

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

We referred in a recent Note to Mr. James Leith Macbeth Bain's last book, 'In the Heart of the Holy Grail,' to which a friend thinks we hardly did full justice. But as Cicero said, *De gustibus non est disputandum*. And something must be allowed for exigencies of space, which prevent the reviewer saying all he would like. Still, we may give a quotation from a portion of the book which, in the form of invocations to Nature, finely reproduces the spirit of Greek verse:—

Ye powers of health inhabiting these woods, and breathing in these oaks and pines and birches the sweet breath of God; ye pure elemental forces abiding in this running river and singing in the waters of this mountain stream the song of life the ever-flowing; ye dwellers in the upper airs of earth, and ye whose home is amid the pure soil and the flowers, the ferns and the shrubs, the heaths and mosses and the green grass of our earth, ye give to my body of your finest strength, ye give to my heart of your sweetest.

We have sometimes been amused at the credulity of some of the so-called hard-headed, practical observers of spiritual phenomena. Often it takes less to impress them than to impress the unpractical, imaginative folk. The latter are often keener-witted and more resourceful in devising explanations of what they see, and, when they are convinced, they prove to be really the more practical of the two classes, since their quick, alert minds move with greater ease in the new region of knowledge, and adapt themselves more readily to its complex conditions. We frequently hear of spiritual manifestations being testified to by matter-of-fact business men, and while we grant that evidence from such people has a certain value, it is far from being beyond criticism. We have known some dreamy, meditative folk who have been far keener and closer observers and reasoners than those whose vision is mainly exercised in the world of everyday facts.

We have received a long letter respecting the reference (on p. 314) to the memorial inscription which was observed on a tombstone erected in memory of a vicar, *viz.*:—

Father, in Thy gracious keeping,  
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

Our correspondent takes exception to our gentle query: 'Did the good people really believe that their beloved vicar was actually sleeping in that grave?' He finds in it an 'attitude of pitying superiority' and speaks of our 'inability to appreciate not only the sacredness and beauty, but the intense spirituality of the lines quoted.' Further, he impales us on the point of the well-worn quotation about

'the primrose on the river's brim.' We bow our head to the storm, and simply ask: 'Does our critic really believe that the good people who caused that inscription to be recorded did not mean that their vicar was actually sleeping in the grave until the coming of the resurrection of the body?'

Our correspondent gives 'one or two reasons why the lines quoted need not, at any rate, appear absurd.' They are as follows:—

In the first place, a period of inactivity described as sleep, lasting sometimes even for years, is admitted as a common experience amongst those who profess to be disembodied human spirits, so that even Spiritualists need not take exception to the use of the sleep metaphor. But apart from this, taken in its simplest meaning, what is sleep? Is it not a psychic state in which an individual ceases to make use of the body as a means of intelligent expression and communion with others? And that is exactly what Death seems to those of us who have not been granted conscious communion with the dead.

A mother might use these very words to bless her sleeping child; it would not mean that she believes the spirit of her child extinct, although for the time being he has ceased to use his body as a means of expression; nor is the little quiet body less sacred to her because momentarily discarded.

And if she may use these words as she lays the little head upon its pillow at night, may we not also use them—only more wistfully as the waiting time for us is longer—when we lay away the sacred body of one who will never use it again?

We entirely agree—but the point is, were those reasons in the minds of those who employed the couplet, or were they honestly expressing the still too prevalent belief that the soul sleeps 'in the sure and certain hope' of a return to conscious activity when the body shall rise again? It is evident that this belief, which is still regarded as 'orthodox,' was entertained by those who used the words of the second inscription that we quoted:—

Rest till the trump from the opening skies  
Shall bid thee from dust to glory rise.

We are so constantly hearing complaints concerning the selfishness and apathy of the world that we are at times apt to forget that the soul everywhere contrives to gain expression in some form, and overleaps the strongest barriers of materialism. Says a writer in 'The Stellar Ray,' an American monthly:—

The majority of people fairly vibrate with kindness of some sort—each in his own way—and I believe that people without this quality of heart are the exception, not the rule.

The world, in short, is not so hard and cold as some of us believe. Many a human soul is like a goodly fruit with a very hard and forbidding rind.

From an article on Education, by the Sister Nivedita, in the June issue of 'Prabuddha Bharata, or Awakened India,' we take the following deep saying:—

It is almost true that the worst of ourselves is a better schoolmaster for us than the best of another people [person?]

That is both neat and shrewd. By the way, in reading our contemporaries in the spiritual Press of India, we are

struck by the fact that, in spite of their quite pardonable shortcomings in the matter of writing English, the native contributors contrive to say many wise things in a very apt way. And there is never any lack of earnestness. The following from 'The Kalpaka' (Tinnevely, South India) is worth quoting:—

Beware, all of you who would lead the half-worldly, half-spiritual life. The desire to lead the spiritual-sensual existence . . . results in untold sufferings and pain, till at last with cries of anguish the soul is made to dis-attach itself from the lower and turn to the higher self.

Professor G. Henslow, writing in 'The Modern Churchman' on 'The Fundamental Distinction between Man and Animals,' finds (as might be expected) one of the vital distinctions to reside in the fact that no animal can recognise the abstract idea of its own existence—in short, that while the animal is merely conscious the man is self-conscious. As we once heard it put, 'Man not only knows, but he knows that he knows'—a very subtle way of indicating the underlying consciousness of self in man. It is hardly necessary to say that we entirely agree with Professor Henslow's conclusion that if, in virtue of his physical structure alone, man has been classed by anatomists in a different *Family* from the apes, then he is entitled to be placed in a different *Order* by his intellect, and 'in a different *Kingdom* by his moral power—which may well be entitled, "The Kingdom of Heaven."

San Francisco cinematograph shows have been having a hot bath. An honest reporter from an honest newspaper visited some of them and frankly described the pictures of horror and vice that were shown, and on Sunday evenings, too. Other reports helped to heat the boilers and the authorities had to step in and work the taps. The latest news is that the cleansing has been thorough: but San Francisco will want watching.

There are signs that London's turn will come. For a very long time there have been penny-in-the-slot 'palaces' here that have probably been as disgraceful as anything in San Francisco.

We were glancing recently over a book of poems, privately issued many years ago, and were struck by some lines concerning the fear of death. They clearly indicate how a poet may be inspired to utter unconsciously a literal truth. We refer to the closing stanza of the poem, which we give in part:—

We give ourselves much trouble lest to die  
Should be to lose this conscious life and pass  
Impersonally into earth and sky—  
Lost in the general mass.

And yet it is our deepest ecstasy  
To pass through love into another's life—  
To yield this rooted self all up, and be  
All husband or all wife.

And deeper still the joy of a rapt soul,  
Whose self is sunk in earth, dead as the sod,  
Whose will has passed into divine control  
And being into God.

. . . the more we die  
To the restraining earth, the more we rise  
Into the rapt beatitudes that lie  
Hidden to mortal eyes.

At last death is the severing of all  
Entanglement or tie that binds to earth—  
*The cutting of the cord umbilical*  
*That frees the higher birth.*

## LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

DRAWINGS OF THE PSYCHIC AURA AND DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASE.—On *Wednesday next*, July 26th, and succeeding Wednesdays, from 12 noon to 5 p.m., at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., Mr. Percy R. Street will give personal delineations by means of the colours of the psychic aura of sitters, and will diagnose disease under spirit control. Fee 5s. to a guinea. Appointments desirable. See advertisement supplement.

## MR. W. J. COLVILLE'S LECTURES.

A Series of Lectures will be delivered by Mr. W. J. Colville at the Rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on the following *Tuesday and Thursday* afternoons, commencing at *three o'clock*. Admission 1s.

### SYLLABUS.

Tuesday, July 25—'Spiritual Disentanglement—The Real Harmony of Conflicting Philosophies.'  
Thursday, July 27—Subject to be announced.

*Questions invited after each lecture.*

The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Mr. W. J. Colville jointly invite MEMBERS of the Alliance to attend these meetings free of charge.

## THE CORONATION: SEEN AND UNSEEN.

BY MRS. EUSTACE MILES.

From notes taken at a lecture by Mr. Robert King on 'The Esoteric Meaning of the Coronation Ceremony.'

Amongst the hundreds of accounts which have appeared of the great Coronation ceremony, few have gone deeply into the inner symbolism and occult meaning of what is perhaps the greatest and most sacred of this world's ceremonies. Some, indeed, have called it 'an empty show!' For this reason I offer this article, and some notes of a lecture given by Mr. Robert King, the day before the Coronation, on 'The Esoteric Meaning of the Coronation Ceremony.' It explains, perhaps, a great deal of what many of us have felt, and have hardly known why we felt it, in connection with this ceremony. For myself I may say that having witnessed in the Abbey the glorious Coronation of Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra, I could appreciate and understand in a very special manner Mr. King's explanations.

The lecturer stated that the information he was about to give was received from his 'Guru,' who said that he (Mr. King) would be permitted to pass the information on to others. We were asked to understand that the Coronation ceremony is not a legal one (for the moment King Edward passed over, King George became the legal King of England), but a distinctly religious function, full of sacred symbolism and teaching. The service is divided into three parts—namely, the Recognition, the Anointing, and the Crowning.

THE RECOGNITION (or the election), said Mr. King, is of great significance, and is well understood by all students of astrology, for in this ceremony the King faced east and south, west and north. He then moved to the centre, in front of St. Edward's chair, and, robed in purple, stood up to show himself to his subjects. The Archbishop of Canterbury, facing the King, proclaimed, in ringing tones: 'Sirs, I here present unto you King George, the undoubted King of this realm. Wherefore all you who are come this day to do your homage and service, are you willing to do the same?' The Archbishop then repeated his declaration towards all the four quarters of the globe; east to south and west to north. At each repetition the King turned towards the quarter to which the Archbishop sent out his world-wide challenge.

THE ANOINTING was, perhaps, the most sacred and mystical ceremony of all. The oil used was specially prepared, compounded of fragrant spices, oil of jasmine, rose, and cinnamon, and all manner of sweet-smelling ointments. Whilst the anointing was going on, the hymn, 'Come, Holy Ghost,' was softly sung while all were kneeling. I have heard this anointing called a 'chrism,' and that is what it really is. The King was anointed with the sign of the cross on his head, breast, and both hands. On his head, that wisdom may dwell in his mind;

on his breast, to fortify his heart; and on the palms of his hands, that in all his actions he may be strengthened for service to his people.

Mr. King explained that the crown of the head is above the seat of the pineal gland, an organ well known to the students of the occult as an important brain-centre for psychical activities; the breast contains the heart, and the etheric heart (a well-known spiritual centre); whilst the hands are the occult symbols of action and service. The symbol of the cross refers to matter—that is, to *service in the body*. In this case it is not used exclusively as the Christian symbol, but has a far older significance; for the cross is one of the oldest symbols in the world, and is well known to astrologers.

After the anointing, the King went to the altar and took the oath kneeling. The lecturer explained that during this solemnly quiet time the aura of the King was being made ready for the influx of the Holy Spirit.

It is of deep interest to compare this visible ceremony with the invisible ceremony, as described by Mr. King, who said that at the consecration there was poured out by Divine Power a magnetic fluid, which magnetism the sacred oil absorbed and retained, in the same way as what is called 'holy water' (which really means *blessed water*) retains the effects of the blessing which has been pronounced over it, as do also the elements of bread and wine in the Holy Sacrament. Then the Primate extended his hands in blessing, and the prayer of the benediction was said. During the time that the 'Veni Creator' was being sung by the choir, great occult changes in the aura of the King were taking place; for, said Mr. King, 'music has the power to create and produce forms which are only seen by clairvoyants, and the influences of the music and the forms thus created radiate harmony and peace.'

While the address, or 'Mantra,' 'Be thy head anointed,' and the words that follow were being said, a *living ray of Divine Energy* passed straight into the heart of the King. Clairvoyants present could actually see this in the aura surrounding the King's person. This ray, described by Mr. King as the 'Divine Atom,' is like a radiant beam from a glowing diamond, and becomes the physical basis for spiritual action in the future life of the King, in his great official capacity.\*

THE CROWNING was truly, in more senses than one, the 'crowning ceremony.' His Majesty having been anointed and blessed, and 'vested' in fine linen and a shining raiment of pure cloth of gold, and having received all the sacred symbols of his exalted office, the actual Coronation of the King took place. The crown was first lifted by the Archbishop and presented to the 'King of Kings'; he then laid it down again and prayed: 'Bless, we beseech Thee, and sanctify Thy servant George, our King, and as Thou dost this day set a crown of pure gold on his head, so enrich his Royal heart.' Again the crown was raised by the Primate. This time it was set upon the King's head.

The next scene of great significance was when the King, crowned and robed, was led to his empty throne, St. Edward's chair, with the sacred stone of Scotland for its seat, on which stone he seated himself, crowned and anointed *King and Minister*. For, from the moment of his anointing and crowning, he was not only a King but a *Priest*. This is beautifully expressed in the Archbishop's final exhortation to him: 'Stand firm, and hold fast from henceforth the seat and the state of Royal and Imperial dignity which is this day delivered to you. . . . And the Lord God Almighty, whose ministers we are, and the stewards of His mysteries, establish your throne in righteousness, that it may stand fast for evermore.' It is also a direct fulfilment of Revelation i. 6, '*Kings and Priests* unto God.'

Referring to the sacred stone in St. Edward's chair, which is said by legends to have been Jacob's pillow, Mr. King gave an account of a visit he paid to Westminster Abbey in order to study the stone from a psychic point of view. He stated that the stone radiates an aura for about three feet all round it. This aura, which is of beautiful colours, with a bright white centre, is capable of being influenced by, and vibrating to, the thoughts of those who are present in the Abbey, so on such a solemn

occasion as a Coronation the atmosphere around that throne must, indeed, be full of inspiration for its Occupant. Authorities on the occult tell how the stone was used for some sacred religious purpose in Atlantis; and, as Ireland was once part of Atlantis, it is not surprising that it has been stated that it was found there.

THE PATRON SAINTS.—Many unseen and glorious beings and 'Great Ones,' said Mr. King, are present at a Coronation. The patron saints of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales are: St. George, St. Andrew, St. Patrick, and St. David. They are the Deva lords, and are the guardians of our race. We are apt to think of them as only legendary saints, but they are real and wonderful living beings, who are sent to earth on rare occasions, a Coronation being one of such occasions. When a crowning takes place, and at the moment when the crown is blessed before being placed on the King's head, clairvoyants can see these Devas, in human form, and clad in glistening white garments, standing north, south, east and west of the King. With their right hands outstretched, they touch the aura of the King, and from their fingers a golden light streams forth, which forms a film all round the aura. This film sinks into and forms a protecting shell about the ray of Divine Energy, which passes into the King's etheric heart, and will never leave him.

At the great Coronation in India more wonderful scenes will take place. The four great Indian Devas will be present, and will weld the East and West together by their sacred presences. It is almost beyond our conception to realise the great and beneficial results which will be brought about through the visit of the King and Queen to India, as Emperor and Empress of India.\* The lecturer said that the wonderful unseen influences, added to all the power from the thoughts of the people surrounding the King (both inside and outside the Abbey) created an atmosphere around him which explained the wonderful solemnity which was felt by the King and many of those who were present at the Coronation ceremony.

I regret that I cannot give Mr. Robert King's lecture more completely, but I think that the few notes which were kindly sent me by a friend who was present, added to my own, in addition to the accounts of the actual ceremonies, will enable many to realise that the *unseen Coronation* is the most wonderful of all. It is interesting to conclude with the King's own beautiful message to his people: 'Now that the Coronation and its attendant ceremonies are over, I desire to assure the people of the British Empire of my grateful sense that *their hearts have been with me through it all*. I felt this, through the beautiful and impressive service in the Abbey—the most solemn experience of my life.'

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#### FEELING AND THOUGHT.

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A thoughtful contributor writes:—

Below enthusiasm we possess ideas. In enthusiasm they possess us. To be possessed may be a much higher state than to possess. It is more generous, more active, and more inciting, but also more liable to aberration, injustice, and reaction. For this reason we want both those who are possessed and those who possess: the former to forefeel, lead on, and inspire; the latter to foresee, regulate, and uphold. Both faculties may, however, belong to the same human being. They are not rarely found together in unequal, but very rarely in equal and strong, proportion. It is well, then, for people of different types to unite in counsel and in action. It is well that opposite character is not a bar, but rather a help to close and enduring friendship. In the growth of life that which once possessed us becomes in time a possession. But that growth ceases if we do not retain the capacity for new enthusiasms, leading on again. So is the growth of the possessing, self-balanced man arrested very early, if, after thorough conviction, his pulses are not quickened to ardour, rising to steady flame.

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MR. W. H. ROBINSON, one of the veteran Spiritualists of Newcastle-on-Tyne, had a useful letter of protest in the 'North Mail' on the 14th inst. against the acrimonious misstatements respecting the late Davenport Brothers which have recently found their way into the Press.

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\* By those who are not occultists this 'Divine Atom' will be more easily understood if described as 'the Gift of the Holy Spirit.'  
—H. E. M.

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\* I have been told by a clairvoyant that the four Indian Devas were also seen at the Coronation ceremony in the Abbey on June 22nd.  
—H. E. M.

## THE HYPOTHESES OF 'BILOCATION' CONSIDERED.

BY ERNESTO BOZZANO. Translated from 'Annales des  
Sciences Psychiques.'

(Continued from page 327.)

### CATEGORY 3.

(Cases where the Phantom is only perceived by a third party.)

This category contains examples of a mixed character and unequal theoretical value. This happens because it is not possible to exclude from it certain episodes which can be explained equally well by the hypothesis of duplication and by that of telepathy. This inconvenience is unavoidable so long as psychical study does not permit us to fix accurately the limits of each hypothesis. Under these circumstances, the sole criterion which I have been able to use has led me to give examples of cases in which the methods of extrinsication essentially coincide with those which characterise the best examples of duplication whenever the balance of probability has favoured the hypothesis of bilocation. This method may be considered quite adequate in view of the fact that the phenomena of duplication only acquire importance as they are considered as a whole. I begin with examples showing the less characteristic details of the phenomena, to follow with others which accord more closely with the hypothesis.

Case 1. In this first case the two hypotheses of telepathy and bilocation have an almost equal value, and the example shows a type of incident frequent in discussions of telepathy. Dr. Hodgson records the case in the 'Proceedings of the S.P.R.,' Vol. XI., page 445. The story as related by the percipient, Mrs. Shagren, is as follows:—

This happened one day after I had finished my morning's work—housework. It was about ten o'clock. I stood before the mirror doing my hair, when I suddenly saw Mr. Hendrickson coming from behind, as if approaching on tip-toe. His hands were outstretched, and I had an impression that he would place them on my shoulders. I could even hear his last step, like the squeak of a boot, as he put his foot down. I turned in surprise, and faced him, consequently seeing him out of the glass and in the glass. As I turned I exclaimed, 'Is that you?' At least I felt that, but as I spoke he vanished. He was perfectly natural in appearance, and fully dressed, just as I had always seen him. . . . The next day, a young lady friend of mine, and also a friend of Mr. Hendrickson's family, came to visit me, and knowing of her friendship with Mr. Hendrickson, I asked her if she knew anything of the family or where they were living, as I had heard nothing from them for about four years, I having been south during that time, and they in fact, in the meantime, having left the city. I asked if she knew if Mr. Hendrickson was still living, as I knew he had consumption. She replied that he was living the last time she had heard from them. And then I said, 'I saw him yesterday morning.' My friend was not surprised and regarded the appearance as a warning of death. To my statement she said, 'I would not be surprised, as I received a letter from his wife saying he had a hemorrhage of the lungs. Let us write,' she continued, 'and find out if he is living or dead.' Then we wrote that we both felt uneasy, and I told of seeing him. In a few days we received a reply saying that he was not dead, but the doctors had said he could not live, and then Mrs. H. related his experience of seeing me in a dream while asleep on the morning he had appeared to me. Although he had never been in the house he described my room, and said to his wife, when speaking of his dream, 'She looked stouter than she used to,' which was true, as I had grown much stouter in the four years since they had seen me.

Mr. Hendrickson's widow wrote to Dr. Hodgson to confirm Mrs. Shagren's story, as also Miss Edenoff, the lady friend.

As I have said, cases analogous to this one are more or less explicable by the hypothesis of reciprocal telepathy, according to which hypothesis, Mr. Hendrickson in his dream directed his thought to Mrs. Shagren and provoked a corresponding hallucination, and in her turn Mrs. Shagren, stimulated by her vision, provoked the same phenomenon in Mr. Hendrickson. On the contrary, the circumstance that Mr. Hendrickson could describe the room and the changed appearance of Mrs. Shagren is in

favour of the objectivity of the apparition. This circumstance resembles the facts we have already noted under Category 2, and at the same time seems to me to be difficult of explanation solely by the telepathic hypothesis.

Mr. 'G. P. H.,' member of the French Society for Psychical Research, had sent an account of an important psychic case to the 'Spectator,' and this was followed by the following letter of confirmation from the man who was interested ('Revue des Etudes Psychiques,' 1902, page 151):—

To the Editor of 'The Spectator.'

SIR,—The letter which has been sent to you by Mr. 'G.P.H.' and which you published in your last issue, June 1st, under the title 'House of Dreams,' evidently refers to a dream of my wife, who is now dead. The account is precise on the main points although I am unable to recognise the identity of your correspondent. The same story has been reported less exactly in the diaries of Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, quoted in your article of May 25th. It will not, therefore, be superfluous if I give a concise summary of the occurrence.

Some years ago my wife dreamed on several occasions of a house of which she described the interior arrangements in every detail, although she had no idea of the locality in which the building was. Later in 1883, I rented from Lady B. for the autumn a house in the Scotch mountains surrounded by hunting land and fishing water. My son, who was then in Scotland, made the business arrangements without either my wife or myself seeing the property. When I went, without my wife, to sign the contract and to take possession, Lady B. was still living in the house. She told me that if I did not object she would give me the bedroom which she usually occupied, and which had been for some time past haunted by a little lady, who made frequent appearances. As I was somewhat of a sceptic in such matters, I replied that I should be delighted to make the acquaintance of the phantom visitor. I slept in this room but I was not visited by the phantom. Later when my wife arrived she was astonished to recognise in the house that of her dream. She went over it from top to bottom, and found that every detail corresponded with what she had so often seen, but when she came back again into the drawing room she said: 'This cannot be the house of my dream, for the latter had on this side a series of rooms which are lacking here.' She was immediately told that there were really such rooms, but that they could not be reached from the drawing room. When they were shown to her she recognised each room perfectly. She said, however, that one of the bedrooms of this part of the house had not been a bedroom when she visited it in her dream. It happened, in fact, that the room in question had been quite recently converted into a bedroom. Two or three days later my wife and I visited Lady B.; as they had not yet met I presented the two ladies to each other. Lady B. cried out at once, 'You are the lady who used to haunt my bedroom.' I have no explanation to give of this occurrence. My wife has never during the remainder of her life had any adventure of this kind, which some people would call a remarkable coincidence, and the Scotch a case of double sight. My dear wife was certainly the last person in the world who would allow her imagination to run away with her. I can, then, guarantee, as can also other members of my family, that she has been able to give an exact and detailed description of a house which was arranged in rather a particular way, and that she did this before either she or the other members of the family knew that such a house existed. You can give my name to those people who are seriously interested in psychical research, and who desire to obtain further information. To this end I enclose my card.

[Mr. 'G. P. H.' gave also to the editor the full name of Lady B., who belonged to the British aristocracy.]

In this second case, telepathic hypothesis is rendered much less probable by the absence of all effective *rapport*, or even simple acquaintanceship between the agent and the percipient. In addition there are the precise incidents of recognition of place and arrangements seen in dreams, combined with the identification of the person whose phantom appeared there. All these incidents are favourable to the hypothesis of duplication with transference to a distance. Let us add that the episode in question counts as an example of pre-cognition, the house visited in dreams by the lady being that in which she was going to live several years later. If this fact adds nothing in favour of the hypothesis of duplication, it limits the application of that of telepathy.

(To be continued.)

## SOME PROBLEMS OF MEDIUMSHIP.

BY HORACE LEAF.

Two gentlemen recently called on a public medium and requested a private sitting. They volunteered the information that they had been 'reading a lot about Spiritualism,' and were well acquainted with the nature of the phenomena and what to expect from a medium. 'We want you to produce a spirit—more than one, if possible—solid like ourselves,' said one of them. They wanted to see it, touch it, and speak to it in truly scientific fashion, as they thought. That was sufficient for the medium to know that no experience short of the miraculous would satisfy his visitors, and that it would, therefore, be wise to have nothing to do with them. To remove misconception, however, he pointed out that the word 'medium' meant something serving as a means of transmission or communication—a 'go-between,' not a manufacturer—and briefly explained the various phases of mediumship, their possibilities and limitations, and the importance of 'conditions'—how they hinder or help. The gentlemen, however, were not altogether pleased; they had imagined nothing so commonplace as this explanation, and the possibility of failure had hardly entered their minds.

In the course of conversation it transpired that one of the investigators was a materialist. He was convinced that there was no God, and hoped to discover the cause which had led others to believe that there was proof of a spirit-world and a continuation of life after death.

To those who know anything about 'conditions' it will be clear that in this person, at least, most of the elements which aid the production of psychic phenomena were absent, and most of those which retard it were present, so that probably satisfaction could be given him only by the merest chance or by the most strenuous efforts on the part of the spirits. This type of inquirer, having preconceived ideas on matters of religion and philosophy, ranging from gross materialism to narrow sectarianism, and being wrongly informed as to phenomena and mediumship, expects as a matter of course what comes only rarely to a few—and then only under exceptionally favourable circumstances. The medium, unfortunately, is not always successful in discovering the peculiarities of such persons, and may be made to suffer in several ways.

The possibility of improving matters in this direction is not very great, as the person of little knowledge and great expectation is always with us, and he is unintentionally encouraged by many Spiritualists in their efforts to propagate Spiritualism. Almost every book on the subject tends to produce this state of mind, for authors invariably recount their most striking experiences, but carefully avoid mentioning failures. Then there is the natural, but harmful tendency to exaggerate, a tendency for which, however, it appears people are not altogether to blame, as psychologists say they have discovered by experiments that exaggeration is a natural proclivity of the mind.

The expectant investigator, after his first unsuccessful experiment, may plod on, but the chances are against his doing so. One thing, however, is very sure, and that is that mediums suffer. The heaviest weight of blame always falls on them, as they are the practical exponents of Spiritualism. In the end they are doubted, as experience amply proves. The factors leading to the expression through a medium of another personality, be it secondary personality or spirit control, may be very complex and difficult to discover, although the observer may not realise that fact. It must be remembered that mediums are, for the time being, passive and receptive, and know but little of the process whereby their development has been effected. What causative activity goes on 'behind the veil' we are left largely to conjecture, although occasionally explanations are obtained.

An interesting example is given in 'The Psychic Riddle,' by Dr. I. K. Funk. The information was obtained from the guide of a lady, through whose mediumship the 'direct voice' was produced. The sitter, who was conducting the séance on test lines, asked for what appeared, in view of the nature of the phenomenon, to be a simple experiment—namely, that the medium should be allowed to speak simultaneously with the spirit voice. 'We have here,' said the spirit, 'a band of medical

experts who are watching closely the heart and mind of the medium, and we have also with us a chemical expert and a band of what you would probably call electricians, who are adepts in the manufacture and control of vital currents. It may seem to you an easy matter that the medium should talk simultaneously with us; but I can assure you that it is an extraordinarily difficult and dangerous thing.'

Some time ago at a materialising séance a spirit of a young man materialised a form several times with great success. The circle was informed by another spirit that his success was due to the fact that the young man, since his passing over, several years before, had devoted himself to the study of occult chemistry for the express purpose of materialising.

Mediums frequently have experiences which throw light upon the complexity of mediumistic development and phenomena. Unfortunately they are usually purely personal experiences and of little value to others. The following is an authentic case. A medium, whilst sitting for development, was entranced, and awoke to find himself perfectly conscious but unable to control his body, which was completely rigid. His efforts to obtain control failing, the guides were requested to break the condition. The request was followed, as normal conditions returned, by some unpleasant but apparently harmless horseplay from the spirit side. The medium, in consequence, determined not to continue the development. The guides then stated apologetically that, being anxious to develop a particular type of mediumship, they had obtained the assistance of a spirit proficient in the direction desired, but he being of a joking temperament, had amused himself in the way complained of. They promised it should not occur again, a fact which appeared to delay the development for a considerable period.

No one who has read the history of Mrs. Piper and the reports of the Society for Psychical Research on the experiments made with her, can have failed to be impressed by the difficulties and care involved in the whole case, particularly on the spirit side. This is clearly shown by the request of the 'Imperator Group' that her mediumship should be transferred from 'Phinuit's' to their care, on the grounds that the indiscriminate experimenting should stop, that the medium was a 'battered and worn' machine, and needed much repairing, and that they would repair it as much as possible. The 'Imperator Group' were apparently experts in this kind of work, having previously successfully controlled the Rev. Stainton Moses, and after a change had been agreed upon there was a marked improvement in the control of the medium and the phenomena produced. More intimate acquaintance with facts such as these is essential to a fair understanding of the movement in general and of mediums in particular. It is neither fair nor wise for the advocates of Spiritualism to leave the enunciation of these difficulties entirely to critical bodies, who cannot be expected to turn them to the advantage of the Spiritualist movement. While Spiritualists continue to select and publish exceptional cases to the exclusion of the more commonplace, they will do as much to hinder as to help.

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'E. P. P.' writes: 'What a lot has been written respecting the "Dangers of Spiritualism," that great wave that the grand old Emerson so graphically describes when he says: "We stand by the sea-shore whilst the tide is coming in. A wave comes up the beach far higher than any foregoing one, and recedes; and for a long time none comes up to that mark, but after some time the whole sea is there and beyond it." Surely life is the spirit's incoming and receding, and Spiritualism is one of the waves. When will man cease to dogmatise on the danger of others' religion and the safety of his own? Only when taught of the spirit. I like your proclamation of the "dignity and greatness of man." If, as Emerson says, "man has access to the entire mind of the Creator, is himself the creator in the finite," then the worm theory is exploded. The turned worm becomes the butterfly, and what a butterfly! Man, with all his possibilities, soaring into the infinite. How greatly we need to withdraw from the crowd and think boldly in solitude, that we may come again rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us—the abundant harvest of the quiet eye. We want just thinking, the result of which will "be a balance to a corrupt society." To be truly great, "a man must build his own world; it is not sufficient merely to be one's architect."'

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## Light:

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### ON A MIDSUMMER NIGHT.

After a day of parching heat and blinding splendour, the night has fallen. The last crimson rapture of the sunset has passed, and the moon, which in the bright hours floated like a small, white cloud in the sky, is filled with golden radiance. It is as though some pallid ghost had become transfigured as an angel. Gone are the glare, the dust and the heat. Droop-headed flowers and flagging leaves are reviving in the coolness and the dew. In the dim blue overhead, where still linger faint traces of the rose and pearl of the sunset, a few stars flash and throb, as though something of the fervent heat of the day had passed into their tiny spheres. But, apart from the moon and stars, the night has a mellow lustre of its own—a summer twilight that will last until dawn and sunrise. It is a night full of glamour, and even now that it grows late, we have no desire to steep our senses in forgetfulness. It is no sacrifice at such a time to forgo for a while the 'honey-heavy dew of slumber,' as Shakespeare called it, and to keep a brief vigil in the outer world. For the hours pass lightly under the open sky, and the air is full of spells. Something deeper in the nature of things than buds and petals has opened to the radiant influences of the summer, and 'voices of the night' more intimate than the notes of nocturnal birds or the whisper of leaves have called to us. And so we walk abroad, through lanes full of cool, dark shadows, and fragrant with the mown hay and the sweet breath of the clover and honeysuckle. Under the night skies, it may be, we shall gain some fragment of inspiration denied to those who have made an orderly retreat to the shelter of couch and curtains.

We think of many things as we ramble onwards. And first there flow into our mind the words of the 'good grey poet,' Walt Whitman:—

I am he that walks with the tender and growing night,  
I call to the earth and sea half hid by the night,  
    Press close, magnetic, nourishing night,  
Night of the south wind, night of the large, few stars!

There is something strangely maternal about Nature at this time. Like some great benign mother she seems, full of caresses for her children. Assuredly Whitman must have felt this when he wrote of 'magnetic, nourishing night.' It is a great thought, this motherhood of Nature, though few of us are able to escape far enough from what R. L. Stevenson termed our 'Bastille of Civilisation' to realise the idea in all its intensity. That, indeed, is the message of the summer night. And it has another which

again is expressed in the words of Whitman, whose large utterance has to our thinking most perfectly clothed it:—

The efflux of the soul is happiness,  
I think it pervades the open air, waiting at all times;  
Now it flows into us, we are rightly charged.

'The efflux of the soul is happiness'—what a message for those fretful and restless folks that are for ever crying out about the vanity of things. Hurried and distracted by the thousand clamorous appeals of work and pleasure, they have no time to possess their souls. For such it is 'Lo, here!' 'Lo, there!' all the time, and never 'Stand thou still awhile that I may show thee the word of God'—the word that is uttered so often in night and silence.

As we pass along, observing the swelling masses of foliage, the luxuriance of flowers and grasses, the ripening fruit and grain, yet another thought comes to us—the divine prodigality of Nature, her wondrous profusion. God's almoner, she scatters her blessings right royally. 'Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness, and Thy paths drop fatness,' cried the Hebrew poet filled with the same thought. Truly it is not Nature that stints and grudges, hoards and 'corners.' All the blessings and benisons, the inspirations of peace and hope and happiness which she rains down through this gracious night are freely given alike to the humblest or the haughtiest of her children. It needs but that the soul should 'untrammel,' escaping, if only for a time, 'the infection of our mental strife.' But how hard is that for most of us, children of towns, doomed to minister to the needs—or the fancied needs—of a clamorous age that is only just beginning to realise the claims of the spirit so long suppressed and stifled by the material side of things. We have heard much of the necessity for a 'return to Nature,' and clearly a great deal of the malady of the age has its roots in the departure from the ways of the Great Mother. All the pastoral peoples, the open-air races, pictured the hills and woods as the haunts of fairy folk—elves and pixies, fauns and dryads. But as the thoughts of men grew more material, they lost these gentle traditions—the fairies departed. With the march of materialistic science notice of ejection was served not only on the fays and elves, but on spiritual beings of all kinds. How could one concentrate one's mind on the work of factory, counting-house, study or laboratory, if these unsettling faiths were allowed to remain! The poets lamented, as well they might, for angels and spirits and the elfin folk were amongst the inspirations of their thought life. Not one 'affable, familiar ghost' was to be left to them! But the unseen world broke through the boycott, and our modern spiritual movements recognise not only the power and presence of human spirits, but even in some cases the reality of elemental souls, the prototypes of the nymphs and elves around which the ancient world wove so many of its picturesque legends. Fanciful it may be, but the idea of 'elementals' has about it something pleasant. It is at least better than blank negation of invisible beings.

As we turn homewards our thoughts revolve around an appropriate theme, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.' There is, we feel, a kind of parable in it. We picture Materialism (such of it as remains to-day) in the part of Titania, the fairy queen. It is a strangely incongruous part, but the idea is necessary to the purposes of our allegory, so we will try to imagine it. Now, just as Titania, after her quarrel with her lord, Oberon, the fairy king, was by a magic spell caused to fall in love with Bottom the weaver, so to our thinking has Materialism, under the lure of the older science, been estranged from the Soul and enamoured of Mortality. We recall how Oberon, returning to his queen, removed 'the hateful imperfection of her eyes' and she awoke restored to her right mind. So assuredly it will yet

be with Materialism. We can picture it at last awaking from its fond illusion, and exclaiming (with Titania):—

What visions have I seen!  
Methought I was enamoured of an ass!

The allegory is far from complete in the form of its presentation, but it will serve.

And so we return, through the shadowy lanes, filled with a penetrating sense that we have been walking to-night under skies

whose constellations  
Light up the spacious avenue between  
This world and the unseen.

## FURTHER COMMUNICATIONS FROM F. W. H. MYERS.

By H. A. DALLAS.

### II.

#### A SEQUEL TO THE LETHE INCIDENT.

In July, 1910, I gave a brief summary in 'LIGHT' of an incident in psychical research connected with an attempt to find evidence of identity by awakening classical memories in the control claiming to be Frederic Myers. The incident to which I refer was headed, 'No Forgetfulness on Elysian Shores.' I related how, with this object in view, a gentleman in the United States, Mr. George B. Dorr, had asked the question during one of Mrs. Piper's trances, 'What does the word *Lethe* suggest to you?' and had received remarkable replies, unintelligible to him, but entirely relevant. These replies contained allusions to a passage in Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' which was quite unknown to Mr. Dorr. He did not recognise the allusions because his memory supplied no key to their meaning.

The last issue of 'Proceedings' deals with a sequel to this incident. Before it had been reported in the Society's publications, Sir Oliver Lodge, who was acquainted with all the circumstances, conceived the idea of putting the same question to Mrs. Willett, the automatic writer referred to in my last article. The answer to this question through this lady included references to a large number of literary works, and chiefly to Æneid VI. Some of the passages alluded to were not unknown to Mrs. Willett, of others she was ignorant, and she appears to have been unaware of the significance of the grouping of these literary reminiscences, for, when sending to Sir Oliver Lodge, she wrote:—

The script seems full of bits from other scs. [*i.e.* scripts] or poems. I feel like sending you the sc. itself, so I have marked off the work with a red pencil, and I also send a copy and notes of what I know of the quotations—but the sc., as a whole, suggests nothing much to me—I only hope it may to you (p. 122).

Although this script was full of appropriate allusions, Sir Oliver did not at first recognise the fact, as his reply to Mrs. Willett shows. He said, addressing his reply to Myers:—

Well, Myers, but I want more from you about *Lethe* and its suggestions than that. It must awaken literary and classical reminiscences in your mind (p. 146).

He continues:—

I will not add any comment to emphasise the ludicrous insufficiency of these hasty and immediately contemporary replies. It must be disappointing to any Intelligence who has sent answers so excellent, to have them received with ignorance, however completely that ignorance subsequently disappears; but the communicating intelligences, whatever they are, are patient, and the response on February 10th was as worthy as that of February 4th (p. 147).

The script of February 10th, which was written after Sir Oliver Lodge had shown himself dissatisfied with the earlier script whose value he had not yet discovered, begins with the statement:—

Myers, yes I am ready, I know what Lodge WANTS, he wants me to prove that I have access to knowledge shown elsewhere.

The control then again proceeds to pour forth literary allusions, in some of which there were discovered cross-correspondences, showing 'access to knowledge shown elsewhere.' With

one of the subjects of this kind I hope to deal in another article; the incident is long enough to require an article to itself.

It would be a pity, however, if the only communications which receive attention were those which carry with them evidential value. The evidential matter is accompanied by other statements which are of interest in themselves. Sir Oliver Lodge recognises this interest, and adds some of these statements to his article. One cannot help wishing he had given a few more. Here is a statement made through Mrs. Willett on the subject of telepathy, which is quite in line with the ideas of the author of 'Human Personality':—

Telepathy is not a matter of the organism, nor of any shadow of it. It does not pertain to matter, nor is it the result of any physical peculiarity. No, it is the law of the Metetherical, it is the mark of evolution in human faculty, the extension of man's powers not evolved by the friction of material self-preservation: not protoplasmic, but cosmic. (Part LXIII., p. 169.)

The script of February 4th, above referred to, opens thus:—

Myers the Will again to live, the Will again to live the River of forgetfulness not reincarnation Once only does the soul descend the way that leads to incarnation (p. 123).

The reference here is clearly to Æneid VI., where departed souls are described as assembled on the banks of the river of *Lethe* 'waiting until their turn comes to drink the water of forgetfulness so that they may wish for a new terrestrial existence' (p. 131).

The passage has been translated by Myers; one line of his translation runs thus:—

Forget their life and will again to live.  
( 'Classical Essays,' p. 174.)

In this communication from the other side he is careful not to give the impression that he endorses the belief in reincarnation. The point is the more interesting because in a poem called 'The Renewal of Youth' he has referred to this very passage from the Æneid—namely, the visit of Æneas to his father and to the 'folk Elysian,' and in this poem he apparently inclines to accept the theory of reincarnation.

He writes as a student issuing from 'some columned cloister':—

How can he tell if for the first time then  
He paces thus those haunts of musing men,  
Or once already, or often long ago,  
In other lives he hath known them or shall know  
And reincarnate, unremembering tread  
In the same footsteps of himself long dead?

( 'The Renewal of Youth,' p. 213.)

That Myers should have now changed his opinion does not, of course, settle the question; but it is interesting, if indeed he has done so. It appears that opinions on this subject differ on the other side almost as much as they do on this. We should, however, like to ask what are Mrs. Willett's *personal* views on this point; for we know that a script may be coloured by the medium's bias, in matters on which this is strong, and we can hardly judge of how far we should accept this statement as altogether an expression of Myers' own opinion until we know how far it is likely to have been affected by the channel through which it came.

THE Brighton Spiritualist Society, 17, Manchester-street, near the Aquarium, issues a useful handbill giving a list of the visiting speakers and mediums, and setting forth the objects of the society, *viz.*: 'To propound the gospel of Spiritualism and stimulate inquiry. To proclaim the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; a path of eternal progress open to all who will to tread therein; retribution for all who neglect or misuse life's opportunities; compensation in the realisation of "the Kingdom of Heaven within," attained only by a life of purity and good works, that prayer and service to God are best expressed by work for humanity, and that Spiritualism proves the continuity of conscious existence.' The services on Sundays, at 11.15 a.m. and at 7 p.m., are 'bright and cheerful,' and the addresses and clairvoyant descriptions that are given are inspiring and helpful. Visitors to Brighton are always welcome, also at the meetings of the Lyceum for young people, which meets at 3 p.m. on Sundays.

## THE HUMAN AURA AND HOW IT MAY BE CULTIVATED.

In one of his recent lectures at 110, St. Martin's-lane, Mr. W. J. Colville made special reference to a remarkable book, entitled 'The Human Atmosphere, or the Aura made Visible by the aid of Chemical Screens.' This instructive volume derives added interest for the general reader from the fact that it is the work of a doctor of medicine who investigates along definitely material lines.

Dr. Walter J. Kilner, the author, was at one time electrician at St. Thomas's Hospital, London, and is evidently a man of studious research, filled with desire for original investigation. In the Preface we are told that there is nothing essentially occult in the study of human aura, as it can be successfully carried forward with the aid of purely material apparatus. This is demonstrably the case within certain limits, and Dr. Kilner wisely refrains from casting any reflections upon more mysterious branches of inquiry than those into which he has most successfully entered.

The first portion of the treatise, said Mr. Colville, deals exclusively with the aura of healthy persons, and makes delightful reading. The style is so clear and the illustrations so graphic that it elucidates in small space practically all the essential rudiments of the subject. Clairvoyants and other sensitive individuals who rely on some psychic faculty for knowledge will find much corroboration of their discoveries from a purely scientific standpoint, and in consequence of this it is not going too far to say that here we have fresh proof that many psychic discoveries forestall external verification.

While reading the descriptions of how material means can be employed for discovering auric emanations we learn that most of Dr. Kilner's investigations have been conducted in a small room with only one window, which is provided at the top with an ordinary blind. Below is a dark serge blind which can be raised to any height desired, but as the serge allows too much light to pass through on bright days this is excluded by pulling down the ordinary blind. A slight gap can be left between the blinds to allow more light when observations are made through a dark carmine screen and also when complementary colours are employed. Opposite the screen and about eight feet from the window is a movable pole supporting black and white curtains, which can be used as wanted. The person undergoing investigation stands about a foot in front of the background so that shadows or marks upon it may not produce optical illusions.

The observer takes the dark screen and peers through it at the light for at least half a minute. The room is then darkened and the observer stands facing the one to be investigated, looking at him through a pale screen; the aura ought to be almost immediately perceived. It is said to be of assistance in discovering the colour of the aura for the 'patient' to place his hands upon his hips and extend his elbows so that in the spaces between the trunk and arms the aura emanating from the body will be reinforced. Three distinct portions of aura are discernible. First, a narrow transparent portion appearing as a dark space; this is called the etheric double. Second, the inner aura; this is the densest portion and varies only a little in width with different persons; it invariably follows the contour of the body. Third, the outer aura, which is very variable in extent. Plates showing these different degrees and grades of aura represent it as varying considerably with physical capacity. A very strong man at the age of thirty-three is shown surrounded with highly developed auric belts, and the same is exhibited with healthy boys, though not quite to the same extent. The stronger the individual, of any age or either sex, the greater is the volume of the aura and the more widely does it surround the body. The later portion of the book dealing with the aura of afflicted persons shows many curious alterations from the normal and affords much information of particular value to physicians.

Taking the book as a whole, it may well be hailed as a very important contribution to practical modern scientific literature. The Appendix is in some respects the most interesting part, because it relates how the influence of decided *willing* causes plainly marked changes both in the colour and the extensiveness of the aura.

## COMFORTING SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

### STRIKING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN SPIRITUALISM.

As the writer of the following interesting account of 'personal experiences in Spiritualism' occupies a high official position on the other side of the Atlantic he stipulates that his name and address shall not be published. He vouches for the entire accuracy of his statements, and our readers may rest assured that we are satisfied that his narrative is a *bonâ fide* setting forth of facts as they appealed to him. Our contributor, who has been on a visit to this country for some time past, is well known to us and is one of the oldest subscribers to 'LIGHT.'

(Continued from page 329.)

The following day, while promenading along the sea-shore, Paul experienced a very pleasurable surprise in meeting Mrs. D., the judge's wife, to whom he had been introduced two years before. She was enjoying this lovely seaside resort with a young lady as companion. A few days later, Paul has the following entry in his diary:—

August 4, 1905. I arranged with Mrs. D., accompanied by Miss S., to have a walk this afternoon at four along the sea-shore. The day was an ideal one. In the shade of a small grove of pine trees near the inlet, Mrs. D. proposed that we should sit and admire the charming outlook. Suddenly taking my left hand in hers, she said, 'Do you know that some of your spirits are with us now and they desire to speak to you?' She went on, being now apparently in a trance condition: 'Here is a middle-aged man who approaches you with marks of respect. He thanks you for what you have done for him in life and since, for the interest you have taken in his derelict family. He gives his name as William Harrison.' (This man had been my groom for several years—a decent fellow but not faultless. I had done a little for his wife and children. He died in March, 1895.) 'But here comes a most beautiful spirit clad in brilliant white. She places her hand on your shoulder and gazes at you with an expression of the deepest affection. She says, "I am always with you now, dearest one, guiding you, impressing your thoughts and actions; thus you have decided to come here; thus I have contrived that you should meet here this excellent medium and her friend." Mrs. D. then added: "On her breast appears a luminous cross, and an expression of great sadness comes over her countenance—she says that this cross is a symbol of her past life, of her intense mental agony, of the crushing out from her poor heart—in obedience to religious fanaticism and teachings—of all its human promptings and aspirations. God knows she acted at the time for the best; but what a sacrifice it was! What bitter tears she shed! Happily these dark shadows have passed away. When her spirit quitted her wasted body, long it wandered among the dark shades of the cloisters, vainly seeking for light. What a bitter disappointment at finding that she had sacrificed all in vain! Your loving thoughts, Paul, reached her, and rescued her from her miserable condition. From that moment she perceived the light, and the path of hope and progression in the new life was opened before her. Why should she not be grateful? Why should she not reciprocate now your once slighted love? And when the happy, yet distant, day dawns for you, she will be the first to receive you in her arms. With these words, an expression of radiant happiness comes over her face, and she slowly melts from my sight.' While uttering these words the expression and the voice of the medium denoted intense earnestness and emotion.

Paul and Miss S. were deeply moved by the sacred solemnity of the occasion, and received the message with feelings of intense gratitude. Shortly after Mrs. D. came out of the trance. She had no recollection whatever of what had just happened. The impression produced on the hearers was so deep and vivid that her words could be repeated to her without an omission; they were written down that same evening, so that the present version is absolutely accurate.

It is well to remember that neither of these ladies had the slightest knowledge of the episode in Paul's early life, which was plainly enough laid bare by the words of his spirit friend.

On the following day, in reply to questions by Paul, this spirit (who, as may be surmised, was none other than Adela) made, through the same medium and in the presence of the same witness, the following statement: 'Yes, dearest one, I did materialise to you at the M.'s in New York last spring, but it was my first attempt and I was not very expert, and when

you spoke to me in French my difficulty in finding words for a reply was so great that I had to leave you in that sudden and ungracious manner. Had there been people present who knew French and who emitted vibrations of that nature, it would not have been so difficult for me to reply. Again, in Boston it was I who appeared to you, although among total strangers and in a strange place. I was most anxious to be successful, both for your sake and mine. In order to build up a stronger form, to clothe it in the luminous garments you saw, and to hold it together, so to speak, I found it necessary to dematerialise part of the medium's clothing and use that, as you so unfortunately discovered. To my intense chagrin I instantly sensed your thoughts and I vanished, as you know. But think, dear one, who but my own self could have given you my name? Who could have sought you in complete darkness, as I did, but a spirit? Who could have instantly vanished from your embrace, as I did, but a spirit? I assure you, dear one, that these failures, regrettable and disappointing to us both, are but the prelude to mutual great happiness which will come to us in the near future and remain with us for years to come. Soon I shall be able to obtain for you a portrait of myself; it will be a great comfort to you until the day when we shall come together, never, never to part again in all eternity.'

Recognising the circumstances under which he had received this explanation—that it was given through a lady of high social position, who had no possible gain in view, no ulterior motive, no knowledge whatever of the occurrences referred to—Paul could not hesitate to accept it as true. But few of our readers will be disposed to blame him for having jumped to the conclusion that he had been shamefully duped at the Boston materialising séance, and that the genuineness of the New York séance at the M.'s was very doubtful. Admitting Adela's explanation as true, it is to be feared that much odium has been cast on unfortunate mediums, many unjust suspicions have been aroused, many genuine demonstrations of spirit power doubted, simply because the conditions did not permit of more perfect results, because one or more of the sitters thought they 'knew it all.'

### ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Under the heading, 'The Open Door,' the 'Daily Chronicle' of the 15th inst. devotes an appreciative article to Mr. W. Tudor Pole's recently established Guest House at Clifton. It explains that, though the venture had obviously to be put on a fitting financial footing, it is not a commercial one. It is a social centre for those interested in forward and reform movements of the day, a place where, as Mr. Tudor Pole puts it, any who are interested may meet and discuss many of the problems of the hour in a spirit of true brotherhood. Guests are welcomed from the world over, and, since the opening, the Guest House has had sojourners from California, Canada, New York, Italy, Egypt, and the East, South Africa, Australia, as well as visitors from London and other places.

In the June issue of Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker's 'New Thought and Psychic Review' Mr. G. W. Buckthought has an interesting article on 'The Glory of the Cross.' In it he says: 'Suffering operates vicariously through sympathy. Psychologists well know that only he who is barren of sympathy is beyond the scope of evolution and the hope of redemption. . . . It is a remarkable fact that the people who most severely criticise the Moral Governor of the universe are the physically fit. The sufferers themselves seldom complain, and the reason is to be found in the fact that spiritual insight usually accompanies vicarious suffering.'

Mr. F. London, of Birmingham, says that, quite recently, a lady got into conversation with her charwoman on religious matters and was horrified to find that the latter was a Christadelphian. She had a strong idea that people of that persuasion could not enter the heavenly state because they did not believe in a devil. She asked the poor woman her views respecting Satan and was told, 'I do not believe in a real individual called the devil, but I do believe there is a condition of devil inside all of us that influences us to do and say wrong things.' The lady replied, 'That makes it worse than ever, you must be past redemption. I cannot have such people about my house—but you had better do your work to-day.' The day's work ended, the woman was complimented and paid, but told not to come again. Well may Mr. London exclaim: 'This is indeed twentieth century Christianity with a vengeance!'

With reference to the suggestion which was made in 'Items of Interest,' on page 321, that Spiritualists should have a funeral card of their own of a reformed character, an esteemed correspondent sends us a neat card, bearing an extract from the 'Bhagavad-Gitá,' and asks, 'What can be better than this?' The passage quoted runs:—

Never the spirit was born;  
The spirit shall cease to be never;  
Never was time it was not;  
End and beginning are dreams.  
Birthless and deathless and changeless  
Remaineth the spirit for ever;  
Death hath not touched it at all,  
Dead though the house of it seems.

A writer in 'The Nation' of the 15th inst. devotes upwards of two columns to an absurd article entitled 'The Death of Mr. Sludge,' evoked by the passing of Mr. Ira Davenport. This writer says that 'Spiritualism has ceased to be among ourselves even a subject of curiosity, and it never was, at its height, much more than the "fad" of a few, a consolation to some who were bereaved, a puzzle to men of science, a drawing-room amusement for an idle season. But for an entire generation it was in the States a conquering religion. . . . It is all so dead to-day that such history as this comes before the mind like a piece of incredible antiquarian lore.' The article in question is, indeed, 'a piece of incredible antiquarian lore'—as incredible as the statement that Spiritualism is dead. If the writer were up-to-date he would know that it is very much alive, and in all directions is permeating the thought of the age. In this country, as in America, it is vitalising religion—not conquering it. Some two thousand persons assembled at the Spiritualist Mass Meeting, held at Newcastle-on-Tyne on the 2nd inst. Not a bad gathering for a 'dead' ism!

The 'Christian World' of June 8th published a letter from a correspondent, referring to a wide-spread change that is taking place in Wales, in which the writer said: 'A Spiritualist society in this township (the population of which is about five thousand) engaged a speaker to give an address on a Sunday at the hour usually set apart for public worship. There was an audience of about three hundred young men of between twenty and thirty years of age. It is a matter that should "give furiously to think" when that number of the earnest, religious youth of Wales can be lured from the ordinary services to hear an address by a Spiritualist.' This does not look as if Spiritualism were dead.

What impression readers of Theosophic literature are apt to receive respecting the attitude of the writers towards Spiritualism may be gathered from the following extract which we take from a letter that was recently sent by a friend to one of the readers of 'LIGHT' who has become an avowed Spiritualist. 'Mrs. Besant,' says the writer of the letter in question, 'in her recent work ridicules the séances most exceedingly. She says it is only the lowest forms of spirits who act the parts of deceased persons, making game of the devotees for sheer fun. Whether this is right or wrong I express no opinion.' Up to the present we have not learned to which work by Mrs. Besant the letter-writer refers, so that we are unable to ascertain whether there is misrepresentation or not—but, be that as it may, the letter indicates accurately enough the impression that the writer has received as the result of reading the book. We admit that only low-class spirits would 'act the part of deceased persons'—but we do not admit that the deceased persons who communicate through mediums are all low class.

There seems to be a large number of persons who are interested in Atlantis and its people; otherwise, we suppose, books on the subject would not be published. The Austin Publishing Company, of Rochester, N.Y., U.S.A., send us a ponderous volume of some eight hundred pages and forty illustrations, entitled 'Submerged Atlantis Restored: or Links and Cycles,' price four dollars. It is issued by J. Ben Leslie, who, assisted by Mrs. C. C. Van-Duzee, a clairvoyant medium, has received the information contained in this book from what he believes are ancient spirits. He says: 'Having confidence in the spirit sources from which the inspirations, the impressions, the manifestations and revelations, through clairvoyant and clairaudient aid, have come to us, we send the work out in their behalf, and trust to their force of inspirational influence to use it as an instrument for good to all races of men.' As we do not know of any means of estimating how far the statements made regarding Atlantis are true and reliable we are unable to say more than that the book is a curious one and illustrates the great faith and earnestness of both Mr. Leslie and Mrs. Van-Duzee.

The 'Glasgow Daily Record and Mail' of the 13th ult., says : 'A very prominent member of the House of Commons, whose identity it would be easy accidentally to indicate were it proper and seemly so to do, enjoys a unique psychic experience. He was bereft of his helpmeet ere he rose to fame, but so closely were their natures attuned in sympathy that he confesses he is ever-conscious of his dead wife's continuous spiritual presence with him. This impression is especially vivid on the anniversary of her death, when she seems so near that he would not be startled did he see her actually in the flesh. Politicians are so generally supposed to be ossified to the finer emotions that this true instance to the contrary is worth mentioning. A prosaic friend of mine was recently dining *tête-à-tête* with the gentleman in question, and so compelling was the latter's explanation of his experiences and feeling in the matter that, despite himself, he felt carried away by the intensity and charm of the speaker, and almost expected actually to see the apparition which was patent to the mental vision of his distinguished host.'

### 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 which may elicit discussion.*

#### A Successful Sitting with Mrs. Wriedt.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to testify to the really wonderful mediumship of Mrs. Wriedt, of Detroit, U.S.A., in whose public circle I sat last week. A cousin (surname given) spoke to me in the 'direct voice,' on a purely private matter. Later came my grandfather, calling me by name and asking after my father, by name also. He reminded me of a most unusual domestic incident that occurred over thirty years ago! Finally, came an uncle asking after his daughter (by name), announcing himself as 'O. B.' He was never called anything else by his intimates. I went as a complete stranger and in no case did I take the initiative. All the sitters were more than satisfied with their individual results.

I consider 'the Cause' is much beholden to Admiral Osborne Moore for his investigation and introduction of this medium here, and to Mr. W. T. Stead for making it possible for us in England to sit with this charming and gifted American lady.—Yours, &c.,

W. COOPER LISSENDEN.

#### 'In the Heart of the Holy Grail.'

SIR,—Thoughtful readers of Mr. James Macbeth Bain's beautiful books, and all those who have been healed and blessed in body and soul through his ministrations, will be somewhat painfully surprised by the tone of the notice given in 'LIGHT,' on page 313, in reference to his work lately published, 'In the Heart of the Holy Grail.' It is only natural that writings of a deeply mystical tendency should not readily appeal to the 'average reader.' Again, since mysticism has rightly been termed 'the science of Love,' and a mystic is, by every fibre of his being, a lover, one can scarcely apply the word 'mystical' to writings that are 'cold and passionless.' A study of the great mystics of all ages and races will soon settle that point. But, as a matter of fact, love easily finds its way to simple and open hearts, and the 'average reader' is far more likely to find the bread of life in Mr. Bain's 'white heat' of spiritual fervour than in cold intellectualism or in the works where thinly-veiled materialism masquerades, alas, as *Spiritual-ism*.

Those who know the widespread good work done by Mr. Bain's books will, of course, receive his last one with joy. Let it be sufficient to say that the 'Hymns, Prayers, and Meditations' that compose it are only a more polished, poetical, and methodically ordered rendering of the forms the author habitually uses in his services of healing, and constitute, therefore, a powerfully effective connecting link of influence between those who, by his ministry, have obtained help from unseen spheres, and the whole 'Brotherhood of Healers,' incarnate and discarnate, of which Mr. Bain is an active and devoted member and representative. This is quite intelligible to any true Spiritualist. The more 'mystical' aspect of the work can safely be left to the discernment of *mystics*.

I do not write these lines because there is need to defend Mr. Bain's books: they have already found deep and reverent appreciation through other publications than 'LIGHT,' but there may be a danger that, owing to the form of your criticism, possible readers may be put off from reaping the benefit that must ensue from an acquaintance with works of that nature.—Yours, &c.,

D. S. HEHNER.

[See 'Notes by the Way' on page 337.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

#### Quaint Epitaphs.

SIR,—Unlike the writer of the 'Note by the Way,' on page 314, I am rather fond (when time permits) of 'meditation among the tombs.' One gets such quaint glimpses of human nature. I had occasion to pass through the parish churchyard here recently and copied an epitaph, thinking it might interest your readers. It is as follows:—

My sledge and hammer lie declined,  
My bellows too have lost their wind.  
My fire's extinct, my forge decayed,  
And in the dust my vice is laid.  
My coals are spent, my iron gone,  
My nails are drove, my work is done.  
My fire-dried corpse here lies at rest,  
My soul smoke-like soars to be blest.

There is one in Battersea Churchyard that reads:—

I was, I am, I shall not be.

This one is quite Spiritualistic:—

Here endeth the first chapter.

The wish may have been father to the thought in the following, which reverses the idea expressed in a well-known passage from Shakespeare's 'Julius Caesar':—

'The good that he did shall live after him. The evil is buried for ever in the tomb.'

Sutton.

E. P. PRENTICE.

#### Karma.

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of July 8th 'D. R. F.' compares two conceptions of Karma, and, thinking them irreconcilable, accepts the one and rejects the other. Now, it seems to me that Karma has necessarily two quite different aspects; those who look on either aspect see the truth, but the whole truth is seen only by those who see the two as one. Without the law of cause and effect, if we can conceive of existence at all, the universe would be but chaos, and consciousness insanity. 'D. R. F.' admits this law, but later writes: 'It is no question of some law that insists on equal measure for all. Love is not bound. . . . The idea of some imaginary law . . . which binds the Supreme Being to allot penalties to some of His creatures and rewards to others . . . has ever been a hateful and mischievous one.' Now, if love has sanctioned this law (which 'D. R. F.' admits), it follows that in case of human action, right or wrong, love must allow the effects of action, pleasant or unpleasant, to accrue. So love *is* bound—self-bound by the law on which all evolution rests, by the law which will be found to be identical with the law of love's own being. And thus (if one can speak of the natural effects of good and evil action as respectively rewards and penalties) it is right to say that the law, to use the theological language 'D. R. F.' employs, 'binds the Supreme Being to allot penalties to some of His creatures and rewards to others.' There is no escape from this conclusion. In trying to evade it 'D. R. F.' becomes self-contradictory: admitting the law, but seemingly claiming that the Supreme Being is free to act in defiance of its provisions; whereas, if cause and effect are not always, but only sometimes, consecutive, then their relation is not a law. Either it must be allowed that the result of action is inevitable, or else trust in an inviolate law of cause and effect is left foundationless.

The acceptance, however, of belief in the utter inviolability of law should not mean the loss of faith in the supremacy of love. It is not correct to think of love as 'in the grasp of some mighty principle,' and so not worth the name of God. True, love is bound by the law, but this is the bondage that is perfect freedom; for love and the law are one. Tennyson uses a harsh name for the thinker who, with vision intent on the law, loses sight of the love:—

God is law, say the wise; O soul, and let us rejoice,  
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.  
Law is God, say some: no God at all, says the fool;  
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool.

We all are, or have been, fools in this respect. Some of the noblest of our race have found it a difficult task to discern God in the law, and to know the straightness of the staff of Divine providence seen as bent in the pool of human sense-delusion. 'D. R. F.', believing in the supremacy of a God who is Love, and believing also in the law of cause and effect, can reconcile the two only by coming to believe that the Divine Love knows it to be best that the children of men should be allowed freely to act for good or ill under the sway of an unescapable law; that so, through the knowledge of good and evil, they may learn to choose only the good, and that thus the love eternal may find full expression in a free humanity. Though the suffering

endured by men who act in ignorance of the law may seem appalling, yet they who know best tell us that there is love at the heart of it all. And some of us have known how the blow which seemed at first a heartless, aimless reaction from our foolish deed is seen at last to have been a touch of love's own hand, which broke away some fetter or turned us from the path towards destruction to the path of life. The poet has sung it: 'All's love, but all's law'; and life has given us much to prove its truth.

Karma, on the lips of some of its exponents, seems a loveless creed. If its aspect of love be lost sight of, and law alone be seen, there is truly danger of a numbing fatalism; but to reject the doctrine of Karma, the law of cause and effect—that would logically mean the abandonment of faith in all natural law, the denial of the only basis of science.

One other thought: The result of action, though inevitable, can be modified by counteraction. When compared with the power of the infinite Goodness, which we call God, the human power by which we make for ourselves 'bad Karma' is as a raindrop to the ocean:

For the love of God is broader  
Than the measures of man's mind;  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind.

Set a toy waggon running down a hill. The kinetic energy stored in that moving toy is indestructible. How then, one might ask, can the waggon stop before its course is fully run? But bring now a big gun and set it in the path; charge it, and, aiming at the waggon, light the fuse. And where is waggon, and that energy so indestructible? That energy, without a doubt, was not destroyed, but found effect in motion and in heat; no whit was annihilated. But what did it avail to bring the waggon to its journey's end? . . . Is it not thus with Karma? Result must follow cause, as surely as night follows day; but just how a result shall express itself, and what shall be its importance in the life—who shall say? To go in fear of 'bad Karma' is to increase it. To trust the Love eternal is to open up one's soul to an energy before whose mighty possibilities the power of the accumulated human sins of centuries shrinks into insignificance.—Yours, &c.,

RICHD. W. ELAND.

Finsbury Park.

#### Pre-existence and Reincarnation.

SIR,—Permit me to thank Mr. Denham Parsons for his courteous and interesting letter in 'LIGHT' of the 8th inst.

1. Granted that 'Elisha's request for a "double portion of thy spirit" was a request to be made the first-born among the sons of the prophets—the true spiritual heir of the great Elijah,' why should Elijah say, 'Thou hast asked a hard thing'? What was it that was 'hard'?

2. Granted that 'a request for the "fission and reincarnation of a portion of the human spirit" of Elijah would have been a queer request to make to such human spirit,' may I point out that I am unaware of making any such statement. Nor was it 'suggested that from that day onwards the name of Elisha should have been "Legion," and that the identity and integrity of a human spirit as a reasoning entity can survive any amount of "detachment" of "portions." However, as Moses was associated with Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, I will draw Mr. Denham Parsons' attention to Numbers xi. 17, desiring him to explain as to what, or whose, 'spirit' is meant by the following: 'I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them!' (Seventy men of the Elders of Israel.) That looks very much like 'detachment' of 'portions'!

3. Granted that 'It is not logical to suppose that the "soul-body" of a reasoning entity is "embryonic and formless," if by "soul-body" one means or includes the human spirit or reasoning entity,' it is, however, quite logical to suppose that the soul-body of the *recently* departed may be *comparatively* embryonic and formless, judging by the analogy of our own pre-natal development and the initial stages of the phenomenon of 'materialisation.'

4. Granted that 'Origen never taught the doctrine of reincarnation upon this planet called earth,' his curious conjectures and singular opinions concerning the origin and destiny of the human soul do undoubtedly entail 'future incarnations.' At the end of the æon, or world age, he states, a rearrangement takes place, and the Logos becomes intensely present to each soul; each fully realises his own character and his past doings; a re-adjustment takes place, a new world arises, and a new start is made. A succession, he says, of such world ages is to be supposed—how many and how long-enduring none can say. For these and other unscriptural notions he was degraded from his sacerdotal dignity. Remembering all this, the learned Father's pronouncement upon the famous allusion of Jesus to

John the Baptist and Elijah, 'which was for to come,' as being 'foreign to the Church of God, and not handed down by the apostles, nor anywhere set forth in the Scriptures,' is—to use a somewhat common expression—rather neat.—Yours, &c.,

H. BLOODWORTH.

SIR,—Replying to Mr. Bloodworth's second letter, the contention of mine originally criticised by him was as follows: That a clear proof that 'reincarnation' was no recognised part of the belief of the Jews at the time of Jesus, exists in the Gospel accounts of what happened upon the Mount of Transfiguration at a date later than that of the death of John the Baptist. For it is therein stated that Moses *and* Elijah were seen upon the Mount—not that the departed one seen with Moses was the recently deceased prophet who had been said to have come in the 'spirit and power' of Elijah. And if the evangelists had believed in reincarnation, or had been referring to such a belief, clearly they could not have alluded to the spirit forms and human personalities of Moses and Elijah as if they had never been reincarnated.

Mr. Bloodworth objected that this contention is 'of little value.' But it still seems to me quite conclusive. And I have already sufficiently answered his criticism that 'Elijah could, and did, detach a double portion of his spirit, apparently by a process of fission' and caused it to 'rest upon another'—meaning Elisha. Also his criticism that the 'fission and reincarnation of a portion' of his human spirit was the 'hard thing,' alluded to by Elijah.

As to the rest, I do not understand Mr. Bloodworth's 'unawareness of making any such statement' as that Elisha's request was for the 'fission and reincarnation of a portion of the human spirit' of Elijah, as his first letter most evidently bears such interpretation. Moreover, I did not imagine *he* had suggested that Elisha's name should thereafter have been 'Legion,' but was humorously hinting at the slightness of the difference between *obsession* and the asserted adding of a double portion of the actual human spirit of Elijah to the human spirit of Elisha. Numbers xi. 17 obviously does not refer to an actual spirit, in the sense, heretofore used, of reasoning entity. And if Mr. Bloodworth did *not* mean 'that the identity and integrity of a human spirit as a reasoning entity can survive any amount of detachment of portions,' he presumably meant that Elijah deprived himself of his identity and integrity—and did so while still within hailing distance of Elisha, and at his request. Like many Theosophists, Mr. Bloodworth is the reverse of clear upon the all-important question of identity and integrity!

Then as to the 'soul-body' of the recently departed, being, as he thinks, 'embryonic and formless' enough to be compared with 'our earliest ancestors of formless structure,' I must be allowed to retain my opinion that the soul-body of any sentient being so far evolved as to be gifted with high reasoning power, cannot logically be supposed to be even 'comparatively' embryonic and formless.

There remains the criticism that though Mr. Bloodworth now grants, not only that Origen never taught the doctrine of *previous* incarnation upon the planet called earth, but also that Origen never taught even the doctrine of *future* incarnation upon the planet called earth, Origen nevertheless made certain heterodox speculations as to what might happen to souls, not at death nor within, say, fifteen hundred years, but in some unthinkable remote future, after an imaginary rearrangement of all things and a 'new start.' But even the illogical belief of some people of to-day, like Origen centuries ago, in a 'new start' of the *Logos* and of the souls now existing, is no adequate excuse for the often protested against yet often renewed claim that Origen taught a doctrine, which, as a matter of fact, he denounced—the doctrine of *metempsychosis* or 'putting into another body,' nowadays called the doctrine of reincarnation.—Yours, &c.,

J. DENHAM PARSONS.

#### Spiritualists and Reincarnation.

SIR,—As Mr. Boucher claims to be an occultist of much experience, I presume you attach some authority to his article (given on page 320), though he is mistaken if he thinks that the several quotations he gives prove inconsistency on the part of those who believe in reincarnation. Mr. Boucher is misleading in describing Eliphas Levi as a Theosophist. The late Abbé Constant, who wrote under this Jewish pseudonym, was not a modern Theosophist, but a Kabbalist, as even a mere tyro—to say nothing of a learned occultist—should know. Kabbalists believe in transmigration, which theory is not the invention of Buddhists, as is so frequently suggested in your columns, as it is found in the Upanishads, though not in the Vedas. These statements illustrate the eagerness with which Spiritualists catch at any unfounded plea in order to prevent the unprejudiced and

fair discussion of this great idea. If Spiritualists were more philosophical, they would be able to consider this question more seriously, and then, perhaps, some advance towards a solution might be made.

Generally the idea seems to obtain that the soul's progress can be achieved better under extra-physical conditions than by further embodiment. If so, why is the soul incarnate at all? If the soul is immortal it must also be pre-existent, and if pre-existent what caused its incarnation? The parents? If so, on the Spiritualist theory they have done it a grave injury, because on a mere impulse they have drawn it from higher and better conditions of life and progress. This leaves the problem of our physical birth unexplained except by sex generation.

Spiritualists dislike the idea of re-embodiment as the result of moral karma as being materialistic, but is not the view that the sex generation of the parents is the governing cause of the soul's incarnation a great deal more so? It is the complete subjection of a spiritual entity to the caprice of passion, and that not its own! The fact of physical embodiment and its possible repetition under the guidance of law is surely far less objectionable than a theory which places the soul at the beck and call of passion—a notion which is the complete inversion of all that our moral intuition tells us the spiritual government of souls should be.—Yours, &c.,

Brighton.

L. H. R.

July 11th.

[While we have no wish to stifle discussion, we feel that we have now devoted ample space to the consideration of the problems connected with reincarnation. Many opinions have been expressed on both sides, but as the subject is not one that can be settled by experiment, or by appeals to 'authorities,' the controversy, unless we call a halt, may go on interminably and serve no useful purpose. Whether we have or have not lived on this earth before, or whether we shall or shall not return to live here in another form, matters very little, practically and actually. The fact that we are here now for a brief season is certain. It is equally certain that we have to try to make the best possible use of our present powers and opportunities. Whether the less advanced among us are suffering for former sins, or are 'young souls' newly started on their careers, or are victims of heredity and environment, makes no difference to the fact that their necessities ought to be regarded by us as our opportunities for helpful service. We are all agreed that altruistic work is the highest and most beneficial form of the fulfilment of life's duty, as it is our happiest privilege—and this quite irrespective of the truth or falsity of the doctrine of reincarnation. Consequently we feel that, however interesting this question may be as an intellectual exercise, or a psychological puzzle, there are so many other and more practical problems that require solution that, save for one or two letters now in hand, the discussion of reincarnation must cease.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

#### Man and the Universe.

SIR,—In your issue of July 15th you point out the error some are guilty of in comparing man as a pigmy in size to the vast universe, and hence deducing the fact of his inferiority. May I, in support of your opinion, point out in the first place that we know nothing of size, but only of *relations of size*? If, indeed—as I think I have before written at length—our universe is constantly vibrating from the size of a pin's head to a size a million times greater than our (apparently) existing universe, we should not know it, if *relations of size* remained the same.

And, in the second place, *consciousness* is not subject to size; size conditions only the material. And how does anyone know the universe is vast? Through thought, through consciousness. I think that anything, however small, if *conscious*, must be held to be superior to anything, however great, if *unconscious*. And free-will? It seems to me that the pigmy man, with consciousness and some measure of free-will, has already partly established his power over the broodingnagian material, and must in the future fully establish it.—Yours, &c.,

F. C. CONSTABLE.

#### A CONFERENCE AT TORQUAY.

At the eighth annual conference of the Devonshire and District Spiritualists' Union, which was held on the 12th inst. at the Pavilion Hotel, Torquay, a goodly company assembled, and under the chairmanship of Mr. W. H. Evans (president), with the assistance of Mr. Hanson G. Hey, the business was quickly despatched. The officers elected for the ensuing year were: Mrs. Grainger (Exeter), president; Mr. Marshall (Torquay) and Mrs. Trueman (Plymouth), vice-presidents; Mr. Prince (Ply-

mouth), general secretary; Mr. Lockyear (Exeter), assistant secretary; Mr. H. Grainger (Exeter), treasurer; Mrs. Short (Plymouth), assistant treasurer. Mr. W. H. Evans was appointed organiser for the district.

In the evening Mr. H. P. Rabbich (Paignton) presided over a well-attended mass meeting, when Mr. Hanson G. Hey gave an excellent address on 'Spiritualism, the Religion of the Future.' Mr. Hey's genial humour, broad sympathy, and ready tact won the goodwill of the people assembled. Mrs. Grainger (Exeter) gave clairvoyant descriptions, which, considering the conditions, were remarkable both for clearness and the number of surnames given.

Tea was provided at the hotel, and judging from the smiling faces and the prevailing geniality, everyone was well pleased.

W.

#### SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, JULY 16th, &c.

*Prospective Notices, not exceeding twenty-four words, may be added to reports if accompanied by stamps to the value of sixpence.*

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—Mrs. Mary Seaton delivered a deeply interesting and instructive address on 'Mental and Spiritual Healing.' Mr. W. T. Cooper presided.—15, *Mortimer-street, W.*—On Monday, the 10th inst., Mr. A. V. Peters gave successful clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided. Sunday next, see advt.—D.N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, *Prince's-street, Oxford-street*.—Evening, Mr. H. G. Beard spoke well on 'Spiritual Truth.'—67, *George-street*.—Morning, Mr. W. J. Colville delivered a brilliant address, followed by an impromptu poem, which were much enjoyed. On Wednesday Mr. P. E. Beard gave clairvoyant descriptions and messages. Sunday next, see advertisement.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Miss Violet Burton gave an instructive address on 'The Unfolding Progress of Man.' Sunday next, at 7, address by Mr. J. Gambriel Nicholson; Mr. Humphreys will sing.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Mrs. Mary Davies gave good addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Imison (Nurse Graham), address and clairvoyance.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mr. Hanson G. Hey gave two practical and inspiring addresses. Sunday next, addresses by Mr. W. Harris-Shaddick. Tuesday, at 8, and Wednesday, at 3 p.m., Mrs. Clarke's open circle for clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, members' circle.—A. M. S.

BRIGHTON.—OLD TOWN HALL, HOVE, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST.—Mr. G. F. Tilby gave excellent addresses. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle; 7 p.m., Mrs. Curry. Monday, at 3 and 8, and Wednesday, at 3, clairvoyance by Mrs. Curry. Thursday, at 8.15 p.m., public circle.—A. C.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mr. Horace Leaf gave an address under control and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7, Mrs. Jamrach; at 3, Lyceum. 'Circles: Monday, at 7.30, ladies'; Tuesday, at 8.15, members'; Thursday, at 8.15, public. Wednesday, at 7, Lyceum.—G. T. W.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD.—Mrs. Ord gave an earnest address on 'The Three Essentials of Spiritualism.' Sunday next, Mrs. Neville, psychometry. Saturday, 22nd, social gathering at Wimbledon. Rendezvous, 'Windmill.' Tea at 5 p.m., adults 6d.—H. C.

HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning, Mr. A. Graham spoke on 'The Beauty of God's Creation.' Evening, Mrs. A. Jamrach gave an address on 'How are the Dead Raised Up, and with what Bodies do they Come?' and clairvoyant descriptions at both meetings. 12th, Mrs. Webster gave psychometric readings. Sunday next, see advt.—J. F.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Addresses by Mr. Johnson; clairvoyant descriptions by Mr. Abethell and Mrs. M. Gordon. Sunday next, morning, circle; evening, Miss V. Burton. Sunday, July 30th, 7 p.m., Mrs. A. Boddington. Thursdays, 8.15 p.m., public circle. Tuesdays, 8.15 p.m., healing circle.—A. C. S.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STRONE-ROAD.—Mr. Smith lectured on 'Emancipation,' and Mrs. Smith gave recognised clairvoyant descriptions. On the 13th Mrs. Podmore gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7, Mrs. Mary Davies. Thursday, 27th, at 8, Mrs. Jamrach.—C. W. T.

HACKNEY.—240a, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mr. A. H. Sarfas gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Mrs. J. Neal conducted the public circle on the 10th, and Mr. and Mrs. Hawes the healing circle on the 14th. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. J. Colville (silver collection). Monday, at 8, Miss Gibson, psychometry. Friday, at 8.30, Mr. and Mrs. Hawes, healing circle.—N. R.