ourselves, by following the laws of God leading inevitably to that true end—the perfection of humanity, since disobedience to those laws of God inevitably ends in the deterioration, and finally in the disintegration, of man—a 'second fall.' In former times, that man could be subject to other spirits than his own was, of course, well known; also the knowledge to prevent the disastrous results which their conflicting supremacy would cause in a man, *i.e.*, insanity, or the *lapse of the rule of the central spirit*,—the rational intellect of man, into the power of these contending inferior agencies, was the work of the Master Philosopher, or Priest, or Magus; and under such Efficient Will, that lapsing power of the patient over his own will could be revived; and *sanity*, that most precious possession of man, restored.

But what do psychical researchers now? A cruel deed indeed: They further weaken the already relaxed central will, and call up the *phantom* part in man's organism (or form, or nature or being) (we all have it), and by accentuating its fluidity into stability, they actually help the very work man

should most avoid, producing thus a pseudo extra life; for man has extraordinary power, well-known to the Master Seers, which he, so to speak, by calling into almost *ab-extra* life, *pro-creates* unlawfully. All this seems unjust, hasty, and mere assertion, but I contend, until proved to be false, that it is really true. The true Philosopher and Physician restores sanity and unity, but these inquisitive modern researchers help on *insanity* and multiplicity or confusion of mental planes subject to other wills.

Can anyone say that any great rational, noble thought or any fundamental query has ever been yet answered by modern researchers?

That the 'subliminal consciousness' has been established for the first time is untrue. Jacob Boehme, Swedenborg, Saint-Martin, &c., knew well what it really was. Why not seek a little of their knowledge?—Yours, &c.,

Rock Ferry.

ISABELLE DE STEIGER.

'Automatic Writing in Latin.'

SIR,—I must not doubt but that the rendering of the sentence, 'Vivitur parvo bene ubi gratuitum,' in 'LIGHT' of September 8th, is altogether scholarly, but I should like to give my reasons for believing that the intended meaning of Horace is not altogether expressed thereby. Instead of 'One can live,' I would suggest as more exact 'One lives,' or 'He lives,' used impersonally. The adjective 'parvo' applies to the adverb 'bene,' which is governed by 'vivitur'; and, if the adjective 'gratuitum' relates to words understood, then it might, perhaps, be also as correct to render it adverbially in English phraseology possessing a rather more terse and epigrammatic meaning. Literally it would be, 'He lives little happily where (things are) gratuitous,' which I would freely render, 'One lives but poorly where necessities are gratuitous,' or, without claim or merit.

Would it not be interesting if your correspondent, Mr. A. J. Rotteveel, could, through the same medium, succeed in obtaining the opinion of the communicating spirit? I myself am inclined to think that something much more pertinent to Mr. Rotteveel himself was intended than could be conveyed by the translation which I have taken the liberty to criticise.—Yours, &c.,

J. F. DARLEY.

SIR,—The Latin sentence referred to in 'LIGHT' of the 1st inst., p. 413, as having been obtained by automatic writing is clearly either a misreading or a modification of the passage in Horace, Car. II. 16, which runs:—

'Vivitur parvo bene cui paternum
Splendet in mensâ tenui salinum,'

and is rendered in Conington's translation thus:—

'More happy he whose modest board
His father's well-worn silver brightens.'

Assuming the words *cui paternum* have not been misinterpreted into *ubi gratuitum*, then the phrase, automatically written, 'Vivitur parvo bene ubi gratuitum,' may be rendered roughly thus, 'To live in humble style, voluntarily, is well,' or 'One does well to live humbly and to acquiesce in so doing.' The person to whom the message was addressed will probably best appreciate its significance, and I trust this solution may assist him.—Yours, &c.,

W. L. WILMSHURST.

The Doctrine of 'The Twice-Born.'

SIR,—Though your editorial comment on the letter by 'A Student' ('LIGHT,' p. 418) appears to cover the ground, it may be interesting to mention that the 'Theosophical Review' for September heads its notice of 'The Twice-Born' with the words 'De Gestibus,' and says:—

'The writer of the book under notice has translated what was probably a psychic experience into a series of events in daily life, and with an astonishing result. The theory of psychic children is by no means new, but their physical birth later on in somebody else's family rather takes the breath away.'

This reviewer appears to hit the mark in the last sentence. It is not difficult to understand the idea that the soul of a child may be to some extent the product of the union of the souls of its parents, just as its bodily traits are derived from those of the parents; but to suppose that this new soul can be formed when there is no body to receive it, and that it has to go about hunting for a body to get born in—and what about the soul that ought to belong to that body?—all this is very dubious imagining.—Yours, &c.,

'The Mercenary Spirit.'

SIR,—All earnest Spiritualists owe thanks to 'F. H.' for his letter in 'LIGHT,' of July 28th, on this subject.

The Teignmouth medium, of whom he gives such an interesting description, is a real, genuine Spiritualist and ideal medium, and a noble, unselfish man; all honour to him! If the majority of mediums, or even a large minority, had acted up to his principles, Spiritualism would occupy a very different place in the world to-day from what it does.

There is an important spiritual law controlling this question. He who schemes and works for selfish ends will lose his labour; he who works for God and his fellows, unmindful of results to self, in absolute faith and trust, will be building for eternity, and will find his reward. As a great teacher phrased it: 'For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.' This is a very difficult lesson for man to learn in his present state of development, but not the less true for that.

In the same issue, under the heading 'Spiritualism as a Sect,' Mr. Hutchinson is pleased to be facetious at my expense. It is, of course, the churchmen who investigate and learn the truth who will endeavour to bind us in chains of dogma. How could outsiders have any influence? As regards Spiritualism becoming a sect, I know nothing about that as I never attend their meetings. The great curse of Protestant Christianity has been, and still is, sectarianism; and Spiritualists will make a great mistake if they fall into the same pit with their eyes open. In my sight, between God—the supreme Over-soul that is ceaselessly and persistently pressing onward towards fuller expression in all manifested Nature—and Man there is complete open communion, limited only by our own obtuseness; and for anyone to pretend to come between me and my God is a piece of intrusive impertinence. Strange to say the rev. gentleman has not a word to say about the real point of the letter he criticises, that before long we shall be told that the Church has always taught Spiritualism!

My thanks are due to 'Searcher' for his information in the same issue about the Pain of Tynnichus.—Yours, &c.,

A. K. YESSING.

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

'A Warning Voice.'

SIR,—By a strange coincidence I read Colonel F. R. Begbie's experience recorded in 'LIGHT' of the 1st inst., just as I was contemplating the sending of a short account of a very similar incident which recently befell my younger son whilst cycling along a London thoroughfare.

My son has proved himself to be sensitive to spirit influence in more ways than one, and to that fact it is probably due that a serious danger was averted, and that, possibly, his life was saved. Whilst riding over a certain patch of roadway in North London, the scene of many a sideslip and serious casualty, he was just about to pass a heavily laden, pair-horse van by turning to the left of the vehicle, when he clairaudiently heard a voice distinctly and emphatically command him to 'turn to the right!' He instantly obeyed, and was passing to the right of the vehicle when there was a sideslip, and he was hurled into the muddy roadway, but several feet away from the wheels of the van.

It is obvious that had the sideslip occurred on the *left-hand side* and the rider fallen in the same manner, instead of falling away from the vehicle as he did, he must have fallen under the wheels!

I have heard of other instances of a similar character where cyclists have averted some impending danger by promptly obeying the 'something' that 'seemed to say to them,' &c.

It would be instructive and interesting if further experiences of cycling readers were communicated to 'LIGHT.'—Yours, &c.,

H. G. SWIFT,

Hon. Sec., Stoke Newington
Society, London, N.

'Herbert Spencer and Work.'

SIR,—Owing to a printer's error in leaving out capitals and misplacing an apostrophe, I am made to say in my letter of September 8th: 'Work for work's sake does not (so far as we know) meet with divine approval; but work for our fellow-workers' sake undoubtedly does.' My words were, really: 'Work for our Fellow-Worker's sake.'

The reference is to Christ, whose 'yoke' is a double one, laid over Himself and His disciple; and who, in every hard task He calls upon us to do, is harnessed with us to the task, to help us to perform it. This is the unique blessedness of work done for Christ, that it is work done with Him.—Yours, &c.,

S.

Alderton Vicarage.

C. E. HUTCHINSON.

Dreams and Visions.

Sir,—Correspondence of the past few weeks, under the heading of 'Dreams and Visions,' in the 'Daily Telegraph,' offers much food for thought and reflection. To a perfectly indifferent mind it must be rather amusing to find so many advocates of extremes of opinions on this subject. While one writer implicitly believes in the truth of dreams and visions, another tries to prove that they are purely the result of an impaired digestion or indiscretion in diet. But to those who, like myself, are just on the borderland of belief—having reasons for thinking that dreams do not always depend upon material causes—these diametrically opposed opinions are very confusing and distracting. There is, however, running through all these letters from people who place credence in dreams, one note which strikes one as very strange. It appears that usually pre-mentiments of unhappy events only are fore-shadowed; some symbolical evidence of a death or serious accident is indicated to the dreamer. But how is it we do not receive intimations of joyful occasions also? Surely, if the unseen agencies or influences are able to inform us of sorrowful tidings, they should be equally capable and eager to apprise us of any piece of good fortune likely to fall to our lot. If I can be enlightened on this point of a profoundly interesting subject, I shall feel very grateful.—Yours, &c.,

T. S. C.

'Theories of Materialisation.'

SIR,—A. E. L.'s interesting article in your issue of August 4th prompts me to send you a few lines setting forth another view of the matter.

If spiritual beings can do so much, as there is no doubt they do, under such bad and careless conditions, what could they not accomplish under well thought-out, sympathetic, and rational conditions?!

One feels inclined to ask, cannot the Spiritualists of a country like England afford the money, time, and brains to make one down-right, common-sense effort to settle the question for good and all?—Yours, &c.,

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

A. K. VENNING.

The 'Apple Cure' for Consumption.

SIR,—A correspondent in 'LIGHT' recently referred to the 'apple cure' for consumption. I was much interested, as a member of my own family circle is a sufferer from that complaint, and as he has a strong natural craving for apples, it might be easy to induce him to follow that cure. Can 'Lex et Lux' or any other correspondent give me any helpful information on the subject?—Yours, &c.,

ANNIE CUNNINGHAM.

An Appeal for Books.

SIR,—Finding that the committee of our local public library do not seem disposed to place upon their shelves works upon Spiritualism and Occultism, we have decided to augment our stock of books, with the view of instituting an active branch of propagandism amongst those friends who favour us with an occasional visit when an intellectual discourse is to be given.

For this end we earnestly appeal to your readers for any books they may feel disposed to give us. The smallest parcel will be most thankfully received.—Yours, &c., for the Barry Spiritualists' Church,

A. BROWN }
L. C. THOMAS } Secretaries.

Alexandra Rooms, Woodland-road, Barry Dock.

SOCIETY WORK.

Notices of future events which do not exceed twenty-five words may be added to reports if accompanied by six penny stamps, but all such notices which exceed twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns.

OXFORD CIRCUS.—22, PRINCE'S-STREET.—On Sunday last Miss Violet Burton again gave a helpful address and answered questions in a very interesting manner. On Sunday next Mr. Frederic Fletcher will speak on 'The Evolution of Mind.'

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. James Payu, the secretary, related his religious experiences, and a good after-meeting was held. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. T. B. Frost.—J. P.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Stebbens gave an address and answered several questions; and several members testified to experiences with 'Ghosts at Home.' Sunday next, Mr. D. J. Davis. Sunday, the 23rd inst., Mrs. F. Roberts will name a child.—W. R. S.

STRAFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Roberts gave an interesting address, followed by clairvoyant descriptions by Mr. Roberts. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion; at 7 p.m., Mr. A. Jones. Thursday, at 8 p.m., investigators' circle.—A. G.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. R. Brailey gave an address on 'The Victory of Life,' followed by successful clairvoyant descriptions. Madame Cope kindly contributed a solo. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Alice Webb will give clairvoyant descriptions.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Miss MacCreddie gave fifteen excellent clairvoyant descriptions, mostly recognised. Mr. G. Spriggs presided, and Mrs. W. T. Cooper, R.A.M., ably officiated at the organ. Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis, trance address on 'How Man is Made.'—A. J. W.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FEENHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. G. H. Bibbings' eloquent address on 'The Sentiment, Science, and Solace of Spiritualism' was much appreciated. Speaker on Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn. On Wednesday, the 19th inst., at 8 p.m., public circle.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Abbott gave a thoughtful address on 'Usefulness' to a fairly large and appreciative audience. Mrs. Boddington presided. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., speaker, Mr. D. J. Davis. Thursday, at 8.15 p.m., psychometry and clairvoyance. Silver collection.—H. Y.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Agnew Jackson gave a good address on 'Thoughts' to a good audience, and held a large after-circle with successful results. Mr. Darby presided. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Nurse Graham. On the 23rd inst. Mr. T. B. Frost.—L. D.

BRIGHTON.—COMPTON HALL, 17, COMPTON AVENUE.—On Sunday last the morning circle gave excellent results. In the evening Mr. F. G. Clarke gave a good address on 'Spirit Communion.' Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. R. Boddington. Hall open on Thursdays from 3 to 5 p.m. Fridays, at 8 p.m., healing; Saturday, at 8 p.m., prayer meeting.—A. C.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Simpson, in a splendid lecture on 'The Other Side,' answered adverse arguments in a scientific and lucid manner, and demonstrated the reality of life beyond the veil. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Adams. On the 20th inst., at 8 p.m., circle. Saturdays, at 8 p.m., free healing.—E. A.

CHISWICK.—110, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last, at a harmonious circle, several mediums were controlled, and test descriptions given. An interesting discussion was held on 'The Eternal Power called God.' In the evening Mr. Samuel Keyworth's address on 'Inspiration, the Source of Religion' was instructive and enjoyable. Sunday next, at 10.45 a.m., choir; at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., address by Mr. H. Wright. Gentlemen required for private developing circle.

BALHAM.—19, RAMSDEN-ROAD (OPPOSITE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY).—On Sunday morning last Mr. Bridger read from and spoke upon 'Oahspe,' the Faithist Bible. Miss Milam gave clairvoyant descriptions. In the evening Mr. Waterfield, of Portsmouth, gave a trance address, and Mrs. Eatwell gave clairvoyant descriptions. On Wednesdays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays at 11.15 and 7 p.m., services for Faithist teachings are held. Clairvoyance at all meetings. Questions invited.

SOUTHAMPTON.—WAVERLEY HALL, ST. MARY'S-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Adams' address on 'Psychic Experiences of Jesus' was much appreciated.—W.

WISBECH PUBLIC HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. D. Ward gave a good address on 'What are we building upon? can the angels help us?' followed by good clairvoyant descriptions.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Clavis gave an interesting address on 'Salvation by Character.' Mrs. Short gave well recognised clairvoyant descriptions. Mrs. Dennis sang an impressive solo.—E. M.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.—On Sunday last, at the morning circle, Mr. R. Boddington, of Brixton, gave a short address and answers to questions, and in the evening addressed a good audience on 'A New Basis of Belief in Immortality.' At the after-circle our president gave interesting and successful clairvoyant descriptions.—F. T. B.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWESHEAD HALL.—On Sunday last, Mrs. Heaton Barnes' earnest and interesting addresses on 'Spiritualism: What does it stand for?' were followed by successful clairvoyant descriptions. The Rev. A. Rushton presided, and an after-meeting was held. On the 10th Mrs. Barnes gave some striking clairvoyant descriptions.—E. B.