

Light:

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"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—*Goethe.*

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have received from the Continent a letter, part of which we venture to print, as it is of public interest:—

Will you allow me to send you a few lines. Your time is so valuable and used to such good purpose that I do not ask you to reply but only to read what I write. By the same post as this letter I am sending you 'Many Infallible Proofs,' which you may like to glance over. It is the cry of a reverent soul who, having found what is truth to him, wishes his fellow creatures to participate in it. Although his truth is not what is truth to you and me, it seems almost cruel to tell him that he must renounce the idea that miracles prove the Divine source of the Scriptures, and that similar resurrections as that of the Christ are of common occurrence at the present day—for he writes (page 78)—'the Gospel of Christ we cannot discuss without deep feeling—all we have and hope in this world and the next is bound up with it; he who insults and assaults it thrusts his steel into our very vitals. And it is a mystery that any man, whatever his own creed may be, can take delight in demolishing faith in ours and even ruthlessly blaspheming a name that is above every name to them.' Mr. Pierson's book, which is full of good anecdotes, I think you will admit is a clever defence of his views.

These worthy evangelists are, however, terrible people. Only think what Lord Radstock said when I told him of the interesting manifestations vouchsafed to Mr. Livermore (so carefully related in Dale Owen's 'Debatable Land') of his departed wife coming to him, with the help of Kate Fox, visibly and tangibly, during many months, sitting on his knee and caressing him. 'It is the devil,' said Lord Radstock, 'taking her form to pull him into hell.'

This well-meaning book has been sent me by a dear sister who is in sore trouble and anxiety with regard to my eternal welfare, declaring that I am a poor lost creature unless I accept her views of God's providence and purpose as she sees them; what they are you may imagine, when I tell you that she thought it right and proper to burn that excellent book, 'Spirit Teachings,' that I gave her, as a wicked heretical work of the Devil. I wonder what Stainton Moses' Imperator would say if he knew his noble words had met with such treatment. You may also imagine with what scant sympathy I respond to equally advanced convictions of other members of my family, when I tell you that I am a Spiritualist of long standing, and have enjoyed the society and friendship of Robert Chambers, S. C. Hall, Stainton Moses, Crookes, the two Wilkinsons, and men of that sort, and have no power or desire to return to the mediæval teachings of my youth. I have had some curious experiences with the invisibles. Here is one worth mentioning. Mrs. Gregory had once staying with her a young, delicate girl, through whom, among other spirits, used to come an Italian female, who declared that she knew re-incarnation to be the great law of progression, she herself having had more than one earthly incarnation. One day, Stainton Moses had some conversation with her, when she denied entirely the re-incarnation theory. Upon learning this, I went to Mrs. Gregory's, and asked the Italian spirit why this recantation. 'Oh,' she said, 'if you had only seen the bright and magnificent spirit that accompanied that gentleman. He made me say what he thought proper, and did not allow me to say what I knew to be true.' How difficult for poor mortals to arrive at truth, if that is the unhandsome way the invisibles act!

One of the most wasteful as well as the most questionable elements of human life is neutrality. And yet how

amiable and clean and peaceable the neutral man or woman seems! and how hard and dusty and militant they are often made to look who take a side! That applies everywhere. Of every good cause, and especially of every unpopular cause it is true. In relation to these, neutrality may be sheer cowardice and unfaithfulness; and, to spirit eyes, few things may look more ugly than neutrality's smug and smiling complacency. But the greatest possible mistake is made by the neutral man or woman. There is really no actual neutrality. The truth is where Mr. Minot Savage puts it in the following passage:—

If you never go to church, never have anything to do with a church of any kind, you may think you are not dealing with the great question of religion; but if religion is something of importance to the world, merely by letting it alone you are dealing with it, dealing wrongly with it, and it is a serious question whether you have any right to let it alone. What right has any man, when great questions are up, touching the welfare and future of humanity, to stand back, merely because he happens to be comfortable, and to let them alone? You must deal with religion. Letting it alone is dealing with it, and may be dealing with it in the very way in which you have no right. For, mark you, religion is one of the most permanent elements in human life.

This applies everywhere; and is even more true of the Spiritual Alliance than of the Established or any other Church.

'The Progressive Thinker' is responsible for the following:—

Again and again has W. Q. Judge, the most brilliant intellect and most eagerly persistent worker in the ranks of the Society, declared by voice and pen that the dead do not communicate with the living. But it is now well known that all his actions and movements in the Society were directed by a medium in New York City, whom he constantly consulted. It is not likely that he went to her for her personal advice, but that he sought the direction of the wise among the dead, and was guided thereby. We are not objecting to this method of obtaining advice; but we are kicking because he abused us, as Spiritualists, hardly allowing us common sense; while at the same time he was depending upon the unseen guidance for his best work.

The tenets of Theosophy treat continually of brotherhood, of purity of life and control of the appetites. A Society that declares it has no use for Spiritualists has left out a very large factor of the world's thinkers in the making-up of a universal brotherhood. Enough would be left out in the summing-up to destroy all claim for universal.

'Voxometric Revelation. The Problem Surrounding the Production of the Human Voice Finally Discovered! (London: Authors' and Printers' Joint Interest Publishing Company) has been sent to us; we hardly know why. We delight in music and song, but have no theories of our own, and do not understand other people's theories. All we can do is to report that the writer seems intensely anxious, and as intensely positive; that the book is elegantly printed, and that, in our opinion, it deserves the attention of teachers of music. By the way, we cannot name the real producer of the book. The title-page has this queer notification, 'Written and Compiled by Justus Abner for

the author, Alfred Augustus North.' How can Mr. North be the author if it was written by Mr. Abner?

What a poor and sordid use millions make of life! No spiritual person can possibly fail to be touched at the sight of the world's choice. With such boundless possibilities, what mean ends are sought! what poor prizes grasped! One of the uses of Spiritualism should be its creation or readjustment of ideals. The world strives mainly for the tinsel, for the mere playthings, for gilded dust and ashes, while the boundless treasures of the spirit, and of life in the spirit, are hardly believed in.

There is a Wallachian legend which, like most of the figments of popular fancy, has a moral in it. One Bakala, a good-for-nothing kind of fellow in his way, having had the luck to offer a sacrifice especially well pleasing to God, is taken up into heaven. He finds the Almighty sitting in something like the best room of a Wallachian peasant's cottage (there is always something profoundly pathetic in the homeliness of the popular imagination, forced, like the princess in the fairy tale, to weave its semblance of gold tissue out of straw). On being asked what reward he desires for the good service he has done, Bakala, who had always passionately longed to be the owner of a bagpipe, seeing a half worn out one lying among some rubbish in a corner of the room, begs eagerly that it may be bestowed upon him. The Lord, with a smile of pity at the meanness of his choice, grants him his boon, and Bakala goes back to earth delighted with his prize.

Does anyone recognise the picture?

Mr. Haweis is publishing a series of really startling sermons on great subjects. (London: J. Bumpus.) Here is an extract from one of them, on 'The Last Judgment':—

As the 'Sower' is a Parable of the Divine influences sown in the heart.

As the 'Talents' is a Parable of the account we shall all have to render.

So the 'Sheep and Goats' is a parable of good and evil tendencies and that Judgment which is being forever pronounced on them—far more than a parable of the identification of Good and Evil tendencies with human personalities.

The figurative language cannot be pressed literally without the greatest violence to the spirit and even sense of the parable itself.

No Judge in his senses ranges the prisoners who come before him into right and left hand batches and sends all in one batch to be hanged whilst all in the other batch go scot-free. That is not at all the right way to do it—and 'should not the Judge of all the earth do right?' What does a Judge even of the commonest ability do?—he cautions one man—fines another—sends another to a penitentiary or a prison—gives one over to his friends—or has him flogged or hung—or sets him at liberty according to the merits or demerits of the case.

In fact you cannot divide human nature into sheep and goats—there is so much of the goat about many of the sheep—and so much of the sheep about some of the goats!

No—the Parable sums up an eternal but Spiritual truth.

Every day and hour the sheep and goats are before the Judge and the good and evil in them is being judged.

Every day they are coming out of light through twilight into darkness and out of night through dawn into day.

It is the tragic Parable of all souls always everywhere—the Spiritual truth summed up after the fashion of the time and in the admitted method of the great teacher in a tremendous allegory.

Looked at literally, indeed nothing can be more irrational than such an event as the Last Judgment, as set forth in prophetic and Apocalyptic imagery.

We Westerners have reduced too much of the Lord's teaching to nonsense by turning into common prose the poetical figures of Oriental Allegory. Our stupid method has ruined much of Genesis and the whole of the Apocalypse.

Consider what the Great Assize demonstration amounts to when put into prose.

Suppose now an Archangel did blow a horn on the last day which could be heard at New York—it could not be heard in Paris or London.

'But suppose there were ever so many angels, blowing ever so many horns?'

But this is not respecting the letter of Scripture; remember the awful imprecations in the Revelations against any who take away or add to the book. Mind, there is only one Trumpet mentioned—God's Special Trumpet—'The Trump of God.'

'Every eye shall now behold him,' but every eye could not, for if He was visible at Berlin He could not be visible at St. Petersburg—no, nor even a few miles away from Berlin.

Then as to the bones being re-clothed with flesh—the open graves—the rising of the dead—what, it must be asked, has become of the calcined dust of the Martyrs and the people eaten by wild beasts or cannibals—the particles of whose very bones have been assimilated by other animal organisms from tigers to ants, and echo answers, 'What indeed?'

So we prosy Westerners get ourselves into difficulties with the sublime parables and allegories of Holy Writ.

But although this is so, nothing can be more certain than such a Second Advent as must and will come to every one of us. We must all stand before the Judgment seat of Christ.

Death will usher us into that examination—and, if you still crave for a Great Assize and numbers to be judged simultaneously, you may reflect that a million or more are daily passing up to the Judgment Bar.

The Rev. J. H. Crooker is one of the keen-minded religious teachers of America. We therefore read with the greater surprise his curiously weak treatment of the problem of Christ's resurrection. He seems to think that the story had no historical basis, but grew only out of 'worshipful love,' as a sort of poetic legend. Then he adds:—

It is infinitely more reasonable, as well as more honourable to Jesus, to suppose that the belief in his resurrection arose in this way than that all the known laws of Nature were set aside. Such beliefs have arisen about other great men, and it is more scientific to include this in the general class than to infer that a miracle occurred. This explanation reflects infinite credit upon Jesus, for only an infinite loveliness of life could have moved people to the affection and confidence which these legends witness.

What we greatly need and what religious scholarship seeks to find is an explanation of this problem, which keeps reason free and honours the sanctities of natural laws, while also paying loving tribute to the spiritual greatness of Jesus.

The 'explanation of the problem' has been again and again given by Spiritualists, to whom, indeed, the resurrection offers no difficulties. We grant that the portion of the story which lays such emphasis on the uprising of the body is probably exaggeration or misunderstanding, but all the rest is clear. Jesus did not die, for no one ever dies; and he was able, as many from beyond the veil have been able, to show himself again to prepared beholders.

In another of Mr. Crooker's discourses, we find the following beautiful and timely passage:—

O Church, bring back the real Jesus, the Jesus that walked in Galilee and blessed the children, that taught so grandly and lived so divinely, that died on the cross a death as heroic as his life had been pure. So long you have kept him buried beneath dogmas that obscure the beauty of his life and hidden behind sacraments that smelt of blood! You have speculated about him, fought for his sepulchre, and persecuted in his name! You have said 'believe' where he said 'do'; you have said 'fear' where he said 'love'! You have frowned on human nature where he smiled; you have taught creeds where he spoke parables; the morality affirmed by him as sufficient, you have put aside as inadequate! O Church, no longer feed us on dogmatic mysteries; no longer imprison his spirit; no longer neglect his gospel. We are wayward, weary, and weak. Give us back Jesus as he was our friend, example, teacher, and inspirer!

We were glad to give a welcome to Colonel Olcott, at 2 Duke-street, a few days ago. He expressed keen interest in 'LIGHT,' although he thought it was sometimes a little hard on Theosophy, in which he is, of course, as profoundly interested as ever.

OBSESSION—OR WHAT?

From one who attended the Spiritualist Alliance meeting on the evening of Mr. Heywood's address, we have received the following story, which, though very far from being a pleasant one, has its distinct uses:—

The strange things related are so like what happened to my own sister that, after some hesitation, I have decided to write to you. I have met with nothing in my reading on Obsession, Possession, and other abnormal conditions of the human subject so lamentable, and, in some respects, so peculiar, as what happened to her. It has often been a subject of reflection for me why a being so good, so pure, so unselfish should have become the innocent victim of such ruthless proceedings as those I shall relate to you. My sister Elizabeth, though not the eldest of our family of four boys and four girls, was, somehow, the important one amongst us. I remember that my mother, on going from home, always gave to this sister her charges and instructions as to what was to be done during her absence. My memory of her is that of a little mother, so to speak, left in charge of her brothers and sisters—some older than herself—because of her superior prudence, kindness, and fitness for the post. Many a time I have known her give up her own things, or her own share, in order to pacify and make content the unsatisfied amongst us; essentially a peacemaker, her affection, good sense and unselfishness are what strongly remain in my memory. We were not what is called a religious family, and seldom spoke of other matters than what concerned this stage of being. After our mother's death, however, I remember hearing my sister say: 'I wonder God does not make it more clear.' Thus showing what was passing through her mind.

About 1875 I introduced the subject of Spiritualism to her, about which, up to that time, she knew absolutely nothing. She was then a married woman, with one child. At our first trying, the table moved and gave out answers. I well remember her mingled astonishment, incredulity and eager hope of hearing from the dear ones who had gone before. What she did in her own home after this I can only conjecture, but one morning my wife and I, looking out of our parlour window, saw her stalking across the green like a trooper, her face quite unlike her natural self. She came, she said, for me to accompany her to London, where she had an important mission to accomplish. I was myself, at that time, so inexperienced, so ignorant, I may say, on the subject of Spiritualism, notwithstanding my reading and study, that, although appalled by her voice, manner, and gait—so unlike her own sweet, modest self—I thought she was going to become a great medium, especially as she spoke of being sent to cure diseases and do all sorts of wonderful things. As for railway fares and other expenses, I was to advance the money and God would repay it all. I can now hardly tell what my sensations were at the time, but I remember that, my wife consenting, I accompanied her to London. At Paddington, greatly against my wish, she prevailed on me to go into a gin palace—a thing she had never done in her life before—and on our coming out she said, 'Did you see that young man sitting on the cask? he has just committed——' Here followed a horrible story, the details of which I omit. On going along Oxford-street in an omnibus, when opposite Soho-square, her hand pointed south, and a frightful gurgling came into her throat. 'Let us get out here,' she said, 'I have to call at 72 in that street,' and going into a shop and finding herself mistaken, she kept me going about the neighbourhood till we were both exhausted. I now insisted on taking her to Mr. Burns' place in Southampton-row, where we found Mrs. Berry and the medium Williams, or Williams's partner, I forget which. Mrs. Berry was thought to be a sort of authority on Spiritualism, but neither she nor any other person could render us the slightest assistance. I suggested to them that it was an evil spirit, and was laughed to scorn for my unphilosophical remark. 'I was prejudiced and utterly ignorant on the subject,' which was perhaps true enough. 'There were no such things as evil spirits,' &c., but I had the sense to see that telling lies and sending my poor fainting sister on lying errands was not the way of a good spirit, and why should the word 'evil' be objected to? I was by this time becoming seriously alarmed and resolved to get my sister home as soon as possible. On arriving at Paddington she said that he was telling her how sorry he was for bringing us up; he repented and hoped we would forgive him, &c. Here I spoke up and told him what I thought. 'If

you are repentant, as you say, show it by at once leaving my sister'; whereupon he broke out in such a torrent of filthy abuse of me, cursing and swearing in the most frightful manner and wishing he could crush me beneath the wheels of the locomotive then before us. How I at length got my poor sister to my house I never knew. My fear of attracting the attention of fellow passengers in the train and the bewildering position I was in I shall never forget. I afterwards took my sister to see Mr. Cozman, who, if I mistake not, was very lately cited by 'LIGHT' as the man who could have put Mr. Stead's unfortunate visitor to rights. He could do nothing, and made me very wretched by saying that he feared for her mind, meaning that she would go mad. At length I wrote to Miss Emma Hardinge, who was then in America, and received in reply a letter, which I enclose. I was unable to find a person such as Miss Hardinge recommended, but I scrupulously followed her other directions. I never, from that day, would say a word on the subject of spirits, nor would I suffer my sister to do so. She never lost her complete sanity, but often said and did some preposterous things. I lived, and hoped, and prayed for the best; I could do no more. Some time after, my wife and I went to France to live, and in 1888 came to London to see my sister and to say good-bye previous to our departure for South America. Her husband and son were both dead, and she was alone in the world. When five hundred miles up the country from Buenos Ayres, news reached us of her death, and at the same time certain strange things happened with us, but of that I shall say nothing. In 1891 we came home, and a strange longing came over me to get tidings, if it were possible, of a sister who was very dear to me. Last summer my wife and I were talking about her as we lay in bed, and I said: 'You know that I never would say anything to Betsy about that dreadful spirit, but did you ever say aught to her on the subject?' After a pause: 'I promised you that I would never allude to the subject, but on the eve of our departure for South America I did ask her.' Here my wife began to tell me many strange things which the other had related to her. Of these I mention two as a sequel to what has gone before. On one occasion, in her bedroom, she had a jug of water in her hand, and the spirit told her to throw it out of the window. She refused, when he said: 'I'll make you,' and in spite of her resistance he did so, and the jug fell with a crash on the pavement below where people were passing. On another occasion, having to go up an ascent to a railway station, she became so faint and weary that she sat down to cry and console with herself. 'Come, come, cheer up,' said this strange companion, 'I'll help you,' and he did so, said she, and 'I went up as light as a feather.' 'Did she say the spirit was still with her?' I asked. 'She told me,' replied my wife, 'that the spirit was altogether a changed being; so good, so tender, so kind, and so respectful. He was no longer a trouble to her, but when he came, which was at intervals, his visit was rather a comfort than otherwise. 'If I am changed,' he used to say, 'I owe it all to you—you have been a blessing to me.' There was much more to the same purpose—expressions of affection, gratitude, &c., but I must say that the whole thing, terminating as it does so apparently satisfactorily, is to me most horrifying; what can it mean? a vile ruffian becoming in the course of a few years almost an angel of light.

The peculiar things that I spoke of in connection with my sister's case were these: One night, after my sister had left our house, my wife and I put our hands on the table to see if it would move for us. It did so, but at the same instant a stench arose, so horrible, so overpowering, that we both rushed to the door and windows to open them.

The other thing was this: I was one night at my sister's house, when she suddenly said to me, 'Go home; he says he has gone off to tease Polly' (my wife). I hastened home—a quarter of a mile—and found my wife, who, by the way, is an impressionable medium, in a very strange way, and this, she said, was what occurred. She was in the kitchen alone, when the glasses, tins—in fact everything—seemed to be on the jingle. Then she was impressed to go into the garden and hide amidst the shrubs. She was on the point of doing so when she suddenly said, 'No, why should I go into the garden to frighten him and make him wonder what has become of me?'

I could write much more on this strange subject, but I stop here. Spiritualism interests me greatly in spite of myself, and I am a constant reader of 'LIGHT,' but I cannot help feeling a repugnance to any further experiments with tables.

'THE PRINCIPLE OF EVIL.'

DEMONS EXIST ONLY AS HUMAN THOUGHTS OR HUMAN DOUBLES.

Permit me to take exception to the implication conveyed in the title of Mrs. Bodington's letters, as to the implied existence of the 'principle of evil' in itself. There is no such thing *per se*. There is but One Universal Conscious-life or Infinite Deity—which is the basis of every manifestation in the Universe, including consequently what we call evil as well as good, or which as self-conscious includes the not-self as well as self.

I have shown previously (p. 40) that the oppositions existing in this plane, and which give rise to evil, are caused by the (apparent) division of the complete self-conscious dual entities, one part or pole of whom are projected as persons into circumferential states, thus giving rise to time, space, opposites, discursive thinking, &c. The reuniting of these dual personalities, which occurs in the course of the circuit of becoming, into complete individuals, entails their transcending of 'opposition,' and all its limitations, including evil.

What we choose to call evil is so to our fallacious conceptions merely. It is the appearance which results from the limitation of our perception; that is, of viewing things in partial relation only (i.e., Hegelian 'abstraction'), instead of in their relation to the whole of things. Could we read the purpose to be fulfilled by each and all we would see that it was necessarily in perfect order, and that the temporary stage of each of us while here is in orderly relation with regard to our future states, and consequently in its relation to the whole, i.e., the past and future, or Unity. Men who are evil here cease to be so when transferred to states in which there are no longer any evil thoughts to be mediated through them and thus entail evil thinking and expression.

Are not all men finited units of the Universal Deity?

From out of the most repulsive forms of human wickedness and folly the perfected Angel will evolve and develop. Without soil saturated by obnoxious decaying matter there could not be the lovely form of the lily, or the beauty and the fragrance of the rose. Without the hells on earth as foundations on which to rest, there could be no heavens. These are as essential to each other as darkness is to light, or death to birth.

But why are men evil here at all? Because part of the work incumbent upon us in the drama of divine manifestation is to transmute the not-self, i.e., the life atoms which we take into our organisms from the animals, imbued with their qualities which react through us, (hence vegetarians fail, in part of the duty and experience entailed upon us). Further, we have also to evolve the thought-units existing in the earth's spiritual (mental) sphere, which have been mediated through previous generations of men, and which also react *their* qualities in us, when mediated through us. Consequently we are not only determined by thoughts, but we are used as instruments in the universal process by which thoughts and matter are determined.

There must be plenty of thoughts of demons, devils, imps, incubi, succubi, &c., existing in our mental sphere, which remain from the dark Middle Ages, when such preposterous fancies were reflected through the disequilibrated imaginings of ignorant monks, such as are pictorially depicted on the walls of the Cathedral of Albi, and elsewhere.

There are no other demons or obsessing powers in our earth sphere but the evil thoughts of evil men, incarnate and disincarnate. The obsessions and hallucinatory visions of this character by the nuns of Louviers, St. Medard, &c., were undoubtedly due to the mediation of such thought-units through these unfortunates, who had been mentally prepared and made receptive to such thoughts by the artificial and unnatural monastic training to which they had been subjected. These subjects would think that such experiences were caused by beings external to themselves, when in reality they were purely subjective. Many mediums make similar mistakes with regard to some of their experiences pertaining to Spiritualism, in the same way as hypnotised sensitives mistake their subjective visions, presented by suggestion, for external objects. Nor is obsession caused by the dispossession of the human spirit from its organism and the inhabitation thereof by another entity. It is caused by the mediation of ideas entailing suggestion and the representation so determined.

Mrs. Besant and Mr. Sinnett have dealt with one aspect of the process of thinking evil thoughts, i.e., that of the effect entailed upon others. But I respectfully suggest that they have

only dealt with one half of the process, i.e., the ultimatum of thoughts, and that they omit to deal with the prior mediation and reception of thoughts, which is the pre-condition of expression and ultimatum. They deal with evolution only, omitting the involution which is its pre-condition. They imply that man generates thought, when he really receives it. In affirming, as they do, that man creates thought, they are affirming that man (the unit) creates the Universal. All thoughts are differentiated units of the Universal Conscious-life in the process of taking form, and whose evolution and expression occurs in and by their mediation through selves, whom they determine while being also re-determined thereby. No man can create thought—he can only receive and express, i.e., react it—any more than a telephone can generate the message to which it responds. There can be no thinking without the mediation of thoughts. Nor can man be made responsible for thinking the thoughts mediated to him, in the sense which these teachers lay down. The mediation of thought is a question of law, and depends on consonance between the particular thought and the thinker. A man can no more think a thought which is not in affinity with his own spiritual quality than a wire attuned on the pitch of the note *do* could respond to a message transmitted on the pitch of the note *re*. Thoughts which are not in affinity with a man's own quality will flow unresponded to through him, without entailing mental reaction; in the same way as a vibration started on the pitch of the note *mi* will be disregarded by a wire attuned on the pitch of the note *fa*, leaving it silent and unresponsive. Induction will take place, but attention will not be aroused, i.e., the idea will not determine its realisation, because it is not in consonance with the ideas already integrated in the self. Consequently it will not pass into idea-motor action or explication. It is this question of consonance of ideas in the discursive process which no doubt constitutes the distinction between voluntary, non-voluntary, and involuntary actions in man.

Thoughts are units of the Universal Conscious-life and consequently represent the universal law as illustrated in the sun and in man. They are prisms, so to say, of substantial life, and radiate a vibrating spectrum. If the vibrations of their spectrum do not synchronise with that of our own spectrum, we do not respond; we do not think the thought, i.e., it does not induce a reciprocal reaction in us. If our spectrum or aura synchronises with that of the mediated thought, it induces a reaction in which we consciously share and participate, i.e., in which the quality implicit in the thought re-presents itself to our attention and constitutes perception. This is amply illustrated in hypnotic suggestion, in which the subject is made to see images, visions, &c., which are purely imaginative; which exist only in the thought transferred from the operator.

A subject may be made to see (perceive) a bunch of flowers, a person, an imaginary scene such as the expulsion of nuns from a convent, which exist only in the thought transferred to the subject, and yet become objective and real to him. A subject may similarly be 'induced' to think that he is changed into another person, or into an animal, or even into a thing such as an egg, and may be in mortal terror of falling and breaking himself. All his attention is centred on the idea transferred by suggestion which becomes objective, vivid and real. The Lucifer and demons of Diana Vaughan and of the 'Diable au XIX^{me} Siècle' have no existence except as thoughts (which are conscious but not *self*-conscious), the thoughts of ignorant monks, ecclesiastics, magicians and sorcerers of the past, but which when attracted into the perception of unbalanced sensitives like the nuns of Louviers, the *convulsionnaires* of St. Medard, become vivid and real to them. The mediation of the same thoughts through a similar subject in our own age, such as the supposititious Diana Vaughan, would, however, entail the presentation of images of more modern form (by the fact of the reaction with a modern subject) than the grotesque imaginings of the visionaries of the past. If in this hallucinated subjective state (if being possessed by an idea is hallucination), we add the possibility of the temporary projection of the double of the sensitive, we then have the possibility of a veritable Witches' Sabbath. Each participant might, however, believe that he was in contact with demons, while, in reality they were all only in contact with the doubles of other pitiable beings like themselves, temporarily possessed and determined by some evil thought. This would account for many of the fantastic tales confessed to by witches, both with regard to their visions of familiar imps, or supposed midnight flights to the meeting-place of the evil ones. The now experimentally-demonstrated

fact that the pricking or burning of the double repercuts to its organism, would account for the injuries which were found sometimes to have been invisibly inflicted on such witches; while the oft-attested fact of their cutaneous insensibility is a symptomatic confirmation that they were recipients of suggestion, thought-transference, or mediated thoughts.

The unprogressed discarnate selves in the intra-normal earth plane (called astral) may seek to influence men by suggestion, but they cannot manifest to the human senses and can only influence those with whom they are in affinity; they are consequently less potential for evil than when they were incarnate. The term demon is therefore less applicable to them as discarnate beings than it was when they were incarnate. While such selves remain in the intra-normal earth sphere for varying periods, now averaging similar duration as that of earth life, they inevitably become unconscious and pass through the second death, reawakening or being reborn into a state in which evil no longer exists. Consequently, if there is any basis in fact at all in these mendacious accounts of devil-worship, it is evident that the forms evoked are not those of discarnate entities, but are either the thought-forms of the assistants or projected human doubles. They do not belong to what are understood as spiritualistic phenomena, and in no wise affect such experiences, which pertain to action exerted by higher beings in inner planes, while the evocation of thought-forms pertains to action exerted from and on this circumferential plane. It may, perhaps, be possible that some occultists evoke demoniacal thought-forms, such as are illustrated in Barrett's 'Magus,' by the use of names constituting 'mantrains.' But the responsibility must rest with the occult schools who teach such things, together with the heresy of Manichæism, and the atheism of independent personal will, and not with the great spiritual beings who have initiated spiritualistic phenomena. QUESTOR VITÆ.

A BATCH OF BOOKS.

'The World's Last Passage. A story.' By JOHN C. KENWORTHY. (London: The Brotherhood Publishing Company.) 'The World's Last Passage' is the journey into, through, and beyond 'the valley of the shadows.' The story is of the simplest possible kind, and does not go beyond the emotions and thoughts started by a telegram, and the actual death of a brother. But the concluding pages are very noticeable. The conventional minister is reading the conventional chapter (Corinthians, xv.) and one who stands by paraphrases and transforms the old words thus:—

'The first life of man is the animal life; the last life is the spirit life.

'The animal life comes first, and the spirit life grows through it.

'The first life is upon the earth; the second life is the perfect life of the spirit spheres.

'While we are on the earth, we live the earth life; but in the spirit spheres, they live the spirit-life.

'And as we are now in this earth body, so shall we pass into the spirit body.

'This is certain, that in our bodies of flesh and blood we cannot enter into the perfect life; for that which is perishable cannot have part in things which are imperishable.

'This is a hidden truth: We all shall not cease from living and become unconscious; but we shall pass from one state to another.

'In a short time, instantly, when the call comes; for the call must come, at which the dead issue forth delivered from death, and pass into the new state.

'For our perishable part must be replaced by the imperishable, and the dying must put on deathlessness.

'And, when that happens, the saying comes true, that death disappears in the triumph of life.

'Thus the pain of death ceases, and the terrors of the grave do not overcome us.

'Death becomes painful through sin; which is the breaking of the law of our nature.

'But our Creator has given us the way of escape, in the Christ-life which Jesus showed us.'

There is much in the book to awaken thought.

'The Ideal of Universities.' By ADOLF BRODBECK, Ph.D. Translated from the German by the author, and much enlarged. (New York: The Metaphysical Publishing Company.) In part

a history and in part the presentation of an Ideal, in the working out of which Dr. Brodbeck rapidly covers a good deal of ground, showing the relation of Theology and Physical Science, and of Theory and Technics, to University life and work. The book is almost entirely a book for high-class teachers and University experts.

'Nature, Divinity, and Life. Gleanings of Inner Meanings. Poetical Sketches, 1896.' (London: E. W. Allen.) No author's name is given, but the title of his first piece, 'Paradises,' is, he says, 'my name, just twisted round.' This conceit strikes the key-note of the book, which is full of good sense and pretty ideas expressed and tricked out in all kinds of grotesque and fanciful poetic notions. We are inclined to think that if the whole thing were turned into simple prose the result would be a much better and even a more successful book.

'Man's Immensity, a Certain Evidence of his Immortality. A Surprise to the World.' By PROFESSOR J. L. DITSON, Sci. (Boston: A. Mudge & Son.) A wildish book, but with some 'method in its madness.' Its flighty rhapsody of science and philosophy may grip some who would neither be attracted nor held by a more sober book: but it is rather too egotistical and volatile for our taste. We are, however, inclined to agree with the writer that Jehovah or Jah Vah was an ancient and powerful spirit who used Moses and the Hebrews for his own purposes.

'Nephelê.' By FRANCIS WILLIAM BOURDILLON. (London: George Redway.) A weird but beautiful story, and a story that ought to be true, though we are afraid that it is not. We say 'that ought to be true,' because the writer practically says it is, and because it would be almost wicked to write it and send it forth, as a bit of mere romancing—though, so far as that goes, the author could find plenty of justification in citing other sinners. It is a story of very subtle thought-transference in the sphere of music, with much that is both charming and thoughtful in it.

'Light and Life from Above.' By SOLON LAUER. (London: Elliot Stock.) A book true to its name; and a book poetic, thoughtful, consoling, uplifting. In form it is rather uncommon, containing something like two hundred chapters or sections on definite subjects, from half a page to two or three pages each. Almost a perfect book for occasional perusal when the house is quiet, when the shady tree invites, or when body and brain can bear but little at a time. It abounds with spiritual thoughts, gracefully expressed. The main divisions of the book are 'The Soul's Way of Life,' 'Society and the Soul,' 'Literature and Life,' 'Pages from a Catalina Journal,' 'Leaves from an Adirondack Journal,' 'Soul-voices.' The Catalina and Adirondack selections are as full of fresh air and sweetness and light as the others are full of delicate spiritual thought.

'Human Verses.' By EPPIE FRAZER. (London: Circle Co-operative Printers' Society, 255, Barking-road, E.) A very homely little book of less than fifty pages, with everything about its appearance to tempt one to drop it, with other poetic bantlings, into the wastepaper basket. But while holding it, to drop it in, we just glanced at it. It got back to the desk in safety, and it got read through. All simple and scrappy enough, but what a subtle spirit is in it!—what fine phrasing!—what strong thinking! We never heard of 'Eppie Frazer,' but we would like to hear of him (or her?) again. The surprising little thing is marked (in ink) 'Price 1d.', but the homely bit of binding must have cost threehalfpence.

We should like to give a specimen, but it is difficult. The originality of the book and the qualities we have indicated are diffused through the whole rather than concentrated here or there. But here is a bit of colour entitled 'Sub Tegmine Fagi.'

SUB TEGMINE FAGI.

THE hot June sun blazed fiercely in the blue.
And, gaspingly, I paced the stifled heath;
Anon I lighted on a bench beneath
A mighty beech-tree, glorious to view;
And yet disconsolate I felt, till through
The leaves o'erhead, a sigh as of the sea
Was heard, and swiftly round the ears of me
A strong, soft, south wind masterfully blew.
A happy impulse stretched me on my back,
And, gazing upwards, my delight was full.
For smooth, grey limbs, aslant in many a track,
Bore far aloft a dome of leafage cool
Which, rippling ever into cleft and crack,
Gave glints of gold and blue in glad misrule.

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MR. GLADSTONE'S PARTING SHOT.

In the 'North American Review' for June, Mr. Gladstone brings to a close his noticeable but somewhat disappointing Articles on 'The Future Life and the Condition of Man therein.' All the way through he has been pleading for caution, reticence, restraint, and with a frigidity rather foreign to his temperament and habit. In our opinion he is in a transition state; and, perhaps without knowing it, his counsels of prudence really mean, 'I feel myself drifting away from the old, and I rather dread the new.' Indeed, in summing up his objects in writing these Articles, he identifies himself with 'those who are conscious of their inability to solve a problem or close a controversy who, nevertheless, may render a real, though limited, service if they can eject from it matter gratuitously imported; draw attention to conceptions by which it has been both widened and perplexed; relieve it from the pressure of unwarranted assumptions; secure upon a field of doubtful speculations a temper of reserve; and make contributions towards narrowing the issues upon which men have found or thought themselves divided.' All that is, in the highest degree, important; and, in so far as Mr. Gladstone has helped in this, we are truly grateful.

But we cannot help regretting that in setting forth his counsels of reserve he felt it to be necessary or just to make those who have made a special stand for the justice and goodness of God, the only objects of his unrestrained wrath. Is this only a fresh illustration of the well-known fact that when a strong controversialist feels himself drifting to the position of his opponent he reserves for that opponent his hottest fire? In any case we must be sorry that Mr. Gladstone has parted from us with a scornful attack upon those who presume to defend God, by denying the eternity of punishment or sin.

When we consider how people have presumed in this direction, and how entirely we are dependent upon inference in relation to God, one would have thought that Mr. Gladstone would at all events have contented himself with a caution to us also. But no! people who say that the great God has appointed this life as the only scene of probation in which eternal destinies are practically determined are approved, or only mildly cautioned to hold details in reserve; but we who postulate the justice and goodness of God and draw inferences therefrom are reproved, derided and condemned. It is hardly believable, but it is true. In fact, this last Article is mainly an assault upon those who undertake anything so presumptuous as the vindication of the goodness of God!

The special object of Mr. Gladstone's anger is our daring assertion that punishment will not be eternal. All

the experience of life shows, he says, 'that habit hardens by use, that the gristle passes into the bone,' and so on, while we 'cast aside' these 'lessons of experience,' and affirm that 'the unchangeable will (hereafter) undergo a process of transformation and reversion, by becoming a pliable and docile material fashioned upon new laws contradictory of the old.' This is almost grotesque. We who say that in the life to come the foolish may become wise and the vicious virtuous suggest no 'new laws contradictory of the old.' We only say that aids and experiences will be forthcoming which will transform and reverse; that, in fact, that will happen which happens, blessed be God! every day upon this earth. And we are surprised at Mr. Gladstone's crude confounding of physical and spiritual laws of life, as though the passing on of gristle to bone was a true analogy as to, say, the passing on of carelessness to hate.

Mr. Gladstone tells us that we are substituting speculation for experience, that we are engaged upon 'a desperate venture of mental rashness,' that we are stepping out 'into the void,' that we 'anticipate results without any indication of the means to produce them,' and that we are to be classed with 'men who make bricks without straw.' But this is really wild reproof. When we deny the eternity of punishment in the Unseen, and affirm that ways will be found to conquer sin, we do so because we trust God, and confide in His wisdom, goodness, and power. Is that 'a desperate venture of mental rashness'? Is that stepping out 'into the void'? Is that to 'anticipate results without any indication of the means to produce them'? Is that to 'make bricks without straw'? Our inference is drawn from the largest of all premisses—the infinite perfections of God: and, even if we err here, it is cruelly unjust to assail us as the mere spinners of arbitrary expectations and baseless hopes.

He taunts us with an inconsistency. We say that it would be a stain upon the perfections of God if evil and sin and misery existed forever. How then, he replies, is it not equally a stain that evil and sin and misery exist at all? What a question! 'If unwise for the longer period, how shall we show that it was wise for the shorter?' he asks. Again, what a question! Would he apply that remark to human terms of imprisonment? Why distinguish between fourteen days and fourteen years? How ridiculous the question seems! But Mr. Gladstone, oddly enough, only two pages on, supplies us with the answer to himself. Treating of another point, he says to an objector, 'But, I reply, this evil is for them a means of good, and, by means of the training they receive, they attain to more and higher good than they could have attained without it.' That is precisely our case: and, really, in order to answer Mr. Gladstone, we have only to step into his pew and sing out of his book.

On this same page, moreover, we find this: 'According to our faith, every man will be judged with full allowances for every adverse incident of his lot, and God will enable all, who sincerely strive for it, to overcome alike the circumjacent and the indwelling sin, or will in any and every case deal with them according to most exact justice.' But that is precisely what we say when we plead against the notion of endless and hopeless punishments hereafter: and yet Mr. Gladstone tries to beat us down with charges of anticipating results 'without any indication of the means to produce them.' Truly, in this matter of Theology, 'the Grand Old Man' is, as he has always been, a rather tiresome young child.

No man who sees the truth, however distant, can conscientiously go on as if it were not there. Thousands of years are vast periods, but the love of human liberty and happiness shall reach out and cling to the eternal. Let every man who believes, faithfully do his share, sow the seed that he has received, and in God's time the glorious harvest will come of a pure, truthful people. —J. B. O'REILLY.

'LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE ESTABLISHED.'

SERMON DELIVERED BY THE REV. H. R. HAWES, M.A., AT ST. JAMES'S EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, WESTMORELAND-STREET, MARYLEBONE, ON SUNDAY, JUNE 28TH.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Hawes referred to the growing eagerness for knowledge concerning the mystery of death, the conflict of views regarding the problem, and the need for actual proof of the reality of things unseen. Although the inspired records, together with a certain moral consciousness and spiritual sensibility, might be sufficient evidence for some minds, the question arose whether this moral consciousness might not be reasonably reinforced, and whether the inspired records might not receive something like confirmation from what was going on around us to-day. In order to fix the attention of his hearers, and to restrict the sphere of his argument, he wished, first of all, to define what he meant by immortality. He would then present four assumptions which would make clear the standpoint or platform from which he surveyed the question, after which he proposed to dwell on the extraordinary and cumulative evidence from dreams, ghosts, apparitions, and from spiritualistic manifestations. In conclusion he would deal with some of the thoughts arising out of these considerations—the immense hopes, the inexpressible consolations which came from letting in the white light of eternity upon the things of time.

First, then, with regard to this term Immortality, they should not be put off with any makeshifts. Some people said matter was immortal, and because man was material, therefore, in that sense, he was immortal. But he did not care for that kind of immortality. He did not care about being an atom—not even a 'mighty atom'—nor did he care what became of him as an atom. Others said man was immortal because his thoughts would go on after he was dead. Well, let them go on. It was to him a matter of little moment if his thoughts survived. He would know nothing about it. He would not be there. He hoped that might benefit the people who came after him, but if those people whose lives were made better by his thoughts had also to pass away like insects, then their lives were scarce worth living.

Again, some people talked of the immortality of the race. But he knew that this planet would freeze into an icicle or be shattered by some mighty cataclysm, and all things would then perish upon it. Even if he believed in the immortality of the race, which he did not, that was not *his* immortality. He meant, by the hope of immortality, the continued existence of a man's personal self, the persistence of his identity, the continuance of his individual consciousness in a way that would make the punishments and rewards of the next life rational; because, if there was no such continued identity, there would be no sense in future punishments and rewards. It was clear, then, what was meant by the hope full of immortality—by the life beyond the grave.

Proceeding to deal with the four assumptions previously alluded to, he would assume, (1) that they valued life and desired immortality. There were people who did not value this life, and who had no desire for its continuance. He wished to address himself to those who did value this life, those who understood something of its possibilities of growth and development. He knew that there were people—whole nations, sometimes—who had never grasped the continuity of this life in the next world. In the books of Moses, it had often been maintained, there was nothing whatever concerning a future life. That was because the Jews came out of a country where the people had very advanced ideas concerning the next world, and the first thing that the Jews did was to get rid of every trace of a theology which reminded them of the land of bondage.

There were individuals, too, who had not any consciousness of the need of another life at all. Occasionally these people might be very cultivated. There was the late Sir Richard Burton, for instance. Sir Richard had been a very good friend of his, and one whom he had held in high esteem. Sir Richard had once said, 'I know nothing about my soul; I get on very well without one. It is rather hard to inflict a soul upon me in the decline of my life.' Yet Sir Richard Burton was a man of exceptional intelligence and ability—a man who used even to say that he was a Spiritualist without the spirits. People of this sort were imperfectly developed or very feebly endowed on one side of their nature.

Some of us were born with exceptionally delicate sensibilities about religion; others had no sort of religious or devotional sentiment whatever. Some had an acute regard for truth; others did not seem to know the difference between truth and falsehood. Generally speaking, all the higher faculties had to be cultivated. Did they ever find a young child who liked to be washed? Did they ever find an average boy who was devoted to his tasks? Did they ever know anybody who liked to obey other people when it ran counter to his inclination? So it was found that most of the highest tendencies needed cultivation—even affection, even love, needed tending. Our best products were all moral and spiritual hothouse plants—requiring light and warmth from Heaven, and shelter and constant care; and the higher the gift, and the finer the sensibility, the more care it required to ensure its development. It was a grand thing to know the value of life—to be born into a universe with boundless possibilities, and if they had not realised the greatness of those possibilities, it was because they were imperfectly developed on one side of their nature, and they ought to hunger and thirst after a realisation of the blessedness of having such destinies.

(2) He would assume that they were willing to consider evidences of an extraordinary and abnormal kind, evidences from dreams, ghosts, apparitions, and spiritual manifestations. Some people were prejudiced against certain kinds of truth—they lived in a 'psychological climate,' which made the entertainment of some sorts of evidence impossible, and when it came to a question of dealing with evidences of an abnormal character, they would believe explanations vastly more impossible and outrageous than the alleged facts they were asked to accept. Their tendency was to reject all evidences that were not in accordance with their preconceptions.

(3) He would assume that they did not think it was wicked to discuss ghosts—or even to consider evidence for spiritualistic phenomena and to inquire into the strange occult and unexplained experiences that indicated the existence of an unseen universe. There was a tendency on the part of some persons to attribute these things to the devil. It was a very convenient way of veiling their ignorance and giving a sop to their timidity.

Then he would assume (4) that the '*Cui bono?*' argument was not a final reply, which would make it unnecessary for them to pursue such questions any further. People said, 'If you can't show us the use of it why should we trouble ourselves?' That was a mere sop to idleness, even as the other was a sop to timidity. He was assuming that the congregation before him stood for impartial investigation, that it stood for absence of prejudice, that it stood for the extension of the sphere of human knowledge, achievement, and progress.

He would make one more assumption—that they would not be frightened by the fear that these things were inconsistent with Christian doctrine concerning a future life. Everything that was true in present experience could be reconciled with true views of the life beyond. Nothing that was true could possibly be at variance with any truth that had ever been revealed, or could be revealed, to man. If they discovered any truth that seemed to be in conflict with any other truth revealed in the Gospels, let them be sure that the seeming discord was not in God, not in Christ, not in Nature, but in themselves. Had not Christ himself told them, 'Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free'?

They might ask, 'If this life beyond the grave really exists, what is the evidence of it?' They knew what the ordinary evidences were, and he would glide over them lightly. Some people said they had a consciousness of immortality. But they could only have a consciousness of what was present. Immortality dealt with the future. What they might have was a Divine sensibility, which brought with it a hope of immortality. This Divine sensibility seemed to be ingrained in the constitution of man; it was a sort of revolt against materialism innate in all races and all religions. It might be said that this Divine sensibility was a generic consciousness. Having this inborn consciousness one might say, 'I believe in immortality and the life beyond, because it would be perfectly irrational, constituted as I am, to suppose that this universal instinct had no significance, that this life had no meaning.' Without immortality life would be a blind alley, leading nowhere; the scheme of nature would be imperfect, and the world irrationally constituted. To bring living, breathing, intelligent, experimental creatures into existence and then to snuff them out with undeveloped lives, unfulfilled hopes, unrealised ambitions and

possibilities, unjustified spirit instincts—the whole thing would be a hollow mockery, a meaningless absurdity. It was a great argument for another life that this world would be irrationally constituted without it.

There was another argument—and a very strong negative one—of a physiological character. It seemed to some that when the brain perished the mind went with it. But the most eminent physiologists now admitted that mind and matter could not be identified. John Stuart Mill had said, 'The phenomena of mind and matter appear simultaneously, but no one has ever been able to connect the two.' One could not express mind in terms of matter. They were two distinct phenomena. Therefore, it was not impossible that mind should exist independent of, and outlast, matter. He did not mean to lean too much on these arguments, although he was very grateful for them. He desired rather to draw attention to the growing body of supplementary evidence in connection with dreams, experiences with apparitions, and what were commonly called ghosts, and the extraordinary psychical phenomena of all kinds, good, bad, and indifferent, connected with Spiritualism.

One was inclined to lay so much more stress upon these things than formerly, because the attention of so many had been arrested by the phenomena and so many people, after having tried to explain them away by hallucination, imposture, and various peculiarities of the mental constitution, had now come to the conclusion that although hallucination and imposture were good beasts of burden, with broad and strong backs, one could not pile all the facts upon them, and there remained a residuum which had to be carried by that other long-suffering and patient beast of burden known as Truth.

Thus, in addition to the authority of inspired teachers and the assurance of the moral consciousness, they were surrounded by evidences which might at no distant time be converted into something like definite proofs, and these abnormal manifestations might be so sifted and scientifically investigated as to place the existence of a future life on the best and surest foundation of proof instead of relegating it to a sublime speculation or a devout hope. Could they not see the importance of this—how it would give at once the death-blow to materialism?

Dealing with the phenomena of dreams, the preacher referred to cases of persons who had been warned in dreams by some departed friend of an impending danger, crisis, or calamity, which they were thus enabled to avoid. When such dreams were substantiated and accumulated indefinitely by hundreds and thousands, it seemed almost more natural and reasonable to say that the messages recorded were of a sympathetic character, emanating from the persons from whom they purported to emanate, than to suppose they were due to coincidence or hallucinations of no evidential value whatever. Here Mr. Haweis gave two examples of the dreams he alluded to. One was a case in which a man was warned of approaching death by his departed brother, the warning being exactly fulfilled; the other an instance in which the captain of a ship, being persistently cautioned in his dreams to heave the lead, and obeying the monition, saved his vessel from shipwreck. It was true there were such things as unfulfilled premonitions; but he rested his case upon the enormous aggregation of fulfilled warnings. Everyone knew, or might know, by reading or by actual experience how numerous these cases were.

The great mathematician, De Morgan, basing his calculations on the law of averages, had worked out an elaborate statement showing what percentage of these cases could be explained by coincidence. Such a hypothesis, it was found, could be held to cover two in a certain number of examples, but the laborious researches of the Psychical Research Society had shown that the proportion of cases of fulfilled dreams or premonition was not as two but as twenty-four—a proportion vastly in excess of any calculation derived from the law of an average in coincidence.

Dealing next with apparitions, Mr. Haweis cited the case of Lord Lytton, who was warned by the spirit of a woman whom he had wronged that he would expire at twelve o'clock on a certain day. His friends, to prevent the prophecy helping toward the catastrophe, put forward the clock, and persuaded him that the fatal hour had passed; but his lordship, who had, when the fatal hour had apparently passed, given up all apprehension, nevertheless died an hour afterwards, at the time predicted. The next example had reference to a body of students, who, while discussing the next life in a sceptical spirit, made a compact that the first who died should appear to his companions.

Some months afterwards, the form of one of them, who had died in the meantime, was seen to enter the room in which they were assembled. A more astounding case was that of Mr. Dick, a Glasgow auctioneer, now living, who, while walking down Renfield-street, Glasgow, was joined by a person who proceeded to warn him against some speculation in which he (Mr. Dick) proposed to embark. This person was his father, who had died some twelve years previously. The singular thing was that Mr. Dick was in no way struck by the extraordinary character of the interview at the time, but the moment the apparition vanished the strangeness of the whole thing burst upon him, and he realised for the first time that he had been conversing with one who was no longer in the body. However, he took to heart the advice he had received, and, by avoiding the intended enterprise, which turned out badly, he was thus saved from disaster.

One might go on on, said Mr. Haweis, indefinitely multiplying cases of this sort. The evidence for these things did not depend on the weakest link of the chain. It was more like the strength of a faggot of sticks bound together. Each individual stick might not bear the strain put upon it, but unitedly they were strong enough to resist all attempts to break them.

These cases of dreams, apparitions, ghosts, and other psychical phenomena at spiritualistic circles amounted, if not to absolute proof, then to a very strong presumption, an enormously strong presumption, in favour of the life after death. He had wished particularly, in this connection, to lay before them at some length evidence in the shape of the phenomena elicited at spiritualistic circles; but the time allotted to him did not permit of this. Alluding to the widespread nature of the abnormal experiences in the way of fulfilled dreams, verified warnings, and kindred phenomena, he stated that in one year, according to the Psychical Research Society's testimony, 1,684 persons of average sound minds and balanced judgments had testified to having had such experiences. This showed how much could be done to place the matter on a sure foundation. Such a body of contemporaneous evidence, used to reinforce the argument from moral consciousness and confirm inspired authority, would bring a new element into play in connection with the question of spirit existence, identity of the dead, intercommunion between the living and the dead, and the consequences would be of enormous importance and value.

In the first place we should get a demonstration of the nearness of the spirit world. Then there was the feeling that human sympathy was the same whether here or in the hereafter, and could traverse the gulf of death. Then they gathered from every alleged hint from *outre tombe* the inexorable way in which moral laws worked themselves out. Everything that came to them—dreams, apparitions, ghosts, mysterious warnings—bore witness in this direction, that their deeds in this life told in the life beyond the grave. This led to a realisation of the enormous importance of assuming a right attitude towards the duties of this life. This life was fluid and formative. This life seemed to him like the setting up of printing types. While this life continued, the types could be manipulated, altered and rearranged with comparative ease, but at death the type was stereotyped and fixed. Whilst in this life, for better or for worse, they could order their condition, they could change their destinies; he did not say that changes might not be possible in the next life. Still, it seemed to him that the summing up of judgment indicated a condition reached, and one that it would be exceedingly difficult to change. A man passed from this world with his thoughts and opinions and convictions embodied in him as resultant forces; hence the supreme importance of working while it was called to-day, because when this life had been consummated and the types of life had, as it were, become stereotyped, there would be a kind of fixedness which the individual had determined for himself, which it would be very difficult to alter and modify. The all-important—the only important thing was now and here to fight for a right attitude towards our obligations—what was due to self, to mankind, to God. This temper and this action alone formed right character, which alone constituted blessedness.

That the dead were alive—that they sympathised with us and could help us, and that we could help them, even when they went out stereotyped with evil, was a blessed thought, and he was thankful that there was no law in the Church of England against prayers for the dead, whilst the 'Communion of Saints' clause in the Creed was at least half-way towards the doctrine. There was as much solidarity in the spiritual as in

the material universe. The break between life and death was apparent only. There might be cycles of being and experience which had to be summed up periodically, for better, for worse. But if it came to the worst, and we were cast into the prison where there was darkness and gnashing of teeth, no Scripture that he knew of had said they must always remain there. They could not come out till they had paid the uttermost farthing—but that would be paid when the perfect discipline had been wrought out. Death and despair were not for man, and nothing could alter the sublime fact that, whatever mistakes we made, there was still One God and Father of all, Who is above all and through all and in all.

THEOSOPHY IN LONDON.

The following, signed J. Page Hopps, appeared, on Monday, in 'The Echo,' under the heading, 'Unconventional Criticisms':—

The portion of the Theosophical world which stood by the late Mr. Judge, as against Mrs. Besant, has given its welcome to Mr. Judge's successor, a Mrs. Tingley, of New York. So there are now two queens and two camps where all was to be brotherhood and harmony for evermore. The new queen, and some of her friends have resolved to go on a crusade round the world to preach the gospel of Theosophy, with the help of a little music for the rich, and meat teas for the poor. They expect to be away from home for a year.

Last Friday the crusade was virtually commenced in no less a place than the great Queen's Hall, Langham-place, though, we understand, a small meeting had been held at Bow a few days before. The taking of the Queen's Hall was a bold bid for attention, but the promoters must have been greatly disappointed. Notwithstanding the three thousand five hundred free places and the five hundred 5s. stall tickets that were liberally given away, the hall was not a quarter full. The music-halls, we believe, were all crowded.

The crusaders number about ten ladies and gentlemen. The ladies appeared on the platform, theatrically dressed, to suggest Eastern priestesses; the gentlemen were very correct evening dress. The platform was charmingly decorated, and on one side appeared a large portrait of Madame Blavatsky; on the other a portrait of Mr. Judge. The real events of the evening, for benighted outsiders, were the musical items—a delicious preliminary organ performance and four splendidly-rendered selections from Wagner, Schumann, and Yradier, by violin, cello, pianoforte, and American organ.

The crusaders had absolutely nothing new or very impressive to say. Mrs. C. F. Wright gave us a pleasant five minutes' elementary sermon on 'Charity'; Mr. E. T. Hargrove (strangely like the pictures of 'Dr. Nikola') blended the interesting and the tiresome in a much longer discourse on 'Toleration'; Mrs. Keighley gave a pleasing rhapsody on 'Europe's Need of Theosophy'; Mr. Wright was merely assertional and illogical in a speech on 'Re-incarnation'; and the great lady, Mrs. Tingley, simply emitted a few rather unmeaning platitudes and prophecies, and sat down unexpectedly.

With the greatest possible desire to be instructed, one could only be mildly interested. The Theosophy presented to London on Friday evening was a diluted form of the Theosophy we are all familiar with, as a queer blending of Humanitarianism and Rationalism, Socialism and Spiritualism, with the addition of nice moral sentiments which are the commonplaces of the many, and of Re-incarnation which is the plaything and puzzle-box of a few. Of course, people may call their compounds what they like; but the thing called 'Theosophy' in London and New York is a very curious medicine for all human ills. It is offered to us as that; but the longer we look at it, the more it presents itself to us as a sort of decoction of hasheesh; and Webster's definition of 'hasheesh' is that 'it is obtained by boiling (certain) leaves and flowers with a little fresh butter. It is narcotic, and has long been used in the East for its intoxicating effect.' The description is exact, even to the 'fresh butter.'

WHATEVER littleness degrades our spirits will lessen them and drag them down. Whatever noble fire is in our hearts will burn also in our work. Whatever purity is ours will chasten and exalt it, for as we are so our work is, and what we sow in our lives that beyond a doubt we shall reap for good or ill in the strengthening or defacing of whatever gifts have fallen to our lot.

—LORD LEIGHTON.

A SLATE-WRITING MEDIUM.

I am always interested in the experiences of other people, and perhaps some of your readers may be interested in mine. With the Editor's permission, therefore, I will briefly narrate two or three of my experiences with a medium for independent slate-writing. I will make no comment on the facts, but leave them to speak for themselves.

A camp meeting was held about fifty miles from the place where I resided, and one Sunday morning I visited it. The service was partly over when I arrived, and shortly afterwards a lady took the platform to give tests by independent slate-writing. I got as near to the platform as I could. The lady, after making a few remarks, said she wished some gentleman would come upon the platform and examine her slates, &c. I, being a stranger, was chosen. This was the first time I had met the lady. There was a small table, which I examined thoroughly, then a piece of black cloth about one yard square, then her handkerchief, with which she wiped off the writing, then the slate, which was a book slate with two leaves. All these things I examined in the presence of the audience in full light. She then wished me to sit on a chair only about three feet from her and in such a position that I could watch her every movement. I never took my eyes off her for a moment. She threw the cloth over the table, then gave me the slate to see if any writing was on it, then placed it under the cloth, holding it in her left hand, while her right hand was on the table holding the handkerchief used to wipe the slate with. In half a minute she handed me the slate and I read the messages written. These were addressed to persons in the audience and were recognised by them. No message was given to me personally. I was thoroughly convinced that the medium was genuine. I left the grounds shortly afterwards and did not have a chance to speak to her again. Some six months afterwards I heard that this same medium was giving tests on a Sunday evening in one of the Halls of the city I resided in. I went to this meeting and sat down about four seats from the front, but in such a position as not to be recognised readily. The medium came into the room shortly afterwards and took the platform. After a short address she requested her audience to appoint some person to examine the table, cloth, &c. Two gentlemen did so. She then placed the slates under the cloth, and received the following names: 'Georgiana, Cleo to Morrison.' I did not hear the first two names, but I said that I recognised the name 'Morrison.' She asked if any other person recognised the other names. She then said that 'Cleo' was not a modern spirit, but was an ancient person, and was a control. I recognised the name as one of my guides, and am positive that neither the medium nor any other person in that audience knew the name of that spirit. Then she said, 'Georgiana is a lady who passed out when quite a young woman, and was very artistic, and seemed to have been a teacher.' I recognised the name as that of my mother's sister. I said, 'Yes, I recognise the name.' She said, 'Yes, she was an aunt of yours.' This name was also unknown to the medium or any person in the audience. She had passed away when I was an infant, some forty years ago. No person in that city had ever heard me speak of this aunt, and the name is not very common in these parts.

About ten days after this I went to see the medium at her rooms, and took with me a book slate, which I purchased at a book store a few days before. The medium had the same table, cloth, &c., as at the meetings. We sat down, facing each other, the table at the right hand of the medium. It was a beautifully fine day, and the sun shone into the room through two large windows. I handed her my slate, which she placed on the table. She took some pieces of paper, and asked me to write the names of the persons I wished to hear from. She moved to the other side of the room, and I wrote the names of friends on separate slips of paper. She then took her seat opposite to me, and I placed in her hand one slip at a time. One of her slates was placed under the table, and the writing was very audible. We found written on it the initials 'E. A. M.,' and a message from my wife, who had passed over many years ago. Then was written, 'George and George Ernest'—these were my brother and son. Then a message was written by 'Cleo,' my guide; and then a message from my great-grandfather. I asked the medium if he had been a soldier. She said at once: 'Yes, but not a private.' He was an officer of Dragoons (British). All

this time my own slate lay on the table, and the medium said: 'I think we can get messages on this slate without the aid of the table.' She then handed me the slate, which I examined, and found perfectly free from any trace of writing. I took one corner of it between my finger and thumb, and the medium did the same. In this manner we held the slate, and I then distinctly heard writing taking place between the leaves, as if written with a slate pencil. This slate was a book slate, the inside of both covers being the slate. When the covers were closed no space remained for the smallest piece of pencil to work in; besides, I am positive the work was done by some other force outside of ourselves. The medium asked the guides to make a portrait on the slate at the same time. After working for about five minutes, three distinct raps came on the under side of the slate, as a notification that they had finished. We opened the slate, and there found two portraits, and the rest of the slate covered with writing. The portraits and the writing appeared as if done with a slate pencil. One of the portraits was that of a woman of about thirty, and the other was also that of a lady about the same age. The medium then took her own slate, and my guide 'Cleo' said that she had done the best she could to produce her portrait under the circumstances. I have a spirit photograph of this person, and the slate picture somewhat resembles it.

This lady was clairvoyant and clairaudient, and would describe the spirit who did the writing, as well as give other tests. She has been before the public for a long time, but has developed the slate-writing power in recent years.

28, Sinclair-street,

W. B. MORRISON.

Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A.

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SPIRITUALISTS IN CONFERENCE.

The seventh annual Conference of the National Federation of Spiritualists was held in Daulby Hall, Liverpool, on Saturday and Sunday, July 4th and 5th. A social tea and entertainment was provided on Saturday evening to welcome the officers, delegates, and associates. Mr. Allen (Liverpool) presided, and an excellent programme was gone through.

At the Conference on Sunday morning, which opened soon after ten o'clock, there were present fifty-five delegates, twenty-eight associates, and fifteen members of the Executive, representing a membership of four thousand. The hall had been tastefully decorated, and presented an attractive appearance. The following distinguished visitors were called to take their places upon the platform: Mrs. Nellie Brigham, Miss B. V. Cushman, Mr. John Slater, and Mr. Walter Howells, America; Mrs. Fidler, Sweden; Mrs. Bliss and Mr. Hector Rumford, London; and Mr. John Ainsworth, Blackpool.

MR. A. J. SMYTH (Birmingham), the President, gave an excellent address, tracing the progress and development of the National Federation. Spiritualism, he said, has given to the world during the last forty-eight years a volume of spiritual facts that transcends the accumulated record of nations. The professors of the colleges and universities and the dignitaries of the Churches had repelled them by cynical indifference or determined opposition. The Spiritual movement, however, was fuller of promise and power than ever before. It is unique in having no personal founder, and owns no man as master; it is free alike from traditional restraints and arbitrary doctrines determined by councils; it glories in a free research into the laws and conditions of life here and hereafter, with psychic phenomena as side lights to aid the investigator. The Federation should adopt the very best methods of propaganda, investigation, and intellectual research. The 'missionary' work of Mr. Swindlehurst had been an unqualified success. He favoured the establishment of District Councils, and complimented the Federation on its secretary and other officers. He appealed for the co-operation of the Societies to set in motion what is deemed essential to the common good. The Federation was little more than a propagandist body, but its powers were enlarging, and he was anxious to gain for Spiritualists a legal standing. He asked them to avoid undertakings that would divide and weaken their ranks, and adopt such methods as would add to their numbers and strengthen their unity. He also urged the proper development and education of speakers and mediums, and thus increase the intellectual, moral, and spiritual status of the platform. Let not the

mighty power of the spirit slip from our grasp, and so be 'spirit without a body,' but let us be 'spirit and body,' and leave to posterity a legacy of knowledge, strength, and freedom, incorporated into the National Federation of Spiritualists. (Applause.)

Cheering letters were read from Messrs. E. W. Wallis and J. J. Morse, the former of whom is in Switzerland, and the latter in America.

The balance sheet and minutes of the previous Conference having been passed, the secretary's report was also adopted, in which Mr. Rooke states that the Federation is in a better position to-day than in any previous period—fifty-eight associates and one hundred and forty-six associates have paid their subscriptions. A balance of £21 4s. 9d. is in hand.

MR. J. SWINDLEHURST, the organising secretary, presented an encouraging report, showing that during his nine months' 'missionary' work he had held one hundred and eighty-two public meetings, attended by an aggregate of twenty-three thousand persons. His visits had included the principal centres of industry in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Cumberland, and the Midlands. He had travelled over four thousand three hundred miles, at a cost to the Federation of only £6 10s. 8½d., owing to the liberality of the Societies, and he was largely indebted to local mediums and workers for their valuable assistance. Still, a 'resurrection morn' was needed in some Societies if Spiritualism was going to be a power in the world. The financial outlook had been satisfactory, mainly owing to the earnest sympathy of the federated Spiritualists. He thanked the Executive Committee for freedom of action, for they had convinced all Spiritualists that unity with liberty is essential to the ultimate success of Spiritualism. The experience gained by his nine months' missionary efforts convinces us of the soundness of the Federation policy in uniting the scattered forces of our movement, and the spreading of our glorious gospel to other districts.

Several delegates spoke encouragingly of the work done by Mr. Swindlehurst, Mr. Long (London) suggesting that one Sunday evening in each year be set aside for the financial assistance of the propaganda work.

MR. CRAVEN (Clitheroe) moved: 'That it is highly desirable that a Board of Examination for those aspiring to platform mediumship be constituted in connection with the National Federation of Spiritualists.' He contended that the spiritual philosophy and phenomena were wretchedly and ignorantly expounded from many public platforms, and the present development of mediums was little better than a mere scramble. What he wanted was training, education, and superintendence, to assure that the mediums the Societies engaged were competent to place the spiritual truths and phenomena intelligently before the people.

MR. W. JOHNSON (Hyde) moved: 'That this Conference desires to impress upon Societies the necessity of placing upon their platform speakers and mediums of known character and intelligence.' He said that no one would care to sit upon such an inquisition as was proposed, as they would have to try the spirits as well as the medium. People usually got what they were fit to receive, and the mediums were less to blame for the results than the audience.

The amendment was carried by a large majority.

MR. TRIMS (Birmingham) moved: 'That the Constitution be amended as follows:—"Clause 6, Art. 2. The development and education of mediums, speakers, or other workers for the propagation of Spiritualism, by means of classes, homes, or colleges, or in any other manner which may be found practicable." Truth, he said, was sometimes presented to them in 'rags, all tattered and torn,' so that even her most ardent admirers were unable to recognise her, while her high and holy mission was disgraced. In the survival of the fittest it would be found that intellectuality would take precedence over the physical. It is not matter but mind that rules the world. He contended that the resolution would open out a way to develop mediums of moral, spiritual, and intellectual standing.

MR. PETER LEE seconded, and gave particulars of the developing classes he himself is now conducting at 'The Two Worlds' office, Manchester.

MR. LONG (London) supported, and urged upon the Executive the need of preparing and publishing a list of competent speakers and mediums. Many societies were to blame for sending highly-coloured reports to the Press, and thus giving a

false estimate of several public mediums. Still, he thought that the philosophy and phenomena would be very much what was demanded by the audience. They wanted levelling up from the floor to the platform.

Others having spoken, the resolution was adopted.

MR. LONG (London) proposed: 'That the National Federation of Spiritualists shall be empowered to prepare a quarterly list of competent advocates of our philosophy and exponents of our phenomena, which shall be published for the information of the Societies.' Having previously expressed his views, he left the question with them.

MR. JAMES SWINDLEHURST (Preston) seconded, and it was adopted.

It was decided to hold a National Spiritualist bazaar, and a committee (with power to add) was selected.

The following were elected to the Executive of the Federation: Messrs. Rooke, Lee, Macdonald, Swindlehurst, Smyth, Hemmingway, and Mrs. Venables.

Mr. Armitage (Yorkshire) was elected President for next Conference, Mr. Rooke re-elected secretary, and Mr. Fitton, treasurer.

Blackburn was selected as the place of meeting, on the first Sunday in July, 1897.

MR. T. O. TODD (Sunderland) introduced the 'legal status' question. He pointed out that all he wanted them to do was to allow a committee to be appointed for inquiring into legal matters, such as trustees and mortgages, holding property, and similar essential information. It affected the future life and welfare of the Cause. They would have to face the problem, and fight it out, in spite of all opposition. The charge of 'autocracy' had been made against him in respect to the draft form he had issued on the question; but they would have to make laws for the guidance of Spiritualism, and that was not autocracy. It would be democratic, as representatives of Spiritualism would draw them up. At present Spiritualists could not legally hold property, and were at the mercy of the trustees if they did. The latter could turn the Spiritualists out of their own building, and make a music-hall of it, and there was no redress for them in the courts of law. This and the declaration of the principles of the Spiritualist movement, together with other questions of vital importance, required immediate settlement, and their legal position defined for holding and securing property established.

MR. ALLEN (London) seconded, and, after a lengthy discussion and the answering of questions, it was unanimously decided that the matter be inquired into by a committee of the Federation.

A very successful public meeting was held on Sunday evening at Daulby Hall, when the room was crowded. Addresses were delivered by Messrs. P. Lee, T. O. Todd, J. Armitage, J. Lamont, S. S. Chiswell, Walter Howells, Mrs. Brigham, and Mrs. M. H. Wallis. Miss Cushman recited 'One Thousand Years from Now,' and Mr. John Slater gave a number of startling and convincing clairvoyant and psychometric tests. Mr. A. J. Smyth occupied the chair.

A word of praise should be extended to Mr. and Mrs. Chiswell and the Liverpool friends for the excellent catering and the general arrangements and accommodation of the delegates and associates.

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.]

Spiritualism and the Vedanta Philosophy.

SIR,—Allow me to put a few words in your estimable journal, as comments on an article in your paper dated July 4th. I must thank you without reserve for the kind and friendly spirit manifested throughout the article towards me and the philosophy I preach; but, as there is a fear of misconstruction in one part of it—especially by my Spiritualistic friends—I want to clear my position. The truth of correspondence between the living and the dead is, I believe, in every religion, and nowhere more than in the Vedantic sects of India, where the fact of mutual help between the departed and the living has been made the basis of the law of inheritance. I would be very sorry if I be mistaken as antagonistic to any

sect or form of religion, so far as they are sincere. Nor do I hold that any system can ever be judged by the frauds and failures that would naturally gather round every method under the present circumstances. But, all the same, I cannot but believe that every thoughtful person would agree with me when I affirm that people should be warned of their dangers, with love and sympathy. The lecture alluded to could but accidentally touch the subject of Spiritualism; but I take this opportunity of conveying my deep admiration for the Spiritualist community for the positive good they have done already, and are doing still. (1) The preaching of a universal sympathy. (2) The still greater work of helping the human race out of doctrines which inculcate fear and not love. Ever ready to co-operate with, and at the service of, all who are striving to bring the light of the spirit,—I remain, yours sincerely,

63, St. George's-road, S.W.

VIVE KANANDA.

Legal Status.

SIR,—Your correspondent, E. Adams, is pleased to say he has sought in vain for 'solid argument against the scheme which has been suggestively drafted by Mr. T. O. Todd on behalf of the National Federation, the objectors appearing to be carried away either by their fears or their prejudices.' There is a lot of virtue in the adjective 'solid.' Such arguments as I advanced are questioned all round. Yet, though ho low-sounding when urged to E. Adams, on behalf of opponents to Mr. Todd's scheme, one at least has solidity sufficient, in E. Adams' opinion, when used properly, to prove that that which I oppose is the thing my argument justifies. E. Adams has no right to twist my meaning. I applaud Mr. F. O. Todd for the success which followed his efforts to quell the boisterous behaviour of a certain 'minister of the Gospel.' I do not admire or advocate the disciplinary process by which that success was obtained. The reverend gentleman either knew or did not know his duty, when engaged in his course of 'Exposures.' If he went beyond his duty, for his own private pocket, he was not true to his church. If he handed all the profits of his lectures to the church funds, the church was to blame for his outrageous behaviour. We do not know more than that he was very rude to Spiritualists during a long period, and then he suddenly collapsed.

According to E. Adams this proposed 'Legal Hundred' will have such power, or at any rate ought to have such power over mediums as Conference had over Ashcroft. On this point all I wish to say is that I do not approve of it. I will not support such a policy. Those who are unable to walk, or work, in freedom will not command much respect consequent upon certificates from 'Legal Hundreds.'

I think E. Adams will find, by reading, that 'modes of government,' or questions pertaining thereto, are the chief distinctions of the various denominations. Take the Scotch Presbyterians; we have three or four distinct bodies of them, but they all agree as to doctrine. Take, again, the Wesleyan Methodists; the differences are almost all upon 'modes of government' and not 'doctrinal beliefs.'

E. Adams will have 'the deed to allow of modifications to suit local needs and conditions—and this surely should be an easy matter,' he says; 'then this objection stands for nothing.' If 'the deed' is to suit *all*, then there will be no offender. Where is the value of 'the deed' as an authority?

'Legal Hundreds' are as liable to be composed of weak minds as of strong ones. 'The decisions affecting matters of general interest come to by an assembly of men of distinction, but specialists in different walks of life, are not sensibly superior to the decisions that would be adopted by a gathering of imbeciles,' says Gustave le Bon in 'The Crowd'—you reviewed last week. But I do not adopt the last word. What I would say is that the 'Legal Hundred' would do all the wilful things one or two of its most determined wilful minds advocated. Then its decisions would not be numerically valuable. Why not at once in conference elect a pope, or father, of the Federation?

This question will not be set at rest just now. I may live to see a 'Legal Hundred' set up, and possess itself of as much power and property as it can secure. I may, if not others will, live to see the cause rent in pieces, and others begin the same process over again.

July 6th, 1896.

JOHN LORD.

Physical Phenomena in a Private Circle.

SIR,—It may be useful to investigators into psychic mysteries to record in public some successful experiences of a small circle of private persons who have met in my rooms and elsewhere, and obtained without the aid of a professional medium some genuine phenomena of what is called physical manifestations.

On Sunday, May 31st, in the dusk of the summer evening, between 7 and 8.30 p.m., with the glare partially shut off by drawn curtains, a party of eight of us, ladies and gentlemen, were met in my rooms to practise any forms of automatic mediumship which might develop themselves. One gentleman only was a stranger—the rest had been more or less constant attendants at my various réunions for psychic practice. Consequently we were probably in harmony to begin with, and the conditions of the atmosphere were also good.

We were seated round a medium-sized octagon table, standing on legs with castors, when one of the ladies, whose husband was present, went into a trance. The trances of this lady, which have developed themselves during the last few years, are attended by complete unconsciousness.

We explained to a 'control,' speaking through the entranced lady, that we wished particularly for the phenomenon of the raps. The control said that she had not learned yet how to produce them, but that there were other spirit friends of the lady present who thought they could produce them, provided we refrained from conversation and kept ourselves in a passive condition. If possible, we were all to try to get into a semi-somnolent condition, and to keep only sufficiently awake to attend to manifestations, without exercising any will or excitement.

As soon as the control had withdrawn and the lady regained her consciousness, raps loud enough to be distinctly heard and even felt by their vibrations through our finger-tips, began to be manifested. They answered my questions in a perfectly intelligent way, and, without mistakes, indicated the letters of the alphabet which spelt out messages, giving the names of two intelligences who were causing the raps, and other directions. We then all removed our hands from the table and sat away a good yard clear of the table so that we could see all the space round the table and one another's movements, and, still clasping each the hand of neighbours, we asked the intelligences to rap under these conditions. The raps came quite as distinct as before.

Pleased with this success, and feeling it our privilege to follow up at any cost of convenience this accidental combination of conditions which had led to such manifestations of unseen forces, we agreed that the same party should meet at the same time the following Sunday.

On Sunday, June 7th, accordingly we held our second set of experiments under the same conditions of light and weather. The raps commenced at once as distinct as before, also strong tilts or risings of the table straight up, giving intelligent messages and directions. When the conditions were well established we again sat away clear from the table and got the raps as before, both when our hands were clasped all round and also when, for experiment's sake, we unclasped them. I then asked the manifestors of the hidden force if they could also tilt and levitate the table while we still sat clear away, and there in the full light of the summer evening we saw the table move with three vigorous tilts in answer. We called the letters of the alphabet, and at certain letters the table manifested its life by the vigorous tilts, and gave us messages in this way. It then seemed to try to levitate itself clear from the floor in this way. But failing in this the raps named four of us present to lightly put our finger-tips on the table, clear of the rim, and then the table levitated about a yard clear up from the floor and remained so a quarter of a minute or so. We then were advised to form a circle next time of fewer persons and some greater marvels would be shown us.

About a fortnight after this meeting, the lady who has been used as the chief medium for producing these results happened to have as a visitor to her house a gentleman from Yorkshire, who is an ardent believer in the spiritualistic phenomena and endowed with considerable mediumistic powers.

We accordingly arranged on the evening of Friday, June 19th, that the same four persons who had been selected by the intelligences at the last meeting should again meet—this time at her house; and in company with this visitor and another mutual friend and earnest investigator, a well-known musician, selected as having considerable mediumistic powers, as yet un-

developed, to try to elicit a further development of physical manifestations.

We met at 8 p.m., and sat in a small back room on the first floor, round a similar sort of octagon table. We had darkened the upper part of the window by pinning up a heavy table cover. The control entranced the lady, and explained that they were going to try the phenomenon of bringing apports from outside into the room, but said they required for this more complete exclusion of the light. Accordingly, a second cloth was pinned on to the first, covering the lower part of the window, and the door was locked. When we had settled down again, raps of several distinct kinds manifested themselves, and gave the gentleman of the house some directions about his financial business, purporting to come from his deceased sister. After this, flowers were felt by each sitter falling on the hands or into the lap. Two rings were taken from the lady medium's fingers and a tortoise-shell pin from her hair and flung on the table, and touches of hands were felt by several sitters. Then the control entranced the lady again, and explained that the flowers were sweet-pea blossoms which had been especially selected by the spirits because there were no flowers of that kind either in the house or in the garden. The control then gave some good clairvoyant tests to the musician present, describing several points of his private affairs and giving advice thereon. These circumstances were unknown to the medium and others present.

While our hands rested on the table, it levitated to the height of a yard or so from the ground and came down with a rush. When asked for the phenomenon to be repeated, but for the table to descend gently and gradually, the unseen forces did this successfully. We then sat away from the table, and the table manifested violent upheavals by itself, and finally fell over on its side. There was sufficient light in the room for us to distinguish our figures distinctly during the manifestation.

When lights were lit at the end of the sitting we found that there were some thirty blossoms of sweet-peas, quite fresh and even damp with dew, and also that a handkerchief of the lady had been brought from another room and flung on the table, and a velvet band for her hair had been brought from her room upstairs and placed in her pocket.

As this lady, who was our medium, is subject to fits of unconsciousness, the fact of these apports might possibly be explained by the medium having been made unconscious during some solitary walk in the course of the day, and the flowers having been picked when she was in that state by the control and placed in her pocket and possibly dematerialised there previous to the sitting, and, as this explanation would upset the belief that they were brought through the matter of the walls or doors, I have asked the lady to make any statements which would go to support or contradict the first explanation.

Her answer is, 'Last Friday I did not go into anyone's garden or anywhere except from our house to the train, and thence to King's Cross Station to meet my visitor, and with him I drove home in a cab. Although, when under control, I am unconscious, I always know when I have been so, and I can absolutely declare I was not unconscious on Friday until after the sitting had commenced. In answer to your other questions, I was wearing the same dress in the evening at the sitting as I had on in the afternoon, but I did not see a florist's on my way, or any flowers except in window-boxes, and I only arrived just in time to meet the train at King's Cross. We consider your report absolutely correct in every detail.'

In conclusion, I have only to remark that, of course, there is nothing very unusual or extraordinary about these phenomena, but the chief merit of them to my mind is that they occurred without the aid of a paid medium, for the most part in good light, and in the company of a set of persons who are all very earnest about the genuineness of spiritual phenomena and very confident of mutual sincerity and good faith, and who are willing, if necessary, to attest to the accuracy of my statements.

I shall have great pleasure in announcing through the medium of your publication, any further phenomena that may occur, if you think it will be of any service towards encouraging the efforts of others to get the same successful results.

F. W. THURSTAN, M.A.

Did you ever hear of a man who had striven all his life faithfully and singly towards an object and in no measure obtained it? If a man constantly aspires, is he not elevated? Did ever a man try heroism, magnanimity, truth, sincerity, and find that there was no advantage in them—that it was a vain endeavour?