

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by the Editor.

My friends expect some account of the way in which my eye is going on. I am not yet able to give any satisfactory account of myself. I am not allowed to read or write, and manage as best I can by dictating my contributions to "LIGHT."

Though I am unfortunately debarred from taking any active part in forwarding such a *rapprochement* as is indicated in the leading article of this week's issue, I should be ashamed not to say how entirely I agree with its tone and temper. I have advocated something of the kind for many years. Unity in Multiformity has been my cry. I do not want everybody who concerns himself with matters that concern me to take the precise view of them that commends itself to my mind. I do not even pledge myself that my own view shall remain unaltered. What I want is that we should discuss our differences in an amicable spirit and dwell as little as possible upon them when the discussion ceases to be instructive. I entirely agree with what "G. W. A." sets forth, and I shall most gladly lend any influence that I possess to carrying into effect what I have failed hitherto to float successfully. The days are coming when such a federation will be organised. Whether those days are near or yet far off, I do not think our efforts should be relaxed.

It would surprise my readers if they knew what a number of perfectly unanswerable questions reach me from my correspondents. I am always glad, when I am able, to give advice in matters of difficulty, but the questions that are put to me are too often of the nature of some of those printed below, replies to which are either impossible or would involve an amount of space that cannot be given to them, or which, again, involve the discussion of metaphysical problems quite beyond the scope of this journal.

As a sample of the inquiries that reach me I print the following. It is noteworthy that very many queries that I receive now do not deal with the old difficulties belonging to Spiritualism, but are theological, metaphysical, and the like. It is also to be remarked that most proceed from people who have taken no pains to inform themselves by reading. The student reads and finds much to ponder. This is the time to question those who know:—

- (1) In what relationship does God stand to man?
- (2) Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and the Redeemer?
- (3) What becomes of our souls and bodies after death?
- (4) Who and what are the Saints?

- (5) Do you accept the Bible?
- (6) Who and what is Satan?
- (7) What is Hell or Hades?
- (8) Do you acknowledge the Trinity?
- (9) What is the punishment for sin?
- (10) What is the reward for a good life led here on Earth?
- (11) Do you believe in Prayer?
- (12) What is the belief or teaching of Theosophy?
- (13) What is the difference between Theosophy and Spiritualism?
- (14) How do you regard the Resurrection and Judgment?
- (15) How can man be saved?
- (16) What are spirits, and how do you account for their appearing in clothes and not in the flesh?
- (17) If you can communicate with the dead, why do you not use the power in speaking to those who have been murdered and so bring to justice the murderer, or free an innocent person who has been falsely accused?

A. S.

Many of these are discussed at length in books already published. These are procurable from the Library of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and I publish from time to time in "LIGHT" a list of works suited to almost every phase of the inquiring mind. To each book is appended a brief indication of its character and scope. Yet it is a common thing for me to receive letters asking advice as to what to read from correspondents with whom I am unacquainted. Obviously I cannot tell them. There are varieties of mind, of taste, and of requirement. The needs of one are not the needs of another. Most of us are on different planes of progression, and to recommend the metaphysical subtleties of Carl du Prel, or the experimental records of Zöllner, to a tyro who had seen nothing and read nothing, but had only heard some vague rumour about strange things occurring in Spiritualism, would be only to increase bewilderment without satisfying curiosity. To avoid this risk I compiled the Bibliography which appears from time to time in "LIGHT," hoping that the inquirer might gain there some general idea of the wide area covered by the literature of Spiritualism, and select the books that appeared to meet his wants. That is the only plan likely to be successful, except in the rare case where a correspondent knows exactly what he wants and can put those wants into exact words. In so saying I am far from desiring to discourage anyone from submitting his difficulties to me, if he thinks that I can be of any service. Individual difficulties need individual treatment, but a general recommendation of published works on Spiritualism already exists in "LIGHT," and is the best answer that I can give to many of my correspondents.

From "Sala's Journal" I clip the following:—

Mrs. W. S. B.—I know nothing, and want to know nothing, about a talking board, the name of which I decline to advertise, and which is said to be somewhat similar to another bogus machine of communication with a world of which we know nothing. I believe that what is called Spiritualism is always a delusion, and frequently a swindle. That is what is for supper.

I suppose the commonplace books which have done the veteran writer so much service in the course of his twelve thousand "Daily Telegraph" articles do not contain any

dies, and, on the other, its "thorough and wholesome death?" The former as a limitation of self-consciousness in relation to a particular and partial experience. And its death was expressly considered on the analogy of deep sleep, which is only consequent on the complete quiescence of the functional activities of the brain. A particular concentration of consciousness, context of experience, relation to an environment, circle of interests, &c., in the midst of which, and determined by which, is the Ego or personality of earth life, falls away, and as these particular external conditions will never revive as re-limitations of self-consciousness, the "personality" which is referable to them, and of which they were the whole determining content, perishes as soon as the grasp of memory and affection relaxes and eventually quits all hold in the absence of stimulation. But this Ego or personality never was more than a *self-representation* by the true (or relatively truer and deeper) subjectivity. *The death of the personality is nothing else than the subject ceasing thus to represent itself*; it is the liberation of the subject from a pre-occupation of consciousness.* But this liberation, while really the complete cessation of a certain mode and particularity of consciousness, is not a radical liberation from the ingenerated dispositions of the subject. Following the idea, and even the language, common to both Buddhism and Christianity, I call these ingenerated dispositions the "roots of attachment." And I do unhesitatingly place them in the subject, and no otherwise can I connect the subject at all with the objective life which is the manifestation and food of those dispositions, as also the opportunity of eradication.† "G.W.A." rightly supposes that I do not place them (the "attachments") in the transcendental consciousness, because their very stirring is the impulse to Re-incarnation. I must call them "latent," an evasive term, truly, when the metaphysics of idealism are in question, which is not now the case. I use it in this connection as I use it of the life of vegetation in winter, and of one set of physical and psychical energies during sleep. And if my friend demands a more radical explanation, I promise it as soon as he gives me one of the latency of powers and dispositions during sleep, and of the possibility of their revival—of "waking." At present I am only concerned with the analogy. But I must point out that in speaking of "attachment," "attraction," &c., I said nothing about "recollection" of a past specific experience and its delights. Our most deeply seated affinities are those which least need the attention of what we usually understand by consciousness; just as our most habitual activities are the most independent of conscious volition. If I feel hungry to-day, it is not because I remember my yesterday's dinner. And the disposition which hunger manifests is not the less in my bodily constitution because I am not in the least conscious of it during sleep or after satisfaction. And so of all other appetites. The incarnate life itself is the conscious manifestation of all the appetites collectively, and may add to or diminish their force. Surely the generalisation is very easy, very obvious. But it would seem not. Though language, not too poetical for everyday use, teems with expressions making year or day the type of life, we persist in associating the uniform facts (laws) of nature solely with the particular *scale* on which they happen to be familiar to us, thus losing all the lesson for reason. Few of us attain the conception that the *form* of things is perfectly indifferent to the spatial or temporal scale of representation. The doctrine of Re-incarnation merely asserts the law of Periodicity in human life on a larger scale than the daily one.

Nearly eleven years ago I put to Buddhism, as I was then trying to understand it, the very question which "G.W.A." now puts to me. Writing in the now extinct "Psychological Review" on "Karma,"‡ I said: "What causes the birth of the individual thus specifically qualified by an

old Karma is 'Upadana'—'cleaving to existence.' But whose Upadana? If that of the old individual, he cannot properly be said to become extinct when he succeeds in transferring to a new consciousness just that which, apart from organism, is most decidedly himself. If, on the other hand, we must seek this Upadana in a deeper principle, one which is neither the old consciousness nor the new, but the formative agency in both by means of Karma, then we have a true *atma*, though subsisting indifferently in and through many successive individual manifestations. Taking Mr. Rhys Davids (though he is by no means singular in his view), as the representative of the nihilistic school of interpreters, we have what he himself admits to be an incomprehensible mystery, and what others may call an utterly nonsensical one. According to this account, there is no individual identity whatever, but a wholly new being, characterised and conditioned by another life, a life not physically generative of its successor, and connected with it by no natural continuity, but by a perfectly arbitrary link, by a perfectly unexplained sequence." Now that is just the view of Re-incarnation which "G.W.A." has excogitated from his conception that the dispositions ("Attachment") must follow the personal consciousness and die with that. By the same reasoning the sleep of the body should put an end to all its dispositions of which the consciousness belongs to its waking state. He speaks of the transcendental Ego as "a divine spirit," which must detect illusion if presented to it, and which could therefore not be attracted to Re-incarnation by it. But that is an entire misconception of the hypothesis. The divine spirit is just that which is seeking evolution in us to and by the detection of illusion and the consequent extinction of desire. It is not, or is only partially in energy in the consciousness either of the subjective or of the objective state of the individual. It belongs to a deeper principle altogether—a remotely deeper one, according to some accounts. It is the ultimate truth of us, no doubt, but the Devachanic consciousness is by no means to be conceived as the at-one-ment with it. That is a consummation which would certainly exempt from Re-incarnation. Now when the "true Ego" is spoken of in contradistinction to the more circumscribed Ego of earth-life (a self-limitation of the former), that is to be understood in a relative sense. It is conceived as a spiritual resultant from successive earth-lives, an accumulated deposit of all the spiritual consciousness evolved or elicited through the *Sturm und Drang* of objective experience. But for all that it is an individual at a particular stage of evolution; within nature, not above it. That is to say that the outward nature lives in it, has roots in it, but latently in its subjective intervals. Then the law of Periodicity operates, the latent life of nature in the Ego stirs and awakes, and its waking is the attraction of the Ego to renewed contact with the nature from which it is not yet free. It is a difficult metaphysical question whether this movement results in a duplication, or sundering, of the self-consciousness, or whether the transcendental becomes in its turn latent through a concentration of all the psychical energy on the objective life.

3. Then "G.W.A." asks, as many have asked: But how did it all begin? "How did it (the attachment) arise in the first case?" Well, I might ask, how did the universe of illusion begin? and the answer to the first question would be the microcosmic analogue of the answer to the second. It is the question of a "Fall." How did Divine consciousness become obscured in nature, overlaid with Maya? A few hours before "LIGHT," with "G.W.A.'s" article, came to hand, I had occasion to put a very similar question. I had been reading an admirable essay, entitled, "The True Self and the False," contributed to a lately published volume called "Things to Come," by the Rev. G. W. Allen. The writer was enforcing, in eloquent and cogent words, a favourite thesis of the non-reality of sin. And he described the state of the man "who knows that these acts are not the acts but the dreams of his true self." Though I felt it to be a captious interruption of a fine passage, yet could I not forbear a pencilled query in the margin: "But how comes the true self to have such dreams?" C.C.M.

SACRED courage indicates that a man loves an idea better than all things in the world; that he is aiming neither at pelf nor comfort, but will venture all to put in act the invisible thought in his mind. He is free to speak the truth, he is not free to lie. He wishes to break every yoke all over the world which hinders his brother from acting after his thought.—EMERSON.

* On this point, perhaps, I may be allowed to refer readers who have access to the book to the remarks at p. xix. (Translator's Preface) of my translation of Du Prel's "Philosophy of Mysticism." It will probably not escape the astuteness of "G.W.A." that the analogy seems here to be reversed, the earthly life, masking the truer self, resembling dream, and "Devachan" being the *waking* state. But upon a little reflection it will be seen that there are two totally different and opposed senses of the term "waking," in one of which it denotes the active life, in the other just the reverse. Our dream life, so far as known to us, is less real than waking; but that is because it is not the true antithesis to the action of waking life. The parallel insisted on here is not that of waking and dream, but of waking and *rest* as alternative and mutually related states.

† We can pluck out a root only when it has a shoot above ground.

‡ "Psychological Review," August, 1881.

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

SELECTED CASES BY "EDINA."

I. A "STORE EPISODE."

Our family medium by reason of her deafness hardly ever goes shopping; but during the early spring she had occasion to call at the supply stores here. While waiting to leave an order she was suddenly accosted by a young man, whom she at first deemed one of the employes; but soon discovered he was from the "other side." This personage said, "Are you Miss ——" (giving the medium's name). On her replying in the affirmative, her visitor from the other world said, "I know your father well, and when I was on earth often served him with goods on his visits to this place." He further stated he had been in the service of the association at the time of his death, which was due to an unfortunate hoist accident which occurred there some years ago. These facts were all known to me, but I am certain the medium was ignorant of any of them. She certainly did not know the deceased, but her description of his face, hair, &c., were perfectly accurate. He was the young man who most frequently served me on my visits to the place, and I was greatly shocked to hear of his untimely death. The medium omitted to ask the name of her communicator, which is unfortunate, as it would have completed the chain of identity.

2. AN ITALIAN VISITOR.

On Saturday, May 21st, our medium informed me that a person named Giovanni de Rossa or De Rosse had twice come to her, and that he appeared to be an Italian. On his second visit he carried a tray with ice creams on it. He stated that his son kept an ice cream and confectionery shop in a certain street. We looked up the directory, but could find no trace of a shop of this kind kept by a person of that name. Our daughter and one of her younger sisters then went to the place in question, and after a diligent search found a small shop of the nature indicated, and kept by a person of the name of Giovanni De Rosse. We, of course, made no further inquiries with the view of identifying the communicator as the father of the shopkeeper in question, and the why and wherefore of his appearance is just one of the unsolved mysteries of this mode of communication between the two worlds.

3. CARDINAL MANNING.

As mentioned in a previous article in "LIGHT," our family medium saw the face of an old man wearing a skull cap on his head in the bottom of a china cup on the forenoon of the day on which Cardinal Manning died. Over his head there appeared the words in black letters, "Cardinal Manning." This "person" bowed twice gravely to her, and then disappeared. In the afternoon she identified Cardinal Manning's likeness in the evening paper as the original of the face she had seen in the cup. Shortly thereafter, the Cardinal appeared to her in a crimson robe and wearing his "full canonicals." Since then four messages have been automatically written by the medium, purporting to be from the deceased prelate. They are not worthy of reproduction, being extremely commonplace, in parts slightly incoherent, and generally far beneath the earthly reputation of the Cardinal; but I note the following points in these messages:—

- (1) The perfect happiness and freedom of the communicator in his new sphere.
- (2) His surprise at finding a mode of communication by means of writing from the spirit world.
- (3) His total ignorance or rather disbelief in Spiritualism while in earth life.
- (4) A statement that he was, when on earth, very fond of children, and loved to see them at his church on Sunday afternoons.
- (5) A statement was made by the writer, on February 28th, that Dr. Vaughan would be his successor. Dr. Vaughan did not get his appointment till the beginning of April.
- (6) In the last message, got recently, the communicator states (a) he was born in 1808; (b) he was the son of a well-known London merchant; (c) that he joined the Roman Catholic Church in 1857; (d) that he became a Cardinal in 1875.

N.B.—These dates have been verified by me from the file of the "Scotsman" in the obituary notice, and appear to be correct.

- (7) The communicator desires the medium to excuse the somewhat childish nature of his communications as being unlike what he was on earth; but says power is coming slowly to him like unto a child.

Regarding Cardinal Manning's case, you have all the facts worthy of note. I express no opinion as to identity in view of the nature of the communications. The handwriting is uniform throughout, like a schoolboy in a copybook, and the signature is always written, "Cardinal Manning."

I am satisfied the medium did not read the obituary, but even if she had she could not have carried the details in her head for two months.

DEATH AND AFTER.

Everything that Mr. Minot Savage writes is worthy of attention: the present quotation from his last Easter sermon especially so. We are indebted for the report to the "Religio-Philosophical Journal."—[Ed. of "LIGHT."]

We dream of an immortal life here on earth; but, if you stop to consider the limitations, the conditions, of such a life, even were it possible, I do not believe you would choose it. Even if we could live here for ever on this earth and all be healthy and strong, if we could gain what is at present an almost unimaginable control over the native forces of the earth, would you take it, as compared with that which I believe to be true? I would not. Suppose we lived here year after year and century after century, it would not be a great while—indeed, it would be a very short while—before the earth would be full. Then births must cease. All the people on the earth would be grown up and old. There would be no more family life, no more children, no more of the joy of watching those unfolding minds and hearts and training these uncertain steps. How much of what makes up the happiness of life would be wiped out by that one fact—a stroke! But that would be a necessity. Then I have curiosity enough, so that I should want to explore. I would not like to be kept for ever on this tiny planet, only eight thousand miles through, when the universe seemed to be inviting study and opening on every hand its vistas of unexplored glory. But with these bodies that sort of dream would be an absurdity.

For, did you ever stop to think that our lives depend moment by moment on the stable equilibrium of our climate and the purity, the balance, of the particles that make up the air we breathe? We could not live except at the bottom of this ocean we call air. We could not dream even of visiting our own little satellite, the moon. It would be an absurdity with our earthly mortality, such as we are today. Then it seems to me that the horrors that in our minds surround death are almost entirely imaginative horrors, no more real than the creatures that frighten a child as he is asked to go upstairs alone at night—creatures that exist only in the fancy of the child.

Death, then, what is it? We confuse it with a thousand things that are no part of it at all. The pains and sickness that are the result of our ignorance and carelessness, of our breaking the laws of life—these are no part of death. Purely natural death is only going to sleep, and, generally, is as painless as going to sleep, is as much a relief as something sought with as great eagerness. I have watched it within the circle of my own family and friends, and have seen that this natural dying is only the ceasing of the candle flame when the fuel is consumed, is only the slow cessation of the ticking of a clock as it runs down—no horror, no suffering, but only a sleeping. We have no right to confuse with the fact of death all the evils of disease and suffering which are the concomitant of our ignorance, our carelessness, our law-breaking lives, and then charge this as an indictment against God and say he is cruel and unkind to ordain death for us all. There is nothing cruel or unkind in the fact of death.

Then we add another horror to it by imagining that there is suffering in the separation of the soul from the body which does not exist. Even when death comes as the result of prolonged disease, it is almost always painless. The muscular movement and nervous activity ninety-nine times out of a hundred are purely unconscious: they do not indicate pain.

I believe—and I can tell you so this morning—that the spirit world folds this lovely, beautiful old earth around like an atmosphere; and when you ask me where those we

call the dead are gone, I do not believe that they necessarily have gone so very far away. Milton imagined and put into words his belief that millions of spiritual creatures walked the earth unseen, when we wake or when we sleep. I believe that this world of those we call the dead is close by us and all around us, and there is a difficulty about that to our imaginations only because we are the fools of our eyes and ears. We fancy that we see all there is, that we hear all there is; while, as a matter of fact, our clear-headed science has taught all those who have cared to find out its truth that it is only the tiniest part of this physical universe that we ever see or hear—just a little fraction that our senses enable us to explore. It has taught us that the mightiest of all the physical forces of the world are the invisible forces, the intangible forces. We talk about spirit as being shadowy, ghostly, thin, unreal. Why? The things that dissolve, the things that change, the things that disperse like shadows, are what we speak of as material things often, from the point of view of science. The things we cannot see and cannot touch are the mighty physical forces. There is nothing, then, in the science of the world to make it seem unreasonable that those we love may be close to us, watching our lives, able to render us services in ways that we can as yet only partly comprehend. This, friends, I believe.

But, says someone, would not that take away from all the joy and peace of our friends—to see us in pain, in sorrow, to see us grieving over their departure? Could it be heaven to them to know all this? Does it take away all your happiness, all your peace, does it ruin all the brightness of your lives, as you watch a child crying over a broken toy, disappointed at the destruction of some petty scheme that you know will be forgotten to-morrow? If we can imagine these friends of ours as really about us, knowing the outcome that we do not know, seeing the meaning of the discipline, the sorrow, the burdens that we bear, do you not see that our sorrows, our griefs, would be to them only as the griefs and sorrows of children are to us, and need not necessarily interfere with their happiness at all?

But I hasten to another point. What kind of people are these? We have dreamed of ghosts and of hauntings until there is this unreasoning kind of fear in the hearts of thousands of people. I wonder, sometimes, as I think of it. I have known people that you could not hire with money to spend the night in the presence of the dead body of the dearest friend they had on earth. What do they fear? Who are these people that used to live here? Why, they are simply folks like ourselves. There is not an inhabitant in all that world that I know of whom I should not want to see at any hour of night or day. Why should I fear them? I have done them no harm. I have no idea that they wish to do me any harm. They are people like us. They remember this old life here. Indeed, they have never been very far away from it. Why should they forget it? They love us just as of old. There is nothing in the fact of death to change a man's love, to change a man's character, to change a man's purposes, or aspirations, or desires. Death does not turn us into angels or devils, nor make ghosts of us. It simply leaves us what it found us. By going through a door you are not changed. You were not changed by going to sleep last night and waking up this morning. Neither does death touch or change us in one essential of our nature or characters, our purposes, our desires.

Do they wear a body over yonder? To my thinking this question answers itself. We talk sometimes about pure force. Now no man on the face of the earth ever had anything to do with such a thing as pure force. There is no such thing outside the dictionary. Nobody ever knew of any force dissociated from matter. Force and matter go together for ever. And so far as we know, matter is as eternal and indestructible as God, Whose garment and manifestation it is.

I believe, then, that our friends in the other life have bodies as substantial and real as are these that we wear. And there is nothing in science to contradict such a hope or belief. Indeed, the scientists themselves are to-day on the verge of such discoveries about the nature and constitution of matter as promise to revolutionise all our ideas even concerning the world we live in. Pure spirit to me means pure nothing. I believe, then, that these inhabitants of the other life are real and substantial, substantial as we are. Which is the more substantial, electricity or a brick? Which is the more substantial, a fossil bone or the ether which thrills through all space?

Here, again, we are only the fools of our own tiny, limited senses. We have not learned to think beyond. Substance does not mean something I can feel with my hands. My power of sense is very limited. Substance does not necessarily mean something that these eyes can see. My power of vision is yet limited. Indeed, it is not the eyes that see at all. I believe that we shall see each other in that other life, not necessarily with this kind of visual organ. But do you think that people are blind merely because they lose their eyes? When two persons are conversing over a telephone, and the line gets out of order, does it annihilate either of the speakers? It is the brain that sees; and, when we trace it even to the nerves and brain, we are not at the end. It is I who see, not any one part of my body, any more than the telescope is part of the eye.

What do they do over there? I believe they lead purely human lives, just as natural lives as we lead here. There are certain occupations that will be gone, I hope; but, if you will stop to think of it, you will understand yourselves what is the principle that ought to guide your dreaming. Many things, associated with the body as at present constituted, will be done away with; and here comes the tremendous motive force that ought to lead you to cultivate while here more of those faculties and powers that you can take with you, not go over there stripped and naked of occupation and interest. The things that are connected with thought, feeling, love, the intangible things, music, art, the search for truth and beauty—these, I believe, will endure. Is Mendelssohn through with his music? I trust not. Is Michael Angelo through with his devotion to beauty and art? I trust not. Is Shakespeare for ever done with his poetry? I trust not. And then, as thousands every year go over as children, as uneducated, as criminal, as degraded, as helpless, beyond any power of ours to conceive, there will be a wide field and scope for the tenderest philanthropy, for the widest brain culture, to help to uplift all these. So I believe the occupations will be as natural as here.

How shall we be related over there? Those relations which exist here, and which are not true, not central, not based in that which is permanent and eternal in us—these will pass away and change. But no one will mourn over any such change, because I believe that that which is eternal in us in the way of love and truth and hope will find full sway and increasing satisfaction over there.

One point more. It will be endless growth over there. I do not believe that we are going to be at once perfect, with unalloyed happiness and enjoyment. I, for one, would not have that kind of world if I could. Imagine yourself over there perfectly wise, perfectly happy, every desire, wish, and longing satisfied, and sitting down that way for a thousand years! What would you do next? It is because there is in us the possibility of endless unfolding, it is because there are infinite avenues of search open for the student who wants to learn, because there is the possibility of the joy of achievement, because, in short, this is an infinite universe and we are finite creatures growing in the midst of the infinite, that this dream of immortality is a rational dream. If we could go through, we should wish some means of suicide. It is because we need not fear getting through that we can dream of still pursuing the pathway which opens up places not only of temporary refreshment, but avenues of ever new delight.

GREATNESS.

He may be great who proudly rears
For coming years strong pyramids;
But greater he who hourly builds
A character by noble deeds.
He may be wise whose mind is filled
With all the wisdom time has given;
Who sees and does his duty well,
Is wiser in the sight of Heaven.
It may be grand to deck the walls
With pictures by rare genius wrought;
Greater it is to line the soul
With tints and gems of noble thought.
He may be great who can indite
Songs that shall every bosom thrill;
He who knows how to make his life
A poem, is far greater still.

THE soul of man experiences in counterpart every form of storm known to the soul of the universe. He is the lesser world in miniature.

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Light:

EDITED BY W. STAINTON-MOSES.

("M. A. (OXON.)")

SATURDAY, JUNE 11th, 1892.

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.

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DIFFERENCES AND THEIR MORAL.

II.

We have now got thus far:—

- (1) Differences exist in appearance.
- (2) We often accept them as not requiring explanation and justification.
- (3) If we attempt to explain them we say that they arise from the fact that some are good and others are evil.
- (4) We never ask *why* are some good and others evil.
- (5) If we did we should discover that there are but two explanations, which are as follows:—
 - (a) I am so virtuous that I have accepted the truth, while those who differ from me are so vicious or so stupid that they refuse to accept the truth, either because by their free choice they prefer evil, or because, through some great deficiency, from which I do not suffer, they are incapable of distinguishing between truth and error, and good and evil.
 - (b) It is the function of Creation to manifest differences on all planes (except perhaps the supremest). I am, therefore (let us say), attuned to a different vibration note from that to which those with whom I most disagree are attuned. This necessitates that the determining reasons which weigh with me in deciding on any matter shall be different from those which weigh with my opponents. Both are genuine reasons, sound considerations, but they are drawn from opposite sides of the whole truth. Hence my opponent's views seem to me to be erroneous, and so mine to them. But our natural antipathy is the cause of my sense of their error, and not my sense of their error the cause of our natural antipathy: i.e., the difference is natural rather than moral.
- (6) It is the view advocated in the present essay that the second of these is truer than the first.
- (7) This being the point of view, what follows seems to be somewhat thus:—

When we are universalised we shall probably be able to appreciate and sympathise with every opinion and

affirmation; seeing the truth in it and disregarding, or even actually not seeing, the error. But we are as yet far from being truly universal, and for the present two things seem to be necessary—*wise action* for present practical purposes, and *wise aspiration*, or desire, as a power to ensure our speedy growth beyond the present point.

For the sake of the first it is needful to recognise certain limits of differences of opinion, and of character, beyond which it is impossible to hope to work together with any successful result. For the sake of the second it is necessary to be ever extending those limits, and growing into a real practical sympathy with persons whose views we do feel to be beyond that boundary, but of whom we also feel that they are our brethren, and that we ought to be able to understand them. Now it is often practically found, and has been true in my own experience over and over again, that, while we may feel very antipathetic to a man when we only know him by the opinions he holds, if ever we come to know him personally we are astonished to discover how different he is from what we had thought, and often to find ourselves strongly drawn towards him. Therefore it is clear that, while for sake of practical results in external work we must join ourselves to those who agree with us and separate from those who disagree, it is equally necessary for the sake of our own spiritual evolution that we should seek to get to know and understand our apparent opponents; and hence the two considerations induce us to exactly opposite lines of action.

In view of these principles I suggest that two things follow practically. First to organise a special and definite association consisting of those who, we feel, come within the first condition, viz., of persons who are sufficiently distinguished from already existing and recognised organisations to make the creation of a new organisation logically justifiable, and yet are agreed among themselves upon a basis sufficiently broad and common to make common action possible, and render the association vital and living. These two influences must exist in every combination, a force and its true antithesis, such as impulse and inertia. But secondly, and to be again true to our law of dual influence, we must not be content with forming our own particular organisation. It is most necessary that a determined effort be made to keep in some sort of touch with all between whom and ourselves there is *any possible degree of sympathy and agreement*, even if it be but on one point. With our own special organisation in which to work for all that we believe in, we can surely afford to belong also to another, the object of which shall be *Federation*. This second body should consist of the members, or representatives of the members, of all bodies who, while in disagreement upon perhaps many points, are in agreement upon some few. And it should be clearly understood that this body exists, not to dispute and quarrel over the points of disagreement, but to organise united action with regard to the point of agreement, and to promote social intercourse, whereby each may come to know and understand the others better. It should be an inflexible rule that no question shall be discussed at any meeting upon which a difference of opinion is known to exist; but that the only question raised should be how best to work together to promote the introduction and success of points on which a unanimous consensus obtains. It may appear at first sight that difficulties might occur; so they might if no person of wisdom and discretion could be found to organise and conduct such an institution; but surely this should not be the case. And I think it is impossible to overestimate the advantages that would accrue therefrom. (1) upon the practical side of getting work done—in all such matters one and one united are more than two, that is, more than two isolated ones; (2) upon the moral side of encouraging wider sympathies, and mitigat-

ing party antipathies. The opportunities of meeting with persons who are not of my own special party, and getting to know them, and finding out—as in the preponderating number of cases would be the result—what good fellows they were in spite of the fact that they took a view different from mine upon a good many points, would have a most beneficial effect. We should be much less bitterly hostile, more willing to agree to differ, and therefore able to work together to set forward the points we did agree upon, and at the same time fight not less earnestly but more good humouredly, each in our respective private societies, for those points on which we differed.

Federation on some such principle as this is the word for the present day. I am sincerely thankful to Mrs. Besant for having made a move in this matter. Personally, I am willing to support her to the utmost of my power. There are three societies—the Theosophical Society, the Christo-Theosophical Society, and the London Spiritualist Alliance. I know at least one gentleman who is a member of all three. I do not urge that these should all absolutely coalesce, for I think on certain points they can work best apart. But I am sure there is no reason why representatives from all these should not meet and form a Council of Federation on some such lines as those suggested here, and decide on what points common action is possible, and in what best way the respective members of each body could be brought in some social relationship. G.W.A.

SOCIAL MEETING OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The usual monthly social meeting of the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held on Tuesday evening next, at 6.30 p.m., at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, when Miss Rowan Vincent will give an address on "Practical Spiritualism."

THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION.

We learn that a Society with the above title has been organised with a view to meeting the wants of those who are in sympathy with the works issued by the late Mrs. Anna Kingsford and the President of the new Society—Mr. Edward Maitland—and who desire further enlightenment in this direction. It is proposed that a scheme of reading be suggested to members, and that facilities shall be offered to them for the loan or purchase of suitable books. It is also intended that inaccessible books shall be republished, and worthy efforts at elucidation of new truth be placed before the public. All particulars are to be had from the Honorary Secretary, Miss Ethel Forsyth, 37, Chelsea-gardens, S.W.

INDEX TO PERIODICALS.

We have received from the office of the "Review of Reviews" a handsome quarto volume of 155 pp., very closely printed, in which is indexed the periodical literature of the world in 1891. It is a monument of industry and exactness. Year by year the number of periodicals constantly increases. Where our fathers wrote books, thinkers of the present day convey their ideas, fresh from the mint of thought, to the magazines and reviews. It is, therefore, highly important that such an Index as this should be in the possession of those who wish to refer back to the current thought of the year. Mr. Stead alludes to the phenomenal success of the "Strand," which now prints 275,000 copies per month, and the "Idler," which, by-the-way, we see relies chiefly on Mark Twain, and the exceptionally strong staff which Mr. Jerome has gathered around him. The magazine is certainly readable in matter, and now that the iron-bound clasps are abandoned, perfectly pleasant to handle. It is impossible to give any idea of the completeness of Mr. Stead's Index. Such a work cannot be reviewed. One can only wonder at the industry of the compiler and applaud the success of his efforts.

We learn that our valued contributor and friend, Miss Caroline Corner, is about to depart for her home in Ceylon on the 24th inst. Her future husband holds a Government appointment at Colombo. We tender our best wishes for her happiness and prosperity, a wish in which we are sure all our readers will unite.

RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.

No. XVI.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

March 22nd. This evening Mr. S. M. and Dr. S. again heard the electrical sounds while sitting by gaslight in the billiard-room. Rector by raps told them to go to the seance-room. I was asleep in the drawing-room, and was suddenly aroused by hearing Rector shaking the floor. On getting up from the sofa and going into the seance-room, I was impressed to put pencil and paper under the table; it was a blank sheet, and no one had touched it but myself. Soon after we had sat down, we heard a new sound made by a freshly arrived spirit, whom I will call Z. Many sounds were round the medium, and he became greatly convulsed, and complained of the power the spirits were withdrawing from him. Light was then rapped for, and on looking for the paper I had placed my initials on and put under the table, I found "direct" spirit writing on it. The message was "God bless you.—RECTOR."

March 23rd. Mr. S. M. and Dr. S. were alone in the billiard-room. The electrical spirit again manifested, and the spirit who had made the musical sounds gave a message through raps, that he was "The Spirit of Art."

March 24th. We started at 9.30. Before sitting down we put a blank marked sheet of paper with a pencil on it under the table. Mr. S. M. magnetised it before placing it down, and we all saw it was perfectly blank. The light was then extinguished. Mr. S. M. was twice removed from the table and thrown down very gently. The table was then suddenly tilted up towards Dr. S. Loud electrical raps were made on table and harmonium stool, and numberless little sounds were heard in the air. The table was then placed in its right position. We heard Imperator's voice saying "Good evening, friends," and asking if we wished for information on any subject. We remarked how much we regretted the accident that had occurred at our last seance, which had caused the control to cease. "Yes; it was very weak, and very little upset it." He then promised to be with us on the following Thursday. Dr. S. mentioned that several fresh spirits had manifested. Imperator said, "Yes; and as time goes on you will have many more. The one who has given the name of Z. is a very great spirit, and belongs to the fourth sphere, and will manifest frequently to you. He belongs to the section headed by Philosophus." We asked for information respecting the spirit who called himself "The Spirit of Art," and made a musical sound in the air. "Yes; he also is a great spirit, but I have known him more as a poet than musician; he will manifest again to you, and I will inquire of the sounds you mention. I was not there, and have no means of knowing now how they were made, no instrument being in the room, but I will inquire for you, and either he or myself will communicate the result, but you must describe exactly what it was like." Dr. S. said it resembled a note of a stringed instrument sounding in the air. He then asked Imperator whether it would be possible to get "faces" through the medium. Imperator said, doubtless they could be given through him, as well as all other manifestations, and he would if necessary give himself for it, but there was much to be considered before taking such a step—whether it would be wise to stop the higher manifestations, putting lower ones in their place. "Only one kind of manifestation can go on at the same time. There is no spirit in the band who understands the art of face-making, and we should have to put ourselves in communication with those who do, and procure their assistance. Under these circumstances it must be left entirely to my judgment." Imperator then said: "If you have no further questions to ask I will shorten the control, as we wish to-night to give you a pleasing test we think you will like. Join hands, and sit perfectly still, and do not break the chain until I signal for light." We obeyed. The medium soon came out of the control, not knowing anything that had occurred, and wondering why we were holding his hands. In a few minutes light was rapped for. When we took up the blank piece of paper that we had previously placed under the table, we found the

following message on it, written very small and neat, requiring a magnifying glass to read it* :—

Doctor Teacher, of the soul, and Guide to the Mind, greets you. We have much to be thankful for in that we have been permitted to impress you for good. The Holy Name of the Supreme be thanked. For ever blessed be His Holy Name. We wish to urge you, friends, that ye make all use of the opportunities given to you, that ye gather up the crumbs of knowledge that we can give, and that ye use all means of extending your knowledge of us and of the land from which we come and to which ye are going. We are to you the messengers of Good and of God. Seek not to evoke marvellous phenomena merely for the sake of wonder. Seek ever a spirit of teachableness and dependence on the All-Wise. Cultivate patience, trust, hope in God, charity amongst yourselves.

The writing of Doctor, the Teacher, given by aid of

IMPERATOR, S.D.

RECTOR.

PHILOSOPHUS.

March 25th. Circle sat for a short time in the billiard-room at 9.30. We heard the usual raps, and the musical sound. It was like someone plucking a tight violin string. At first it sounded very faint, and moved about the room; by request it came near to us, and sounded close to my ear. The electrical knock came with startling vehemence, so near to me that I did not wish for a repetition. The table was then tilted, and almost thrown down, and Mr. S. M. was removed from it several times. We heard numerous raps using up the power, but no communications were given.

March 27th. Mr. Percival and Mr. N. joined the circle this evening. Rector, who moved round the room with a muffled tread, shook the floor, table, and our chairs. Often when sitting in the dining-room he has made all the glass and plate vibrate on the sideboard; indeed, the whole house at times seemed to shake. After Rector's manifestations were over we were startled by heavy thuds on the table. We failed to get any communications, neither did Emperor control.

March 30th.—This evening our circle sat in the study at ten o'clock. Raps were heard very soon; "Z" rapped, also J. N. L. She gave the name of Lydgate. The "Spirit of Art" also manifested. The sounds then concentrated themselves in front of the medium, and much spirit light filled the room.

We heard Emperor's soft thud on the table, and knew by that he was trying to control the medium. After hearing the usual "Good evening, friends," we thanked him for the wonderful spirit-writing given to us at a previous seance. "Yes," he said, "the spirit who was principally concerned in that writing will manifest more frequently now; he has not been able to do so before, and will have difficulty for some time, but eventually will be much concerned in these manifestations." In answers to questions he said:—"He is experienced in many ways, dates back very far, and has been from the first concerned in this movement. A teacher through many ages, he lived before Christ, and is a very high spirit, and is so experienced that I find him a great assistance. He is a Greek, and he and many others of the band were attracted by the peculiar temperament of the medium, by his tastes and knowledge. They are also charged by the Almighty with this mission. He selects His own workers. There are many spirits waiting to come to this circle, it is a privilege greatly coveted, but we cannot allow anything to interfere with our work. We have allowed some spirits to enter the circle who have been greatly benefited. The spirits who chiefly manifest at circles are the earth-bound from the first sphere, except those who are selected by the Almighty for any special work.

(To Mrs. S.) Your father has no mission to return to earth, and has passed on to a high sphere; affinity and sympathy brought him to you when he manifested at the Holmeses'. Emperor then said he was not able to control the medium on Thursday; that an unsuccessful seance was always had for him. They did not like to remove him altogether from the outer circle,† but as time goes on we

* The message here referred to is written in most minute script, the spaces and lines most accurately observed, and the letters beautifully formed. I am not able to reproduce this special writing, but I propose hereafter to give facsimiles of all the various handwritings in which messages were given. I have already said that messages purporting to come from a particular spirit were always in the same handwriting. It is important to note now that "direct" writings were in the same script as those written through my hand. I may say that by "direct" writing I mean that which was given without the intervention of any human being present: the writing through my hand is of the nature that I call automatic.—S. M.

† A circle to which we had proposed to admit some who might not join the inner circle.—S. M.

shall isolate him more and more. We said, He is anxious for a good seance on Wednesday next and for your presence. "Yes, he is too anxious, but we will do what we can. When manifestations do not come freely, break off, if only for five minutes, and change the air in the room, as the state of the atmosphere often prevents them."

"Were you present with us this evening when sitting in the billiard-room?" "Yes, we seize opportunities of giving you information, and we like to give it under circumstances which will bring conviction. Such conviction comes to those who wait in trust. The impatient spirit mars our work, as does the mistrustful. There are, and man knows it not, and never can, until he soars to a higher plane, conditions of spirit which draw down blessings from on high. Man had almost lost communion with the spheres until of late, and cut himself off from the blessings God would give. Time was when the Christ blessed the earth on which He walked, blessings withheld except from a few, because they would not hear. The mighty works which God enables us to give you are denied to many, to most. Ye know how in your daily lives association with men who mistrust you mars your happiness, but ye do not understand how mistrust drives from you influences of good. Cultivate, then, a humble spirit of patient watchful dependence on those who bear to you the message of God; it is to that feeling that you owe your favourable success; it is to that that we look for a still higher revelation, accompanied by the signs and wonders given to man as of old, and which, in mercy to the weakness of men, our Divine Master allows us now to give. Signs and wonders are given as blessings to those who can receive them, and as attestations of our work. Signs of the God Who works in us, the Almighty Creator, Governor, and Director of men, Whose name is for ever blessed; but we are not allowed, nor do we wish to prostitute those powers for the conviction of those whose only desire is to see marvels and to satisfy their curiosity." After answering other questions, Emperor bid us "Good evening," and departed. The medium awoke, feeling much better.

WHAT HAS POETRY DONE FOR THE WORLD?

There have been poets from the earliest ages; mortals whose keen sympathy with their environments made their minds mirrors of nature, wherein the things reflected, touched by inspired thought, enabled them to clothe "the palpable and the familiar with golden exhalations of the dawn." The poetry of the Hebrews is the oldest on record, and that, followed by the classic poetry of Greece and Rome, has had the most powerful influence on the world. The object of poetry is a communication of intellectual pleasure, conducive to morality, and though low and even vile subjects may be introduced into poetry, they are but the fulcrum whereby the leverage of all true thought raises its aspirations higher. No poetry ever impresses mankind permanently which has an immoral tendency, and we may quote as an absolute truth Lord Beaconsfield's axiom, "Poets are the unrecognised legislators of the world."

Those poets who have most stirred the great heart of the world are King David, Homer, Virgil, Pindar, Theocritus, Horace, Dante, Petrarch, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakspeare, Milton, Schiller, Goethe, Burns, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Longfellow, and Tennyson. Many minor poets' names have also gone down to posterity whose sweetness and light have made an indelible impression—but, like Tarquinius Superbus, we can only deal with the taller poppies. Chronicled above are the immortal names of those whose poetry has influenced the world for all time—by drawing men's thoughts to the spiritual life which is around them now and hereafter—by putting into rhythmic numbers, the possibility of so keen a sympathy, between men and their material environments, as to establish a language between them—by cultivating and nourishing the powers of the soul till men become capable of the highest and noblest deeds—and by teaching great truths, in metaphor, to minds which could not grasp their meanings unclothed. Thus Poetry has done more for the world than any of her sister arts.

KATE BURTON.

[Our correspondent is evidently referring to Western poets only. There are many fine poems of Eastern origin, and the Vedas are probably older than the Psalms.—ACTING ED. OF "LIGHT."]

PLANETARY INFLUENCE.

All material forms exist by virtue of correspondence with some spiritual form. All material forms exist directly, from the correspondential forms in the degree next to them, and these spiritual forms are the mediums through which the activities flowing from the Creator enter the lower forms. Every change, therefore, however minute—yea, all of those changes for ever beyond the ken of the most powerful microscope, which occur in organised material forms, are so many ultimations on the material plane of changes occurring in the correspondential forms on the spiritual plane.

These changes, let us ever keep in mind, are the results of activities and relationships between the different planes of existence, which extend into the infinite particulars of each plane.—J. L. WILLIAMS, "Was Swedenborg a Theosophist?" p. 42.

That the position of planets in our solar system affects the character and fate of all human beings, either from birth or from the first kindling of the soul's fire, is not yet among generally received opinions; none the less is it firmly believed by a large number of educated people, as well as by the multitude who trust to Moore's Almanack for reliable readings of the stars. Though wholly ignorant of astrology, I am among those firm believers. The concurrent testimony of wise men, in ancient and modern times, is enough for me when I find such a seer as Boehme entirely agreeing with them as to this. Here, for one example of his frequent reference to the stars: "Every seed of the body, according to the outward world, standeth in the power and under the authority of the Spirit of the world in the configuration of the stars; for as the great clockwork or machine standeth in the figure at that time, such a figure also the *Spiritus Mundi* giveth it in the condition of the outward life; and such a beast it modelleth in the property of the outward life: for the spirit of the outward world out of the four elements can give nothing else but a beast. And so now it distributeth itself always in the *beginning* of every *child's* life, in the figure: as the stars' constellation or configuration standeth in its wheel, such an image it maketh in the property or constitution, out of the *limus* of the earth, viz., in the four elements. From whence many a man from his mother's womb, according to the outward man, is of the condition of a malignant evil serpent, or of a wolf, a dog, toad, or of a sly fox, of a proud lion, or of a filthy swine, a haughty peacock; also of a self-willed, stubborn, unruly horse; or else of the condition of some good, gentle, tame beast, all as the figure is in *Spiritus Mundi*." ["Election." Chap. viii., pars, 106, 108, 109.]

And "the starry spirit worketh in the flesh and blood, and maketh the soul to long and lust that it also may do as the starry spirit doth, ["Threefold Life." Chap. xviii., par. 21], so that man is very many times in the outward world so very evil natured from the stars that he becometh loathsome to himself." ["Three Principles." Chap. xx., par. 72.] Thus "the soul is always according to its constellation which stood in its birth, as also hath stood in his conception; as that it is all times aspected with the conjunction of the constellation, with the imagination of the constellation; so is also the outward spirit, unless it be that the soul do attain divine light again in the new birth, and then the soul constraineth the outward spirit with the divine light and leadeth it captive." ["First Apology." Part ii., par. 549.] Belief in this subjection of man to astral influences has long made me intensely curious about its mode of action; and from Rama Prasad I hoped to learn something that might in some degree explain it. My own slowness in understanding what he writes may be the cause of disappointment; and on the chance of other people gaining more, I will give a brief epitome of what I did definitely gather from his pages on this subject. It leaves me seeking still. "A *truti*," he tells us, "is the astral germ of every living being." ["Nature's Finer Forces." P. 206.] They might be spoken of as solar atoms. These solar atoms are of various classes according to the prevalence of one or more of the constituent *tatwas* (ethereal vibrations). The different classes of these solar atoms appear on the terrestrial plane as the various elements of chemistry. [Ibid. P. 22.] "The units of time and space are the same—a *truti*." "At every moment of time, i.e., a *truti*, there are millions of *trutis*—perfect organisms—in space." [Ibid. P. 80.] "Individual man or woman is the most perfect expression of a *truti* . . . "it is a phase of solar existence having in it every power of life that is manifested on earth. It is the most complete original of individual human life. "Thoughts on the Prasnopnisat." P. 469. "Theosophist,"

May, 1889.] If I rightly understand ["Nature's Finer Forces." P. 139], every *truti* is said to be composed of the *tatwic* rays proceeding from the other *trutis* on the same plane, whether of psychic, or mental, or externalised life; for here we read—"Each *truti* on the plane of *Prana* is a life-coil; the rays which give existence to each of these *trutis* come from each and all of the other *trutis*, which are situated in the space allotted to each of the five *tatwas* and their innumerable admixtures, which represent, therefore, all the possible manifestations of life." Similarly, "in the plane of *manas*, each mental *truti* represents an individual *mind*. Each individual *mind* is given birth to by mental *tatwic* rays coming from the other quarter, which represent all the possible *tatwic* phases of mental life. On the psychic plane each *truti* represents an individual soul brought into existence by the psychic *tatwas* flying from every point to every other point ["Nature's Finer Forces." P. 140.] In the saying that follows. "The latter class of *trutis* on the various planes of existence are the so-called gods and goddesses," I get the nearest approach to my desideratum. The two next pages are profoundly suggestive, but nothing in them explains *how* stars instigate to such and such conduct, when in certain positions relative to each other. With moral character such a statement as the following seems to have absolutely no connection; "As the earth moves in her annual course, i.e., as the *truti* of time changes, these permanent *trutis* of space change the phases of their life, but their permanency never is impaired. They retain their individuality all the same; all the planetary influences reach these *trutis* always, wherever they may be in their journey: the changing distance and inclination is of course always causing a change of life-phase." [Ibid. P. 81.] This leaves me no whit nearer any idea of what those planetary influences are, thus constantly affecting these "astral germs" of individual human life. And I doubt whether reading the whole of the interesting work I quote from would supply it.

At the risk of earning ridicule, I confess to believing those we call heavenly bodies to be as much self-conscious individual beings as we are ourselves,—that in their bodies, as much as in our own, a multiplicity constitutes a seeming unity,—that from organisations, in some unimaginable way corresponding to our own, they effect a divine purpose, by the vibration of their breath,—that they are responsible agents of the Most High God, not always guiltless in the use of power,—and that their influence is as much due to character as that of human beings. Only on such theoretic grounds can I reconcile Boehme's words about the prompting and imagination of the stars, and his emphatic assertion that they are powerful but not compulsive in regard to the human soul; and as to the *new creature* in man *powerless*. For he is precise in his report of their spiritual *status* relatively to man; and even of the sun, "the nature God" as he terms it, he is careful to make us know that it is "without divine understanding" ["Mysterium Magnum." Chap. xii., par. 4], and that "though God's fire is at its root, yet that it belongeth not to God's kingdom." [Fourth point. Chapter v., par. 20.] Rama Prasad agrees with him here pretty well, saying that the gods and goddesses in *Prana*, which inhabit the sun and superintend human souls, are "self-conscious. But they are in comparison to men absolutely elementary beings. They live in absolute conformity with time and space. They have but one idea, one work, and they are always full of it. They are always true to their nature. Transgression is impossible to them." ["Theosophist," May, 1889. P. 492.] But no conception of the nature of these astral beings helps me to guess how that tells upon character in our planet, *unless we admit the possibility of spirits coming from other orbs to this*, attracted by the figures which ethereal vibration deposits on its surface, and associating with human spirits born when such and such vibrations prevail. To attribute spiritual tendencies to a material cause is only possible to materialists, who are here out of court; but Swedenborg has taught us that by the great law of correspondence spirits can find in material conditions a language to us unknown, to them so forcible as to be sometimes compelling. With wonderful prescience of knowledge only lately acquired by Europeans in our time, he wrote in 1741, "The substance of the soul is produced by the aura of the Universe ["Animal Kingdom." Part II., No. 311], and elsewhere he speaks of "the form of the ideas that constitute the nature of the soul." May not these ideas, originating in the sun or planets, and impressed on the

astral germ of a human organism, become disturbed by other vibrations in certain positions of the planets? and consequent irregularities of its form invite disorderly spirits?

Here words of L. Oken come to mind which will serve to give better expression to my thought. "The vibration of air is a progressive motion of sonorous figures: if the sonorous figures are not incommensurable, several may be at one and the same time in a single portion of air without interfering with each other. They harmonise because they have originated according to concordant laws; but if they are products of different laws they are then confused, and an indeterminate and offensive vibration originates; just as savours become loathsome if they depart from their law." Now, if, as I cannot doubt, the figure causes the spirit in a sense secondary to that already enlarged upon, *i.e.*, when the idea of an *eternal* being separates itself, by desire to realise that idea, into a peculiar self-will; if the figure causes elementary spirits by attracting atoms of life to cohesive solidarity, "for things naturally indefinite are subservient to such as are definite, and definite natures give an orderly arrangement to such as are borne along indefinitely according to an all various transmutation,"* then it is easy to conceive of offensively irregular figures from discordant vibrations, drawing evil influx to a soul. One can push such an hypothesis no further; but the malign effect of some vocal figures is well understood by those who are versed in black magic. Speaking of these Mohini Chatterij writes, "It is not unusual for sorcerers to adopt some of the forms of true religious rites, and with change of accent turn them to their purpose. It is generally believed that when the spell is muttered backwards its effect is reversed. The truth is, however, that the effect is not so much due to the arrangement of the words as to the sound produced and its accompanying psychic disturbance. ["Man's Forgotten History," P. 103.] Practices which our ignorance of spirit-life has classed among mere superstitions, testify that geometrical forms have a force inexplicable to reason. Not to speak of what is known to initiates in occult science, anyone who has read "Benvenuto Cellini's Autobiography," with its graphic account of his attempt to summon spirits; or studied the Ritual prescribed by Eliphaz Levi for their evocation, will not forget the importance attributed to pentagrams and other cabalistic figures. I used to think they were designed to affect the mind of the operator, predisposing it by artificial tension to imagine supernatural sights, but when I had learnt from St. Martin that music opened different spiritual spheres, according to its quality,† I dismissed the shallow thought; for music produces sonorous figures by vibration just as does the human voice on a smaller scale. May not these figures attract spirits to whom such shapes are a language? Is not this implied when in answer to the question, "How are statues said to have enthusiastic energy?" Proclus replies, "Telestic art, through certain symbols, and arcane signatures, assimilates statues to the gods and makes them adapted to the reception of divine illumination." ["Proclus on the Nature of Evil," P. 35.] Madame Blavatsky noticed lately a curious fact, relative to forms and spirits, "the remark made in 'Theosophist,' September, 1886 that if the rules or mathematical proportions or measurements are not accurately followed in every detail, an idol is likely to be taken possession of by some powerful evil spirit, *is quite true*,"‡ an assertion which common experience may help us to believe. Let violence of anger be feigned by gesture or play of countenance, and anger will soon be felt. Even in our own faces attribution of character appears to give it something of reality. As I try to leave this subject, my thoughts are coasting round an abyss of mysteries connected with language, written or spoken, that Boehme has indicated rather than revealed. He speaks of "*the spirits of the letters*" in several of his books with unmistakable fulness of conviction. In his "Fifth Epistle," par. 27, we find: "It is opened to me to sound out the spirits of the letters from their very original." And in Chap. xxxv., par. 49, of "Mysterium Magnum," "the spirits of the letters in the alphabet are the forms of the only spirit in the language of nature." There is no temptation to try and elucidate sayings that baffle one's own understanding utterly. This, however, may well be glanced at here; the notorious congruity of language and the character of those who speak it in many

parts of the world. Take for example the crowding consonants of German, the vehicle for thought *par excellence* in Europe; and that of the simple-hearted, sensuous natives of islands in the Pacific, where the language is said to be almost made up of vowels, and as soft in sound as the other is stringent and guttural. If the connection between the form of letters and the psychological characteristics they express should ever be discovered, no doubt the frequently recurring *x* in the Mexican tongue will be found to represent some marked peculiarity of nature. Anyone who wishes to examine what Boehme has said about the hidden life of letters will find in his "Explanation of the Table of the Three Principles," an unfolding of the letter sense of the word "Adonai," pars. 13-20; of "Jehovah," pars. 30 and 31; and "Tincture" from pars. 41 to 50. Chap. xxxv. of "Mysterium Magnum" should also be read; and pars. 18 and 19 of "The Fifth Theosophic Question." A. J. PENNY.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Health and Mediumship.

SIR,—Without calling in question the unsettled subject of the hurtfulness or not to health, mental and bodily, caused by the exercise of mediumship, I think the point raised by your correspondent "J.W.B." most interesting.

I confess to agreeing with "J.W.B.," as far as my experience goes, that mediumship *does* more usually occur in persons of delicate health and organisation than in others.

For a good many years past I have been in the habit of observing and noting certain physical and phrenological developments, in order to see in what class of persons they did or did not exist. If I were an astrologer I have no doubt that I should, in drawing their horoscope, find that certain corresponding astral signs would unquestionably be there, as I know certainly the same signs are found in the hand of those persons I have been enabled to see.

Certainly nearly all the sensitives that I have known have been persons with delicate organisations, not of robust health. Their frames, if of fair complexion and blue-eyed, were loosely made, inclining to stoutness, but often quite the reverse. Indeed, the stoutness that comes to mediumistic constitutions seems to be an additional covering donned by nature as armour to protect them later on in life. Some stout mediums become strong in health, and then their mediumship may turn and become chiefly what Spiritualists would understand as "physical."

I notice that most mediums have pretty much the same phrenological development, the full and swelling brow of genius even, only other facial traits show the want of energy and firmness, which real energising genius possesses.

Insane people have often much the same. The line between genius and insanity becomes of the thinnest, indeed, *there is no line, and it all depends upon circumstances*, whether a person is a medium or a genius.

These circumstances Occultists would understand.

The lines in the hand as well as the phrenological chart of the head explain and proclaim much. I should doubt if a mediumistic person exists who has a line of the head that does not droop to the moon, besides other chiromantic marks. Dark-eyed persons, more of the Saturnian natures, have also the same tell-tale signatures, with some differences. A medium has usually also a fine and soft skin. I fancy if put under the microscope it would be much less dense than that of a non-medium.

I notice also that these fine-skinned, receptive, sensitive organisations are unfortunately most liable to infectious diseases, and I observe what I call (to myself) mediumistic children usually take all the epidemic disorders the first. Their flesh seems a mere sieve to imbibe the floating germs.

But they have their advantages. It appears to me, from taking mental notes of such facts, that they are much more easily influenced and healed by simple and pure medicines, such as homeopathic, and especially the Mattei remedies than are others, for on non-mediumistic natures these more spiritual medicines often have no effect. I am not speaking with authority, but merely recording commonplace daily observation.

If one sees executive gifts with mediumistic conformation of brow and corresponding lines in the hand in a young

* "Proclus on Providence," p. 17.

† See his "L'Esprit des Choses," Vol. I., p. 135, and "L'homme de Désir," section 112.

‡ "Lucifer," November, 1891, p. 186.

person, provided the health is not too delicate, one may expect that that person will be a genius; but if there are no executive talents or energy for the arts, sciences, or the business of politics or life, and only the phrenological conformation, the person will probably be *only* a medium, and probably his or her life may be sad, suffering, or sinful. It appears to me the chart of life is writ very clearly and the "signaturum rerum" simply, much easy prophesying might be done with real advantage. As it is, by people ignoring or really being ignorant of such matters, young people rush into different walks in life unprepared and unarmed. Mediumship, of course, means so much, its merits and demerits, its dangers and advantages, its cause and its effect being a great subject not easily disposed of.

Fern-grove, Liverpool.

ISABEL DE STEIGER.

Rev. H. R. Haweis on Mediums.

SIR,—The Rev. H. R. Haweis has rendered our cause an essential service in laying the claims of Spiritualism before his large and intellectual congregation, but it would have been better, I think, if he had been more moderate in his condemnation of mediums. The term "lying and fraudulent mediums" would imply that mediums are a very bad lot, but according to my experience they are quite as good as the ordinary run of humanity—perhaps better. Mr. Haweis uses the term more particularly in connection with spirit-photography, but I never knew of a genuine medium practising imposition in the production of spirit pictures. Mumler was charged with fraud, but was acquitted. Even in the case of Bugnet, some years ago, it was never proved that his spirit-photographs were not genuine. Imitation spirit-photographs have been prolifically made by ordinary photographers, but this is quite another affair, and therefore Mr. Haweis' remarks on fraudulent mediumship require qualification, otherwise they are misleading.

The extent to which fraud exists among mediums I consider to be greatly exaggerated. In the course of my experience in this country and in America, extending over a quarter of a century, I have never met with any fraud among genuine mediums, recognised as such. I have known four cases of fraud practised by pretended mediums, whose artifices were very soon discovered, and they were heard of no more.

There would seem to be a fatality with mediums that in the course of their career they should be the subject of an "exposure," probably the result of bad conditions, but they generally come out all right by giving evidence of their possession of mediumistic powers and go on their way as if nothing had happened. One opinion is that the spirits are themselves responsible for the seeming fraud, the object being to excite inquiry and lead to investigation. That is what "John King" once told me. Be this as it may, I think exaggerated denunciations of mediums should be avoided.

Neither do I agree with the Rev. H. R. Haweis as to Mr. Maskelyne being a valuable ally of Spiritualists. Conjurers, I consider, are a great drawback to the progress of Spiritualism, especially with the multitude, who, when told of the wonders of the seance-room, at once refer to the wonderful things conjurers do, without taking into account the difference of conditions in either case.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

[It is obvious that Mr. Cooper expresses a private opinion, which we are unable to agree with in some points.—ED. "LIGHT."]

Memory and Personal Identity.

SIR,—Is it possible that we are making needless confusion by assuming that memory constitutes an "Ego," that it creates, or at least exhibits, a continuity in the individual different from what exists between separate individuals? May it not well be that the individual "Ego" is not "the continuous "I," but "I-as-I-am-just-now"? That memory, in fact, is not a link of *special* unity, but the main direction (and for most people the only direction) in which "I-as-I-am-just-now" perceives his unity with "all-the-rest-of-mankind"?

As a matter of personal experience, when I recall half-forgotten events in my own life, the process is very like thinking of somebody else; and when I am thought-reading someone in the flesh, or receiving communications from the dead, the experience is (to sensation) very like vivid memory of mental episodes of my own.

George Eliot says that the "true Heaven" is the "recovered past." * Certainly it is possible to extract from some series of events, as reviewed in memory, an unmixed joy which one did not experience while they were in progress! And there is often a delight in receiving an impression, brain-wave-wise, which the originator of the impression has not experienced. (The reverse of all this is also true, but to that I am coming back presently.)

Is it not possible that the Great All is making a Heaven for Himself, by dividing Himself into an infinity of I-as-I-am-now's, each of which can find Heaven in looking into the experiences of the others? That what we call memory and what we call thought-transference are the present tentative experiences by which "Heaven" is being evolved; and that so far from going to God in the Heaven which orthodox people suppose Him to be enjoying already, we are in reality evolving for God that true Heaven which consists in the *recovered consciousness of unity after suspension of continuity*? If so, then the cases in which *memory or thought-transference are not pleasant* would really give the key to the law of the process, being the exceptions which should test the rule; and, by studying them, we should get much light on the normal conduct of life altogether.

All this is merely suggestion. What I wish to assert positively is that the little girl whom I "remember" as becoming a medium long ago does not seem at all more nearly related to me-as-I-am-now, than do some of the thinkers (whether in this life or passed beyond it) of whose intellect mine seems to be at times a continuation or complementary development.

INGEBORG.

The Luminous N.

SIR,—I see from your reply to "T.S.," in the last issue of "LIGHT," that you are waiting for confirmatory evidence with regard to the story of the "Luminous N."

I was in St. Petersburg at the time this mysterious N put in an appearance on the Alexander Column, and well remember the sensation it created. I also well remember that I felt pretty well satisfied with the following explanation of this "phenomenon": that this luminous N was purely and simply the *reflection* of a Russian letter engraved upon the glass of one of the lanterns placed around the column, the letter in question having this shape, "и", which, when reflected on the column would be very like a Roman N.

Now, as for the meaning of this letter "и"; the name of the firm was stamped, I believe, on each of the lanterns around the column, viz., "Siemens & Halske," the "and" having in Russian for equivalent "и" thus:—

СИМЕНЪ
и
ГАЛЬСКЕ

There was just enough place on the column for the "и" to be reflected, the two other words being too long, I presume. As for the reason why this mysterious N had never been seen before, several explanations are possible: either it may not have been noticed before, or (this more probable) the lantern—I mean the part of the lantern which may be taken away and replaced again—had not been placed in such a way as to enable the letter in question to become visible, as there are no other public buildings near the column on which this "N" or "и" could be reflected. After so much sensation had been created by this incident, the glasses of the lanterns were changed by order of the authorities, and this brought this extraordinary phenomenon to a close.

I must also say that it is hardly correct to call the "N" in question a *luminous* one. When I saw it it struck me as being of more or less the same colour as the column itself—precisely what a reflected letter would be like.

On reference to M. Bodises's "Traits de Lumière," your readers will find that he does not accept the explanation I have just given and does his best to prove why; yet I do not consider his arguments to be conclusive. If it is true, as he says, that "tout phénomène incompréhensible à la masse sera toujours expliqué pour les non initiés par une simple cause physique," it must be true, I suppose, of the contrary, too; yet I do not think this is the spirit in which the study of the "occult" should best be approached.

MICHAEL PETKOV-SOLOVVO.

9, Mohavaia, Saint-Petersburg.

* Jubal.

Mr. Davey's Imitation by Conjuring of Phenomena Attributed to Spirit-Agency.

SIR,—In reply to your remarks upon the late Mr. Davey in "LIGHT," for June 4th, p. 265, perhaps you will allow me to point out that Mr. Davey published in the "Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research" (Vol. IV., pp. 405-7), in 1887, a full account of his grounds first for believing himself to be a medium, and then for ceasing to believe it. His belief had, as he explains, depended mainly on certain practical jokes of his friends, who had led him to suppose that words which they had surreptitiously written on slates had been written through supernatural powers of his own.

After discovering that he had been himself thus deceived, Mr. Davey devoted much time and trouble to experiments designed to protect others from being deceived in similar ways. Carrying some simple conjuring tricks to a high degree of perfection, he showed how difficult it was for ordinary observers to exercise sufficient attention and acumen to detect the means employed.

He then revealed those means in part, but not completely, since he hoped to renew experiments of the same kind. Now that his death has made further experiment impossible, Mr. Hodgson, who was cognisant of his *modus operandi* throughout, has given a fuller explanation—an explanation which will certainly make it difficult for anyone any longer to make of Mr. Davey a medium *malgré lui*.

Mr. Davey had, of course, a perfect right to invite what persons he pleased to witness his experiments. Like yourself, sir, I should have been glad to receive an invitation, which I did not receive; but I certainly do not venture to assume that I should have shown any more ability to discover Mr. Davey's methods than was shown by the observers whom he actually did invite. I sympathise with the regret naturally felt at this discovery of the narrow limitations of ordinary human powers of observation; but since these limitations do exist, I feel grateful to Mr. Davey for having warned us of them; at the cost of great trouble to himself, undertaken from a wholly disinterested love of truth.

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

Leckhampton House, Cambridge.

June 4th, 1892.

[Mr. Davey, on whom I desire to make no remarks other than those that arise out of fair criticism, is said to have been befooled by his friends, and then to have set himself to play a similar trick on others. I am not able to say what amount of credence is to be attached to his former and later statements. The fact remains that he sought me out and confided to me what is incompatible with his latest attitude. Repeatedly asked to account for his change of mind, and to afford me an opportunity of judging of its value, he resolutely refused to do so. I should imagine that our previous relations would have caused him to be anxious to explain his tergiversation. Those who care to do so must draw their own conclusions. I have only desired to clear the ground, and to stamp Mr. Davey's evidence for what it is, in my opinion, worth.—ED. "LIGHT."]

Prophetic Dream Vision.

SIR,—On May 27th the following very remarkable dream vision occurred. The face of a very steep green mountain appeared in an easterly or south-easterly direction. The top of the mountain was hidden from view as if it were roofed over by timber. The side of the mountain began to fall down as if it were disturbed by an earthquake. It was then daytime. Then it seemed dark, or about the dusk of evening, and dark masses passed through the air over a wooded district. The vision is prophetic of some remarkable coming event, whether literal or symbolic. If the former a destructive earthquake may be expected in the east or south-east.

W. S.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. P. E. N.—Too controversial for our columns. We avoid all matters such as you raise.

To prepare for a positive condition, we must pass through a negative stage. We must have plastic clay with which to make bricks.

THE gates of heaven are closed against those who seek to save their own lives and care not whether others have lives to save or not.

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. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—Service every Sunday, at 7 p.m. Speaker for Sunday next Mr. J. Allen. Committee meeting, 8.30 p.m.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—Mr. H. Hunt gave a good lecture on Sunday on "The Universe of Thought." Sunday next, Mr. Hunt, at 11 and 7. Thursday, Mrs. Spring. Saturday, Mrs. Mason.—C. I. H.

WANDSWORTH SPIRITUAL HALL, 132, ST. JOHN'S HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.—Sunday, at 7 p.m., psychometry, Mr. Whittecar. Wednesday, at 8 p.m., physiognomy as taught by Lavater, Mrs. Ashton Bingham.—E. A. B.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH, 14, ORCHARD-ROAD.—Mrs. Mason's seance on Tuesday was well attended and gave great satisfaction. On Sunday, to a very good meeting, Mr. Hector Bangs read a paper on "Spiritualism: What is it?" Mrs. Whitaker's guide gave a beautiful address on the soul, and on the laws of mediumship, followed by remarks by Messrs. Ware, Mason, and Bangs. Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., seance by Mrs. Mason; ticket only, from the secretary. June 12th, Mr. Cable; 19th, Mrs. Wilkins; 26th, Mr. Portman.—J. H. B., Sec.

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET.—The Whit-Sunday meetings were small. In the evening Mr. Butcher's guides spoke upon "Death and the Resurrection," contrasting the cold materialistic theory of Orthodoxy with the facts and teachings of Spiritualism. On the previous Sunday we had to rely on our own resources. We were fortunate in having our esteemed friend, Mr. Bevan Harris, of Newcastle, present, who, with Mr. Wright and the President, succeeded in interesting the audience. Sunday next, Mr. R. J. Lees, at 7 p.m. Monday, Study class. Thursday, at 8 p.m., "Healing."—J. T. AUDY.

SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—The Wednesday seance for inquirers was well attended, and the results to many were of a very satisfactory nature. We had good audiences at the Sunday services, when Mr. W. E. Long officiated. The annual summer outing will be held on Monday, July 11th, to Keston (Kent) by brakes, starting at 9 a.m. Next Sunday morning, public seance at 11.30 a.m.; Lyceum at 3 p.m., and address by Mr. A. M. Rodger at 7 o'clock. Next Wednesday's seance will be conducted by Mr. W. E. Long. Investigators welcomed at 8.30 p.m.—W. G. COOTE, Assistant Sec.

HYDE PARK (NEAR MARBLE ARCH).—On Sunday, 29th ult., we had a good meeting, and the earnest attention of a large number of listeners, although at the close a number of rowdy persons tried to upset our meeting. Mr. A. M. Rodger gave an interesting address on "Spiritualism from a Biblical Standpoint." The writer also spoke, showing that Spiritualism taught him to glean the true and good from the Bible as from other books. On Whit Sunday no meeting was held. Next Sunday, at 3.30 p.m., Messrs. Wyndoe and Percy Smyth. We still await assistance in the dissemination of our literature.—PERCY SMYTH, Organiser of Open Air Work for L.S.F.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' CORRESPONDING SOCIETY will assist inquirers. Copies of "LIGHT," leaflets on Spiritualism, and list of members sent on receipt of stamped envelope. Address, J. Allen, 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace, the last Sunday in each month at 7.15, reception for inquirers; on Friday, at 8.15 p.m., for Spiritualists only, the study of mediumship; also, at 1, Winifred-road, on Tuesday, at 8.15 p.m., for students and inquirers. And the first Sunday in the month at 7.15 p.m.; reception for inquirers.—J. A.

WHY PINE FOR REST?

Why pine for rest, O mortal? Naught reposes,
The constellations circle ceaselessly,
And sentient things must move or cease to be.
The Gate of Life in war or peace ne'er closes,
And youthful hearts for ever scatter roses,
While Death each moment sets some traveller free
To lift the curtain of mortality
And lay aside the vestment that opposes
The spirit's flight to those ethereal regions
Where, swift as thought, the yearning soul acquires
The freedom of its long matured desires.
Among the snowy-plumed and flashing legions
Who wait with outspread wings, the noblest asks—
His only prayer—for ever higher tasks!

ISABELLA J. SOUTHERN.