

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 489.—VOL. X. [Registered as a Newspaper.]

SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1890.

[Registered as a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

Madame de Steiger has full space in the last number of "LIGHT" for her reasons of objection to the form of protest against capital punishment. As to the hanging of people I do not understand her to appear as an advocate of the present law. The petition, as regards its form, is not of our origination, and no doubt the London Spiritualist Alliance and the Editor of "LIGHT" might have preferred a different form of words. But it is not words that we fight about: it is facts. Personally I should have preferred a very short expression of opinion that would have been acceptable to all who hold, as I do, that hanging is not the form of punishment most in accordance with our present knowledge. It is a question about which I would not argue. I do not know whether hanging people "diminishes the crime of murder." I doubt whether anyone can affirm or deny that proposition with any certainty. I find myself very uncertain as to the motives and incentives out of which "the crime of murder" springs. If it is contended that a man will be deterred from taking the life of another because his own life would be the forfeit, I should want some much stronger evidence of that allegation than I at present possess before I credited it. I do not think that, as a rule, people reason up to the act of murder. It is the outcome of passion, in some form or other, which is not controlled by reason. Doubtless there are cases where we can trace a steady and systematic process which is, unquestionably, reasoned out and deliberately perpetrated. But I am by no means sure that the punishment of life-long incarceration, without hope of release, and with the discipline of hard labour, would not be quite as efficient a deterrent as hanging. It must be remembered too that hanging is an irreversible remedy, and I am by no means sure, again, that juries do not go wrong sometimes. Moreover, I am inclined to believe that they have this fear themselves from the often illogical recommendations to mercy that they make.

The fact is that a man, who has at all progressed beyond a rudimentary state, does not like to be forced to take human life. He cannot judge of the motives that may have caused the rash deed, he cannot see the heart, he can only give such a rough opinion as he would pronounce on a given act in a man's life on evidence laid before him. He will find plenty of people to disagree with his conclusions. Witness the constant divergence of public opinion in all notorious cases. A more indecent exhibition than is made when a notorious criminal is sentenced to death cannot be conceived. A

more ridiculous remedy for the possible error of judge and jury who have, under very solemn obligation, dealt with the case to the best of their power and ability, than the fiat of a Home Secretary who has *not* heard the evidence or seen the demeanour of the witnesses, I cannot imagine. So, because the public conscience rejects it, and because the usual administration of the law in regard to it is unsatisfactory, I reject with some contempt the present state of matters in respect of the death penalty. Nor do I at all admit that "Messieurs les Assassins" are to be held responsible for this modern application of the old Jewish law of retribution. We have outlived the "eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth" idea of justice. Quite as little can I admit that this brutal punishment is deterrent. Even if it were, I should not hold it to be justifiable. We ought to be able to take care of our criminals better than by hanging them. A man at the gold-fields sleeps with his nuggets under his pillow and shoots "at sight" any other man who shows an inclination to steal them. But where there is an organised police we do not defend our property in that rude way.

This consideration, however, is not my sole or chief reason for objecting to the death penalty. Believing, as I do, that its incidence is irregular and its efficacy as a deterrent very questionable, I protest altogether against its infliction in any case. It is a clumsy expedient for removing a man out of sight. It does not kill him. It does not limit his capacity for mischief. On the contrary, it enlarges it. It lets him loose with all his vindictive and angry passions stirred and boiling with unknown possibilities of evil-doing. How any man with the knowledge of a Spiritualist him can fail to agree in this opinion I find it hard to imagine, though I know it to be the case. We ought not to deal with this serious question of capital punishment on any lines of mercy. We see, when some more than usually interesting criminal is before the world, how opinion will sway backwards and forwards, and how it revolts the public conscience to hang a murderess. But that is a very low ground of protest compared with the ground that I take. I contend that no tribunal of men has the right to cut short a human life. I do not admit the right of any such fallible tribunal to "get [any] being away from the community in which he is utterly unfitted to remain." That is a confession of impotence for good on the part of the community. Nor is it conceivable to me that the destruction of life is the only remedy in the hands of the community. They owe a duty to the criminal, and have no right to obliterate him by way of reforming him, when they know, or ought to know, that there is no path of reformation by that way.

Let it not be thought that I would allow a man, who sinned so terribly as he does who destroys a human life, to escape the fitting punishment of his deed. I would not; but I would not add sin to sin by taking *his* life too. That seems to me to be a very futile way of punishing a crime, one that could only be accepted by people who have thought that when a man was dead he was done with. Madame de Steiger—in much of whose criticism I agree—points out this.

But I confess myself somewhat impatient of that weary waiting for a future perfected generation which will be able to do without hanging, as she suggests. Let us abolish the hanging, and let us also educate the race. Surely we can do both. And I see no "sign of weakness" in protesting against what I regard as an infringement of right which, whatever may have been possible to say for it in the old days, is not to be said in the light of our present knowledge. In those "good old days" men were sold into slavery; women were bought and sold like oxen; a man dare not open his mouth to express his belief in an unpopular truth; there was no liberty worth the name; there was no freedom. And are we now to be driven back to the theory that because a man does, for what reason man cannot fitly judge, a great wrong, he is to be wiped off the face of this earth, told with judicial solemnity that he is to make his peace in so many days with God, ordered to be hanged by the neck on a given morning—before which he sings his hymns and advertises the world that he is going straight to Heaven, where even the holiest saint fears to intrude—are we to be told this and be expected to acquiesce in it as the outcome of the knowledge that we have at this end of the Nineteenth Century? It may be so: if it be so indeed, it is the sternest and severest verdict that has ever been passed on our Civilisation and our Christianity.

And this is my opinion, quite apart from expediency and reasons of statecraft. It may be that it is necessary to hang some men in order to keep other men straight. It is so, Madame de Steiger tells us, in Switzerland. I am sorry to hear it: for it shows that that pocket edition of all the virtues in the form of a Republic has not solved yet a very elementary problem. I do not doubt that it will be hard for any community to take the first step to abolish this barbarous and savage punishment or penalty. It is so easy to get rid of a man—or to think that you have got rid of him—by killing him. But I anticipate a time, not very remote, when those who make opinion on such topics as these will agree with me that to hang a man is to waste him, and to commit an unlicensed attack, which ought to be resented, on his selfhood. For, let Messrs. the Judge and Juries know, they do not do anything more than transfer their culprit from a limited area of activity to one much more extended.

May I do what I can, by drawing attention to Mr. Frederic W. H. Myers' letter (p. 231), to emphasise his request? Narratives such as those quoted in "LIGHT" should be raised to their highest value by definite and precise statement. I am sure that my readers will recognise this necessity, as they will remember that I have always insisted on the value of records which rest on evidence that is, by the nature of things, not reducible to demonstration. There is much that we cannot bring down to lines of perfect proof, and to put it aside is, as I think, a mistake. But that belief does not prevent me from desiring that, wherever it can be had, the most perfect evidence possible should be got for such facts as, for example, Miss Hagan gives to us. She is a well-known lecturer; what she states commands attention, and she will, I have no doubt, put what she has said on our records of evidence in a way that will give added value to her own statement.

DE QUINCEY'S ESTIMATE OF GERMAN STYLE.—Most of Kant's countrymen regard a sentence as rude mould or elastic form, admitting of expansion to any possible extent. It is laid down as a rough outline, and then by superstruction and epiperstruction it is gradually reared to a giddy altitude which no eye can follow. Yielding to his natural impulse of subjoining all additions, or exceptions, or modifications, not in the shape of separate consecutive sentences, but as intercalations and stuffings of one original sentence, Kant might naturally enough have written a book from beginning to end in one vast hyperbolical sentence.—*DE QUINCEY'S Lecture on Style.*

SPIRITUALISM IN RELATION TO AGNOSTICISM AND MATERIALISM.

By J. J. MORSE.

The acquisition of knowledge increases the possibility of the diffusion of correct information regarding the multiplicity of phenomena, which, in their aggregate, constitute what makes up the universe, as at present understood. This acquisition, however, implies either Oriental contemplation or Occidental investigation; in the one the result is a subjective philosophy, while in the other the outcome is an objective science. The subjective may precede the latter, as in the generalisations of a Newton, but eventually the facts of objective science become the true supports of the speculations of the philosopher. The East speculates, the West investigates. Each assists in the increase of knowledge, but ever increasing confidence is being bestowed upon the method of practical experimental observation as a means of answering man's everlasting Why? what? and wherefore?

The philosophy of Spiritualism must rest upon as real and secure a foundation of objective and continually re-producible fact as any other philosophy concerning any department of the universe. If not, it is inutile in this age. To-day the demand is for the positive, alike in things spiritual and material. The age admits that conditions govern everywhere, but it cries, "have done with superstitious mystery and pseudo sacredness." The science of Spiritualism must become as exact as that of chemistry, and in no small measure it so is to-day. The entire realm of psychic phenomena, mediumship, telepathy, hypnotism, mesmerism, as affecting the human body and mind, are related to laws as definite and exact as those that concern the variations of terrestrial magnetism, or the motion of the heavenly bodies; while the range of "physical" phenomena is as much included in the "laws of nature" as is any other series of objective facts. To say that, so far, the laws are unformulated is but to reiterate a statement that could, with truth, be reiterated concerning many other branches of human inquiry. Let the matter of "Spiritualism" be limited, as to initial inquiry, to its objective facts, and the question then is, What is the interpretation? That theory which covers the most ground will finally assert itself. But the said "objective" facts must embrace those that occur in the human body as well as those that occur in its presence. The testimony of William Crookes, F.R.S., recently reproduced, and emphatically re-endorsed by himself, with the evidences of a Zöllner, Flammarion, Wallace, and many others eminent in various walks of life, challenge attention—not sneers or flippancy; and the Agnostic's "I do not know" must imply the duty of finding out. Professor Huxley asserts, as one of the chief exponents of Agnosticism, that Agnosticism "simply means that a man shall not say he knows or believes that which he has no scientific ground for professing to know or believe"; and as (was it not?) Lord Brougham said, "Science is but ascertained and classified knowledge." The writer of this article quite agrees with Huxley, always insisting, however, that observation and experiment must precede knowledge, which, when classified, can become science, i.e., scientific. To contemptuously reject, without inquiry, the claims for the objective phenomena of Spiritualism is contrary to the scientific spirit, and, as the antithesis of the Agnostic apothegm must be that a man shall not deny without scientific reason, the Agnostic must either let the subject of Spiritualism severally alone, or else devote the same careful study to it that any other branch of human experiences call for.

As a Spiritualist I am satisfied that certain objective facts have occurred. The said facts have had all the characteristics of material phenomena, i.e., they have resulted from the application of force. The asserted triviality of the phenomenon is not the question. Franklin's kite and door key are permissible as elements in his investigation. Things in themselves trivial become, in combination with themselves and others things, of transcendent importance. Singularly the writer is an Agnostic, in so far as he accepts the demonstrated, challenges the questionable, and holds in abeyance the verdict upon the undecided. Millions of our fellows are deluded by the utterly absurd and, to the writer, entirely fictitious teachings concerning *post mortem* life that ministers of all denominations teach. Spiritualism, as understood by the writer, is as heartily opposed to such teaching as ever the most enthusiastic Agnostic. But Spiritualism removes the *non possumus* of Agnosticism by experimental investigation concerning the continuity of conscious-

ness in another realm, which, if it exists, must be as natural as is this. Unluckily, many Agnostics assume that Spiritualism, as it is called, is a reversion from the superstition of past times. It is nothing of the kind. It is, with the kindred study of Psychology, an attempt to extend our knowledge of man's nature, with a view to discover whether there is anything to warrant the assertion that he is, to use conventional terms, an immortal being. Will the Agnostic help to extend our knowledge, or will he still continue to confuse a laudable desire to arrive at knowledge outside of Agnostic limits, as a retrogressive movement to old time superstitions, and so remain aloof? While appreciating the standing quotation on "Saladin's" most admirable paper, *The Agnostic Journal*, from Arnold's *Light of Asia*, as follows:—

Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes?
Or any searcher know by mortal mind?
Veil after veil will lift, but there must be
Veil upon veil behind?

Surely my Agnostic friends will allow it is our duty to go on lifting "veil after veil," even if it be to find "veil upon veil behind," as every truth-seeking Spiritualist does.

That there can be any relation between materialism and Spiritualism seems absurd; but materialism is susceptible of two interpretations: criticism, as applied to the miraculous, i.e., religious; philosophy, as applied to an interpretation of man and the world. Its positive assertions are limited to physical existences, the net result of its teaching, man and the universe a mechanism; its only immortality the eternity of matter. Phenomena and condition, it admits; aught outside of the sum of matter, it denies. One substance is the foundation of being, and therefrom arises all there is! What that substance is is conjectural. Death ends the individual, the grave is, truly, then, our resting place. Spirits can have no place in such a theory, and dissolution being perfect immortality for the individual has no ground. Admit the Materialist's ground and what follows? From my point of view the "unknowable," the "substance," becomes the universal basis—spirit! The conditioning of this basis results in the phenomenal universe, and evolution interprets the rest. To ring the changes on terms is not enough. Ask me to define spirit, I cannot. Ask the Materialist to define matter, can he do better? Its qualities, attributes, and modes are not *it*. Whatever the base of being is we can only know of it by its modes, as they affect our consciousness. A "spirit" world is no greater mystery than a "matter" world. A spirit world, if it exists, is a condition, and if conscious beings exist there they can only know of that condition by its phenomena. That the old nomenclature of metaphysics has imparted an incorrect idea of this "other life" is not my fault. The subjective, in its order, is objective to beings that live therein. Now comes the crucial question, Has man a subjective nature? To what are consciousness and sensation referable? Spiritualists urge a "soul," "spirit," Ego. Are they right or wrong? Ridicule, denunciation, and *ad captandum* arguments do not befit philosophers. To-day hypnotism is abroad in our midst, and if man exhibits so-called supersensuousness is there a corresponding supersensuous realm to which his supersensuousness is related? Come, gentlemen, you have hammered theology flat; dethroned Gods, devils, and angels: cooled hell with your sarcasm, and obscured Heaven with your jests, leave thrashing the dead lion, and turn attention to the living issues of to-day. Keep up with the procession. Spiritualists are neither liars, nor lunatics.

Spiritualism is a positive gospel. It takes nothing for granted. Prove all things is its motto. It rests upon facts, and in so far is a science. Its facts are reproducible under proper conditions. Its great efforts are to bring evidence before the world, to prove that there is a persistent Ego in man, which in this stage has a demonstrable existence; that "death" is but a phenomenon in the conditioning of that Ego, an incident in its career. Cheerfully admitting the good that Agnosticism and materialism have done, and are doing, it has no quarrel with either, since, like them both, it wants the "truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," at all times. It, Spiritualism, must be accepted as a breaking away from the mystical and supernatural, from the ignorance and fanaticism of past efforts to deal with the old time question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" by bringing "immortality," the spiritual world, and man's relation thereto, into the region of practical science and positive philosophy, and the placing of the questions concerned where they can never again become involved in the puerile speculations of the ignorant, the superstitious opinions of priestcraft, or the unscientific assertions of the believers in the miraculous.

CLAIRVOYANCE.

NOTES BY "EDINA."

I trouble you with three more cases of clairvoyance, because I deem them interesting and instructive. (1) Some nights ago when my wife and self were at the table alone, communication was opened up by a new "visitant" who gave her name as "Jessie Hamilton, of Glasgow," and professed to have heard of me some thirty years ago, when I used to go a good deal about that quarter. We could get no clear message, though there was plenty of power, alphabetical signals being futile, or, at least, nearly so. I said, ultimately, "Write through my daughter to-morrow evening." The "communicator" promised to do so. By next night I candidly confess we had forgotten about Jessie altogether till about eleven o'clock our deaf daughter, who was sitting with us, suddenly said, "There's a woman like a nurse, or elderly servant, here, in a great anxiety to speak, and she says her name is Jessie Hamilton." We were certainly surprised, as we had told no one of the former visit. I now observed, from the movement of my daughter's hands on the table, that writing probably would come; so paper and pen were put into her hand and the following message written:—"Jessie Hamilton, of Glasgow. I came several times to your daughter, Miss M." (the younger one), "and she didn't listen to me. I knew you many years ago. . . . No more. I wish you could see me, as well as your deaf daughter. She never knew me before. Good-night, JESSIE HAMILTON. . . . No room for any answers; speak on your table, and save the trouble of writing. Mr. (giving my name) knows me." I have to note (1) that the sheet of paper was barely sufficient for this message, from the sprawling hand in which it was written, which may account for the expression "No room for any answer"; (2) that we were most anxious to communicate by the table, but could with great difficulty get tangible results; (3) that I have no recollection of any person named "Jessie Hamilton"; but (4) she may have known of, or heard about me, because she did give me some accurate details as to ages, &c., of certain persons I knew there at that early period of my life. The important points here are, however, the communicator told my wife and self her name by the table, the one night; promised to communicate by writing next night; *we told no one*, and yet the next evening she appeared to my deaf daughter, spoke, and was heard, gave her name, and wrote the message above quoted.

(2) Second case.—This morning my deaf daughter went into the drawing-room, and at an hour when we don't usually expect visitors. To her surprise, after she had been there for a few minutes, she suddenly observed standing between her and a table, close by, a young man dressed in a frock coat, with a moustache, and having his hair parted in the middle. Deeming it a visitor to me on business, she said, "I beg pardon," and made for the door, being quite taken aback at his sudden appearance. Before reaching the door she glanced back and found he was gone. He was so *real* that she could scarcely believe it was a spirit-form; but the room being quite empty, she remained, and while occupied examining some photographs recently added to the album, she found a finger suddenly appear on a page where one had just been inserted. Now, looking up, she saw the same young man again, who told her about his tragic death some years ago. This photograph had been sent to us by the young gentleman's mother, about a month since, as a memento of him. We did not know the family till recently, but having met the lady at a séance here with Messrs. Husk and Williams in November, a common bond of interest in our "lost ones" was formed, and the fact that this young man had appeared at a séance to his mother formed the subject of conversation between us. The "common bond" has certainly been "deepened" by this unexpected incident.

I may add the girl's appearance and manner when she emerged from the drawing-room clearly showed how much she had been startled by the early visitant.

(3) The third case is as follows: Coming home from an annual dinner, where my companion for many years has been G—S—, who died last March, and whose absence I sorely missed on this occasion, my daughter said, "Mr. S. has just been here, dressed for dinner, and he bids me say to you he was beside you to-night; also that he knew when he went to the country he wouldn't get better, and his only sorrow at going was that he had to part from his dear daughter who wrote his letters, and tended him in his last illness."

Would that I could tell his daughter this; but if I did, she

would not believe it. This same communicator came (see former notes) on the afternoon of his funeral and spelt out the name of a mutual friend who was beside me at the grave on that mournful occasion.

ANIMISM AND SPIRITISM,

(By ALEXANDER N. AKSAKOW, Editor of the monthly journal, *Psychische Studien*, in Leipzig. An attempt at a critical examination of mediumistic phenomena, with especial reference to the hypotheses of hallucination and the unconscious. As a reply to Dr. Edward von Hartmann's work, *Spiritism*.)

This important and valuable contribution to the literature of Spiritualism has now appeared in book form. The work was originally published in *Psychische Studien*, and has been coming out in monthly parts during a period of four years, being commenced in the January number of 1886, and finished in the April number of this present year. The original manuscript was in French,* and is translated into the German language by Herr G. C. Wittig, a frequent contributor to the *Psychische Studien*.

The work in its present form is published in two large volumes, containing 750 pages, and is a critical reply to Edward von Hartmann's pamphlet on *Spiritism*, an English translation of which, by Mr. C. C. Massey, appeared in "LIGHT" during 1884-5. Von Hartmann accounts for all Spiritualistic or mediumistic phenomena by the hypothesis of *hallucination, nerve-force, and masked somnambulism* though (be it said) he had no personal experience of such phenomena, having never (as I believe I am justified in saying) been present at any mediumistic séances. Mr. Aksakow's work consists largely of accounts of séances contributed to the various Spiritualistic phenomena, carefully selected from the *Spiritualist*, "LIGHT," and other journals devoted to mystical subjects, as well as of some personal experiences, all of which are critically discussed and commented upon by the author with a view to prove the untenability and illogicality of Von Hartmann's theory. The phenomena which are more particularly discussed are those of materialisation, transcendental photography, and casts of materialised hands and feet taken from paraffin moulds; these when proved to be genuine facts are, the writer considers, irrefutable arguments against the hallucination theory of Von Hartmann, and a twenty years' study of Spiritualistic phenomena, during which he has spared neither time, trouble, nor expense, certainly justifies Mr. Aksakow in the conclusions he has come to, and the highly interesting work he has now published is a most valuable addition to the more intellectual and critical literature connected with Modern Spiritualism.

With regard to the title, *Animism and Spiritism*, there is a long disquisition in the commencement of the book, but a short passage which occurs at page 577 will, I think, serve to show the author's meaning:—

"For the sake of brevity, I propose by the word 'Animism' to denote all mental and physical phenomena which comprehend an action apart from the body of the human organism, and especially all mediumistic phenomena which may be accounted for by an operating force of living men, acting beyond the limits of the body. The designation by the word 'Spiritism' should only be applied to those phenomena which, after all previous hypotheses have been sifted and condemned, offer sufficient evidence to demand the hypothesis of communion with the deceased.† . . . The description 'Mediumism' will comprehend all the phenomena both of Animism and Spiritism, without distinction."

The work, as it now appears, is preceded by an introductory chapter, which may, the author says, serve for both postscript and preface; and which gives his reasons for answering Von Hartmann so much at length, his own aim being, not so much to establish the facts of Spiritualism as to examine them critically, with a view to arrive at the truth concerning them. This he has done in the most masterly manner, and his work will, no doubt, be widely read and appreciated in Germany and Russia.

"V."

I FEAR the evil effect of sentimentalism for a spirit that reasons. From it are born those false vibrations which put the whole instrument out of tune, and end by rendering it incapable of giving any sound.—CAVOUR.

* The Hon. State-Counsellor Alexander Aksakow is, as our readers well know, a resident in St. Petersburg.

† In other words, "Animism" is to be applied to phenomena due to the spirits of living persons, "Spiritism" to those of dead.

UNCONSCIOUS CREATION.

By MRS. A. J. PENNY.

We have received before now intimations from the unseen that the emanations of persons may, when of sufficient strength, give rise to separate existences, half spiritual, half material, like ourselves, yet finer, more subtle, less thoroughly manifested. — "G. R. S.," "LIGHT," November 30th, 1889.

Every spirit in its degree must create . . . not another spirit do you thus create, but something which to your outerness may seem but an *idea*, for which you shall suffer, and which you shall enspiritalise. — "LIGHT," "Psychic Telegrams," No. III.

For some years past my mind has been warping round to this same belief, solely from deductions made from the significant hints of Boehme and other seers; and I would fain bring my guesses upon this subject into presentable coherence. So before machinery was perfected would the designer of a supposed new fabric long to weave a close, smooth pattern of the stuff he imagined. I have no adequate mental machinery, and only a little time left for throwing down samples of crudely tentative thought before contemporaries; therefore I crave pardon for venturing to offer it. If thus I can but set fast in other minds the various sayings which have served mine, like pegs from which to spin connecting, gossamer lines of hypothesis, they may help as outlines for more able thinkers to fill in and confirm. Of their suggestive worth I cannot doubt. But it will need some ductility of thought and imaginativeness to see where one is apposite to the other, and unless the reader will kindly *try* to follow the writer's chain of ideas his impatience will be equal to his contempt.

The first notion of our *inevitable* creativeness came to me from these words of Boehme: "Therefore there is also such great diversity in the spirits, as there is also in the will of the essences; whereof we have an example and similitude in the will and purpose of our *mind*, out of which do spring so many various *thoughts*, where every thought hath again a centre to a will, that so out of an imagination a substance may be produced." "In such a manner are all spirits created out of the eternal mind."* In what manner? By the *ideas* of the Divine mind becoming substantiated in the wisdom—"the corporeity of the Holy Spirit." And at this point one may choose either Boehme's or Madame Blavatsky's teaching, for they are identical as to this, that the *idea*, the senseless unconscious image of man, extant millions of ages before it was engrossed in our coarse flesh and blood, was what subdeific powers *worked out* into creaturely existence; precisely as our brain holds an outline of the work the hands proceed to execute: let us have a saying from each of these great teachers to illustrate this. "A Divine imagination, in which the *ideas* of angels and souls have been seen from eternity, in a Divine type or resemblance; yet not then as creatures, but in resemblance, as when a man beholds his face in a glass; therefore the angelical and human idea flowed forth from the wisdom, and was formed into an image, as Moses said." (*The Clavis*, 43) "This true image it is which God from eternity hath beheld with His Holy Spirit in the wisdom, but without substance, which He created into substance, that is brought substance into this image." (*Apol.* 3, text 4, point 4, par. 18.)†

After discussing at length occult doctrine concerning man's primeval evolution Madame Blavatsky says, "Finally, it is shown in every ancient Scripture and cosmogony that man evolved primarily as a luminous incorporeal form, over which, like the molten brass round the clay model of the sculptor, the physical frame was built by, through, and from the lower forms and types of animal terrestrial life."‡ Now, an idea conceived in the human mind with any habitual intensity does not end as an imaged possibility; it prompts desire for carrying it out; we want, as we say, to realise it. So Boehme says, "Where there is a desire there is a mother, for no desire can make itself; it must arise out of a will,"§ and, "In every will of every essence there is again a centre of a whole substance."|| I beg for a stress of attention on that last sentence. How is that substance produced? Let him answer again. "We well know the similitude of the Deity in ourselves, if we know and consider ourselves, for the spirit giveth everything its name as it standeth in the birth in itself, and as it formed them in the beginning—in the creation—so it also formeth our mouth; and as they" [Heaven

* *Threefold Life*, chap. iv., par. 30.

† See also *Incarnation*, part I. chap. ii., par. 14, and *Threefold Life*, chap. x., par. 14.

‡ *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II., p. 112.

§ *Threefold Life*, chap. viii., par. 52.

|| *Forty Questions*, Ques. 1, par. 115.

and earth, stars and elements just before named] "are generated out of the Eternal Being, and are come to a substance, so the *human* word goeth also forth out from the centre of each spirit, in shape, property, and form, and it is no other than that the spirit maketh such a substance, as the creation itself is when it expresseth the form of the creation . . . for God is Himself the being of all beings, and we are as gods in Him."* These words are of no dubious meaning. He has already taught us that creation in all worlds was and is effected by the seven spirits of eternal nature; and that a desire for manifestation of spirit is invariably the hidden "lubet,"† which strongly concentrates diffused undifferentiated life, till contraction and motion generate fire, fire light, light air, air water, and water substance. That, in fewest words, is Boehme's account of the genesis of manifested life. My contention is that the desire of any human mind acts on its own plane, precisely as the Divine lubet in the wisdom—or Akasa, if our Theosophic friends prefer the term; and as "the eternal centre, and the birth of life is everywhere, if you make a small circle, as small as a little grain or kernel of a seed, there is the whole birth of the eternal nature"; the intrinsic insignificance of the desire—given its sustained intensity—proves nothing against resulting substance; and of course by substance, I do not here mean matter or anything external senses can perceive, but, I fear, such substance as may often compact itself into materiality in other bodies, first as a model and then as a concretion formed upon it. For the wonderful and awful truth is by many great seers established that a spirit "maketh out of itself a form of a spirit and the form maketh a substance according to the property of the spirit."‡ And Swedenborg warns us, that those who suppose spirit to be merely thought without substance are mistaken, and entirely ignorant what spirit is, since a spirit is a substance and indeed a subtle organism.§ Mr. Sinnett will help us here, "Every thought of man upon being evolved passes into the inner world and becomes an active entity, by associating itself, coalescing, we might term it, with an elemental, that is with one of the semi-intelligent forces of nature. It survives as an active intelligence—a creature of the mind's begetting, for a longer or shorter period, proportionate with the original intensity of the cerebral action that generated it. Thus a good thought is perpetuated as an active beneficent power, an evil one as a maleficent demon. And so man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offsprings of his fancies, desires, impulses, and passions; a current which reacts upon any sensitive or nervous organisation, which comes in contact with it, in proportion to its dynamic intensity."||

To Mr. Sinnett's lucid instruction, I wish to hang on as what appears to me additional knowledge as to how our thoughts associate themselves or coalesce with those convenient extras, the elementals, this dictum of Swedenborg's. Writing of diseases he said, "With men who are in fevers, such spirits are present; for the sick man summons those who infuse heat. Such spirits rush where their sphere is." (*Spiritual Diary*, 4571.) Asad and angry thought has similar attraction; a loving or hopeful one no less. Chemical affinities in action should give us a lively idea of the instantaneous rush of spirits to the sphere our spirits betray. We can get a little further still on the lines of causation, as to how this is done by collating some of the dark—but gradually enlightening—sayings of great seers regarding breath and sound.

(To be continued.)

* * The foregoing article was written some few months ago under the mistaken impression that its leading thought was—constructively—more my own than I find it could have been. For since then, turning over a four year old extract book, I chanced to see the following passage which I had copied from p. 139 of Dr. Franz Hartmann's *Magic*: "Man is a centre from which thought is evolved, and crystallises in forms in the world of souls. His thoughts are things that have life, and form, and tenacity; real entities, solid, and more enduring than the forms of the physical plane." A sentence which holds more than pages of mine could express with equal force and clearness; yet as infusions of herbs are serviceable to the body, so may an infusion of thoughts serve the mind, by carrying out and prolonging their effect.

* *Threefold Life*, chap. vi., pars. 2 and 4.

† "This pleasure, or lust, in the English translation" (of Boehme) "is very aptly and significantly expressed by the Latin word *lubet*. Such a sweet and meek lubet there is without or before all travelling nature in the eternal liberty." (*Dionysius Freher*.) The question, of course, occurs to one, what corresponds to this in the antecedents of the manifestations by nature of the human spirit? Must we attribute the previous lubet to the transcendental ego?

‡ *Point IV*, chap. 6, par. 10. § *Spiritual Diary*, 2366.

|| *The Occult World*, p. 131.

NOTES FROM MY SPIRITUAL DIARY.

By F. J. THEOBALD.
PART IX.

"NEVER LIVE NEAR A PIOUS FOOL."—*Talmud*.

[May we not be pretty sure that in a few years' time that terrible malady, *religious mania*, will exist no longer? One of the grandest teachings of modern Spiritualism is the Perfect, the Infinite Love of God, which must "cast out all fear," and sweep away the God-dishonouring dogma of eternal punishment. The communication I now copy was from one who had lived a Christ-like life, and was respected and loved by all who knew him. Unhappily, just at a time when his physical powers were at a low ebb, from over-wrought brain, some of those "pious fools," against whom the Talmud gives warning in no mild terms, got hold of this good man, and by their persistent warnings against, and representations of, hell-fire, drove him at last in a fit of anguish to put an end to his earth-life. For years after this fearful blow, his loving and afflicted family were bowed down in grief; then came a knowledge of Spiritualism, which brought back brightness and joy into their lives. It was whilst visiting these friends that I was placed *en rapport* with this spirit, who wrote as follows:—]

"I am rejoiced to be with you. Never can I find words to express to you the amazing relief it was to my weary spirit, to find myself in the arms of our loving Lord and Master, Christ Jesus. Yes, He did take me to Himself, and bless me. He forgave me the infirmities of the flesh, which led me on so erringly; but, ah! it was all want of simple trust. My loved ones, I have tried to help you all, and I cannot help feeling that even out of the evil act that severed me from you, good has come. It was not for me to judge of the mysteries of Providence, or to shun the weary path of life in the earth-body, but by doing so I gained the haven of Love that I should never have realised whilst on earth. And from my spirit home I can assure you of the Infinite Love of our Father, One who pitieth our infirmities, One who hears our cry. . . . All is well, and out of evil good shall arise. I have much to learn, and as I learn, so shall you all learn.

"I find it very difficult to explain to you the beauties of our home. . . .

"Have I ever told you that for every prayer sent up to the throne of God, a gem of glittering brightness is added to the Crown, and also to the picture in which is portrayed your life's history in your guardian spirit's home?

"Thus one who lives a life of prayer thereby forms for himself the brightest crown, the most lovely spirit home.

"Yes; 'Prayer is the spirit's vital breath. He enters Heaven by prayer.' Literally does he live in Heaven whilst on earth, if he lives in and by prayer.

"I found that all the humble efforts I made to aid others, whilst on earth, were helpful to me here. The dark cloud that enveloped me during the last hours, or I may say months, of my life, was dispelled by the breath of Heaven that was borne in upon my weary spirit, as soon as I was freed from my frail, failing body.

"My brain was overwrought. I should not have been much longer in health. Had I lived on our mutual anxieties would have been tenfold what they were. It is a mysterious subject, but, in the midst of all, the mercy and lovingkindness of God shine out bright and clear.

"We have glorious music, rolling in magnificent harmony throughout the expansive horizon of our home; so grand! so thrilling! Do you not hear the echoes in your earthly home? Yes; you may do so at times. When the sweet, low voice of Love enters into your weary, waiting spirit, that is the faint echo from our spirit home, but all is so faint, so weak! Only when you come can you fully know how true, how real it is. Let me join with you, daily and hourly, in prayer, that our union may be more and more complete; that we may unite as a loving family around the Eternal Throne, the Centre of all Light and Love, the Everlasting, Ever-existing God!"

INTELLECTUAL negotiations ought not to commence with an ultimatum.—E. DOUGLAS FAWCETT.

"THESE two sides together form the medal of life, a medal on whose obverse may be traced sprigs of flowers, implements of toil, and weapons of battle, and at the foot a skull and bones, but on the reverse there is written a hieroglyphic which no eye has read."—J. G. Dow.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
ADELPHI, W.C.

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"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.
MANY letters and articles are crowded out owing to pressure on our space.

Light:

EDITED BY "M.A. (OXON.)"

SATURDAY, MAY 17th, 1890.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

MESMER v. CHARCOT.

HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR IS DUE.

BY THE REV. H. R. HAWEIS.

The *Daily Graphic* publishes the following communication from the Rev. H. R. Haweis:—

Why can't our scientific men say, "We have blundered about Mesmerism; it's practically true"? Not because they are men of science, but simply because they are human. No doubt it is humiliating, when you have dogmatised in the name of science, to say, "I was wrong." But is it not more humiliating to be found out; and is it not most humiliating, after shuffling and wriggling hopelessly in the inexorable meshes of serried facts, to collapse suddenly, and call the hated net a "suitable enclosure," in which, forsooth, you don't mind being caught? Now this, as it seems to me, is precisely what Messrs. Charcot and the French hypnotists and their medical admirers in England are doing. Ever since Mesmer's death at the age of eighty, in 1815, the French and English "Faculty," with some honourable exceptions, have ridiculed and denied the facts as well as the theories of Mesmer, but now, in 1890, a host of scientists suddenly agree, while wiping out as best they may the name of Mesmer, to rob him of all his phenomena, which they quietly appropriate under the name of "hypnotism," suggesting "Therapeutic Magnetism," "Psychopathic Massage," and all the rest of it. Well, "What's in a name?"

I care more for things than names, but I reverence the pioneers of thought who have been cast out, trodden under foot, and crucified by the orthodox of all ages, and I think the least scientists can do for men like Mesmer, Du Potet, Puysegur, or Mayo and Elliotson, now they are gone, is to "build their sepulchres."

I shall be accused of invincible ignorance in not distinguishing between hypnotism, which Dr. Wyld tells us is "the submission of the soul of the patient to the will of the operator," and mesmerism, which is "an analogous operation plus the psychical sympathy transferring vital magnetism"; but I accept the distinction without pledging myself to any theory. I am mainly concerned with the facts, and what I want to know is why these cures and abnormal states are trumpeted about as modern discoveries, while the "faculty" still deride or ignore their great predecessors without having themselves a theory which they can agree upon or a single fact which can be called new. The truth is we are just blundering back with toil to work over again the old disused mines of the ancients; the redis-

covery of these occult sciences is exactly matched by the slow recovery of sculpture and painting in modern Europe. Here is the history of occult science in a nutshell. 1. Once known. 2. Lost. 3. Rediscovered. 4. Denied. 5. Reaffirmed, and by slow degrees, under new names, victorious. The evidence for all this is exhaustive and abundant. Here it may suffice to notice that Diodorus Siculus mentions how the Egyptian priests, ages before Christ, attributed clairvoyance induced for therapeutic purposes to Isis. Strabo ascribes the same to Serapis, while Galen mentions a temple near Memphis famous for these hypnotic cures. Pythagoras, who won the confidence of the Egyptian priests, is full of it. Aristophanes in "Plutus" describes in some detail a mesmeric cure—*καὶ πρῶτα μὲν δὴ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἐφήψατο*, &c., "and first he began to handle the head." Cælius Aurelianus describes manipulations, 1569, for disease "conducting the hands from the superior to the inferior parts"; and there was an old Latin proverb—*Ubi dolor ibi digitus*—"Where pain there finger." But time would fail me to tell of Paracelsus (1462) and his "deep secret of magnetism"; of Van Helmont (1644) and his "faith in the power of the hand in disease." Much in the writings of both these men was only made clear to the moderns by the experiments of Mesmer, and in view of modern hypnotists it is clearly with him and his disciples that we have chiefly to do. He claimed, no doubt, to transmit an animal magnetic fluid, which I believe the hypnotists deny.

But the Charcot phenomena are for all that in many ways identical with the mesmeric phenomena, and hypnotism must properly be considered rather as a branch of mesmerism than as something distinct from it. Anyhow, Mesmer's facts, now generally accepted, were at first stoutly denied.

In 1784 the Paris Royal Academy appointed a commission to examine mesmerism—which of course reported unfavourably, upon which Mesmer wrote these prophetic words, addressed to the Academicians, "You say that Mesmer will never hold up his head again. If such is the destiny of the man it is not the destiny of the truth, which is in its nature imperishable, and will shine forth sooner or later in the same or some other country with more brilliancy than ever, and its triumph will annihilate its miserable detractors." Mesmer left Paris in disgust, and retired to Switzerland to die; but the illustrious Dr. Jussieu became a convert. Lavater carried Mesmer's system to Germany, while Puysegur and Deleuze spread it throughout provincial France, forming innumerable "harmonic societies" devoted to the study of therapeutic magnetism and its allied phenomena of thought-transference, hypnotism, and clairvoyance.

Some twenty years ago I became acquainted with perhaps the most illustrious disciple of Mesmer, the aged Baron du Potet. Round this man's therapeutic and mesmeric exploits raged, between 1830 and 1846, a bitter controversy throughout France. A murderer had been tracked, convicted, and executed solely on evidence supplied by one of Du Potet's clairvoyantes. The Juge de Paix admitted thus much in open court. This was too much for even sceptical Paris, and the Academy determined to sit again and, if possible, crush out the superstition. They sat, but, strange to say, this time they were converted. Itard, Fouquier, Guersent, Bourdois de la Motte, the cream of the French faculty, pronounced the phenomena of mesmerism to be genuine—cures, trances, clairvoyance, thought-transference, even reading from closed books; and from that time an elaborate nomenclature was invented, blotting out as far as possible the detested names of the indefatigable men who had compelled the scientific assent, while enrolling the main facts vouched for by Mesmer, Du Potet, and Puysegur among the undoubted phenomena to be accepted, on whatever theory, by medical science.

Meanwhile England was more stubborn. In 1846 the celebrated Dr. Elliotson, a popular practitioner, with a vast *clientèle*, pronounced the famous Harveian oration, in which he confessed his belief in mesmerism. He was denounced by the doctors with such thorough results that he lost his practice, and died well nigh ruined if not heart-broken. The Mesmeric Hospital in Marylebone-road had been established by him. Operations were successfully performed under mesmerism, and all the phenomena which have lately occurred at Leeds and elsewhere to the satisfaction of the doctors were produced in Marylebone fifty-six years ago. Thirty-five years ago Professor Lister did the same—but the introduction of chloroform being more speedy and certain as an anæsthetic, killed for a time the mesmeric treatment. The public interest in mesmerism died down, and the Mesmeric Hospital in the Maryle-

bone-road, which had been under a cloud since the suppression of Elliotson, was at last closed. Lately we know what has been the fate of Mesmer and mesmerism. Mesmer is spoken of in the same breath with Count Cagliostro, and mesmerism itself is seldom mentioned at all; but, then, we hear plenty of electro-biology, therapeutic magnetism, and hypnotism—just so. Oh, shades of Mesmer, Puysegur, Du Potet, Elliotson—*sic vos non vobis*. Still, I say, *Palmar qui meruit ferat*. When I knew Baron du Potet he was on the brink of the grave, and nearly eighty years old. He was an ardent admirer of Mesmer; he had devoted his whole life to therapeutic magnetism, and he was absolutely dogmatic on the point that a real magnetic aura passed from the mesmerist to the patient. "I will show you this," he said one day, as we both stood by the bedside of a patient in so deep a trance that we ran needles into her hands and arms without exciting the least sign or movement. The old Baron continued: "I will, at the distance of a foot or two, determine slight convulsions in any part of her body by simply moving my hand above the part, without any contact." He began at the shoulder, which soon set up a twitching. Quiet being restored, he tried the elbow, then the wrist, then the knee, the convulsions increasing in intensity according to the time employed. "Are you quite satisfied?" I said. "Quite satisfied"; and, continued he, "any patient that I have tested I will undertake to operate upon through a brick wall at a time and place where the patient shall be ignorant of my presence or my purpose. This," added Du Potet, "was one of the experiences which most puzzled the Academicians at Paris. I repeated the experiment again and again under every test and condition, with almost invariable success, until the most sceptical was forced to give in." I spent in all about a fortnight with this really distinguished and estimable man. When we parted he gave me a medal of Mesmer, which he much prized. "It is," he said, "because you have intuition, mesmeric power, you have studied and understand." I still possess both the medal and an autograph of Mesmer. Few of your readers will probably have seen either; but now, if ever, in my opinion, is the time for the mention of such a memorial, though slight—such a recognition, though scanty: "Honour to whom honour is due," *Palmar qui meruit ferat*."

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The next Assembly will be held at the rooms, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., on Tuesday next, when Mr. Paice will deliver an address on "Infinite Existence and Finite Morals."

The closing meeting will be held in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, on June 12th. Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald will discourse on "My Experiences in Spiritualism: A Word with Sceptics and Spiritualists." At this meeting members have the privilege of inviting their friends. Cards can be had from Mr. Godfrey, and those interested in the meeting and desirous of attending it, who are not personally acquainted with a member, can obtain information as to facilities for so doing by applying to the President.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

[Any acknowledgment of books received in this column neither precludes nor promises further notice.]

Theosophical Siftings. Vol. III. No. 5. (7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. Price 3d.)

The Pilgrims: An Allegory of the Soul's Progress from the Earthly to the Heavenly State. By CHARLES FOX. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co.)

Psychic Studies. (No. 12, and last of a very useful monthly publication by ALBERT MORTON, of San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A.) [The Editor set out with an announcement that he would do what he could for a year, and he has met his engagements. He finds, as we all do, that those who work also bear the charges; and he retires. Our thanks to him for what he has done; his little pamphlet has always been bright and readable.]

We have also received various newspapers and pamphlets which we can acknowledge only in this way.

CORRECTION.—A printer's error occurred in the communication of "R.S." in last week's "LIGHT," the word "Christ" being substituted for "dust" in the fifth line.

MR. MOSES KENNEDY.

Our readers will remember that Mr. Dawson Rogers recently published in "LIGHT" an account of a séance with Mrs. Everitt, when a message was received purporting to come from Moses Kennedy, late of Glenwood, Missouri. Respecting this communication the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of April 26th has the following:—

In the *Journal* of March 22nd, 1890, was printed the following communication:—

CONFIRMATION WANTED.

To the Editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

During a séance held at my residence on the 16th inst., with Mrs. Everitt (a very fine medium for the direct voice), a spirit came, and speaking in firm, emphatic, and distinct tones, with a decidedly American accent, expressed his interest in the work in which we were engaged and his wish for our success. He added that his name was Moses Kennedy, and that he passed away in September last at Glenfield, Missouri, age seventy-one. I had no opportunity of making a note of his remarks until the close of the séance and as to one word, "Glenfield," I am not quite certain that I remembered it correctly, but I think I did. I shall be glad if any of your readers can confirm the accuracy of the message.

London, England, Feb. 23.

E. DAWSON ROGERS.

There is no town named Glenfield in Missouri, but there is a Glenwood in the State. S. T. Suddick, of Cuba, Mo., after reading E. Dawson Rogers's communication in the *JOURNAL*, addressed a letter of inquiry to the postmaster of Glenwood, from whom was received a letter stating that Moses Kennedy died in that place September 29th, 1889, aged seventy-one years, and that his widow still lived there. A letter to Mrs. Kennedy elicited the reply that her husband, Moses Kennedy, died September 30th, 1889, that he "was born in Clermont County, Ohio, November 18th, 1818, and would have been seventy-one years of age last November. He was in belief a Spiritualist during the last ten years. Previous to that time he was sceptical as to all religions." The widow in her letter adds: "Dear good friends, I hope you can tell me something that will bring comfort (happiness I do not expect). I am lonely and desolate, and think the time long until I meet my loved and lost one."

Another letter from this lady says:—"You may use my name in confirming all the statements there made, except the slight mistake in the name of place. My sister is with me and we both understand why my husband would manifest in London. It is very important business we have there and it was much on his mind the last year."

A scientific investigation of this case involves the inquiry, Did Mrs. Everitt know of Moses Kennedy's death? Had she been in communication with any person in the flesh who could have informed her of this event? Mr. Kennedy, it seems, had business in London, and presumably there were persons there who had been advised of his death. Had the medium any means of learning the fact? Mrs. Kennedy is a Spiritualist. Has she or any of her friends been in correspondence with persons in London, from whom the medium could have obtained the information independently of telepathy and without a communication from the spirit of Mr. Kennedy? A satisfactory reply to these questions is necessary before a scientific investigator will accept Mr. Dawson Rogers's communication and the letters from Glenwood as incontestible proof that Moses Kennedy actually spoke through the medium, Mrs. Everitt. Will Mrs. Kennedy, Mr. Dawson Rogers, and all interested help the *Journal* to confirm or to disprove this test? The truth, and the truth only is desired.

In reply to the remarks of the Editor of the *Journal*, Mr. Dawson Rogers has addressed to him the following letter:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

SIR,

The *R.P. Journal* of April 26 is to hand, and I note your remarks in reference to the message given at a séance in my house through the mediumship of Mrs. Everitt, which purported to come from Moses Kennedy, formerly of Glenwood, Missouri. You suggest that before a scientific investigator will accept my communication, and the letters from Glenwood, "as incontestible proof that Moses Kennedy actually spoke through the medium" a satisfactory reply must be given to the question whether the medium had any means of learning the facts. Will you

kindly excuse me for saying that I do not see how the authenticity of the communication can be effected either one way or the other by the information for which you ask? Suppose Mrs. Everitt had once heard or read, but had since forgotten, the particulars given at the séance—what then? Of course I am familiar with the opinion professed by some that, such being the case, the facts may have reappeared at the séance from the medium's unconscious memory! But that explanation, in this instance, would not apply. It was not Mrs. Everitt who uttered the message, and the voice which gave it was not produced by the use of the vocal organs of the medium, who was in her normal condition during the whole of the séance, making her comments on the proceedings, and chatting freely with the members of the circle. It was, moreover, a male voice beyond question, speaking, as I have already said, in firm, emphatic, and distinct tones, with a decidedly American accent. The message, therefore,—even supposing that Mrs. Everitt had once known the facts—came from an independent Intelligence, and I see no good reason for doubting that that Intelligence was Moses Kennedy as it professed to be.

But for the sake of our weaker brethren it is well, as you suggest, to answer the question whether, during the five months that had elapsed since Mr. Kennedy's decease, the medium had had any means of learning the facts as to his name, residence, age, and time of death. I have the distinct assurance of Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, whose veracity no one here will for a moment doubt, that neither of them had ever so much as heard of Mr. Moses Kennedy or of Glenwood, Missouri, until the particulars were given in the direct voice at my house on February 16th last. Mrs. Kennedy on her part will no doubt say whether she has any reason to think otherwise. I have already written to her for information on the subject.

Yours respectfully,

E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Church End, Finchley, London.

May 12th, 1890.

THE REV. J. G. WOOD AND HIS WORK.

The *Times* has the following notice which our readers will like to see. Mr. Wood was a Naturalist, and, what the *Times* does not say, he was also a Spiritualist: one of the earliest as he was one of the last till he exchanged imperfect knowledge for one more assured. A journal such as "LIGHT" should preserve these stray notices, and we therefore give space to this:—

Many grateful readers will turn with interest to *The Rev. J. G. Wood, his Life and Work* (Cassell and Co.) The memoir is written by his son, the Rev. Theodore Wood, who inherits his father's tastes. No man has done more than the late Mr. Wood to popularise natural history and make it generally attractive. Richard Jefferies, who followed in his steps, was the closest and most sympathetic observer of all things English. Mr. Wood likewise in his earlier days sought his relaxation in the English fields and hedgerows; but he had ransacked besides all the zoological literature in his native language, and had all notable books of travel at his finger-ends. He was nearly as much at home in the tropical forests or on the Central Asian steppes as on the chalk downs near his houses at Belvedere and Sydenham. His favourite pursuit became a passion, and ultimately a profession. The clergyman turned to systematic zoological studies when he took to the pen, and next he exchanged the pulpit for the lecturer's platform. A very delicate child, he was encouraged to be much in the open air, and then he scraped acquaintance with all sorts of wild creatures. Delicate as he was, he became almost amphibious in his habits, and used to hunt for crayfish under the stones, coming home soaked to the skin. When he was strong enough to be sent to school, he might have been the prototype of "the old madman" in *Tom Brown's School-days*. His repositories were full of the strangest pets, and he carried snakes about his person like a Hindoo snake-charmer. When he went to college, his rooms at Merton were as much a menagerie as those of Frank Buckland, and he would devote himself to hatching butterflies by the half-thousand. Sitting in his study in later life, surrounded by books and specimens, microscopes and stuffed monstrosities, Teniers might have painted him as a quack-salving magician of the Middle Ages. He was fortunate, so far, in being devoted to his pursuit, but in some respects he was a singularly unlucky man. His books became extraordinarily popular—more than one of them

was sold by the hundred thousand; he was in constant requisition as a contributor to periodicals; his services as a lecturer were latterly in great demand; and yet he was always in straitened circumstances. Assuredly no man worked harder, and much of the work was sheer drudgery, for he was extremely fastidious in revising proofs and verifying authorities. He rose at half-past four, and kept pretty steadily at his desk till eleven at night, with the exception of a three-mile run before breakfast and a two hours' sleep after early dinner. He had got over his original delicacy and showed wonderful tenacity and endurance. But his bones were strangely brittle, and he was always bringing himself to grief. At one time or another he broke both legs and one of his arms, to say nothing of fractured ribs and collar-bone. His misfortunes culminated when, by a stumble in the road, everything in his right hand was crushed or shattered; he never recovered the use of it, and had to fall back on a type-writer. The accident happened near his own house on a Saturday evening, when he was hurrying to catch a train. It shows Mr. Wood's pluck and hardihood that he went on to his destination, slept, and conducted church service next morning before consulting a surgeon. With similar calmness and fortitude he persevered with his travelling and lecturing to the very last moment, although attacked by mortal disease and suffering acute agony. He had taken to lecturing because he had found that literature paid him very inadequately. More than one publisher broke in his debt, and books that from first to last had a considerable sale were nevertheless pecuniary disappointments. As for the lecturing, it brought him friends and notoriety, but very little money. The exertions were excessive; the strain on the constitution was severe, and when travelling expenses were deducted the net receipts were trifling. He twice crossed the Atlantic, and made the tour of the States. The first time, after bearing the rigours of a terrible winter, he cleared little more than he might have done had he stayed at home. The second trip, which came off during a Presidential election, was a disastrous failure. But his geniality as much as his zoological enthusiasm assured him hospitality wherever he went, and, although overtaken and harassed by many cares, on the whole his life must have been tolerably enjoyable. The Life reminds us of the valuable practical lessons which Mr. Wood missed no opportunity of inculcating. He showed that the birds, with rare exceptions, are more the friends than the enemies of man; that the rooks save the farmers from being ruined by the wire-worm; and that it is the hawks and owls, ruthlessly killed down by the keepers, which hold the destructive field mice in check. He did what he could to ameliorate the lot of the horse, so far as breaking, shoeing, biting, &c., are concerned. But he was a firm believer in the immortality of the much-abused brute creation, and, like the Indian of poetry, he counted on his faithful dogs bearing him company in a future state. *The Dominion of Man* (Richard Bentley and Son) is one of the posthumous works which this industrious writer left behind him. There is nothing very new or original in it, but it is full of anecdote and of references to remarkable, but well authenticated, facts gleaned from the writings of distinguished travellers in all quarters of the globe. It discourses in desultory fashion on the animals man has pressed into his service or seduced into pleasant companionship, from the domestic dog and cat to the hunting leopard, the camel, and the elephant. It tells, for example, how dogs are broken to drag sledges, how cormorants are taught to catch fish, and pigeons to carry despatches. There is a specially interesting chapter on the development of the breeds of dogs, showing, for instance, how coursing has been brought near to perfection by crossing the swift but soft-tempered hound with a dash of the square-built and determined bull-dog.

THE Puritan ideal seeks to reach the Divine by debasing the human, to make the tree shoot higher by cutting off the branches. While the highest effort of poetry is never either purely sensuous, or purely spiritual, but that strong health which grows out of their fusion. Puritanism throws degrading epithets at the sensuous nature and seeks victory by sacrifice and suppression. The result instead of being healthy is morbid. Even at its best Puritanism and every such faith is morbid. The spirit of man will not endure this divorce. The physical organism cannot be peeled off. No agony of asceticism or of religion can ever purge away the sensuous nature. The highest life is as much a life of the seen as it is of the unseen universe, and whether he be a fanatic or philosopher it is only by a mutilation of his being that a man can reach the beautiful gates if he perpetrates this divorce between spirit and sense. Mind and body, faith and reason, thought and passion, soul, intellect, and senses are one life and not several, and the divorce which any such theory, be it religious or philosophical, introduces into the life of man, is one which nature herself never instituted, and one for which nature always takes her revenge.—JOHN G. DOW, *Macmillan*, April, 1890.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Resurrection of the Body.

SIR,—This question has entered on a new phase. Authoritative writers in the Church no longer insist on the recombination of the material particles. The notion may be occasionally heard from the pulpit, but I cannot find it in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, and both Bishop Goodwin, in his late work on *The Foundation of the Creed*, and Rev. H. H. Jeaffreson in his essays on *The Divine Unity and Trinity*, expressly repudiate the old theory of "a resurrection of relics." This writer, an Anglican of the Anglicans, holds firmly to the doctrine, while rejecting the vulgar interpretation, so that the familiar arguments on the continuation of life after the incident of death, as well as on the total dissolution of the corporeal particles, have no bearing on the real position. For Mr. Jeaffreson is at great pains to show that the doctrine means the restitution of the natural powers of life, which are now subjugated by death, when the spirit, indeed, is emancipated from the flesh and survives in its spiritual body; but the natural forces, which assumed a material form and constituted its identity during life, become latent and unconscious. The body is evidently something more than the chemical elements. These pass while it remains and holds them in unity by its identity. Its power of appropriating external matter is regarded by Mr. Jeaffreson as distinct from soul and spirit, which are denizens of the spiritual world even while connected with the natural world through the body which appropriates flesh. Body and flesh have their distinctive meaning in the New Testament, although, like force and matter, the terms may be occasionally interchangeable. Perhaps they bear the same relation to each other as the astral body bears to the physical body. Not long since in "LIGHT" the astral body was referred to as "the body of the resurrection." If so, my point is admitted that the doctrine of the resurrection of the body does not mean the resurrection of relics, but the restitution of power destroyed by death. At all events, it is a prediction of great antiquity, which deserves respect for its stability, and renders it imprudent for us to discard it because it has been misinterpreted. It becomes students of the occult to be specially tenacious of old traditions like this. As pregnantly remarked by Mr. Maitland, "It is not a new gospel that the world needs or that a new religion should propound, but a new interpretation, and one that, though new to this age shall not be really new, but shall represent a recovery of that which is either so old as to have become forgotten, or so profound as to have escaped recognition by superficialists—a recovery of that, too, which was intended by its original formulators." I hope he will not object to the application.

W. W. F.

SIR,—In my student days I was required to read Bishop Harold Brown's *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, and I may claim that this book has been one of the standard textbooks for Divinity students for at least thirty years. Not to trespass on your space, I give only the briefest extracts, to show what young clergymen are usually taught about the resurrection of the body. I quote from the eighth edition, published 1868. At p. 106, we read :—

Because we maintain that the body of Christ even after His resurrection and ascension is a true human body with all things pertaining to the perfection of man's nature, . . . it by no means therefore follows that we should deny that His risen body is now a glorified and, as St. Paul calls it, a spiritual body. Nay! we have the strongest proofs that so it is.

On the same page we read again:—

In 1 Cor. xv. we have St. Paul's assertion that in the resurrection of all men the body shall rise again, but it shall no longer be a natural body but a spiritual body; no longer a corruptible and vile, but an incorruptible and glorious body. . . .

That similar teaching was prevalent in the Church of England two centuries ago, we have (besides, of course, the grand proof of the writings of her leading theologians) one signal proof in the following fact. Just two centuries ago, we find a great philosopher, himself an Oxonian, though not exactly an "M.A. (Oxon.)," blaming a Bishop of his day for daring to make an Article of the Christian creed, and curiously the new Article was *this very* idea of the resurrected corpse.

What more truthful witness can we summon? What lovelier spirit

E'er burst from its mortal control,

or is now haply to be found among the "controls" of our greatest teachers in spirit circles, than he who in earth life was known as John Locke; the author, I might almost say,

of England's religious liberty, and so profound a student of the writings of the Church of England's divines that it was his pen that conferred on Hooker his still enduring title of the "judicious"?

For complete knowledge of his subject and unimpeachable veracity, even in these days of wholesale impeachment, I challenge refutation to my proof that *that* doctrine of the "resurrection of the body" (which is a spiritual body, and so far "like unto Christ's glorious body," or, as in the creed of our baptism, "a resurrection of the flesh," which is true flesh, like, nay, *one with that spiritual and only real flesh* of which our Saviour says, "He that eateth My flesh, I will raise him up at the last day") is now, as it has ever been, the avowed doctrine of the Church of England, in her creeds and authorised formularies. I give just one short extract from Locke's *Letters to the Bishop of Worcester* :—

By these and a few other the like consequences, one may see what service they do to religion and the Christian doctrine who raise questions and make articles of faith about the resurrection of the same body, where the Scripture says nothing of the same body; or, if it does, it is with no small reprimand to those who make such an inquiry. "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him." (1 Cor. xv. 35, &c.) Words, I think, sufficient to deter us from determining anything for or against the same body's being raised at the last day.

I put this extract and, indeed, Locke's whole "Letters" in as evidence.

Vicarage, Stoke Gabriel.

JOHN H. N. NEVILL.

May 10th, 1890.

[Our correspondent's letter is very valuable, but does it embody the doctrine of the Church of England as generally understood?—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

"Spirit Music."

SIR,—I was in error when I said that my invisible musicians had gone away; it seems they only stopped for a time, and as they returned and carried on the manifestations for some days longer, I send you this sequel to my "Spirit Music." The musicians, or some of them, began again, in the place above the earth, where they left off, about north-west, just over against my north window, near which stands my piano. The instruments did not seem to me to be the same. Much less singing; the place of the voices appearing to be taken by an instrument of a mechanical sort, over which the players did not, at first, seem to have complete control.

This instrument was something like an organ; very soft, and at first weak, but growing stronger as time went on. Once I heard a very curious sound as though someone was filling the instrument full of air; after that operation, whatever it was, ceased, the sounds were louder and clearer. Generally one part only was played, the treble, somewhat like a cornet, which instrument was also represented; altogether, the mechanical music was not of the same quality as that produced by the instruments we are familiar with, but seemed on the whole most like the organ and cornet.

The music consisted of the following hymns: "Sun of my Soul," "Abide with me," "Pilgrims of the Night," "When I survey the Wondrous Cross," and these songs, "Oft in the Stilly Night," "Ye Banks and Braes," "Auld Lang Syne," "Highland Laddie," "God Save the Queen," "Home, sweet Home." As usual, these were played over and over till I wearied of them, but by means of them a sort of communication was kept up that partly took the place of conversation.

The manifestations went on all day and late at night. I sat up to listen, and went to bed with the music still going on, falling asleep more than once with the softly played hymn, "Sun of my soul," in my ears. One night I had gone to bed and lay listening to one sweet voice which through these last manifestations had chanted with great persistence the Athanasian Creed. All at once I became conscious of a sort of break or pause; a struggle, was it? over in a moment. But another hand, rough and vigorous, burst in with five-fingered exercises; my sweet chanter had been pushed away; but she chanted on without instrument; then the sound of her voice grew faint, and passed into the silent land. I was told afterwards that the spirit who pushed her aside was an interloper, and was punished for his intrusion.

I will conclude this with one more experience, by your permission. It was needful for me to go on a shopping expedition to L., our most important town, but some distance off. No

sooner had I taken my seat in the railway carriage, alone, than I found myself accompanied by one of the musical invisibles who had played to me at home. Over the roof of the carriage his location seemed to be, and he played some of the airs I knew so well, with one more, a famous air in the opera of *Norma* which I had played on the piano.

He took his music rather fast, and kept the train's pace from station to station. When the train stopped so did he, then resumed his music when we went on. When we got to the terminus I heard no more till in the carriage on my way home, when the same performance took place. When we got to my last station there was an end.

In my room, next day, the music began again. Then it began to leave me, and go to the Salvationist band, and I heard the two, the earthly and the spiritual, playing together.

This ended the manifestation, and I heard no more, except very faintly, as it were, far off. May I say, in answer to "M.D.," that I am not in the hands of a medical man, and, so far as I know, have never taken the drugs he names, and very little medicine of any sort? I am a total abetainor, and as aids to health use the Turkish bath, the water cure, and massage.

"PENCIL."

Mr. Gladstone and Genesis.

SIR,—There is a letter in this week's issue of "LIGHT" by a correspondent, "E. M." He says that I have misrepresented Mr. Gladstone. Well, I quoted from his article, and the only remark I made was "Mr. Gladstone is right, it is a tale." Surely any one might see that Mr. Gladstone did not mean what I meant by "tale." As to the rest, quoted by "E. M.," of course I saw it, and saw that it was an ingenious attempt to make that appear to be which is not. Any one who knows what Evolution means can see that the first chapter, or any other chapter, of Genesis has no relation at all to it. But it is useless criticising details, because the basis of the "tale" itself is impossible. It is creation, that is, making the universe out of nothing! Nothingness is unthinkable; for if a man think he must think something. Something out of nothing is impossible and also unthinkable. People say they believe it; but they do not; for no person can believe that which he cannot think. They may say, as St. Augustine is reported to have said in reference to the Trinity, "I believe it because it is impossible." I can assure "E. M." that my letter was intended for "LIGHT." It had no relation whatever with Agnosticism, but simply with matters of fact and reason. Moreover, I do not believe in any 'ism; all 'isms are false and foolish; still I do believe something. I believe that I am and shall ever be. Both reason and fact confirm me in this.

J. BAYNES THOMPSON.

Raps

SIR,—A very interesting paper was read at the last meeting of the Society for Psychical Research by Professor Alexander, of Rio Janeiro, relating some remarkable phenomena through the mediumship of the children of Mr. Davis, who was residing at an isolated telegraphic station near Rio.

We may congratulate the Society in, at last, having some records to refer to their Phenomena Committee, although they are brought from South America.

I have recently had the Davis family visiting at my house, and have had the pleasure of a few sances with the children. The power has probably diminished since the records; besides which I have reason to think that Professor Alexander himself contributed in some measure to it when he visited and sat with them.

But the point I wish to draw attention to is one I alluded to at the Society for Psychical Research meeting, and is one of great interest to Spiritualists, who are seeking for fresh evidence to establish the identity of the communicating intelligences. Some members of our own family group of "spirit-workers" had asserted themselves in this Rio Janeiro circle when they were absolute strangers to us; and Louisa (well known to our friends as one of our most active spirit workers and writers) gave some of her small, direct, and automatic writing through the mediumship of the Rio children, appending her signature, and showing herself clairvoyantly to one of the girls.

This identity has been established by the affirmation obtained through two or three mediums in our own circle. Among other proofs of identity, not the least interesting is that obtained through raps.

Individualised raps were adopted years ago by our spirit children and other workers. The kind of rap we were absolutely

familiar with, and our memory serves to individualise a few, but at that date we did not record (as I wish now I had done) the specific rap of each one. Some, however, we remember.

Recently sitting in the quiet of Haslemere, we were able, with Mr. Davis's expert assistance, to write them down; and as often as they were repeated it was interesting to note the claims made by each spirit to his or her individual rap. I will record a few. The dot represents a short and sharp sound; the line a slow and somewhat continued sound.

Louisa raps thus	(three sharp, a pause, and final one.)
J. W. E.	" . - - - -	(sharp and long alternately.)
Percy	" - - - . .	
Horace	" - - -	
Emily	"	(muffled, otherwise like Louisa's.)
Dewdrop	"	
Harry	" . - -	

It will be interesting and instructive if our friends having such individualised and characteristic raps will record them, and obtain affirmation as we have done through outside mediums and absolute strangers at the time.

May 5th, 1890.

MORELL THEOBALD.

Definitions of Spiritual Science.

SIR,—Mr. Maitland, in his able address on "Needed Definitions in Spiritual Science," puts forward strong arguments in favour of Pantheism. It seems hardly fair, however, to present one aspect of the subject only. We read in the above-mentioned exposition of Mr. Maitland's views, "The sin of the current orthodox presentation of the doctrine of the Incarnation is, that by making of the historical Christ a being altogether apart and unique, it deprives humanity of its Divine potentialities, and so ministers to the condemnation instead of to the salvation of the race." St. Paul, in his writings, did not deny the divine potentialities of humanity, but he was careful to explain that this divinity of the future was not inherent, but that it is the gift of the "historical Christ," in whose Para-divine potentialities the inspired writer believed. Religious discussions being out of place in "LIGHT," I wish to meet Mr. Maitland on his own ground; and on his own ground, with full understanding of his meaning, I maintain that the God-Man exists, or rather is, independently of and apart from that quintessence of humanity which, nevertheless, lives by Him. Is the being (whom we may call divino) less a god for having once been man, and is the Supreme Deity less the Most High God for having taken humanity upon Himself? I agree with Mr. Maitland that "What is said of the Christ is said for all. The life related of Him on the exterior plane must be enacted by all on the interior." After the resurrection the analogy ceased to exist, and the God-Man re-assumed at His ascension the Para-divinity which He had held in abeyance during His earthly incarnation. On the third day an angel was found in the sepulchre, but He had risen.

LEO.

Prophetic Impressions.

SIR,—The very interesting communication from your correspondent "Beryl," in your last issue of "LIGHT," seems somewhat on a par with similar experiences of my own; impressions so distinctly prophetic, or anticipatory, that they appear to me to admit of no explanation by any known law, being in all cases entirely free from any connection with previous impressions.

Most frequently these have come in the form of a dream, or a waking pictured vision, often related at the time to others and subsequently confirmed. The most singular instances, however, have been when a passage from some book, hitherto quite strange to myself, has occurred to me, put, as it were, in language spontaneously, thus:—

I was talking with a friend at her house, of various forms of worship. Said I, "In such a place it always seems to me one would cry, 'They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him.'" The words came to me involuntarily, as the expression of what I felt. Coming away, I asked, as was usual between us, for the loan of a book, and took up one which had recently been sent her; she had lightly run through it, and liked it; the title was *Hilda Among the Broken Gods*. There to my amazement, given, too, as the expression of a similar mood to my own, occur the very words quoted above.

I subsequently drew my friend's attention to the singularity of what we must, I suppose, call the coincidence. This is only one of many such odd facts occurring to my own knowledge. Several times I have in conversation been met with the remark,

"Ah! you have been reading Ruskin or Wallace," or others, as the case might be, authors of whose writings I was ignorant. Yet the words I had unconsciously used would have quite sufficed to found a charge of plagiarism.

How account for it?

That prophetic vision is as real a gift as memory, I am certain, though the occasions are mostly very trivial; yet in their very triviality to my mind proving the fact, as not derived from any especial previous impression.

Hampstead.

F.O.

Mind, Matter, Force.

SIR,—Mr. J. Baynes Thomson has evidently no doubt in his mind that he has cut away all ground for the belief that suffering has a tendency to raise men in the moral scale; or, as he prefers to put it, that "calamities are blessings in disguise." The fact that good men try to lessen the sufferings of their fellow men reduces such a belief, he thinks, to an absurdity.

Mr. Thomson clearly holds that anything of which the nature or tendency is to bring about what is good and useful ought never to be interfered with. Yet I very much doubt if he would himself in all cases be willing to act up to his own principle. It is the nature of fire, for instance, to purify (to say nothing of numberless other good and useful things), and Mr. Thomson will admit that purity in all its aspects is a thing "devoutly to be wished"; yet, if fire broke out on his premises, he would, I am sure, do all in his power to put it out. The earth on which we live has a tendency to draw all things towards its centre, and this is surely a good and useful tendency, for it keeps us all from flying off into space; yet, if Mr. Thomson happened to find himself in deep water, he would, I think, be "sinful reprobate" enough to scramble out, if possible, and counteract, as far as in him lay, the benevolent tendency of gravitation.

But why multiply examples? Mr. Thomson is more in his element when he falls foul of the churches and the creeds. The churches believe that God made something out of nothing, and Mr. Thomson, following Mill and others, pronounces this impossible. But if belief on the one hand proves nothing, neither does assertion on the other. Mr. Thomson leaves this matter as he found it.

In my first letter to you on this subject I ventured to offer an argument that God, matter, and force, cannot, all three, have existed from eternity. Mind must have produced matter and force, or must have derived them from its own existence. Neither Mr. Thomson nor anyone else has attempted to show where my argument fails.

May 3rd, 1890.

GEORGE HARPUR.

Evolution.

SIR,—In the first place, then, emphatically before all other men, Mr. Spencer is the inventor and patentee of Evolution. And, as our age is essentially the age of evolution, Mr. Spencer may fairly claim to rank as its truest prophet."

Thus saith "The gospel according to Herbert Spencer," by Grant Allen, published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

These sonorous assertions may, or may not, have some local applicability. But round as they are, their circumference hardly includes all time and everywhere. For instance, during several thousand years the Sanscrit word *prabhavapyaya* has meant the place, or rather plane, whence emerges the origination, and into which is the resolution of all things; and written in that language is a great literature describing the origin and growth of the universe. More than that, the writings, dissatisfied with discussing how things were caused, carry their synthesis to a consummation, stating why and how there must be absolute cessation of all phenomenal existence.

If, the Eastern philosophy purporting to show how phenomena came from noumenon and will return to it, be not worth calling a system of evolution, then possibly Mr. Herbert Spencer's disciple can make good his claim within the temperate latitudes; but even here the adjustment may cause heat.

Doubtless, complacency which habitually arrogates to itself the one right method for the discovery of truth will dismiss Eastern penetration, and all sorts of attempt whatever but its own, to the waste places where mere metaphysical elaborations ought to be discharged; and also, no doubt, that decision will secure here the applause it deserves, on the principle that eloquence is very much in an audience. Still, it can be said of Oriental philosophers that, though their process is greatly metaphysical and deductive, and derived chiefly from intuitive genius, they were not altogether unassisted by mathematical

accuracy, and by a knowledge of Natural Law developed by psychological research stretching over many centuries, placing at the disposal of the observers countless experiments from which they generalised and so attained to scientific precision concerning subtle potentialities giving them access to true knowledge, which perhaps it is trite to observe is not always exhibited by European learning.

Moreover, sometimes the discoveries of Western science have been anticipated in the East. Mr. Grant Allen may perhaps be surprised to hear that, when he wrote the sentence, "Speaking popularly, then, it is the encyclopædic character of Spencer's fundamental idea that gives the key-note to his entire system," he continued to sketch much that he might read exhaustively treated in ancient Indian literature, which got its knowledge of the potentiality of expansion and contraction acting gradually through aeons of time, not merely from physical effects as they are, but by the way of psychological discovery, unknown to the West, which disclosed to the old writers truthful aspects, glimpses of which are now appearing above the European horizon. Hitherto, partly because they are incompletely acquainted with the Sanscrit and other writings dealing with these subjects, but principally because the tendency of thought, which is habitual here, has declined to consider what it has been taught to call superstition, the learned Oriental scholars of Europe have not been attracted towards the sort of writings referred to. But you, sir, are aware there are signs that a change of mind and of will is at hand.

GILBERT ELLIOT.

Is Mediumship Dangerous.

SIR,—In the course of a lecture upon Spiritualism delivered at the Hall of Science, on Sunday last, Mrs. Besant made a statement upon which I would like to hear the opinion of experienced Spiritualists. It was that the exercise of mediumship (I believe she was referring particularly to trance) often leads to insanity, intemperance, and other evils.

May I ask, sir, if there are any cases within your knowledge where mental, moral, or physical deterioration has resulted from the practice of mediumship?

There was another point in the same lecture which I may notice, *en passant*. Repeating her former declaration that all the communications of the séance-room could be traced to their origin in the minds of the sitters, the lecturer remarked that since her Mile End address only one instance had been forthcoming, namely, the case quoted by your correspondent, Mr. Clayton, where the sitters were informed of a fire which had broken out during the progress of the sitting. This she considered easily reducible to clairvoyance and not involving spirit agency at all.

But has the séance recorded in a recent issue of your paper by Mr. Dawson Rogers been overlooked? Mr. Rogers stated that a communication was received, purporting to come from a spirit who gave his name, age, and address when in the flesh. The statements were amply verified on inquiry although the medium, Mrs. Everitt, and the sitters were entirely ignorant of the facts. Full details appeared in "LIGHT" of April 26th.

107, Caledonian-road, N.

SAMUEL T. RODGER.

May 13th, 1890.

The Explanation of the Explanation.

SIR,—What I learn from the beings that are engaged in my spiritual development is that there are no such things as atoms, by which we understand things that cannot be divided, but that all beings are made of "living and sentient beings," which beings are themselves made of living and sentient beings that have sufficient intelligence to make them, and these again are made of other beings that have still greater intelligence than they have. And then again of others that have still greater intelligence than those. And so on *ad infinitum*, there being no beginning to the process of beings forming beings. For, if there were any beginning to it, something must either come into being out of nothing, which is quite inconceivable, or be made by something which is not being or blind force acting without design or intelligence and thus forming structures indicating a design and intelligence much greater than that which any of the inhabitants of this planet possess. It is to me utterly inconceivable that beings could be made of anything else but beings and these of other beings and so on *ad infinitum*; from which it follows that the greater the intelligence of the forming beings the less their size; and that even a being of the lowest kind must consist of beings of different sizes of greater and greater

intelligence, proportional to the smallness of the size, their numbers increasing in the same proportion until the highest beings of all are of an infinite number and their intelligence infinitely great. And I see the truth of that favourite saying of Plato's, "All things are made of gods." And I think if you will give serious consideration to the subject you must perceive that such is a deduction of pure reason. If you were to submit to the readers of "LIGHT" what my controls have said upon the subject of "matter passing through matter," it might perhaps elicit a better explanation, though I doubt it.

I have learnt from the same controls what we were at first, millions of years ago—in a far higher state than that we are in at present; and have had clearly shown me the necessity for the physical and moral evil we are subject to on this planet as a means of developing the moving power that is within us, and enabling us to do a much greater amount of good than if we had never been subject to physical or moral evil. But, should I be believed?

A RETIRED CLERGYMAN.

The Fasting Woman of Bourdeilles Again.

SIR,—The *Petit Journal* for Friday, May 9th, again notices this interesting case:—

News of Marie Bourion.—The fasting woman has lived for nearly three weeks in the little village of La Verrerie. Her health improves daily, and the heroine of Bourdeilles openly declares her ardent desire to recommence the test which has so recently nearly cost her her life. She says, "This time it shall be no joking matter," and proclaims her readiness to remain any length of time without food or even drink.

It is, however, doubtful whether she will find a physician willing to undertake the responsibility of a second trial. Notwithstanding this uncertainty, the brave woman is still very hopeful, and often talks of her sensation her second experiment will make in the world.

ELIZA LUTLEY BOUCHER.

Mr. Bellamy's "Looking Backward."

SIR,—I thank Mr. Wallace for his great courtesy in "letting me down so gently." I confess that I thought I had read the book sufficiently through, for I did feel sorry that so good a story should have come to so desolate an end, and threw down the book disgusted. As far as *Looking Backward* is concerned I must alter my opinion to one in accordance with that of Mr. Wallace. I should have anticipated his just strictures if, when writing my last letter, I could have laid my hands on the book, but for the moment I could not, hence my apparent persistence in error.

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Mr. Tindall and the Bible.

SIR,—I am somewhat surprised at the appearance of a letter from Mr. Chainey in answer to that of Mr. Tindall. Mr. Chainey is fond of saying that "controversy is the grave of truth," and one would have thought that he would have been too sorry at the efforts of other controversialists at interment to himself take part in such a proceeding. First of all a word as to the accuracy of Mr. Tindall's statement that discussion was not desired at the meeting at Harcourt-street. The facts were simply these, Mr. Chainey stated that he was willing to answer questions *provided they were put to elicit information, and were not of a controversial character*. Everyone acquainted with public meetings knows that it is practically impossible to distinguish between one kind of question and another. Three questions were put, all intended to weaken Mr. Chainey's position, but equally also requests for information, as every question must be. The chairman could not say that they were not intended to elicit information, though he knew perfectly well that they were controversial in spirit, and he solved the difficulty by closing the meeting, and so relieving Mr. Chainey of discussion.

Mr. Chainey now states that "the Bible is the very prince of occult books," and charges Mr. Tindall with being ignorant of the fact. I venture to assert that the ignorance is quite the other way. The one fact necessary to be clearly grasped before we can make any really useful study of the Bible is that it is not a book but a literature. It contains writings produced in different ages and different countries by different men who simply expressed their own thoughts and beliefs with no more idea that their writings were going to be bound up with others and regarded as forming with them one consistent whole than Chaucer or Shakespeare had that their writings, or selected portions of them, were going to be swept into the modern treasuries of poetry. This is the result of Biblical criticism, and no scholar will deny it. That portions of the Bible have an occult value is probably true, but to argue from this that the account of the creation in Genesis represents something more than the fables the Jews had borrowed from the Babylonians is absurd.

F. W. READ.

SOCIETY WORK.

Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions.]

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—Mr. Cohen occupied the platform on Sunday with subjects selected by the audience. Sunday next at 7 p.m., open meeting.—C.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Sunday last Mr. Yeates delivered an address on "What think ye of Christ, and what think ye of the Devil?" Next Sunday Mrs. Spring will occupy the platform. Séances are held every Thursday at 8 p.m., to which all earnest inquirers are cordially invited.—Geo. E. GUNN, Sec.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, CLAREMONT HALL, PENTON-STREET, PENTONVILLE HILL.—Last Sunday morning Mr. Dever Summers introduced the subject of Prayer for discussion. Messrs. May, Dowsing, Vogt, and others continued the theme, which proved very interesting. Next Sunday morning, at 10.45, Mr. F. W. Read will speak on "The God Idea in Spiritualism."—S.T.R.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday morning and evening we held experience meetings, and were favoured with some excellent testimonies in favour of spirit return. On behalf of the Society I beg to thank an unknown friend for a gift of Miss F. J. Theobald's pamphlets for use and distribution. We hope some other friends will also assist us by gifts of literature for our library. Sunday, May 18th, Mr. McKenzie, 11 a.m., "The Twelve Tribes of Israel;" at 7 p.m. Mr. G. Chainey.—J. VEITCH.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CHEPSTOW HALL, 1, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday morning last addresses were given by members; and at the evening service Mr. T. Everitt delivered a very instructive address, explanatory of the theories of present day materialism, showing its shallow pretensions, and insufficiencies, concluding with a lucid presentation of facts as ascertained by the investigation of modern Spiritualism, which Mr. Everitt claimed was in strict accord with the discoveries of modern science, some of which he enumerated, to the evident satisfaction of the audience, which numbered over 100. On Sunday next Mr. J. Hopcroft at 11.15 a.m. Lyceum at 3 p.m. Messrs. R. Wortley and J. Hopcroft, address and clairvoyance at 6.30 p.m. prompt.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings free, every Sunday at 6.45 for 7 o'clock. At our annual meeting of members the following were elected for a working committee for the ensuing year:—President, Mr. Chapman; vice-presidents, Messrs. Lombard and Deason; secretary, Miss Bewley; treasurer, Miss F. E. Bewley, with Messrs. Deason, jun., McCallum, Brown, Lucas, Dennis, and Mesdames Hearn and Deason for the remainder of the committee. A hearty and unanimous vote of thanks was given to the retiring officers, and also to Mr. Watkins for his valuable service to the Lyceum. We are extremely sorry to have to discontinue this branch of work for the present, but we hope it may be resumed at no distant time. The balance-sheet was considered highly satisfactory. Mr. Darby will be the speaker instead of Mr. Summers on the 25th inst.—M. A. BEWLEY, Sec.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—The Lyceum was well attended on Sunday, Messrs. Collings and Lewis and Miss Smythe assisting the Conductor. Recitations were given by Harry Towns and Lizzie Mason; reading by the Conductor on the Object of Life. A lecture was given in the evening by Mr. Hopcroft on subjects chosen by audience, including "Man's Responsibility," "Soul Culture," and "Music," concluding with remarks on the abolition of capital punishment. Petitions were numerous signed in its favour. Next Sunday, service at 11 a.m.; Lyceum at 3 p.m. Lecture at 7 p.m. by Mr. Joseph Freeman on "Spiritual Experiences and the Outcome of them." Thursday, at 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Hawkins, séance. Saturday, at 7.45 p.m., Mr. Hopcroft. On Sunday, May 25th, Mr. Everitt will address the Lyceum in the afternoon, and in the evening will deal with the different phases of Mrs. Everitt's mediumship.—C. WHITE, Hon. Sec.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It seems desirable to make clear that any facts previously published in transactions of any Society or in any journal cannot be printed as original matter in "LIGHT," and should not be sent to us except for our private information. All records sent, moreover, must be accredited by the name and address of the sender, and will gain in value by the attestation of witnesses.

The Editor begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to return rejected MSS. If accompanied by stamps to pay postage in case of its being deemed unsuitable for publication, he will use reasonable care in reposting any MS.

It will ensure despatch if all matter offered for publication is addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to any other name or address. Communications for the Manager should be sent separately.