

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

II.

Sub-Committee No. 2 investigated the phenomena of "rapping." They reported, among other things, after describing the method of "giving the alphabet," that:—

The presumed spirits displayed distinct individualities, each having a manner peculiar to itself, and rapping delicately, emphatically, or deliberately, as the case might be, expressing as it were character, mood, and temper.

When we attempted to shorten the process of communication by anticipating words or phrases which we thought were intended, we frequently found our anticipations emphatically negatived in favour of more appropriate expressions, or of words of a different signification altogether. Intelligence was further manifested by the occasional dictation to us of special conditions for our then observance, such, for instance, as requesting us to sit in a different order at the table, requiring one or more to sit away from it, asking for an increase or diminution of light, or for the appointment of some particular person to ask questions, directing us to link or unlink hands, to be more quiet in our conversation, &c.

The Sub-Committee go on to make the following important observations as to the conditions observed as necessary for success or non-success in obtaining phenomena; they assert that success appeared generally to be aided:—

- (a) By orderliness in the conduct of sésances.
- (b) By a quiet, but not particularly passive demeanour and conversation.
- (c) By quietude in the house in which we assembled, we failing sometimes to obtain phenomena early in the evening, but obtaining them later, when the servants had retired and domestic noises had ceased.
- (d) By a somewhat moderate supply of light.

As to failure, the Sub-Committee reported:—

- (a) That we invariably failed to obtain the phenomena in the dark.
- (b) That at our few trials by daylight we invariably failed to obtain manifestations.
- (c) That we invariably failed to obtain manifestations without the presence of the two ladies in our party.
- (d) That our compliance with conditions dictated to us by the presumed spirits invariably intensified the manifestations at the time.

One very important observation was made by the Sub-Committee, an observation which will commend itself to all who have had to do with phenomena of any kind:—

Intentness or desire for the manifestations (as preparatory processes) far more frequently prefaced failure than success, we commonly finding that those sésances were the most successful at which the phenomena occurred immediately, or almost immediately, we had seated ourselves at the table.

Conservation of power, objection to waste, were also noted:—

We rarely obtained second replies to questions already answered, even when we invented such questions for the purpose. The phraseology of communications was mostly succinct, redundant words or terms being seldom, if ever, employed.

The report concludes with specific accounts of several instances of a nature we are now well accustomed to.

Sub-Committees 3 and 4 obtained but few phenomena, but No. 5 was appointed to meet Mr. Home. Raps and some table moving were observed, but "it is almost unnecessary to add that nothing occurred at any of the meetings which could be attributed to supernatural causes. The members had fully expected that they would have witnessed some of the alleged extraordinary levitations of Mr. Home, but he explained at the opening of the inquiry that the phenomena produced through his agency were of uncertain manifestation and that he had no power whatever to produce them at will."

Sub-Committee No. 6 experienced a ludicrous failure. It met four times, but failed to obtain any phenomena that deserve to be recorded. On one occasion a lady visitor brought with her two little girls, aged apparently about eight and ten years respectively, whom she declared to be mediums. The children were placed at a small chess-table, which they proceeded to rock to and fro, to their own intense delight, and to the amusement of the company. At no other meeting was there even the pretence of any spiritual phenomena. A failure, indeed!

These reports were the general expression of the results obtained from the Society's investigations, but it must not be supposed that they were unanimously agreed to by all the members of the Society; notably Dr. Edmunds, from whose individual communication we give some quotations. Among other things he says:—

The framing of the Report, and the selection, publication, and reviewing of the evidence has practically drifted into the hands of devoted and zealous Spiritualists, who are led by skilful and successful writers.*

In reference to the report itself, the most irreverent scoffer at Spiritualism can take no exception to the propositions therein formulated, inasmuch as they are made to hinge upon the following sentence: "These reports, hereto subjoined, would appear to establish the following propositions." No one who refers to "these reports" can fail to admit that they "would appear to establish" propositions at variance with the solidest experiences of mankind, and upsetting the primary convictions of every-day life. But so would any silly story if taken as fact. . . . All that is urged as to the high character and great intelligence of many of the witnesses to the more extraordinary things I fully endorse. I must add that many of the witnesses and believers in Spiritualism are persons in whom I can divine no possible motive for misrepresenting their convictions, and that if, on a trial for murder, they were witnesses, and I were jurymen, I should rely with entire confidence upon their evidence as proof of all matters not inherently incredible or inconsistent. Supposing, however, that even they were to testify that they had been pursued for five miles by a decapitated man with his head under his arm, I should certainly not accept the evidence unless my mind were driven to accept or reject, and could find no excuse for rejecting it.

I have witnessed raps, and noises, and movements of various kinds. I have heard from truthful people narratives of the most extraordinary events that have occurred just after or just before I was present, but I have never been able to see anything worthy of consideration, as not being accounted for by unconscious action, delusion, or imposture. I have no hesitation in expressing the conviction that none of the extraordinary phenomena will ever come within range of real investigation by a competent observer, without being at once divested of all mystery.

These last remarks offer an admirable example of the unwisdom of prophesying till after the event.

* This was contradicted by the compilers of the Report.

"A HANDBOOK OF SCIENTIFIC AGNOSTICISM."

It is well to have something which may give some definite meaning to the term Agnostic. Every generation, or, come to that, every decade has its own pet term of theological contempt. "Infidel" is delightfully vague, "Atheist" is condemnatory enough to remind one of the communion service, "Unbeliever" is mild, and "Agnostic" has been generally indefinite. This clever book, however, clears up some of this indefiniteness. The first principle of the Agnostic is thus stated:—

Whatever falls or may fall within the range of consciousness is knowable; that which never comes within the range of consciousness cannot be known. In the last resort a man can know only his own states of consciousness, and besides his states of consciousness he can know nothing.

"It is this great negation—once for all," says the author, "which gives its origin and title to the name Agnostic!" He goes on to say:—

Shortly, Agnosticism, as understood by its most distinguished adherents, may be described as a doctrine which insists on the application of certain well established principles in every department of intellectual research, and that nothing shall be considered as known or knowable that will not stand this test.

In the application of these principles a clearly-defined method is insisted on. This method requires that, in the investigation of any doubtful phenomenon, there should be—(1) An appeal to the direct facts of consciousness; (2) inferences from the facts of consciousness, conducted according to strict logical rules; and (3) when these resources are no longer available an appeal to the testimony of experts in those departments of learning which are relevant to the matter in hand. In mathematical and physical science this method has been employed for a long time; in physiology, only in recent days; in psychology, still more recently; in departments of human thought whenever they detect, or fancy they detect, a fallacy arising from careless thinking. Correct thinking, as indispensable complement of free thinking, is the imperative demand of the modern Agnostic. Who thinks awry can hardly walk straight.

A good deal would seem to depend upon what is meant by correct thinking, but as this correctness is dependent upon strict logical rules, it cannot be wrong correctness supposing that the laws of logic in their strictness are perfectly accurate,—but suppose they are not!

It is agreeable to note that with scientific Agnostics the spiritual life is not ignored, therefore the Agnostic and the Materialist are not to be confounded, a confusion which it is to be feared has taken place before now. Mr. Bithell is speaking of feeling or sensation:—

In the higher region of our spiritual life we meet with many examples of this unity of feeling as resulting from a complexity of causes. The serenity which results from the act of prayer, no doubt, is often profound and unmistakable. But whether that serenity arises from some delusion, a belief in some legend or superstition, the satisfaction which springs from having performed a prescribed rite, or whether it is the result of a rational faith, it is often extremely difficult to determine. It is in this region, too, that those subjective affections of the mind called "false certitudes" find a prolific soil.

Again, it is a frequent experience among men and women of contemplative habits that a highly-exalted state of feeling takes possession of the entire individual, and brings all the faculties of the mind into subjection. Now, there is no reason whatever for doubting the presence of this emotion; but, when we come to inquire into the causes which have led up to it, we discover a variety of opinions. Some jump to the conclusion that this must be "communion with God." "We do not merely mean," says the Rev. R. F. Horton, "that we have certain very clear ideas about His will. But we also mean that we are conscious of His spirit, an agency in ourselves, and yet not ourselves; One with Whom we hold communion, One from Whom we receive teaching, and cleansing, and real daily strength. That is what we mean as Christians when we say that we know God." It is very clear from this passage that what the preacher knew was simply a group of his own feelings and thoughts: but to say that this is "knowing God" is going rather farther than cautious men will follow him.

* "A Handbook of Scientific Agnosticism." By RICHARD BITHELL, B.Sc., Ph.D. (London: Watts & Co., 17, Johnson's-court, Fleet-street.)

† That is, when there are no direct facts of consciousness to which we can appeal.

Of faith we get this definition:—

Faith is the name we apply to those beliefs that are strong as to enlist the co-operation of the will.

Here, perhaps, the difference between Agnosticism and religious "Gnosticism" is most clearly brought out, faith which is founded on belief with knowledge is a different thing from a faith founded on belief without knowledge. The former is the faith of the Agnostic, the latter of the Religionist:—

(1) We have that kind of faith which is founded on knowledge sufficiently accurate and extensive to command our confidence and justify us in taking action upon it, even over the duties of life demand it. (2) There is that kind of faith which we repose in judgments concerning matters of which we have no knowledge, and which are not founded on any definite proof, no proof being available. As examples, I may mention the verdicts of consciousness, on which we place such implicit trust, just because we cannot help trusting them. Also, our trust in the uniformity of nature and the reign of law, concerning which we know only the past, when the future is purely an object of trust, founded on the supposition that the laws we have observed to hold good in the past will hold also through all future time—not only in the physical world, but also in the spiritual world of thought and feeling.

And as a contrast:—

In a recent number of the "Nineteenth Century" the Rev. Father Ryder tells us that "faith, according to the Catholic teaching, is the act of believing without doubting whatever God has revealed. The revelation not being immediate to the individual, the question arises as to the evidential cogency of the *media* through which the revelation is brought home to us. This is the problem accepted by Christians generally, by Bible Protestants and Anglicans, as well as by Catholics." This kind of faith has no relation to faith as we define it. It is not based on our own knowledge, nor does this presentation of the object of faith inspire us with any desire to surrender ourselves to its demands.

As to psychology the author says:—

It cannot be expected that we should accept as conclusive the arguments of men who bandy about such words as "mind," "soul," and "spirit" until these men come to some agreement among themselves as to what they mean by them. Sometimes they are spoken of as separate entities; sometimes as functions of one or other of them; sometimes as mere synonyms of the Ego. A more Materialistic explanation is that they are simply names for the products arising from the disintegration of brain tissue. Questions of this character are extremely interesting to the trained Agnostic. It is in the midst of discrepancies and contradictions like these that he finds some of his most congenial work. When often think a question closed, he prefers to keep it open until some general agreement is arrived at.

The last observation is valuable; many, very many people have had an idea that the Agnostics' creed is, "I do not know, therefore you cannot know."

"Agnosticism" seeks always to know, because it does not know; it does not assert that others cannot know because it does not. The following passage, which refers to the so-called Georgia Magnet, of two years' ago fame, well expresses this, and with the extract we conclude our notice of an able, generous, and successful attempt to make clear to the world what scientific Agnosticism really is:—

Questions of this kind are not to be pushed aside with a contemptuous puff, nor are they to be answered by saying the phenomena presented are the result of chicanery or sleight-of-hand. That is only to repeat the error of shallow theologians, who, to escape the labour of research, jump at once to the conclusion that every unexplained fact is the work of Divine power, and then imagine the puzzle has been solved. What we want to know is whether the phenomena we witness are the result of some illusion or not, and it is a mere begging of the question to assert without investigation they are one or the other. Bigotry in science is quite as offensive, and more inexcusable, than bigotry in religion.

On that many short-sighted, proud, intolerant barbarians, who fancy that there is nothing good outside their corner of the earth, and that the sun of reason shines only in their caves, had only made a better study of geography and history in their youth! It is impossible that they could have made the narrow circle of their head the brain measure of the whole world, or the manners of their little neck the rule and plumbline of all times, climes, and nations.

"SPIRITUALISM AND THE BIBLE."

The "Coming Day" has no hesitation in its avowal of belief in Spiritualism, as witness the following from the pen of "Peter Dean" in the current number:—

Are believers in everything the Bible teaches consistent in opposing Spiritualism? The one only essential thing constituting Spiritualism is belief that the spirits of the so-called dead can and do communicate with the living—everything else is accidental and open. Now, I say that if the Bible teaches anything, it teaches this essential part of Spiritualism; it teaches that the spirits of the "dead" return and manifest themselves to the living; it teaches seeing things in trances, it teaches spirit-healing, and it teaches spirit materialisation. I will not say, as some Spiritualist is reported to have said, that the Bible is full of Spiritualism, and that if you took it all out you would have nothing left but the backs; but I do say that the Bible has in it a vast amount of Spiritualism, and if I believed the Bible to be all God's word, as the orthodox profess to do, I should feel compelled to be a Spiritualist. I do not say that an orthodox believer in the Bible is logically called upon to believe all the nonsense that may be taught in connection with Spiritualism, but I do say he is logically called upon to be a Spiritualist, believing that there is communion going on between the "dead" and the living.

First of all, take the Old Testament. Look what an amount of Spiritualism you have in it. Look what a prominent part angels coming down to men play in it. Angels come to Adam and Eve; angels come to Lot and his wife to lead them out of Sodom; and Jacob actually has a wrestling match with an angel, and has his thigh put out of joint by him. Then how can you get over the case of the woman of Endor calling up the spirit of Samuel in order that Saul might have a séance with him? There is no getting out of this case by attempts to explain it away, for the original Hebrew of the passage distinctly says it was Samuel himself who appeared and spoke. If the Bible had nothing else in it than this passage, the Spiritualists would be able to quote it as on their side. But, all through, it has divinations—some favoured and some condemned—the casting of lots, oracles, visions, prophetic dreams and the like, in abundance.

Then, when you come to the New Testament, I think the Spiritualists have it even more on their side. In Hebrews we are told that angels are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation." If you believe that this verse is God's word, how can you deny Spiritualism? Listen to what Christ commissioned His disciples to do—"Heal the sick, cleanse the leper, raise the dead, cast out devils." Again, "And when Jesus had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power over unclean spirits to cast them out." In Mark we read that in the synagogue at Capernaum there was a man with an unclean spirit, that Jesus said to it, "Hold thy peace and come out of him"; and when the unclean spirit had torn the man and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And in Acts we read that the people brought those vexed with unclean spirits and the disciples cast them out. I think, again, if you look into the meaning of what is meant by the disciples having spiritual gifts, you will find that it was all a sort of Spiritualism. Then look at the accounts of men having "trances" and "visions" which you have in the New Testament. Paul saw Jesus in this way when he was going to Damascus; Paul, again, in this way was caught up to Paradise and the third heaven—"whether in the body or out of the body" he could not tell; and Paul also in this way saw Ananias and the man of Macedonia, saying "Come over and help us." Peter had a vision of unclean beasts, and Stephen had one, in which he looked into Heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. But there are hundreds of such awake-visions given in the New Testament:—the Book of Revelation is one mass of them. I think, therefore, nothing can be clearer than that, in the New Testament days, people were Spiritualists, and were believers in the kind of things Spiritualists are believing in now.

LIFE.—I have found life a warfare, but I have always found the weapons provided sufficient for the victory. The obstacle has been the necessity for the leap over it. And the God of my childhood has been the Guard and Guide of my youth, and the friend of my grey hairs.—AMELIA E. BARR.

THE IGNORANCE OF CONTEMPT.

By MRS. A. J. PENNY.

The inferior potencies creep into the guise of nobler races, and feign themselves to be the very spiritual beings whose characters they have assumed; and in this case they abandon themselves to boastful speeches and pretences of power superior to what they possess. Indeed, I think that if anything spurious grows like an excrescence from the first beginning, there will flow in a vast mass of falsity from the perversion, which it is necessary for the priests to learn thoroughly, from the entire arrangement among the images appearing, so that, being on their guard against it, they may detect and reject the misleading assumptions of these pretenders as not being true and good spirits.—JAMBICHOS "On the Mysteries."

Surely it is as necessary for our priests thoroughly to learn what Spiritualism is in its higher, as well as in its lower bearings; would that they perceived the danger of treating it as little better than the devil's *vade mecum*!

The divorce between Spiritualism and spirituality, like every other family quarrel, is embittered by relationship, and prolonged by mutual recriminations. The disorderliness of Spiritist belief, its large scope for folly on the visible scene of action, and mischief and malignity on the unseen, gives inevitable scandal to all who restrict their attention to *holy* mysteries; but at the same time their disdain and refusal to examine into the facts of Spiritualism enlarges the triumph of agnostics, and divides the forces which, if combined, might reduce—even if they could not cure—the gross mania of materialism.

The Romish Church has been wiser, carefully maintaining its avowed *rapproch* with the inner life. If its clergy permit the ignorant classes to believe every glorious vision a manifestation of the Virgin Mary, or of some special saint, it is probably an accommodation of truth to policy, of phenomena well known to us under another name, but enlisted in the service of religion.

Now the most Protestant believer may serve his religious faith without any duplicity, by ostensibly recognising the nearness of the unseen spiritual population. As to this, our Church must now be included in the words of which Boehme spoke when he said, "If the world were not so mad, and suffered the devil to drive it, who derideth all manner of revelation, that thereby he may blindfold man."—"Three-fold Life," chap. 10, par. 22.)

But for that blindfolding, what precious knowledge might have been gained by duly consecrated seers and mediums! For if consecration be needed for those who teach Bible truths and ecclesiastical dogma, how much more for those who would "hearken what the Lord should say to them" in the sanctuary of well-trained psychical perceptions? Are they dangerous, and liable to abuse? Undeniably they are. But are not the dangers of hypocrisy and profanity, from unrealised professions of spiritual life, as great? And these are risked on all sides.

The loss to our Church from contemptuous neglect of Spiritualism—as "providential" surely as any other great contemporary movement—comes into view more clearly every year with a ground-swell of antagonism in minds most amenable to guidance, had guides been ready to advance in spiritual knowledge.

The following remark of Mr. Minot Savage (some two or three years old) will show the method by which religious faith is discredited, betraying, as I think, the prejudices of alienation from an orthodoxy too proud to learn, and too well satisfied with hereditary knowledge to believe that Spiritualism has anything worth having to add. "Where Spiritualists' faith is accepted the old faith fades away, because no place for it is left. The new supplants the old; it does not so much disprove theology as it dissolves and dissipates it. Then it is curious for the student of these things to note that none of the spirits are orthodox." Having, during at least a score of years, gratefully accepted from Spiritist literature, confirmation of orthodox belief—so far as Biblical teaching forms it—I venture to challenge that assertion. What exact particulars Mr. Minot Savage would assign to the faith of a Spiritualist I do not know. On two salient points it differs widely from what is often chosen as the standard of orthodoxy to excuse jeering at *any*. The obsolete errors of the literalist, who insists on the resurrection of the actual present, mortal body, and the elemental hell-fire to which reprobate sinners are doomed.

Now, I suppose the majority of so-called orthodox Christians believe in these rough translations of revealed truth as

little as Spiritualists can. These last reject in toto what they have not the humility to try to understand, like potulant children, throwing away as worthless the nuts they cannot easily open; and to such judges of doctrine, assurance is quickly given by familiar spirits that there is no resurrection body other, or more subsequently formed, than the spiritual body in which all human beings find themselves after death; and no anguish endured for sins committed in the mortal body.

Again, it seems to me a mistake to confuse "old faith" with theology, which is but man's representation of divine teaching; and a good deal of it a scaffolding that serves the purpose of a particular age, which needs re-adjustment, as edification is carried on from one height to another. If Spiritualism effects this re-adjustment, let us be thankful.

But that it can dissolve or dispense with one iota of sacred truth revealed to our predecessors in the mind of a wise Spiritualist, I do not believe. Such a one instructed by Swedenborg knows the great law of influx, *that it is always modified by the mind of the recipient*, and will inquire carefully to what manner of spirits in the flesh such and such subversive instruction came, will try to learn something of the medium's habits of thought and of the character of those who supplied the requisite human aura. The relationship to its purport of conspiring tendencies in those who transmit and receive the message, is often very striking.

Having noticed the readiness of Spiritualists to gibe and sneer at orthodoxy, whenever opportunity offers, it will be well to hear from Mr. Bushnell what has made that temptation so excusably natural.

"Their religious and supernatural instincts have been so long defrauded that it would be a kind of satisfaction to get silence broken, if only by some vision of a ghost. Anything to show or set open the world unknown . . . the secret of their greedy, undistinguishing taste for delusion is the sharpness of previous appetite; and that was caused by the abstinence of long privation. We had so far come into the kingdom of nullities; calling it the Kingdom of God; we had become so rational and gotten God's own liberty into such close terms of natural order, that the immediate living realities of religion or religious experience were under a doom of suppression. It was as if there were no atmosphere to breathe; and the minds most remote from the impression and associations of piety naturally felt the hunger most. . . . The Church also or Christian discipleship begins to ache with the same sort of pain, feeling after some way out of the dullness of a second-hand faith and the dryness of a merely second-hand gospel; and many of the most longing, most expectant souls are seen waiting for some livelier, more Apostolic demonstrations; they are tired beyond bearing of the mere school forms and defined notions; they want some kind of faith that shows God in living commerce with men; such as He vouchsafed them in the former times, and if we can trust them they are not wholly disappointed." (H. Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural." P. 320.)

Is it not true? And can we be just to those who revolt against "sound doctrine" without attributing to its professional guardians unwise arrest of thought and unjustifiable sanction of the strange idea that all Divine revelations ceased at the death of the last Apostle? As if the spirit promised to "lead us into all truth" had then come to a pause which lasted for centuries! Out of the treasures of our national belief *things old** are taken with persistent fidelity; and "new" cannot be added.

(To be continued.)

BEYOND.

Fair world! these puzzled souls of ours grow weak
With beating their bruised wings against the rim
That bounds their utmost flying, when they seek
The distant and the dim.

We pant, we strain like birds against their wires;
Are sick to reach the vast and the beyond;
And what avails, if still to our desires
Those far-off gulfs respond?

Contentment comes not therefore; still there lies
An outer distance when the first is hailed;
And still for ever yawns before our eyes
An utmost—that is veiled.

—JEAN INGELow.

* Every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old. (Matt. xiii; 52.)

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

THREE LEGAL COMMUNICATORS.

By "EDINA."

One evening in the early part of September, we had a trial with "Ouija." So far as I was personally concerned, the result of the experiment was a failure; but the moment our family medium handled the instrument it began to move rapidly. I placed her in such a position that she could hardly see any of the letters of the alphabet, and certainly could not spell out the messages as they came.

The first message "spelt out" was simply the name of a deceased Scottish judge, Lord—, who passed over some years ago. Recently I got a message from J. D., a friend who died last April, that Lord— sent his compliments to me, and would communicate with me soon. No more than the name was now given. I put a test question, viz., "Where did I last meet with you?" The instrument at once spelt out the name D., which was correct. This circumstance was quite unknown to the medium.

The next communication purported to be from another deceased judge of the Supreme Court, who joined the majority some years ago. The message simply consisted of the name of the deceased, his residence then in earth-life, and sent his compliments to Lord—, a particular friend of his who still adorns the Judicial Bench of Scotland. I regret it is not in my power to convey this kindly greeting to his former *confrère*, in view of some of my prior unfortunate experiences in this direction.

The next communication by the instrument was one of a much more satisfactory and important kind. The person from whom it purported to come was quite unknown to the medium when in earth-life, but as noticed in an article in "LIGHT" in July, 1891, she saw him in our home one afternoon when we were sitting at dinner, and he then promised to write. He afterwards did so, and the salient points in the message were published at the time. The portrait of this gentleman was in the Exhibition of the Scottish Academy in May, 1891, and on the same evening of the day on which the medium saw him in our house she, under test conditions, identified the portrait as being a speaking likeness of her communicator of the afternoon. This gentleman when in earth-life was a representative Scotsman and a very distinguished member of one of the Edinburgh legal societies. We have in the course of eighteen months got four messages from this personage, and all of them—but particularly the second one—show remarkable evidence of identity, being full of details unknown to the medium.

The communication got by the Ouija from this person, whom for the purposes of this article I will call Mr. G., was rapidly spelt out and to the following effect:—

1. That he was greatly pleased at being again able to come to us.
2. He renders his best acknowledgments to me for certain services I had rendered to a very near relative of his at the recent general election, and expresses his gratification at the successful result achieved on that occasion.
3. He states his dissatisfaction with the result of the trial of a Scottish *cause célèbre* with which I was officially concerned.
4. He expresses a pretty strong and accurate opinion regarding a friend of my own, who had to do with certain proceedings at the said trial, which shows me that on the other side his judgment of character is as good as it was here.
5. He gives me a message peculiarly convincing and very personal from my old friend J. D. regarding an event which occurred in the month of May last in connection with the filling up of a vacancy to a public office here, and concurs in the opinion expressed by J. D. there-*about*.

Now the first point I make regarding these three communications is, that they purported to be from persons who when in earth-life had close and personal relations with each other, and in fact might be called in Scotland three "cronies," being lawyers by profession, Conservatives in politics, and staunch Established Churchmen in religious connection, most likely to gravitate to each other on arriving in the spirit world.

The second point I wish to make is that the firm of which this third communicator was for many years of his life the leading partner, but from which he had retired some years before his demise, acted as the solicitors for the plaintiff in

little as Spiritualists can. These last reject in toto what they have not the humility to try to understand, like potent children, throwing away as worthless the nuts they cannot easily open; and to such judges of doctrine, assurance is quickly given by familiar spirits that there is no resurrection body other, or more subsequently formed, than the spiritual body in which all human beings find themselves after death; and no anguish endured for sins committed in the mortal body.

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But that it can dissolve or dispense with one iota of sacred truth revealed to our predecessors in the mind of a wise Spiritualist, I do not believe. Such a one instructed by Swedenborg knows the great law of influx, *that it is always modified by the mind of the recipient*, and will inquire carefully to what manner of spirits in the flesh such and such subversive instruction came, will try to learn something of the medium's habits of thought and of the character of those who supplied the requisite human aura. The relationship to its purport of conspiring tendencies in those who transmit and receive the message, is often very striking.

Having noticed the readiness of Spiritualists to gibe and sneer at orthodoxy, whenever opportunity offers, it will be well to hear from Mr. Bushnell what has made that temptation so excusably natural.

"Their religious and supernatural instincts have been so long defrauded that it would be a kind of satisfaction to get silence broken, if only by some vision of a ghost. Anything to show or set open the world unknown . . . the secret of their greedy, undistinguishing taste for delusion is the sharpness of previous appetite; and that was caused by the abstinence of long privation. We had so far come into the kingdom of nullities; calling it the Kingdom of God; we had become so rational and gotten God's own liberty into such close terms of natural order, that the immediate living realities of religion or religious experience were under a doom of suppression. It was as if there were no atmosphere to breathe; and the minds most remote from the impression and associations of piety naturally felt the hunger most. . . . The Church also or Christian discipleship begins to ache with the same sort of pain, feeling after some way out of the dullness of a second-hand faith and the dryness of a merely second-hand gospel; and many of the most longing, most expectant souls are seen waiting for some livelier, more Apostolic demonstrations; they are tired beyond bearing of the mere school forms and defined notions; they want some kind of faith that shows God in living commerce with men; such as He vouchsafed them in the former times, and if we can trust them they are not wholly disappointed." (H. Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural." P. 320.)

Is it not true? And can we be just to those who revolt against "sound doctrine" without attributing to its professional guardians unwise arrest of thought and unjustifiable sanction of the strange idea that all Divine revelations ceased at the death of the last Apostle? As if the spirit promised to "lead us into all truth" had then come to a pause which lasted for centuries! Out of the treasures of our national belief *things old** are taken with persistent fidelity; and "new" cannot be added.

(To be continued.)

BEYOND.

Fair world! these puzzled souls of ours grow weak
With beating their bruised wings against the rim
That bounds their utmost flying, when they seek
The distant and the dim.

We pant, we strain like birds against their wires;
Are sick to reach the vast and the beyond;
And what avails, if still to our desires
Those far-off gulls respond?

Contentment comes not therefore; still there lies
An outer distance when the first is hailed;
And still for ever yawns before our eyes
An utmost—that is veiled.

—JEAN INGLOW.

* Every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old. (Matt. xiii: 12.)

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

THREE LEGAL COMMUNICATORS.

BY "EDINA."

One evening in the early part of September, we had a trial with "Ouija." So far as I was personally concerned, the result of the experiment was a failure; but the moment our family medium handled the instrument it began to move rapidly. I placed her in such a position that she could hardly see any of the letters of the alphabet, and certainly could not spell out the messages as they came.

The first message "spelt out" was simply the name of a deceased Scottish judge, Lord—, who passed over some years ago. Recently I got a message from J. D., a friend who died last April, that Lord— sent his compliments to me, and would communicate with me soon. No more than the name was now given. I put a test question, viz., "Where did I last meet with you?" The instrument at once spelt out the name D., which was correct. This circumstance was quite unknown to the medium.

The next communication purported to be from another deceased judge of the Supreme Court, who joined the majority some years ago. The message simply consisted of the name of the deceased, his residence when in earth-life, and sent his compliments to Lord—, a particular friend of his who still adorns the Judicial Bench of Scotland. I regret it is not in my power to convey this kindly greeting to his former *confre*, in view of some of my prior unfortunate experiences in this direction.

The next communication by the instrument was one of a much more satisfactory and important kind. The person from whom it purported to come was quite unknown to the medium when in earth-life, but as noticed in an article in "LIGHT" in July, 1891, she saw him in our home one afternoon when we were sitting at dinner, and he then promised to write. He afterwards did so, and the salient points in the message were published at the time. The portrait of this gentleman was in the Exhibition of the Scottish Academy in May, 1891, and on the same evening of the day on which the medium saw him in our house she, under test conditions, identified the portrait as being a speaking likeness of her communicator of the afternoon. This gentleman when in earth-life was a representative Scotoman and a very distinguished member of one of the Edinburgh legal societies. We have in the course of eighteen months got four messages from this personage, and all of them—but particularly the second one—show remarkable evidence of identity, being full of details unknown to the medium.

The communication got by the Ouija from this person, whom for the purposes of this article I will call Mr. G., was rapidly spelt out and to the following effect:—

1. That he was greatly pleased at being again able to come to us.
2. He renders his best acknowledgments to me for certain services I had rendered to a very near relative of his at the recent general election, and expresses his gratification at the successful result achieved on that occasion.
3. He states his dissatisfaction with the result of the trial of a Scottish cause *célèbre* with which I was officially concerned.
4. He expresses a pretty strong and accurate opinion regarding a friend of my own, who had to do with certain proceedings at the said trial, which shows me that on the other side his judgment of character is as good as it was here.
5. He gives me a message peculiarly convincing and very personal from my old friend J. D. regarding an event which occurred in the month of May last in connection with the filling up of a vacancy to a public office here, and concurs in the opinion expressed by J. D. thereon.

Now the first point I make regarding these three communications is, that they purported to be from persons who when in earth-life had close and personal relations with each other, and in fact might be called in Scotland three "cronies," being lawyers by profession, Conservatives in politics, and staunch Established Churchmen in religious connection, most likely to gravitate to each other on arriving in the spirit world.

The second point I wish to make is that the firm of which this third communicator was for many years of his life the leading partner, but from which he had retired some years before his demise, acted as the solicitors for the plaintiff in

the case referred to in the message. I have no doubt as the deceased when in earth-life knew all the parties to the suit, that he had followed the proceedings in the projected trial with as much interest as he would have done if alive. The result of the suit has thus far been very unsatisfactory to all the parties to it, and the expression of this communicator's views on a matter regarding which my daughter could have no interest whatever is, I think, an important adminicle going to prove identity.

As regards the medium's knowledge of this person, I have to say (1) she never saw or heard of him when in earth-life; (2) she knew nothing of the name of his firm or of their connection with the suit before referred to, and supposing she heard of the result of the trial in the newspapers, she could form no opinion of the legal effect of the judgment.

I am not going to dwell on this branch of the case further because enough has been said to show the medium's absolute ignorance of the bulk of the matters referred to in the communication. It must also be kept in view that she was placed by me in such a position as to be a mere automaton in the production of the three messages, and could not in any way readily see the words as they were spelt out on the "board."

In view of the persons from whom these messages were received it may be interesting to note that just before the instrument began to spell out any words she stated to us that on the table lying beside me were some law papers with a large red official seal on them, and there also appeared before her vision a horsehair wig like that worn by advocates and judges when in court, and that this wig "dangled" before her all the time the messages were coming.

More communications came at this sitting, but with these I shall not deal, being satisfied for the present to have "grouped" these three legal communicators as having come to us at the same séance. Friends they were on earth, and their intimacy and association with each other appears to be continued in the other sphere.

A DREAM STORY.

Mrs. Crosse in "Temple Bar" tells the following curious story of Sir John Pringle:—

In the summer of 1863 we were spending a few months at Dunkirk. The English Consul at the time was Sir John (then Major) Pringle. We saw a good deal of the family, and one day, during a walk over the dunes, after we had been talking of those "bodings unsanctioned by the will which teach us to beware," Major Pringle related the following curious fulfilment of a dream. When a boy of fifteen he dreamt that he met with a strange accident—that he had fallen, in fact, into the crater of an active volcano, and was only rescued from his perilous position, by means of ropes, with great difficulty after many hours—it seemed—of course. The dream was so vivid and circumstantial that it made a great impression on the boy's mind, and he mentioned it to several people. Years passed away, when Pringle chanced to be in Sicily, and here he joined a party of young Englishmen in making the ascent of Mount Etna. They attempted too close an examination of the crater. Pringle lost his footing and was precipitated into a cup-like depression from which it was impossible for him to extricate himself. In this terrible predicament the recollection of his dream flashed upon him. For years he had never thought of it, but now the horrible nightmare was reproduced in all its fearful realism. After a long and anxious delay he was rescued by means of ropes, precisely as he had been in his dream. Sir John Pringle was a man of undoubted veracity, and, though a Scotchman, was not addicted to a belief in second-sight.

COMMUNION WITH THE DIVINE.—What if man had eyes to see the true beauty, the divine beauty I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality, and all the colours and vanities of human life? Thinner looking, and holding converse with the true beauty, divine and simple, and bringing into being true creations of virtue, and not idols only? Do you not see that in that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities, for he has hold not of an image, but of a reality, and bringing forth and educating true virtue, he can become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may.—PLATO.

BRAIN CENTRES.

The new phrenology is going on, so it is very interesting to note the advance of knowledge regarding the instrument on which intelligence plays its tune in the human organisation. The following is given in the "Literary Digest." It is copied from the "American Naturalist" for September, and is from the pen of Dr. Clevenges:—

Gradually a better understanding of the nature of the brain and its workings is being acquired and disseminated by investigators and thinkers (who are not always one and the same). Twenty years ago the most incorrect ideas concerning the brain existed, consisting of a mingling of superstition with the incorrect phrenological deductions of Spurzheim, Gall, and their followers. Careful experimentation has now prepared the way for thinking pathologists and histologists. But however much may be due to the patient and careful labours of the microscopists, a research with the brain is needed to supplement researches with the eye or other sense-organs. It is only the investigators with brains who know what to look for, and recognise it when found.

The methods by which the motor-centres in the brain are localised are simple enough. After a piece of the skull of an animal was removed, electrical stimulation of certain parts of the bared brain invariably produced certain muscular movements. Applied at one point the fingers would move, at another, a certain arm-movement would occur, and thus leg, tail, face, and tongue-movements were induced, the muscular co-ordinations thus evoked being often quite complicated, as in swimming, grasping, running, and emotional expression. Cutting away these same small portions of brain-tissue produced paralysis or loss of ability to voluntarily perform these same motions. Tumours or the rupture of blood-vessels in these same regions cause similar paralytic conditions.

Destruction of other portions of the brain led to the localisation of centres for the special senses, and we have thus ascertained that the optic-centre is in the hindmost tip of the cerebrum, the auditory-centre is two or three inches further forward. The centres thus far accurately located are those for sight and hearing, and those controlling the motions of all parts of the extremities, the head, and the vocal apparatus. Taste and smell have not been localised, and it is presumable that they are more generalised than centralised through the brain. But it is probably a function of the hippocampi to bring the smelling, tasting, and eating apparatus into co-ordination.

Consciousness is at its fullest when we possess every faculty intact; a multitude of considerations leads me to deny that consciousness has any localised area in the brain; the entire nervous and vascular tissue in its solidarity is the seat of consciousness. Memory, too, has no special seat but has many brain localities devoted to different kinds of memories.

As regards volition, the fact that the so-called will-power controls such a great number of parts would of itself argue that volition exercised the centres of innervation of those parts.

As volition is merely the strongest impulse, and is aroused or checked by single or multiple reflexes, the centres of which are scattered throughout the spinal cord and brain, it is plain that there can be no special seat of the will-power.

Sexuality (to borrow a phrenological term) is sometimes apparently augmented by brain injury. This I interpret as indicating that full brain integrity diverts or holds in check the manifestations of an appetite that belongs to every cell of the body. There need no more be a special localisation in the brain for sexuality than for hunger, and these two instincts are at the very foundation of life, and exist in every part of the body, controlling, directly or indirectly, every act and thought.

We sometimes encounter the term "emotional centre" or "centres," but, in a broad sense, emotionalism is nothing more nor less than degrees of excitement. So from this point of view it would be absurd to look for its centre.

Instinctive acts are reflexes depending upon a definite arrangement of nerve strands transmitted, in many cases, through ages. Reason, on the other hand, is often engaged in holding such reflexes in check. An instinct may have its impetus in a brain-centre that controls the activities of any particular group of muscles, and may have as many different seats as there are brain-areas concerned in co-ordinating the multitude of muscular acts. Reason involves every sense, and sometimes controls all voluntary motions, hence its seat cannot be special; and, its operation being general, so must be its functioning mechanism.

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

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

SPIRITUALISM—A SOCIAL FACTOR.

While some are exercising themselves about the necessity of phenomena, or more, about the good or evil that may come of inquiring into the necessity of phenomena, it is apparent that there are others who see in the progress of Spiritualism a departure of a new kind, which must in some way or other affect the future of mankind.

To say that it is a question of pure science is to very much understate the position. To assert that it is a question independent of religion is to misstate the conditions. If by a belief in Spiritualism is meant a belief in the ascertained fact that there is intelligence active for evil or for good outside ourselves, and not conditioned as we are, then pure science and pure religion as such must stand aside and let the greater matter have full consideration.

It is as futile to speak of a belief in an unseen world, which impinges directly upon this, as independent of religious belief, as it is to assert that such a world is merely a subject of investigation in the way that the luminiferous æther and all that pertains to it is a subject of proper research. That Spiritualism is not a religion we are all agreed; that it is, having unseen intelligence as its basis, something outside the subject's mere investigation, we all know; but we are sure that it is a something which must influence religious belief, and must modify the general methods of science. To solve an equation when the unknown quantity is a mere symbol is one thing, and to try and solve it when the unknown quantity is a thinking reality, is another thing. If there is intelligence outside ourselves it is of an importance so supreme to recognise it that all other issues sink into insignificance; the time-honoured beliefs of thousands of years must share the fate of the science built up on the foundation of a five hundred years' apparent knowledge.

The position has been too much narrowed down. That the so-called dead may come back is but a part of the matter, the small part which is expressed by saying that intelligence cannot die, and finds means to show itself as occasion demands and warrants. Spiritualism in its broadest meaning asserts that the intelligences that we know in the presentment called the flesh, form but a fraction of the mighty sea of knowing which is concurrent with the universe. And the universe is *not* the solar system.

At times it seems that men who are ready enough to welcome the presence of intelligences at séances, and so

forth, are hardly able to grasp the meaning of it all. To come into the séance-room and, it may be, recognise a relative or friend, is nothing when considered in the light of the immensity of its total meaning. Much more is signified than that dying is going to live in the next street.

But if the study of Spiritualism, the endeavour to break the shell of our material existence, has proved any thing, it has proved this above all: that there is a vast ocean of independent intelligence which envelopes and permeates the world as we know it. As a social factor, then, this must be considered, at least as much as in our physical surroundings we consider the atmosphere we breathe.

To go to business, to write a book, to make laws without the recognition of this fact of superabounding intelligence is as if we were to walk about the house in broad daylight with the shutters closed, holding a tiny lamp to shed the small light that we suppose we need. It does not matter by what name it is called, subliminal consciousness, the absolute, or what you will; it is there, and must be reckoned with for good or for ill. We who call ourselves Spiritualists believe it to be full of personalities, good, bad, and it may be indifferent.

The Apostles, who were near to the spiritual outpouring that came after and about the time of the death of Christ, were among it all, they knew that they wrestled, not with flesh and blood, but with spiritual wickedness in high places—with opposition marshalled by intelligences not bound as we are.

It is not, then, that Spiritualism is to be considered as a co-factor with what is called education, or what is known as religion, in the regeneration of the race, but as a recognition of independent intelligence, which must be conquered if evil, and cherished if good, in the fight upwards which social progress means. We cannot make outside intelligence take rank with a Sunday afternoon Bible-class or a Saturday evening Socialist meeting. Social progress means the recognition of this intelligence, and the ordering of life as in its presence. It is the modern presentment of the old "Thou God seest me." Brotherhood, love, honesty, all must stand the search-light of the knowing which independent thinking spirit throws over everything.

So it will not do to make of Spiritualism a small engine like a missionary society, or an offshoot of some religious church. It stands as the assertion of the outside intelligence which is something beyond, and predominant over, all the smallnesses of this episode we call our life.

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

We observe the announcement of a new course of Spiritual, Occult, and Religious Science Lectures to be given by Mrs. Hardinge Britten, at Edinburgh Hall, Moor-side, opposite Alexandra Park gates, Manchester, on Sunday evenings. We have no doubt that this popular speaker will attract large and appreciative audiences.

EXORCISM.

Mr. G. De Winton writes in the "Daily News" concerning the Church's position in respect of Exorcism as follows:—

A paragraph in your paper relates that a man in a West Russian village was sent to prison as a rogue and a vagabond for professing to exorcise the devil from persons possessed. It may not be generally known that the canons of our Church recognise the occupation of exorcism by licence. Canon 72 enjoins that "no minister or ministers shall, without the licence and direction of the bishop of the diocese first obtained and had under his hand and seal, attempt to cast out any devil or devils, under pain of imposture or cosenage and deposition from the ministry." Those who hold that all crimes are referable to Satanic agency must regret that the power by this canon inferentially conferred on our bishops is not by them, in the interests of the criminal classes and of the community at large, widely exercised.

September 23rd, 1892.

G. DE WINTON.

In Memoriam.

W. STANTON MOSES.

There is a long and appreciative article in the "Religio-Philosophical Journal" for September 17th, from the pen of Dr. Elliott Cones. The main portion of that article must be reserved for the "Stanton Moses Number" of "LIGHT," but the opening paragraphs are given here:—

I take up a heavy pen with a heavier heart, to send the bad news that W. Stanton Moses is no more of earth. I have to-day by mail from Washington a cablegram from London of September 5th, announcing his death, but am as yet without any particulars. I presume the cable was sent immediately, and consequently that our friend left us on that date—within one month of that other bereavement we have all felt so keenly. Two such shocks in quick succession are hard to bear; each seems to intensify the other.

It will be nearly two weeks before we can hear further. Meanwhile I bring my tribute from the bottom of my heart to lay on the grave of the great and good who is gone.

His last letter lies before me, dated August 23rd. It must be one of the last he ever wrote—a death-bed message, sounding now almost like a message from the other side:—

August 23rd, 1892.

MY DEAR CONES,—I am oppressed with the sense of Bundy's death. It is always with me. I am too ill to do much. Have put my paper in commission for September. Confidentially, I am very much afraid of myself. Symptoms are ugly. Gaps in memory. Traces of paralysis on the right side. But there is, I hope, no failure in mind.

All things conspire now to worry me. Work does not kill. Worry does. I turn to you with strange longing.

I am weary—wearied. I would that I were dead. I have a series of notices of Bundy, which I shall leave for my acting Editor. I am used up.

Wearily, your friend,

W. S. M.

I think I never received a more pathetic message. There is the bowed head; there are the folded hands; there, too, the soul undaunted, inviting the final summons. And the very last words, like the first, are of the friend gone before, so soon to be followed. This is characteristic of the man. It is prophetic, too. He was conscious of his fate; his spirit advanced to answer to his name: "Adsum!"

The following is from the "Unseen Universe" for October. We entirely disagree with Mrs. Britten's assertion that Stanton Moses "was too cynical and remote from the common sympathies of humanity to be understood or appreciated by many of his English compeers":—

Already in many more places than this magazine can hope to reach, the tidings have been circulated that on September 5th, in the prime of life, usefulness, and reputation, both as a writer and thinker, Stanton Moses, the Editor of "LIGHT," has left us with none to fill the special place he occupied in the great Spiritual movement.

As a writer Mr. Moses' especial forte was his scholasticism. Educated at Oxford, ordained as an exponent of crude, harsh, man-made, and metaphysical theology, when Mr. Moses, in his devotion to truth, reason, and common-sense, became a convert to Spiritualism, he carried with him into his new faith his educational tendencies and his characteristic impulses towards learning, science, and profoundly metaphysical research.

In all these respects, no less than by his toleration for his contemporaries in scientific knowledge and culture, but especially for the mystic and authoritative *nom de plume* letters of "M.A. (Oxon.)," Mr. Moses was even a greater authority abroad than at home. He was too cynical and remote from the common sympathies of humanity to be understood or appreciated by many of his English compeers.

Those with whom and for whom he wrote and published will never again (at least in this generation) find such a representative as he was.

The work he effected will be done again, but not with the power, finish, and peculiar emphasis in which he sent it forth to the world. His career, age, and work have been told again and again in obituary notices from different points of view. In that of the writer of this notice, his loss in the present age is simply irreparable.

SIR,—I much regret to learn the death of Mr. Stanton Moses, who, with untiring energy and rare courage, has for so long a period in this materialistic age rendered invaluable service to the cause of a more spiritual insight into the mystery of life and death, which, rightly regarded, are after all not two but one. A cultivated man and a lucid, vigorous writer, he dared publicly and continuously to maintain convictions which he deemed of the utmost importance to human welfare, at a time when these were not merely unpopular, but entailed ridicule and loss of intellectual caste among cultivated people. This I believe to be high praise. For the modern persecution by sneer and "boycott" is every wit as real, if somewhat less disagreeable, than the older persecution by fire and faggot. But we hope that our friend, having passed onward, may still find a way to help us.

West Brighton,

October 1st, 1892.

RODEN NOEL.

SIR,—I had not the pleasure of knowing Mr. Stanton Moses personally, but I should like, as one keenly, and possibly sometimes critically, interested in Spiritualism, to bear testimony to an aspect of his work that has, it seems to me, been too little noticed. I do not hesitate to say that he gave to the subject, for the first time, a really scientific, and not less, a literary interest. He dealt with it calmly, rationally, understanding the mode of thought of his time, and giving to ascertained fact its due value. He dealt with it also humanely and tenderly, as an educated gentleman, and not as a fanatic; and while firmly holding and strongly asserting his own belief, he never insulted the faith of others, nor railed against history, nor blasphemed the order of the universe. He made it possible for men of thought and culture to look upon the phenomena and doctrines of modern Spiritualism with some attention and patience, apart from democratic trumpetings about the golden age, or the invention of new religions; apart, too, from last-century philosophy, the science of the shilling manual, and the "poetry" of the "inspirational platform." Finally, and these are not the smallest of his claims upon our gratitude, he sternly and relentlessly exposed imposture, and he wrote good English.

Turnalt, Argyll, N.B.

JAMES A. CAMPBELL.

October 3rd, 1892.

M. RENAN ON DEATH AND MENTAL DECAY.

Renan, in his book, "Recollections of my Youth," written in his sixtieth year, tells us that since the first months of 1846 he has never shifted his immovable anchor from the scientific purview of the universe; that there is no trace of free-will in it superior to that of man. And, at the close of the book, expressing his hope for a calm and sudden death, he says: "I should be very grieved to have to go through one of those periods of enfeeblement during which the man once endowed with strength and virtue is but the shadow and ruin of his former self; and often, to the delight of the ignorant, sets himself to demolish the life which he had so laboriously constructed. . . . If such a fate be in store for me, I hasten to protest beforehand against the weaknesses which a softened brain might lead me to say or sign. It is the Renan sound in body and mind, as I am now—not the Renan half-destroyed by death, and no longer himself, as I shall be if my decomposition is gradual—whom I wish to be believed and listened to."—"Agnostic Journal."

"LIGHT" AND THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.—The following letter has been received:—SIR,—At a meeting recently held to close the "Fresh-Air Fund" for the season, a very cordial vote of thanks was given to the Editor of "LIGHT" for his helpful assistance to the Fund. As chairman of the meeting I have much pleasure in assuring you of the sincerity of the gratitude.—Yours faithfully, JOHN KIRK.

"SPIRITUALISM: A WARNING."—Under this heading Mr. A. F. Tindall has sent us a long abstract of a reply by himself to a sermon delivered by the Rev. H. E. Stone. We are obliged to Mr. Tindall, but "LIGHT" has always kept itself aloof from the general outside controversy on the subject of Spiritualism. Mr. Stone and his like have been answered over and over again, and there seems no need to further advertise him.

MAN is perceptive through his own will, but also through his own will blind; he is free through his will, and through his will a slave; he is honest through his will, and through his will a rogue.—PESTALOZZI.

SPIRITUALISM AS IT IS.

BY WILLIAM OXLEY.

The demise of W. Stainton Moses, late Editor of "LIGHT," occurring as it did in what is thought to be the prime of life, and by which the career, or life's work, of one who occupied a very prominent position in the Spiritualistic world of thought and action was cut short, will awaken in many minds questions that have a profound bearing upon the work in which he was engaged, and into which he so heartily entered, counting (metaphorically) "all other things but loss," so that he might gain the knowledge that pertains to the human spirit, in spiritual states and spheres, when emancipated from the physical body.

Did he gain such knowledge, in pursuit of which the best years of his earthly career were spent? Has anyone, now in physical embodiment, attained to such knowledge? If not, why not? What is the end in view, on the part of the operator, or operators, who are the prime movers in what we regard as the great spiritual movement of our day and times? That it has been the means of demonstrating beyond doubt or cavil, to thousands of honest and truth-loving men and women, the continuity of so-called personal life, cannot be denied; and the importance of this fact cannot be over-estimated; but beyond this—and here comes in the force of what I wish to put forward in reference thereto—what do we really *know* concerning the status of the personality, such as we now are conscious of, when it has passed through the process of dissolution, or death?

To my view, the knowledge that the "Ego" *does* survive, and passes into another world or state, is but the alpha—the first letter in the alphabet, which, when formulated, will enable us to learn the language of spirits, apart from matter or material surroundings that in our present state make us conscious of being who and where we are. I am quite aware that hosts of so-called "spirits" have communicated with mortals, in a great variety of modes—materialised forms, ghosts, apparitions, controls, phantasms, &c.; but beyond the fact that they testify to their knowledge of being themselves, and that they are alive, and happy or otherwise as the case may be, what have we, who are alive, and in the same conditions that were theirs, gained in knowledge as to what their state, condition, and world is in reality and actuality?

To the superficial observer it is strange that those who were known to have been "Spiritualists" in earth-life, seem to be either so oblivious of their past that they are forgetful, or that they are so engaged in their, to them, present life that they have no care for those who are on earth. In any case, known instances to the contrary are the exception and not the rule. Let us hope that our late departed friend, "M.A. (Oxon.)," will form one of the exceptions, and come and tell us his views of the life beyond. But here would come again the question of identity which is proving so troublesome and unsatisfactory. Supposing he could "come back," and communicate something, what criterion have we by which to test the veracity of what purports to come from disembodied human beings? In what form, figure, and make-up does the liberated human spirit have its self-consciousness? The testimony of clairvoyants seems to agree in describing the spiritual form as being like, in shape and configuration, the structural organism that it emerges from. But is this the real and permanent form and shape of a disembodied human being? To all my interrogatories, addressed to speaking materialised spirits, controls, &c., the answers have been so equivocal and unsatisfactory that such a class of evidence is of little value.

It would be strange indeed in these times of intellectual activity and discoveries in every domain of science—so far as Nature is concerned—and which discoveries have brought to light the action of laws the operation of which is now well known, if such a result did not awaken into activity the desire to know something of the laws that operate in the domain of psychical science; for most assuredly it must now be recognised as a science with a philosophy, and dealt with accordingly. The present state of human mentality—as we note its development among the nations of Christendom—supplies the conditions for a patient study and research, commencing with the phenomena so abundantly supplied and tabulated in the indefinite number and variety found in Spiritualistic records.

What does it all mean? is frequently heard from many who, satisfied as to the genuineness of psychic phenomena, are sure there must be something underlying, which is awaiting the man, or men, qualified to speak with as much authority as the adept in any given branch of natural science. An attempt in this direction has been made by the Theosophical school of thought, and its founder, the late H. P. Blavatsky, has published several recondite works, in which the present and future destiny of man is claimed to be set forth as the result of the labours of many generations of certain "wisemen of the East," and for whom the lady in question was the reputed mouthpiece.

But all behind Madame Blavatsky is an unknown quantity—and for ever likely to remain so—and all that is given out rests upon nothing more solid than assumption, or assertion, and as to proof none is given, or attempted to be given. The absence of this is fatal to its value in the eyes of those who are looking for proof and demonstration as a solution of the question, "If a man die will he live again? If so, where, how, and in what condition?" With the words used in a recent letter to myself by "M.A. (Oxon.)," "Theosophy is a hallucination," I cordially agree, and after looking carefully into what is intended to be palmed off as truth, I find the whole fabric vanishes into thin air. For instance, the Re-incarnation theory, the seven (arithmetical quantities) so-called principles of which the human being is composed, and which at death are dismembered, part going with the Ego, and the rest forming a shell, *debris*, floating about in space; which shells, spooks, or what not are said by Theosophists to be the operators in the Spiritualistic seance rooms. The unphilosophy, not to say absurdity, of such teachings is too patent not to be detected at once by the student of the laws of life and the searcher for pure truth. We are already in possession of the first principles of psychic and spiritual science, as enunciated by Emmanuel Swedenborg (I do not speak of his theology, which to the progressed scientist and philosopher of spirit is obsolete), his propositions being that "Man is a recipient of life"; that his life is sustained by continuous influx; and that all things in outer nature are "correspondences," or re-presentations in objective form of spiritual verities, and from which they derive their form: in short, all things on the earth, within and under the earth, are effects, and the science of spirit, or life, unfolds and brings to view the causes of which they are the effects. A thorough and patient study of these laws will be found sufficient to unfold what are the mysteries—as yet—pertaining to the world of spirit and its inhabitants.

Forty years of psychic phenomena, which have been so multifarious in expression, undoubtedly have resulted in redeeming this extraordinary outworking of hitherto unknown power from the easy-going charge of "superstition," which is now exploded by strict "scientific" methods and research. But *facts* are scientific, and the tabulation of these affords the means whereby a new domain of "science" is opened up, of far more importance, in the long run, than the scientist of outward nature is at present willing to grant. What I refer to may be gathered from a paper by Professor Huxley on "The Decline of Bibliolatry" (see "Popular Science Monthly" for September), in which he says, *inter alia*: "The extant forms of supernaturalism have deep roots in human nature, and will undoubtedly die hard; but in these latter days they have to cope with an enemy whose full strength is only just beginning to be put out, and whose forces, gathering strength year by year, are hemming them round on every side. This enemy is science, in the acceptance of systematised natural knowledge, the worth of which is confirmed by daily appeal to nature, to every region in which the supernatural has hitherto been recognised."

Such is the gospel of materialistic science as propounded by one of its most brilliant advocates and exponents. But if such a gospel were to be generally accepted it would result in negation and know-nothingism, so far as the real constitution of man is concerned. What is Nature, to which the learned Professor appeals as confirmatory of his doctrine other than the external manifestation of spirit? It will require a wiser man than the Professor to define what Nature really is. Nature is what it is by virtue of containing an inner principle which we term spirit, and from which it cannot be dissociated. In fewest words, one is the internal and the other the external of the same thing.

The true scientist *knows* that there can be no antagonism between physical and psychical science, and I am bold to

admit that the knowledge of the physical—so far as causation is concerned—is unattainable without a knowledge of the psychical; for in the latter domain we can deal with causes of which outer Nature, in the infinitude of its manifestation, is the phenomenal expression. As spiritual scientists we decline to admit the materialistic definition of the term Nature; and we affirm that the psychic part of the human being is as natural, while in embodied conditions, as the denser parts which are classed as material or natural, notwithstanding the dogmatic assertions of the materialistic scientific school of thought to the contrary.

The true knowledge as to who and what man is, is not attained by the mere study of biology, physiology, anthropology, and other ologies of the kind; for the human principle of life cannot be dealt with by such sciences. To attain this knowledge must be by other modes; and the question of questions is now awaiting solution. Will it ever be solved? Is it within reach, by the exercise of the human mind, and by researches into the domain of the psychical and spiritual?

To this all-important question I modestly but emphatically respond in the affirmative.

Higher Broughton, Manchester.

October 1st, 1892.

MR. STEAD AND GHOSTS.

A representative of the "Million" has been interviewing Mr. Stead, and this is what the representative says:—

In the storm and stress of a busy life you may find Mr. Stead, in the intervals not devoted to preparing his magazine or pushing forward the work of the Association of Helpers, simply absorbed in the subject of Spiritualism and apparitions. It was more particularly upon this subject that, on behalf of "The Million," I wished to see him, and so our talk gradually drifted round to a chat about this latest of Mr. Stead's adopted children.

"And so you are still engaged in your investigations into Spiritualism and ghosts? I suppose you will now have hosts of good ghost stories up your sleeve, Mr. Stead?"

"Yes, decidedly I am continuing the investigations. You have seen the 'Real Ghost Stories' I published at Christmas, and the later New Year's volume dealing with 'More Ghost Stories.' Well, I have now collected evidence which would add largely to that already made public, and the more I look into the subject the more do I become convinced that it is certain that spiritual existences are around us. The phenomena I have myself observed, the experiences at the sances I have attended, and the work of the mediums and clairvoyants with whom I have come in contact, all go to show the importance and the necessity of the world more keenly studying this question, and bringing to bear upon it the light of scientific research and investigation. To me the matter is now one of vital importance. And it seems to me in connection with the question of Spiritualism, very odd, very peculiar, that so many good, devout, excellent people who accept and uphold the literal inspiration of the Bible should entirely ignore the existence of good and bad spirits, but I can assure you this is an undoubted fact. They can go so far as believing or accepting the Spiritualism of the Testaments, but do not seem to think that when they regard the Old and New Testaments as existing for all time, they must, as a natural outcome of such a belief in the permanence of the Bible, admit the co-existence of spirits down to the present day."

"But could you give me any instances in which you have found mediumistic communications bear any degree of exactness, without a suspicion of trickery arising?"

"Yes, many. In this room," Mr. Stead went on, "we have had a number of sances, some of which had quite a remarkable result. On one occasion a materialising medium said she saw the spirit of one of the dead in the chair in which you are sitting."

"What!" I gasped.

"Sitting in that very chair," Mr. Stead repeated. "I could not see the form, but the description of the dress, the minute account of a white scarf, or cravat, worn was minutely accurate. The medium could not by any means have known the person she described. More singular still, and a remarkable corroboration of this appearance of a spirit, the same dead person has been described by some half

dozen mediums in different parts of the country, the description of the spirit often varying in detail, but always being substantially the same. There was not in any of these instances the slightest suspicion of collusion."

"That is very interesting."

"But don't let us make this subject a plaything. It is its seriousness, its importance, the feeling that sances are harmful, and the fact that there are so many children and fools in the world, that I wish at present not to commit myself to any definite assertion with regard to the question."

"Dr. Wallace has admitted that most of the communications of the spirits of the departed are trivial and commonplace. This is due, he goes on, to the fact that the majority of those who died are trivial and commonplace, and that the production of these dreams, impressions, and phantasms may be as a special exercise of their lost spiritual faculty as agreeable to some spirits as billiards, chemical experiments, or practical joking are to some mortals. Secondly, some spirits are condemned to haunt the places where they committed crimes as a kind of penal service, even continuing to reproduce some incidents connected with it. Thirdly, good and benevolent spirits wish, whenever possible, to give some message to their friends."

"And have you been able to photograph any of these spirits?"

"No, not yet," said Mr. Stead sadly. "The fact is, all our experiments have totally failed. We have," he laughed, "tried to photograph the 'spook' with the magnesium flash light and without. But flash our lights never so much the 'spook' still holds back. If we used the magnesium light, then that proved too powerful, and apparently swamped the shadowy form which the medium said was present in the room. If we tried to catch the 'spook' in its own light we also found that was not sufficient to produce any effect on the sensitive plate of the camera."

"But what about the photographs of spirit forms and ghosts already taken?"

"There is no doubt that a number of well-authenticated photographs exist. Some have been taken—under test conditions—which make it seem impossible that fraud was committed. And, that being so, one might reasonably infer that spirits do exist, and may be photographed. But we want something more than this. We want a result such as Mr. Maskelyne suggests. Mr. Maskelyne thinks that the only way of convincing the scientific person of the realness of these 'spooks' would be for the spirit to materialise near the entrance to one of the strong-rooms of the Safe Deposit Company. Then, when the spirit had materialised, it should be cajoled into the strong-room and locked up. After an interval, say half an hour, the strong-room should be opened. If on the door being opened the materialised spirit was not in the room, then would Mr. Maskelyne give up his disbelief in 'spooks,' and admit that such a thing as a spirit was possible."

And in continuation of this novel proposal of "first catch your spook," Mr. Stead has something of interest to say in "More Ghost Stories," which may be here fitly interpolated.

"I should have been most anxious," he said, "to have endeavoured to apply this test if I could have succeeded in obtaining a materialising medium who would produce the spirit upon which the experiment could be tried. Unfortunately, being a tyro in the matter, and the race of mediums seeming to be almost extinct in this country, I have not been able to accept Mr. Maskelyne's challenge."

"In fact," said Mr. Stead, in continuing the conversation, "I want something more tangible than a good deal of the present balderdash and flapdoodle. Young Mr. Maskelyne, for instance, has offered, as soon as he hears of the likelihood of a spirit appearing, to focus his camera lens upon it. He, like his father, is willing to give up his scepticism on the subject if on his camera plate the ghost of a spirit should be found imprinted."

"Will the photograph satisfy you, Mr. Stead?"

"No; I want to get the ghost to speak when a phonograph is in the room. I want the voice of the 'double,' or the 'spook,' so bottled up as to leave no uncertainty in the mind. In fact," proceeded Mr. Stead, with a smile, "we not only want to photograph the ghosts of the living and the dead, but to obtain a record of their spirit voices in the phonograph, and, by means of an instrument I am perfecting, to get them to work the type-writer as well. If our ghost can stand these tests then we may say that the exist-

ence of the 'double'—or the 'spook'—is placed upon a perfectly solid basis."

"Have you seen a ghost?" I then asked.

Mr. Stead shook his head.

"No," he said: "I haven't. I am too dense, too material—but who knows what may happen?"

And at that point Mr. Stead's stream of talk came to an end.

"JIM THE ORANG AND HIS COUSINS"

The "New Review" has a curious and very interesting article with the above title. That the ape is somewhat lower than the angel called man is true enough, but how much or how little lower investigators like Professor Garner may eventually discover for us. Professor Garner is about to visit Africa in order to investigate the character of the anthropoid apes "at home." He says:—

It is not my belief that apes are accomplished artists, musicians, mathematicians, architects, or linguists, but it is very difficult, if not impossible, to define the exact limits of these faculties by any sharp lines; and the fact that they distinguish sounds, colours, figures, quantities, and numbers clearly indicates that they have the basis upon which such superstructures may be erected, and my purpose is to see how tall such an edifice may be built. If my investigations result in the positive proof that apes are capable of more than man, I shall accept the situation and make the best of it; while on the other hand, if the evidence shows that there is no affinity between man and ape I shall be quite content with the result, and thousands of human beings who are now in doubt about their ancestors will be made happy.

And the following story is singularly suggestive:—

About two years ago, as I drove through the streets of the little city of Columbus, Georgia, I saw an Italian with a hand organ and a monkey of the brown Capuchin variety. The poor little monkey was dressed in a kilt and cocked hat, and around his waist wore a belt to which was attached a small chain which the Italian held in his hand. Quite an audience of black and white children had assembled to witness the performance, and while the man ground away on his machine the little Franco-Scotch-Simian soldier passed round the circle to collect the pennies. I dismounted from the buggy and asked permission of the owner to speak to his monkey; permission was granted and I uttered to him in my best manner the Capuchin salutation and sound for food. The little captive immediately turned from his duties and came to me, uttering the same sound with great rapidity and energy. I procured some food from a shop in front of which this scene took place, which he ate with great relish. I also gave him some milk, which he drank with delight, and then climbed up into my arms with an unceasing chatter which I cannot venture to translate literally, but the tone and manner of which appealed to my better feelings in the strongest possible manner. After spending a few minutes with him I could only with difficulty release myself from his little arms, which he had folded about my neck most affectionately. His cruel master tugged and jerked at the chain and scolded him in the ugliest Italian. And in turn I rewarded him with a like scolding in as good English as I could command. During this scene the tears came to the monkey's eyes, and I really regretted that I had spoken to him at all, as this little ray of sunlight thrown into the darkness of his life of captivity may have made it all the more gloomy by reason of comparison. But I have remembered vividly how he called to me, with tears in his eyes at my departure, with that same soft, pleading, and musical tone with which he had answered my salutation, and this has sometimes made me wish that I could release them all from their confinement and restore them to the freedom of their native forests.

This is the conclusion of a deeply interesting and able article:—

From my rather extensive acquaintance among the Simian tribes, I have reason to expect good results to follow my work. I believe that I have shown to the thinking mind the possibility of learning the speech of these creatures, and have pointed out from time to time almost every faculty and characteristic of man, and shown that they possess the germ

from which could have grown every human trait and accomplishment. I do not mean by this to say that man is descended from such an ancestor, nor do I mean to convert it; I leave that to be settled by others, and I shall abide by their verdict. But whatever may be the facts in the case, we are related so nearly by the ties of nature that our humanity may be touched by them without being contaminated; and I always feel the deepest sympathy with them in captivity and regret that man, with his superior strength, his exalted faculties, and his sublime sense of right and wrong, cannot be made to realise the cruelty of consigning these sinless creatures to the narrow limits of a felon's cage while there are continents of space to spare them. These animals belong to a sphere of life unlike our own; they cannot be deprived of the exercise which constitutes so great a part of their lives and pleasure without impairing their health and inflicting punishment. If they must be kept in captivity, either for the benefit of science or to gratify our whims, in the name of justice and humanity make their cages large enough for them to take their exercise and protect them from the outrages of the "small boy" of whatever size or age.

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.]

"Spirit Identity."

SIR,—Your editorial "footnote" on my two selected cases published in the issue of September 24th last appears to me to call for some additional remarks.

J.M.L. was not known to the medium. He lived and died seventy miles from us, and the medium saw him in the street about fourteen years ago, but never spoke to him. She, therefore, knew nothing of his personality. Memory cannot come into play here, and there must be a distinction drawn between my knowledge of this communicator and that possessed by the medium, whose mind may be said to have been a total blank regarding him.

The same remark almost applies to H.J.R. I had had some business connection with him years ago, and knew about him. The medium, on the other hand, had only met him at some of the "exhibitions" I have mentioned, and had only a speaking acquaintance with him, because of his official connection with the institution specified.

I can account for H.J.R.'s communication, because of one which preceded it, from a former headmaster of the institution, besides several others coming from kindred sources.

But I "peril" the question of identity on the signature alone, which was very peculiar, and its reproduction by the medium in my presence was extremely startling.

I have only to add that on these cases my attitude has been "severely judicial," just because of the abnormal character of the communications, and also because for forty years my experience of the laws of evidence has led me to "prove all things"—even messages coming through the hand of my daughter.

The internal evidence, such as the use of certain phrases and expressions, cannot be dealt with, otherwise the value of the cases would have been greatly enhanced. "ERRA"

"A Question."

SIR,—I regret that there seems to be a disposition on the part of some Spiritualists to do away with spiritual phenomena, and to contend that to seek for them is "dangerous." History teaches us that this is the way of all sects.

First come the inspired teachers and the miracles. These follow the creed-makers. These latter make their system's finality and boycott all fresh inspirations. Spiritual phenomena of all kinds will be needed while a single materialist remains on this earth. And even when Spiritualism becomes a universal belief the phenomena will be still more needed, for only by studying them can we learn more and more about our immortal destiny. Some say we should depend on intuition and do away with physical phenomena. Do my suppose that subjective facts alone would have convinced the late Editor of "LIGHT," and many other educated people? No! Then how do people expect the present generation to be convinced? Are they to be satisfied with the husk, while the old investigators had the kernel? We are told that it is wicked to drag the spirits down to earth again. Have out

new converts never heard of that Divine Power of Love which to benefit those who are dear, will sacrifice comfort to minister to them?

Loving spirits will bring their heaven with them into any conditions to benefit humanity. Do we not see some faint gleams of this love in those who forsake wealth for poverty, pleasure for pain, and ease for hard toil *because they love*?

Then we are told of the dangers. My twenty years' experience as an Occultist proves to me that there is a Divine Power in man as well as behind the phenomenal universe. This Divine Power if evoked by Love and desire for truth can protect us from evil. Of course we must bear certain trials. These are for our development. And for spiritual development we are born on this earth; but we shall be protected from all *real* harm.

I have often been censured for not believing in the gods of human fancy. I marvel that I should have to remind some of our friends, and perhaps amongst them some of my critics, of the existence of the Divine Intelligence in Man and in the Universe, and also of the attribute of love and its protecting power. My *Guide* informs me that this effort to depreciate phenomena is the latest *role* of those "unseen adversaries" who hate Spiritualism, and to check them he urges me to write this letter.

A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L.

SIR.—A question I fancy which interests some of your readers is, "Are séances, and intercourse with the class of spirits supposed to be present on such occasions, lawful?"

This question, I imagine, is put by those who still believe more or less in the Bible, and implies belief in different classes of spirits, and antagonism amongst them; some spirits who would say, "If you consort with, or consult that class, we shall refuse all intercourse with you"; and if intercourse with the one is unlawful, it implies the other is so much more powerful that it may dictate.

As advocate of the view that the Bible does not teach the heavens and bells of our various religions, but talks of the real heavens in which are the sun, moon and stars, that is of the real space around us, I assert the question becomes, Is such space inhabited? Are there spirits or conscious beings which can pass from world to world? If there are, and the Bible professedly represents such beings, it would be such Space Society as forbids all seeking intercourse with it, to seek intercourse with any lower class of spirits, not members of the Space or Universal Society.

Is this so? I do not know.

Has the Bible, or have its authors, any right to dictate on such matters? I do not know.

Is there a Space Society at all? I do not know.

The Bible apparently says there is, and states clearly enough; it seems we, our race, have forfeited their favour and intercourse. It farther states that intercourse can be recovered on terms; and they not only promise renewed intercourse on terms, but promise immortality, which they say cannot be acquired without their consent.

Is it so? I do not know. Only it seems to me if we want what they offer we must consent to their terms. As to immortality, it may be true or not. But how any immortality can be enjoyable except as member of the Supreme Society, or most powerful society of the universe, I cannot see. Members of hostile, weaker powers must be exposed to terrible chances in Infinity.

I can well imagine, if any wish to join any Society, they must submit to the rules of such society and not introduce the ideas or ways of any other society, especially if that other is objected to.

If you wish to live here in England do not adopt Chinese habits; adopt them if living in China.

It is much in that sense I would say, lawful or unlawful.

The question concerns my object. For I am asking, Will any submit to the terms on which renewed intercourse with Higher Intellects is promised?

But I do not even know if such Higher Intellects exist, and until we do know, how can we say other subjects are lawful, or unlawful, on their authority? Besides, do we know even what they are supposed to command? For we seem to have misunderstood most of what they are supposed to tell us.

They may mean we are not to submit ourselves to lower psychic or mere earth powers. I hardly think anyone competent to dictate until we obtain the promised renewed intercourse, then our teachers can explain what is lawful, what not.

All I could say is, let students of each class obey the reputed rule of that class. If one rule is, they who seek the higher must not associate with the lower, we should obey it.

REJECTED.

Spiritualism and the Catholic Church.

SIR,—Now that Spiritualism has become a subject of so much argument, may I be allowed to say a few words about it as, although I am only seventeen years old, I have had some experience in the matter? To begin with, I must say that, as far as we Catholics are concerned, I feel certain that it is both wrong and unwise for us to have anything whatever to do with it!

I went to my first séance in the beginning of this year, at the house of a well-known "clairvoyant," and was very much pleased with all I then saw and heard, as also with the manner in which the séance was conducted by our medium, Mrs. —. After two or three séances, I myself began to see lights and shadows flitting about the room; I also saw flowers, and in a very short time figures of people whom I had known: also of others I had never seen, but described so accurately that my friends with whom we were holding the séance were easily enabled to recognise among them several of their deceased relations and friends.

We all, to the number of seven, felt the cold air on our hands, but I was the only one of the party, the medium excepted, who could see anything. The answers we got to our questions were really wonderful, and sometimes we held long conversations with the spirits by means of a certain code.

We often afterwards had opportunities of proving the veracity of their assertions, and I do not remember one important instance where they did not speak the truth. Their mistakes were generally with regard to time, as they did not seem to have any idea of the length of a month or year. The clairvoyant at whose house we held these meetings (I do not mention her name as I do not wish mine to be known) thought it very remarkable that a girl as young as myself, who had only just begun to go to séances, should see as much and as clearly as she—a medium of more than twenty years' standing.

Sometimes, when sitting in my room at night, or even in the day time, I still see wonderful things, generally without any connection with what I have been reading or with the subject of my thoughts at the time. I have never been able to see anything for myself, but always for other people, either relatives or friends. Often I do not understand these visions, as I cannot in any way connect them with anyone of my acquaintance.

I am a good physical medium, as I can move a table or work the "planchette" with the greatest facility.

We had been attending séances for about four months when my sister (who always accompanied me) and I, began to have very strange feelings about Spiritualism: we could not help thinking, argue as we would against ourselves, that in going in for it we were doing wrong. Besides, it is forbidden by the teachings of our Church, yet somehow we seem to have glided into it unawares, for, when we first went to the clairvoyant, we had not any intention of taking up Spiritualism. All we wanted was to get, by means of a clairvoyant, advice about some private matters.

We then consulted several priests on the subject, and they with one voice told us to give it up at once, as the knowledge we had obtained could not possibly come from a good source; so we once and for all made up our minds to have nothing more to do with it. Since that time we have not been near a clairvoyant's house.

The following is a question we more than once asked ourselves when deliberating what course to take: What spirit, having entered Heaven, would be allowed to revisit this earth in order to give us that knowledge of the future which our Lord, in His far-seeing wisdom, has denied us, and which He has given us no means of gaining except those means which, being contrary to the doctrines of the Church, it is not lawful for us to make use of? And again: What child of the Church would not lose his faith and give up praying if he went in for Spiritualism? Would he not say, Why should I waste my time in praying for that which the spirits have already told me for certain I shall get? We must, therefore, choose between Faith (that faith which has been handed down to us by our ancestors, and for which, perhaps, so many of them shed their life's blood) and Spiritualism (of which those same ancestors had a horror as

of something that polluted their very nature). Therefore, if we trusted to the spirits for everything, as far as we are concerned, the Divine Providence which guides us would pass altogether out of our lives! Yes; that same Divine Providence which has decreed that not one hair of our heads shall be touched except by His Almighty will.

I wish I could lay before you more clearly all that I myself feel upon this important subject; that I could convince you, as I myself am convinced, of the harm we do ourselves by going in for these seances, which I must acknowledge to be fascinating to the last degree.

I fail, however, to express myself as I would desire, and therefore offer my excuses for presuming to ask you to publish this letter in your paper. MYSTIC.

[The above letter is not accompanied by any name or address, but it bears internal evidence of having been written in good faith; it is therefore published as throwing an interesting side-light on the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards Spiritualism.—ED. "LIGHT."]

Spiritualism the Co-Worker.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Frank Sykes, has a curious attack on Spiritualism, partly true and partly "otherwise"! and ends with a prescription for its work "as the mightiest power for good the world has seen." The whole letter is a curious confusion of things that differ, yet with the sighing of an earnest soul for the "dissemination of a stream of healthy influence."

I have for years endeavoured to point out that however valuable Spiritualism is as a handmaid to religious and practical life, Spiritualism *itself* is purely on the scientific or evidential side of truth; and does not possess, without allying itself to deep religious life, the power to solve "deep problems of a full national life."

It may be, and is, urged by enthusiastic Spiritualists that it is all sufficient to promote the brotherhood of man for which we all long; and, in proportion to our own sense of brotherhood, towards which we continually strive. But we shall never attain brotherhood until we recognise Fatherhood and follow the *life* teachings of one Jesus, who expressed to us all that our finite capacity can grasp at present of the Great Father's nature. We must start in our life's work from a life-pattern. No absolute proof, such as Spiritualism offers, is a sufficiently wide platform from which to preach liberty to the captives, or the rules and maxims and endeavours necessary for true spiritual life. We want a divine life to create, or stimulate, that life within us: and not only proofs of its existence and continuity. It is for Spiritualism to confirm the absolute continuity of life here and hereafter; to assert its boundless outlook and possibilities, all dependent upon the uses we make here of our present transitory beginning of life; it is for Jesus Christ, or, if you prefer, Confucius or Buddha, to become the inspiration of that life, which is in fact God's life in the soul of man.

Man has always looked for, longed for, yearned for a pattern of the highest *life* obtainable. One has lived among us, one life which has drawn its vitality from the Great Source of all spiritual life; and all creeds and theories and dogmatisms fall short of this vitality. The *motif* your correspondent yearns for will never be found in any proofs or phenomena such as it is the province of Spiritualism to offer, but only in God's life, in its highest expression (for us finite beings) in His Son. If we could all take this Christ-life, and with some of the teachings of Spiritualism leaven Christianity, purge the Churches from vain superstitions or erroneous doctrines in regard chiefly to the future state, and live the life, we should find the Church, and not the scientific platform, the best place for organisation and for carrying out the noblest life of brotherhood, under Christ's recognition of the Fatherhood of God. Spiritualism *has* a work, and a very important work; but it lies in the direction of controverting materialism and confounding our *savants*, in comforting those that mourn, and speaking by *facts* when faith is weak, and not in what is known as creating spiritual life. The confusion of the two provinces has weakened Spiritualism, and will continue to do so until we leave off confusing things that differ.

MORELL THEOBALD.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MANY valuable contributions are received, but are so lengthy that to insert them in full would be impossible, and to condense them would probably spoil them. May we urge upon our friends the necessity for condensation?

SOCIETY WORK.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—Spiritual service each Sunday at 7 p.m. Speaker for Sunday next, Mr. C. H. Hardingham, subject, "Spiritualism and the Bible." The tea and concert which took place on September 20th were in every way a success.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—A good discourse was given on Sunday last by Mr. Horatio Hunt, on "The Revelations of Death." Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. H. Hunt; at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Hunt on "The Book of Life." Monday, at 7.45 p.m., seance, Mr. Hunt. Tickets to be had from the secretary. Saturday, at 7.45 p.m., seance, Mr. Mason.—C.I.H.

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 33, HIGH-STREET.—Rev. Dr. Rowland Young's address on "Eternal Punishment, a Human Fiction" was listened to on Sunday evening with evident pleasure. On Sunday next he will speak on "Future Punishment a Divine Fact," at 7 p.m., prompt. Thursday, healing, at 8.30 p.m. October 16th, Mr. Lees. October 23rd and 30th, Mrs. Smith, of Leeds.—J. T. AULY.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—Mr. Towns lectured on Sunday upon the question, "Of what use is Spiritualism?" and narrated some of his remarkable experiences. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Cable, "Psychometry." Tuesday, at 8 p.m., seance, Mrs. Mason. On Saturday, October 8th, Mr. W. Walker will give a special seance on behalf of Mr. Norton, who has met with a serious accident, at 8 prompt. Tickets, 1s. each.—J.H.B., Hon. Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Sunday, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m., spiritual service; at 3 p.m., Lyceum. Wednesday, at 8.30 p.m., spirit circle. On Wednesday last a good meeting was held, mostly strangers, when the members present addressed the audience on the light and teachings which the spirit world had given them. The Sunday morning and evening meetings were well sustained by our workers.—W. G. COOTE, Hon. Sec.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION, 359, EDGWARE-ROAD, W.—Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Towns will speak on "Psychometry." Sunday, October 16th, Mr. Wyndoe will give a discourse on "Federation." October 23rd, Mrs. Ashton Bingham on "Spiritual Gifts." We have now several Seance Committees sitting regularly. All those who wish to join fresh seances now being formed should attend at 8 o'clock next Tuesday at the Hall. It is necessary for those who wish to attend the seances to first become members of the Federation.—A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L., Hon. Sec.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. Webster, 5, Peckville-street, North Melbourne; Canada, Mr. Woodcock, "Waterniche," Brookville; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middellaan, 682; India, Mr. Thomas Batton, Ahmedabad; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, B. Fortenson, Ada, Christiania; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, French Correspondent, 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 p.m., reception for inquirers. Friday, at 8.15 p.m., for Spiritualists only, The Study of Mediumship. And at 1, Winifred-road, the first Sunday in each month at 7.15 p.m., for reception of inquirers. Tuesday, at 8.15 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J.A.

PECKHAM RYE.

In the notices which have appeared from time to time in "LIGHT," the disturbances on Peckham Rye, with the avowed object of "putting down" Mr. Lees, have been ascribed by our correspondents to agents of the Christian Evidence Society. In reference to one of our paragraphs, Mr. T. T. Waterman, the organising secretary of the Society, has sent us a communication in which he says:—

Will you allow me to say that your correspondent has made a mistake so far as the Christian Evidence Society is concerned? This society has no "placard on a pole" and has never had one, nor were any of its agents present, I believe, at the time referred to; nor have they been present officially at any time during the current year. We know nothing of any disturbances on the Rye, except what has been learned from the public newspapers. Wherever our agents are sent to lecture they are instructed to act with courtesy to all, and from many years' acquaintance with them, I believe they would at all times repress disturbance rather than wittingly cause it.

On the other hand, we have evidence on which we can implicitly rely, that one of the leading offenders openly proclaims himself an agent of the Christian Evidence Society. Of course, after Mr. Waterman's assurances, which we accept with pleasure, we know that the person referred to does not always speak the truth.