

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

'Ebenizers, or Records of Prevailing Prayer,' written and selected by H. L. Hastings, is a novel book. It is filled with instances of answers to prayer, and truly the inference seems obvious and irresistible. We lately commented on Dr. Barnardo's mighty successes or marvellous coincidences; and need not repeat our conclusions. Thought-transference or suggestion, aided by unseen messengers, may account for it all.

We observe that Dr. Gorodichze calls effective hypnotism 'psychic vaccination.' It is smart but unpleasant. Vaccination anyhow is the injecting of diseased matter; and so may hypnotism be: but that is the danger of hypnotism, not its *rationale*. Besides, even if the claim on behalf of vaccination is valid, it conveys disease only to prevent disease: but how does that hold good in hypnotism? One may truly say that it can convey soundness in order to prevent unsoundness of mind; but that is a very different affair.

We are always pleased to see any of Mr. Hudson Tuttle's books presented to public attention in any way, and we are specially pleased to see Mr. Copley's spirited republication of the clever work on 'The Origin and Antiquity of Man.' The book aims high. Dissatisfied with the hitherto 'vulgar aim of History,' Mr. Hudson Tuttle attempts a more comprehensive generalisation and more philosophical analysis of the facts. He says, 'The problem we are to discuss will involve the investigation of the origin, science, and relation of language; the geographical distribution of races; the relation of man to physical conditions; a survey of the races of men, and an inquiry into the causes of deviation.' That is a large proposal, and yet we have only a comparatively small book. But that is, in a way, an advantage. Mr. Hudson Tuttle is not, like Lyell or Darwin, an original investigator and experimenter. He is intuitive and industrious, and compresses demonstrations into something like assertions or principles: not so good for the student, but sufficient for those who only require a general knowledge of these vast subjects. The book is published by H. A. Copley, Canning Town, E.

We have received from Messrs. Lawrence and Bullen an advance copy of 'The Chariot of the Flesh,' by Hedley Peck, a sensational psychological story of more than average merit. The first half of the book abounds in psychical speculations of considerable value, though frequently highly fanciful: the second half has in it too much hysterical or rancid love-making for our taste. All the way through, the story and the flow of reflections that abound in it are never far away from our neighbourhood. There is one keen remark concerning the savants, well worth citing. In the presence of some new psychical power, it is said, 'the savants stormed, and then, when they found it impossible any longer to ignore the new power, they themselves began to give names to the mya-

teries; and, having done this, they were consoled, considering that they had thereby exorcised the supernatural.' That is very smart, and as true as it is smart.

A bright American minister (S. C. Beane), speaking lately at the installation of a brother minister, put the standard very high. He is all for shortening the distance between the visible and the invisible. 'The invisible world,' he said, 'is not a strange, fenced-off or altogether unknown country. It is the other half or nine-tenths of everything we see or touch.' It is only 'that part of ourselves which we have not yet explored.' 'In the light of to-day's knowledge it is unmanly superstition which stands appalled before any new comer or old visitant from the unseen world.'

The Jesus we celebrated at Christmas-time entirely understood this. The discourse from which we are quoting puts this finely:—

Jesus appears to have rested his religious experiences on these three assured certainties: First that his life had its being in God, not that he or anybody was a mere subject of Omnipotence, not that the Heavenly King in majestic isolation sent down couriers with messages to his human children, but that his human soul, the type of all human souls, was the very life of God's life; that there was no distance, no apartness; that, like branch and vine and root, there was one life; man, when wholesome and at his best, at one with his Divine Father. Hence no ground for suspicion that any divine mystery not yet disclosed could contradict the sweet mission and benignity of a human heart and soul. Second: hence the jubilant assurance pouring through his gospel, that every space and speck of the universe, every century and moment are held inescapably to Divine law and love. And, third, a confidence, sure as knowledge, that the future would explain the present, the great whole expound these separate parts, so that what seems broken, partial, even fatal now, when seen at length and at large, would be found perfect in the plan to which it shall be found to belong.

Here is another fine thought, with unspeakable consolations and guidances in it:—

Wherever souls are, there God is, and every law and every blessing and every retribution and every possibility. It is one of the great ends of life to mount up into this calm, unwavering certainty, to dwell in the invisible as in a home, to live with its dark problems as with friends. It is the great function of the Christian pulpit to-day to proclaim in earnest certainty that God lives, that He is everywhere, and is forever the same—not so much to answer great questions as to help the asker to live with them, and with his whole being live into them, and expound them slowly and surely by experience.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.

A meeting of members and friends of the Alliance was held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall, on the evening of Friday, December 18th, when an address was given by Mr. Arthur Lovell on 'How Spirit Creates Matter.' We hope to give a report in our next issue. The next meeting of the Alliance will be held on January 22nd, of which notice will be given in due course.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Mr. W. H. Terry, Austral Building, Collins-street East.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.

BY AUTOMATIC WRITING THROUGH THE HAND OF
W. STANTON MOSES.

THIRD SERIES.

[Mr. F. W. H. Myers having kindly sent me, by permission of the executors of Mr. Stanton Moses, three volumes of automatic writing given through his mediumship, I wish to preface the third series of 'Teachings' by saying that as much of the matter which has now come into my possession has already appeared in 'Spirit Teachings,' 'Spirit Identity,' and in former numbers of 'LIGHT,' the messages I am now deciphering will necessarily, in places, be disconnected in order to avoid needless repetition. Furthermore, absolute continuity is impossible, as the messages are written in so small a hand that even with the aid of a magnifying glass I cannot decipher all the passages, and the peculiarity of some of the writing adds to the difficulty.—M. SPEER.]

No. XLIX.—Continued.

OCTOBER 26TH, 1873.

We now prepared again to mould your life, and to bring you to a phase of your existence wherein our immediate operations should be revealed, and you should be brought to know what it was that had framed your career, and which, in ways seemingly so diverse, had planned and arranged your life. You had no hand in much that you were led to do. You did it—so much you knew even then—unwittingly, and now you were to be even more markedly the agent of an unseen power. You were introduced by us to a new phase of life, and to those who, in it, were to be fellow-workers with us. We had long prepared for this. We had arranged that our friends should be prepared and brought to a plane of sympathy and knowledge which would enable us to establish affectionate relations and friendly co-operation in our work. Review the past as it concerns the circle through which we have operated; and you will see the truth of what we say. We planned and arranged, as we best could manage, that instruments selected for their fitness should meet on a plane of sympathy, and receive open evidence of spirit power. You were guided by one, to whom we could gain access best, to look into Spiritualism. You were influenced powerfully. You were all led, step by step, from report to experience, from hearing to knowledge. When first you were brought within the immediate sphere of spirit influence you were convinced of our operations. From that time till now we have led you on and on. We have testified in your midst with miracles of power. We have taught you directly a Gospel of God far in advance of that which you had before received. We have laboured with zeal, and are thankful for what we have been permitted to do. With one of you we have never needed to strive. We thankfully recognise the support that we have gained in a difficult task from that consolation. And if, with the others, we have met with opposition, it has only been because we have not always been able to regulate the conditions, and to give our teaching and our proofs in due measure. We have no fear that either of you, our friends, will finally reject what God has permitted us to say to you and do for you. When you review the teaching which has been given you, you will not fail to recognise how much you have gained by it: how much truer are your conceptions of the Supreme! how vastly wider your ideas of His all-abounding love which, you now see, is not confined to a favoured people or a favoured land, but is conterminous with the universe, boundless as infinity, limitless in its out-goings, fathomless in its depth. How much wider are your views of duty! Trammelled by no considerations of creed, you see that mankind is one vast brotherhood—children of a common God who has revealed Himself from time to time to all, in all ages, according to their wants. You have come to see

that anthropomorphic views of God are born of man's ignorance; that the revelation of God is frequently but the imagination of man; that the Incarnation of the Supreme in a body of flesh is a human figment, curious only in respect of its prevalence among some civilised and educated folk; a superstition which advanced knowledge puts aside, with its causes, its results, its erroneous doctrines, its degrading views of God. You have learned that man needs no external Saviour, and that duty honestly performed to self, to brother, and to God is the only passport to happiness. You have cast aside those human figments of mediæval ignorance which a rigid dogmatism has perpetuated. You have learned to curse none for disagreeing with you: to bless rather, and to help, to pray for, and to labour with, ignorance and folly. You have truer views of man's eternal destiny and present duty. You are beginning to see that life is real, even when not enclosed in a casket of matter. You are beginning to realise the truths which spirits teach of retribution in the future for present sin, of happiness and satisfaction in the spirit world as the consequence of progress and beneficence. You see that work in its intensity must be directed by a wider scope of knowledge than man can boast. You are beginning to have truer views as regards the body in which the spirit is enshrined, and on which it is for a time so dependent. You will learn more. For mistake you not, you are yet a child, in ignorance. Happy for you if you learn with the ready willingness which should be the characteristic of childhood. We have much to teach, but we are dwelling now only on the past. And if you desire to estimate what spirit teaching has done for you, meditate on what you once thought, and contrast it with what you now know; and see how, as one of your Teachers has said, you have been brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of God's truth. For each of you, our circle, we pray constantly. We do not cease to tend and guide you. Each of you is a special care; each is in our heart. We pray for you the blessing of the Supreme. We cease awhile.

+ I. S. D.

No. L.

OCTOBER 27TH, 1873.

I desire to ask information regarding the very interesting communication. Has the whole of my life been a preparation for this, as you seem to imply?

It has. We have guided and planned it for no other purpose. We have wished to secure a medium duly prepared. That was not possible, except by life-long preparation. The mind must be prepared, and stored with information, and the life must have been such as to fit the progressive mind to be receptive of truth. This can only be by prolonged training.

Then the medium is selected at birth? On what grounds? What are the peculiarities?

The medium is not necessarily selected at birth; we said that in your case our selection was largely made because we wished to give a special training to an instrument selected for a special purpose. Mediumistic power is of various kinds, differing very widely. With the physical medium it is a physical peculiarity. The aura, or atmosphere, which surrounds all substances, animate and inanimate alike, is in the medium amenable to spirit power, and receptive of and sympathetic with spirit influence. But in higher classes of mediumship it is a mind in sympathy with spirit control, receptive of spirit teaching, and responsive to spirit influence that we seek: a mind that we can guide by impression, and mould to our ends. This is our desire. For spirit influence exists in many, very many, instances where the recipient is quite unconscious of its exercise. We have desired to point out to you this in your own case: and in that of the circle through whom

we operate. You have dimly seen how that lives are moulded by external power, and you have suspected that spirits may influence more than man suspects. So it is. The whole race of man is in some sort the recipient of guidance from the world of spirits. The world of matter is but the reflex and shadow of our world: man is but the channel of our influence: and within certain well-defined limits, which we may not transgress, we manipulate events and mould the issues and destinies of mankind. We have explained to you that we are not permitted to interfere in the chain of cause and effect: to save man from the consequence of his sin: to pander to idle curiosity: to change the world from a state of probation. We are not permitted to discover to you what the All-Wise desires to keep hidden. We cannot force on you knowledge. We can but offer, and protect, and guide, and train, and prepare the willing mind for future progress.

I can understand that many things must remain hidden, for want of power to comprehend. How far are you able to supply 'new' knowledge? For example, when you write you use phraseology which you must get from my brain, I presume. Do you simply influence me, or do you guide my hand, or do you depose my spirit and occupy my brain?

The nature of the control varies much. At first you will remember that it was necessary for us to lull your spirit to sleep before we could operate upon you. We could get the absolute passivity we required in no other way. That is the state of unconscious trance. Even still, when we speak through you in circle, we depose your spirit, as you have phrased it, lest it should break through the condition of passivity and be hurt. This is rendered necessary from our fear that the perfect harmony of the circle might be broken, but when you are completely isolated it is not necessary for us to lull you to perfect sleep. It is sufficient that we influence the passive mind, without entrancing the spirit completely. You now write, in words such as you would naturally employ, ideas conveyed by us to your brain. There are concerned in this work four spirits, who fence you round from external influence, and preserve the proper harmonious conditions in order that I may suggest to your mind the thoughts which you are to write. There is no need to actually guide the pen. The same power that enables me to suggest thoughts, enables me also to impress you to pen a special form of letter. The handwriting is selected solely as an evidence of individuality, for your own satisfaction. The words used are such as you would use; only the thoughts are ours. You write what we put into your mind, and you have no power to alter it. It is only when the condition of passivity is broken, and your mind commences to act, that the message would become unreliable. The ray of light would be broken, and we cease at once. This is the only condition under which your brain could act: and when that supervenes we at once cease. We can, of course, as you well know, supply to you new thoughts and new ideas. It is only the clothing of the thoughts that remains your own: and not even that always. We are bound here, however, as elsewhere, by an unalterable law. We cannot force on you ideas for which you are not prepared; nor can we get into your mind thoughts and conceptions for which it is unfit. Cease.

One moment. Is the control analogous to what we know as mesmeric?

It is of that nature in this case. My ideas are passed through your mental and bodily organism. You are the vehicle merely.

Then is that the same thing as impressional control?

Not precisely. Impressional control is a less exact influence. The general outline is suggested, and the form and method of treatment are left uninfluenced. In many

cases this form of mediumship comes last of all. The mind has become so accustomed to spirit influence, so imbued with spirit teaching, that it may be said to have acquired complete mastery of such subjects, and may be allowed to pursue its course with slender and occasional guidance. The controlling spirits do but hint, suggest, or supply occasional information. The mind of the medium does the rest.

Then this is not so reliable?

In some cases, not. But defer. You must cease.

+ I. S. D.

MR. VOYSEY ON OBEDIENCE AND PRAISE.

There are pauses in Mr. Voysey's raid against Christ and Christianity,—blessed Sundays of affirmative religious teaching which his congregation must greatly relish. He is then at his best: and then few men in London surpass him in robust and wholesome instruction. Here is one of his recent sermons on 'Obedience and praise,' with a fine analysis of the modern agnostic whose agnosticism is the result of a rather ignoble shrinking from distress. He contrasts him with the Psalmist who, out of his distress, sang praises to his God. Very keenly, he says:—

This flabbiness of the moral sense, this absence of stimulant to heroic virtue, is one cause of our coldness towards God. The other and very potential cause is the deep and widespread discontent with His arrangements, with His ordering of the world. Trouble seems to have now an effect the exact opposite of that which we discern in the Psalmist. He went straightway and deliberately thanked God for his afflictions and troubles. He saw their supreme value in keeping him in the way of God's commandments. He was distinctly and truly the better for his troubles. But here are a host of good people who, at the first scratch or pin-prick, cry out at the wrongs and woes of the world and rail at God's providence as some inscrutable and possibly inexcusable act of cruelty and neglect. And if we do not go to this depth of folly ourselves, we know many people who do, and the air around is all filled either with inarticulate murmurings or open maledictions against the Divine government. 'Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments.' So says the Psalmist. But the modern cynic would cry out, Why, the man must have been a fool to talk like that! He might have sullenly borne his affliction, or prayed for grace to be able to bear it without cursing his Maker; but to praise Him again and again, 'seven times a day,' 'for His judgments,' is too much for this enlightened age to appreciate or even understand.

The secret of much of our want of faith and trust, and of nearly all our unspirituality in religion, is our fleshly clings and our undue anxiety about money, for instance. Of this, Mr. Voysey says, with much truth,—and it is a greatly-needed lesson for the day:—

You cannot get songs of praise to God out of a man who thinks first of money. He does not know what worship means, what love means, much less praise. When we love as God would have us love Him, when we are set on finding the truth and proclaiming it, even if it brings us to beggary, then the God of love and truth has some chance to find a place in our hearts. And once there, He will turn our darkness into noon-day, our tears into joy, and our lamentations into songs of praise.

SOCIETY WORK.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mr. Allen, of Manor Park, delivered an interesting and instructive discourse to a large audience. On Thursday evening, the 17th inst., the Rev. J. Page Hopps gave an address on 'Many Roads, but One Home Hereafter,' which was highly appreciated. On Sunday next, Mr. Veitch. We had the pleasure of sending £6 10s. to the West Ham Hospital, resulting from Miss Florence Marryat's recent lecture.—T. R. McCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Geo. Horatio Bibbings again visited the Marylebone Association, and his inspirers were heard to much advantage during an impassioned oration entitled 'The Message of Christmas.' The large audience again and again testified their appreciation of the utterances of the speaker. Miss Florence Morse sang 'The Holy City' in a manner which deservedly gained her much appreciation from all present. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Miss MacCreadie, clairvoyance.—L. H.

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EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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THE SPIRITUAL CHRIST.

During the month now nearing its close, every right-minded Spiritualist has been in sympathy with that which deeply underlies all the symbols or even the mere decorative millinery of Christendom. But it is everywhere the Spiritualist's business to penetrate beneath surfaces to realities, beneath the body to the soul. He it is who ought to best understand the Master's saying,—'The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.'

There are some who think that no such person as Jesus ever lived in the flesh, and we believe that even so good a Spiritualist as Mr. Gerald Massey has his doubts about it; or, at all events, that he thinks Paul's chief references to Christ were cryptic or occult, referring, not to an external person but to an internal principle. And there is, indeed, not a little in Paul's letters to back up that opinion. That was a remarkable saying, for instance, in one of his letters to the Corinthians, 'Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more' (R.V.): as though, in some way, he gave up the person and relied on the principle, for he elsewhere and repeatedly writes of Christ being born in us; and, in a variety of ways, seems to insist upon it that the real Christ is every one's true spirit-self.

But he that as it may, we, for our own part, are content to construe all this as meaning that the real Christ is in the spirit-sphere, and that our entire relationship is with him there. Not what he did in the flesh but what he is doing in the spirit—that is the important matter. Not the once shed blood, not the actual wooden cross; but the mighty self-denying bias won from him, and our own cross which he teaches us to carry—these are the real means of salvation. This is purely spiritual: and this is precisely the significance of Christ for the Spiritualist, who has kept his Christmas 'in spirit and in truth.'

Here we may join hands, as we so often find we must do, with the Rationalist who is as discontented with mere spectacle as we are, and asks for reality. One such lately asked for 'A Christianity which shall identify itself with the Holy Spirit everywhere . . . a Christianity which shall stand for the life of Christ—not Christ the man who once exemplified the life, not Christ the date, but the impulse Christ, the movement Christ, the spirit Christ, forever and forever shaping history, now flowering in sons of carpenters and naming new spring seasons in the tree of life, but never begun and never ended and never confined to any one holy May-hour of history.' That is, indeed, a very pregnant sentence which throws a light on many things, and suggests how the Christ could have existed from all eternity—not the personal Hebrew Christ—but the spirit ideal—the divine creative energy working in

humanity, THE WORD; indeed in the beginning, and with God—and God: for this is God—that divine creative spirit, ever evolving the divine in man, so finely exemplified once, nearly 1900 years ago.

Here we come right up to the saving power of the Christ, and identify it with the saving power of the divine spirit, working in a million ways. All through the ages it has been struggling for entrance and possession. Its presence and its power are seen and felt in all the higher impulses; and the surrender to these is salvation, and truly 'salvation by faith,'—by faith in all the divine saving graces which Christ represents and for which he stands.

In this spiritual realisation of the Christ-power we see three prominent characteristics:—The consciousness of God, pity for Man, and a passion for Righteousness: and truly these blend in one. The demonstration of this is the abiding value of the personal Christ. The four little Gospels are really all described in these three characteristics, and they are the only abiding verities which will persist beyond all theologies, rituals and creeds. They are, in truth, the vital elements of the universal Religion now slowly dawning upon the world which has yet to keep its perfect Christmas Day.

'The consciousness of God' is something entirely different from mere belief in Him: for belief may be merely arbitrary or, at best, only intellectual. The consciousness of God is a certain awareness of Him which amounts to spiritual knowledge: it is its own evidence; and it depends, not upon argument, but upon emotion, restfulness, confidence, aspiration, love. Here may be found the explanation of that deep saying attributed to Christ: 'No one knoweth the Father but the son.' Of course. The mere philosopher, the acute arguer, the creed-builder, the magic-mongering priest—what *could* these know of the Father? The son alone, with a son's needs and temper and trust and love, can be aware of Him, or respond to Him. And truly that is how Christ is 'born in us,' when the right spirit is evolved, the spirit of sonship which enables us to say, 'Abba, Father.' We are persuaded that this is the key to the New Testament in so far as it deals with the spiritual conception of Sonship, and of a Sonship which Christ only represents and exemplifies for us all, even as he said.

'Pity for Man' is a primary result of this heavenly birth. The life of the Christ of Jerusalem was supremely a life of pity. His dearest disciple well said, 'He that loveth is born of God.' Truly: and he who is born of God loveth. And there are millions born of God who never heard even of Christ's name. It is told of a celebrated missionary to China that before he left for China the first time, he publicly stated that his leading motive was the awful fact that a constant stream of Christless Chinamen were passing away to hopeless perdition. On his return, some years after, he was reminded of this statement, and he then made the following profoundly significant reply:—

I have changed my mind about that; and in this connection let me tell you a little incident that happened in my own family. I had a very valuable Chinese servant in my employ, upon whom I leaned with implicit confidence, and one day he came to me and said: 'I shall be obliged to ask you to find some one to take my place, as, in the course of a few weeks, I am to be executed in place of a rich gentleman, who is to pay me very liberally for becoming his substitute'—such a mode of exchange, as the reader may know, being in accordance with the law of the Empire. I then inquired what possible inducement there could be for him to forfeit his life for any amount of money, when he replied: 'I have an aged father and mother, who are very poor and unable to work, and the money that I am to receive will make them comfortable as long as they live. I think, therefore, it is my duty to give up my life for the sake of accomplishing this.'

The missionary, who had then become a bishop, went on to say that he could not think of such devoted love being

rewarded only with hell, and he appeared to see the birth of the Christ, without Christian agencies, in this glorious 'heathen.'

'A passion for Righteousness' we can only name, hoping to resume the subject on a future occasion. Suffice it now to say that if anything could demonstrate participation in the Christ-spirit it is this. 'The righteous Lord loveth righteousness,' said an ancient Hebrew prophet, centuries before the Advent of Christ. But the Old Testament abounds with records which tell of the presence of the spiritual Christ in Israel. What a melancholy fate, that the children of Israel of a later day knew not Israel's glory and culmination when it came! But do we truly know it even now?

THE NEW SPIRITUALISM.

BY MR. RICHARD HARTE.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED, ON FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 4TH; MR. H. WITTHALL IN THE CHAIR.

(Continued from page 609.)

The New Spiritualism will start with the proposition that the universe is a spiritual universe and man a spiritual being; that the true man is the noumenon of the phenomenal man—a real mystery, of which we may never know anything, except that it has a separate life as a centre of consciousness. It is in fact, the hidden 'I am I' in each of us, the real owner of body, mind, conscience, consciousness, and everything else we call 'ours'; and which we infer to be a part of the Universal Noumenon we call Deity. That is the view of man which is characteristic of Spiritualism, and it is supported by the analogies of science—the Conservation of Energy, for instance, being almost another name for the conservation of consciousness. According to this view of man, his ceasing to exist at death is the most unnatural, the most absurd, the most impossible thing imaginable, and the *onus probandi* falls on those who maintain that he does not continue to exist; and if the Materialist can prove that negative, he will show himself a cleverer fellow than I now think him.

The New Spiritualism will look upon materiality as the temporary condition of spirit, and upon the body, therefore, as a kind of garment that spirit puts on in order to manifest on this earth; it will consider that the matter which we know is only one of many different kinds of substance; and that, since the very essence of phenomenal existence is to be in some sense or degree substantial, we must necessarily, when we leave this earth, find ourselves on another plane of life, clothed by kind Nature in other garments appropriate to that condition of being—perhaps in the psychic or thought bodies which seem to be, as it were, the under garments which embodied spirits are wearing even now. The New Spiritualism will behold this universe as a living universe composed of an infinite number of centres of consciousness in hierarchical degrees, in and through every one of which Deity—the life of all lives—is manifesting itself; and, therefore, the New Spiritualism will hold that nothing is 'common or unclean,' nothing which exists is intrinsically bad; a bad thing being, in fact, merely a bundle of useful qualities or faculties which happen for some particular reason to be manifesting in a way that is inconvenient to ourselves.

The New Spiritualism will acknowledge that, of necessity, the universe must certainly contain on its various planes an infinity of beings utterly unknown to us mortals; but it will see that all these entities, even the very highest, cannot be other than finite, since they belong to the manifested universe, and, being manifestations, can no more be 'God' than a king can be monarchy, a professor knowledge, or a clergyman piety.

The New Spiritualism will probably not be so fruitful in elaborate allegories as the Old; and those it makes will take an intellectual rather than an emotional form. It will employ analogy more to explain the universe than to rule the multitudes by exciting their hopes and fears. And the very fact that it will know and acknowledge that its allegories are only allegories, and not at all matters of fact, will make bigotry, and religious hatred, and priestly domination things of the past. We have to remember two things in this connection: First, that the

allegories which we construct in order to express what we feel with regard to the Cosmos, and to our position in it, although they cannot be true statements of fact, very probably convey to our minds, with a clearness which nothing but allegory could produce, as near an approach to the truth as we could by any possibility take in. Second, that it is not at all necessary that a thing should be what we call 'real' in order to deeply affect us, satisfy us, and determine our actions. It would puzzle us, I think, to say whether music should be classed with the Real or with the Ideal. We enjoy a romance or a dramatic representation, and learn from it, although we are perfectly aware that neither the characters nor the events are matters of fact.

Now, the feelings with which a large number of pious Christians regard the dramatic and historical elements in their religion—what they call 'sacred history'—seem to be of very much the same kind; and the pious delight they take in acknowledged allegories like the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' in 'Passion Plays,' and in purely fanciful pictures of persons and events they consider 'sacred,' and also their affection in many cases for images, are all naïve recognitions of that fact. Believers are, therefore, neither the fools nor the hypocrites that some people suppose them; they are very often simply emotional people, who are easily satisfied intellectually, and who enjoy sacred allegories by making believe to themselves and others that they are true history, and who rather prefer their religious stories to be of the 'penny dreadful' type. After all, that which is true in religion is its poetry and its appeal to the higher emotions, and these depend very little on historical accuracy. It does not matter, for instance, one iota to the modern Christian whether Jesus was ever crucified or not, it is enough that every Christian believes that he was; for it is not the poor dead Jew that is the Christian's risen Saviour, but the living principle embodied in the ideal Christ; and Christ still lives, and will live for ever, whether the Jesus of Nazareth ever lived and died or not.

The New Spiritualism raises the veil which priest and parson have carefully drawn across the entrance of the Temple, and shows us the Allegorical Monsters who dwell in the darkness there, and who till now have obtained our worship, and still claim it with awful threats. It shows us that instead of these fabulous monsters and their retainers, there exists all around us an invisible universe, which interpenetrates us, and in a thousand ways influences and controls us; a universe in which humanity may find powerful allies in the battle it has to wage with ignorance and misery; a natural universe of substantial beings and things, which is part of the Divine Plenum in which Deity is manifesting to us; a universe of which we are at present grotesquely ignorant, but of which we may at least learn something if we do not throw dust any longer in our own eyes by our silly prejudices and ludicrous conceit.

The New Spiritualism teaches not only a deeper science, but also a wider theology. It teaches that just as there must be something divine, something of the Deity itself in everything that exists, so there must be some element of truth in every analogy, since it contains a resemblance of some kind which strikes the human mind. In the Power which we call Deity there must be something, therefore, which corresponds to our conceptions of a father, of a judge, of a king, of a shepherd; just as there must be something there corresponding to the great processes of Nature; but what that 'something' is we can only picture to ourselves by figuring it in the form we imagine it to resemble—by our very allegories, in fact. There must even be in Deity something which corresponds to the secretion of bile by the liver, and, doubtless, it is that very element which enables the materialist to secrete his philosophy.

Therefore, the New Spiritualism, instead of 'robbing' anyone of his faith, or of his 'God,' makes him a worshipper of all Gods, a partaker of all faiths, a free member in all religions, all theologies, all Churches. The New Spiritualism, therefore, gives to men a true Initiation into the Mysteries; but it does more than that. Like all Initiations it confers not only knowledge but power. It gives its Initiates a real power that nothing in this world can withstand. It teaches its Initiates how the world may be transformed from a den of misery into an abode of happiness, and it puts in their hands the means to make that transformation. If you will listen to me a little longer, I shall tell you why I dare to make that claim.

The utmost that theologians and moralists can do to make the world better is to hold up beautiful ideals before mankind; then when exhortation fails, there is nothing for it but to call in the

policeman. Those ideals, they say, take us out of ourselves. Yes, and they take us out of the world of present realities; for however beautiful, real, or 'true' ideals may be for another state of existence, they are fancies in relation to this one. What we want is to learn to live in this world—we shall be taken out of it soon enough. Humanity has always been painting and worshipping ideals, and it has not yet learned thereby the first elements of self-guidance, self-reliance, or self-control. As far as history goes back men have trusted for salvation to praying, and preaching, and punishing, and believing, and the outcome of that *régime* is that mankind seems now to be rushing down an incline that leads to an abyss; and when in desperation we ask our so-called teachers how we can avoid the threatened destruction, their only reply is that we must pray harder, preach longer, punish more severely, and believe more implicitly. Now, I take it that just in proportion as men cease to pray, they begin to help themselves; just in proportion as they cease to preach, they begin to help each other; just in proportion as they cease to punish, they begin to educate; and just in proportion as they cease to believe, they begin to think.

We ardently desire now to help ourselves and each other, and to educate not only others but ourselves; but we are caught in the mud now left by the ebbing tide of savagery and barbarism. The danger we are in is that all the hopeful, generous feelings, which are part of man's nature, may soon be actually crushed out of the world, bred out of the race, as a hurtful quality is bred out of animals,—bred out of us by the infernal struggle for existence that goes on so gaily and yet so pitilessly under the *régime* of praying, and preaching, and punishing and believing. The world now turns its back on Spiritualism, because it thinks that Spiritualism means more credulity, more praying, more preaching, more prohibitions and commandments—more of the very things that have driven it into Materialism, and are driving it into Anarchy. No: the New Spiritualism means all the liberty that the Anarchist seeks, all the freedom from pious cant and emotionalism that the Materialist desires. It means far more, for it means a return to Nature; not a return to the savage state, but a return to that which is natural, both in thought and deed, in the case of men who have reached a higher level of capacity than the barbarians, whose silly imaginings we still repeat with awe-struck hearts and empty heads, and call it religion, and whose cruel injustices we still keep up with aching consciences, and call it civilisation. Neither does the New Spiritualism mean, like the Old, the spinning of intellectual cobwebs, or the blowing of emotional bubbles: for the New Spiritualism is the most practical thing imaginable. It sees that when analogies exist between things on different planes, those things are real things on their respective planes, and that if we would affect or influence them we must work on the plane to which the thing we wish to affect belongs.

Would you think a people practical who emptied their sewage into their wells, and who whipped everyone who then got typhoid fever, and stoned anyone to death who said that whipping was not the best treatment for that disease? Yet those people would be sages compared with ourselves; for, on another plane, we do precisely that idiotic thing on a gigantic scale. It is proved by thousands of indubitable facts that as a fish swims in water, so we are surrounded by an ocean of psychic substance, into which the thoughts, emotions, passions, and designs of mankind continually empty themselves; which psychic substance we mentally and morally breathe and drink, as really as with our bodies we breathe air and drink water, and upon the purity and wholesomeness of which psychic substance our very lives, not only as spiritual beings, but even indirectly as material beings, depend; yet into that psychic ocean in which we live, we cause to flow, day by day, and year by year, great rivers of human misery, injustice, cruelty, greed, and selfishness; and we fancy that, when we have done this, and punished those who have been made wretched and desperate, and killed those who call us fools, we have proved ourselves orderly, pious, and virtuous people; and it never strikes us by any chance that it is the law-makers rather than the law-breakers who are the real criminals!

The New Spiritualism says that every poor wretch we allow to live or die in misery, every criminal we torture or kill, is so much psychic poison emptied into our wells, which acts and reacts on us in a hundred ways from the invisible world, obscuring and poisoning not merely individuals, but even whole peoples; and that to allow millions of men, women, and children to live in want and wretchedness, and die with despair

and hatred in their hearts, is a thousand times more foolish than to poison the air we breathe and the water we drink. Some people may say that all this is fanciful; but that is precisely what a cow would say if I took her to the Royal Academy and told her there were beautiful pictures on the walls. It is not fancy, it is a terrible reality; and it is at the bottom of the old allegory, that God requires sinners to repent, and never to die in their sins. A more modern simile would, perhaps, be that Common Sense requires the miserable to be deodorised, and the criminal to be disinfected; especially before being allowed to enter the astral world. The only real question is how this had best be done; and for my part I think it would pay us a thousand times better to make men good and help them to live than to make men bad and help them to die.

When I look around me and see the violence, the cowardice, the arrogance, the misery, the callousness, the fraud, the bigotry, the cruelty, the greed, the meanness, and the miserable cant and hypocrisy that are rampant in the world; and at the same time perceive how long-suffering, generous, truthful, brave, kind, and self-sacrificing people are when the conditions of life enable those qualities to show themselves, it does not seem to me to be wickedness that ails the very worst of us so much as a colossal stupidity—a stupidity that will surely rise from us and vanish away like a fog as soon as we have learned the very first lesson that Science teaches her children—that *if you wish for a particular result, you must furnish the necessary conditions*. The result that all men desire is happiness, the conditions for its attainment are to help ourselves, to help each other, and to teach the young to help each other and themselves. But we have not the power to help ourselves or each other, for a terrible spell is upon us, obliging us to be cowards, bullies, hypocrites, toadies, drunkards, robbers, and torturers, and forcing us to saddle and bridle ourselves that knaves and fools may ride us to death. Yet we know that the conditions we now furnish are those of misery, not of happiness.

Why do we not alter those conditions? We have no heart to try. We do not dare to try, because we have come to believe that the Great Power behind the universe is working out divine ends by means of human wretchedness, using for that purpose a 'struggle for existence' in which those are bound to succeed who possess in the highest degree the very qualities which we know to furnish conditions of misery, want, and crime. We have come to believe that they who will ultimately succeed in the struggle for existence will have thereby shown themselves to be the fittest to survive and people the world—the fittest to people Hell—and we fancy in our blasphemous stupidity that it is the purpose of Nature and the will of God that this kind of 'fittest' shall triumph; and that we have only to go on as we are doing—praying, preaching, cheating, lying, robbing, slaying, ravishing, believing and punishing—in order to end by becoming a real credit to our Maker. That is the spell that is on the world at present; and who are they that have put that spell upon it? Who are they who tell us, who teach us, that kindness, and forbearance, and forgiveness, and gentleness, and straightforwardness, and self-sacrifice, are not 'practical,' that they 'don't pay,' are not 'good business,' not conducive to success in life, not even quite manly, not in accordance with God's law of the Struggle for Existence and Survival of the Fittest—and though good enough to talk about on Sundays, not 'good enough,' in a more real sense, for week days, not good enough to be made the basis of our collective life, or the rule of morality embodied in our education and our laws? Who are they that say all that? The men who tell us that infamous and grotesque lie are the leaders of *fin-de-siècle* thought, the Goliaths of our Science and of our Religion; men who are crammed with learning, and covered with honours, but whose 'spirituality' reaches only to the height of affirming on the one side, and denying on the other, that the Allegorical Monsters of Theology are the Creators and Rulers of the universe, and who are equally blind to the Great Reality before their eyes. Who will face these Goliaths? Who will lay them low? I think there is a youthful David, called 'the New Spiritualism,' who is even now down by the brook, picking up smooth round stones for his sling.

Do not imagine, however, that I want to belittle the grand achievements of Darwin and Wallace, or the splendid labours of Spencer, or the great work of our Huxleys and Tyndalls. All such great men are stars who in their courses are fighting for Spiritualism, for they are smiting down the Dragons of the priests. Doubtless Evolution is carried out in the vegetable and

animal kingdoms by a struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, and in the human kingdom that struggle and survival rightfully obtain in some degree; but that they should not govern our lives is shown clearly enough by the fact that instead of producing perfection in our case, they are bringing on degeneration in the very characteristics in which we claim superiority over the beasts. The two weak points in that theory, as applied to men, are, first, the use of the term 'spontaneous' to mean *uncaused* instead of *caused by some Divine power*. I used to be an evolutionist in that way myself at one time, for I thought that babies grew *spontaneously* under gooseberry bushes. The second point is in ignoring the new factor which human intelligence and sympathies have introduced into the problem; for this makes the Darwinian theory as applied to man an instance of the same fallacy which it would be to argue that because it is good to manure a turnip, therefore we ought to manure a baby.

It is because the New Spiritualism will supply a great spiritual force that it will save the world; and it will supply that force by giving back to humanity the great conception of Deity, now almost abandoned alike by religion and science; and by giving us, in place of the Allegorical Monsters of Theology, real friends, powerful friends, in the persons of those entities whom we call high or advanced spirits—beings who, compared with men, may verily be called 'Gods.' The New Spiritualism supplies the force that will transform the world, because it teaches every human being, no matter how guilty and degraded he may be, that since the life that animates him is part of the Great Life we call Deity, he is, not figuratively, or by anyone's mediation, but literally, and by his own right, a child of God, and co-heir in all that life has to give, whether in this world or in the next; and that if he is kept out of his heritage, *somebody* has swindled him, *somebody* has tripped him up, and knocked him down, and now sits heavily on him to prevent him rising to his feet. When that thought comes home to the masses, to the toilers, the outcasts, to the slaves, to the hungry and shivering—as it is bound to come home, perhaps soon—of what use will it be for those who have so long lied to the people, and cheated them, and terrorised them, and tortured them, to tell them that 'cheap labour is necessary for production,' that 'Christ died to save them,' that 'the Struggle for Existence is a divine law,' that 'God is Love,' that 'Competition is the soul of Trade,' that 'the pure in heart shall see God,' that 'Adulteration is a form of Competition,' that 'God is their Heavenly Father, and will compensate them by and by,' and all the rest of it we have heard so often. For my part, I think that when that day comes it will be well for all those who imagine that they are still 'respectable people,' not to waste time in arguing with an awakened mankind, but to hurry out at once and call upon the mountains to be so kind as to fall upon them and cover them up; for then the cry, 'For God and the people,' will have a meaning it never had before.

Society is now organised on a principle that is in conformity with the theory that the struggle for existence—the Devil take the hindmost—is the Divine law of human life. Our education is calculated on that basis; every act of our lives has it for animating principle; and nothing but a change from that theory, and from the conditions it imposes, will now save mankind from fatal degeneration; nothing but a change of heart will cause that change of life; and nothing but the New Spiritualism can by any possibility bring about that change of heart. But when the change comes, it will not, I think, be a cataclysm; for it will not be physical force, but the far more potent spiritual force that will produce it. The solvent of misery will be the awakened reason and the awakened conscience of men collectively. Physical force applied to spiritual things only arouses physical force to oppose it, and the desired result is not obtained. The anarchist is like a man who thinks he can make the kettle boil by knocking it with the poker; all he does is to bring up the policeman, who sets to work to prevent the kettle from boiling by hammering it with the tongs. The awakening will affect high and low, rich and poor alike; and if the conscience of the rich and the high is a little quickened by events, and, like the proverbial coon, they climb down the tree when they see the hunter coming, why we ought to be magnanimous enough to pretend not to see it.

I think that even my dull eyes can see the rosy light on the horizon, which proclaims the coming of a new era, so long foreseen by poet and prophet, when a new and true Spiritualism, a Holy Spiritualism, a blessing and not a curse to the world, will

descend upon man, as if 'in the form of a dove,' imbuing him with a sense of his own true dignity, of the wonders of Nature, and of the majesty of Deity. Then the Allegorical Monsters of Theology will flit off jabbering into the darkness, and the thunder clouds that now threaten mankind will roll away—thunder clouds which I verily believe are charged with what the old Hebrew prophets called the 'wrath of God'; and then the sun of universal kindness will shine forth, and all Nature burst into blossom. And when that comes to pass, there will be heard, as it were, a voice from Heaven saying: 'This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased,' and Man the Thinker, Man the Spirit, will know that in his own nobler self Christ has come again.

A REMARKABLE VISION.

Perhaps the following remarkable occurrence may be of some interest to your readers:—

For some two years past I have been in the habit of occasionally hypnotising my wife, mostly for the purpose of studying the phenomena of 'clairvoyance' which she exhibited, this 'clairvoyance' not being of the order known as 'spiritual,' but of a rather more material kind, such as is usually met with in mesmeric clairvoyants, viz., visiting places at a distance, &c. She is of a practical, critical turn of mind, and not at all given to putting trust in her powers in the hypnotic or normal states. The following circumstance was, therefore, of particular interest to me, as a mesmerist and hypnotist of the modern school, as it may also be to others who are willing to accept the word of honour of a fellow creature who has the interest of science and truth at heart.

At present I am residing in Paris, inhabiting a flat, such as is well known to Continental custom. One room of this flat, the 'salle à manger,' opens out upon a piece of fenced land, which is for sale, but is sublet as a kitchen garden and fowl run. On December 8th, at about 9.15 a.m., my wife, whilst busy about her household duties, happened to look out on to this land, and she saw, whilst in a perfectly normal state, a vision of a man standing in a stooping attitude, with a gun in a vertical position, the butt resting at his feet, and a quantity of blood around him on the ground. The vision remained a few seconds and then faded away. She told me what she had seen, and as usual I made a brief note of it.

During the day my wife had occasion to go out, and on her return, contrary to custom, she entered into conversation with the 'conciierge,' during which the latter remarked that a Monsieur V., who had resided at the top of the road, had shot himself early one morning *just a year ago to-day*. The vision of the morning at once occurred to my wife, and she asked further particulars, from which it appears that Monsieur V., on December 8th, 1895, after taking his dogs for their usual morning outing, descended into his cellar, carrying his gun with him, the butt of which he tied to his feet with string to make sure of the weapon remaining in an upright position; and, standing thus with his head over the muzzle, he fired, with, of course, a fatal result. The 'conciierge' said, in addition, *without any leading question from my wife*, that he, Monsieur V., had owned the field at the back of our premises, where he had been in the habit of keeping his dogs, chickens, &c., and also of storing goods, and that one of his dogs *is still kept there*. It also transpired that this day, being the anniversary of his death, Mass was to have been said for the repose of his soul at a neighbouring church; but, owing to some private matters, it had been postponed till the morrow.

That all of the foregoing particulars were absolutely unknown to either my wife or myself I can vouch. Neither had we any opportunity of gleanings the smallest portion of a rumour upon which to build up the vision which is so strikingly illustrative of the sad occurrence above described, both as to time and manner of death, for we have been here only about three months, and do not know or speak to one of our neighbours. We do not even keep a domestic and we deal with tradespeople over a mile away.

I do not write to start any controversy, but simply to state a fact, and nothing but a fact. Explanation I leave to abler heads than mine. But I can assure all who will accept my word that none could be more critical than myself in this matter, and I have brought all my training as a scientific student to bear upon this coincidence before rushing it into print.

7, Rue Brussel, Paris.

A. W. LAUNBY.

CURIOUS STORY OF SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.

TRANSLATED FROM A COMMUNICATION BY MARGUERITE VAN DE WIELE TO 'LE SOIR,' BRUSSELS.

When I was a little girl of ten there was, in the neighbourhood, another little girl of my age, whose parents would have it that I was exactly like her in appearance. According to these good people two peas were not more alike than their Josephine and I; a slightly arbitrary opinion which they never succeeded in inducing anyone else to accept, for she was dark, plump, high-complexioned, and strong, whilst I was quite the reverse. Her education was received in the country, at a boarding school, and it was only by meeting her occasionally during her holidays that I got to know her by sight.

Josephine died of one of those childish ailments which take off the very young with the awful rapidity of the thunderbolt. The mother became almost insane with grief. She did not possess a single portrait of her daughter, and had this illusion—strange, but so touching—that if I would only sit to the photographer as a substitute for the departed child, her grief would be assuaged.

So they took me to the photographer. The thought of the part I was going to play, of that child who had, they told me, gone up to Heaven, and whose place I was to take, overcame me, made me nervous and tearful.

It was an April morning, blue, clear, and languid. In the work-room of the photographer, at the top of the house in St. Gudule's-place, where one could hear the vibration of the church bells as if one were in the belfry itself, the heat was stifling and enervating. The sunlight was blinding and the odour of collodion overpowering. When the photographer turned the lens on me, I was almost fainting. It seemed to me that I no longer had any legs or arms or material body, that my brain was emptied, my arteries bloodless.

They took me home cold and white, my forehead damp and my teeth chattering. I was ill for a week. But the most extraordinary and marvellous thing was that the portrait so obtained was that of Josephine—her faithful likeness and certainly not mine, for on this point I insist that, in spite of her parents, there was not the slightest resemblance between us.

DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

We learn from the 'Banner of Light' that Dr. J. M. Peebles, who is in his seventy-sixth year, left his home in San Diego on December 2nd, for his third journey round the world. In the course of his travels he will take in Honolulu, the Fijis, New Zealand, Australia, the East Indies, Siam, Malacca, Ceylon, India, Persia, Egypt, Palestine, Southern Europe, Rome and Paris to London, returning home *via* New York. While in India he intends to make a microscopic search for the 'Mahatmas.'

In reply to friends who have expressed the apprehension that he is too 'old' to undertake such a journey alone, the Doctor writes to the 'Banner':—

Old! I am not old; but in the morning, the morning-time of eternal youth.

True, the hairs may have whitened, but the silvered hairs are not I. The brow may have become wrinkled, but the wrinkles are not I. The knees may be weaker, stiffer than fifty years ago, but knees are not I. The hands may be a little tremulous, but the hands are not I. They are but the instruments that I use. 'This body of mine is not I, but the tabernacle, the tent, the house that I live in. I, the ego, the conscious myself, am not growing old. I am young, and life to me is afire with youthful hopes and towering aspirations.

Growing old is only a delusion of the senses; the innermost soul, a divine entity, a potentialised portion of God, cannot grow old. Eternal youth is its birthright.

Occasionally I have neglected the house that I inhabit, for the purpose of repairing the houses of others. Both duty and the law of self-sacrifice required it. There's no loss, however: 'Whoever loseth his life for my sake'—that is, for the sake of truth and human good—said Jesus, 'shall find it'—find youth eternal!

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.]

Mourners.

SIR,—I admitted that bereaved mourners would be quite out of place in circles of investigation such as Mr. Thurstan was forming. I also admit his contention in reference to gathering for mutual edification and pleasure, unless mourners go there to be edified and to get pleasure, in which case they have a perfect right to be present.

But that Mr. Thurstan's contention was general and not particular appeared clear from his advice to mourners to emulate the sick stag and shun the society of their fellows. To me this advice seems pernicious for the reasons already given.

Mr. Thurstan now contends that bereaved mourners are in a state of infectious spiritual ill-health, and likens their condition to that of a person suffering, say, from influenza. I admit that a sufferer from influenza ought not to mix unnecessarily amongst his fellow beings, because he would almost certainly infect them with the disease, and not be relieved thereof himself. With a bereaved mourner the case is quite different. By mingling with his fellows he would be likely to be cheered, and they in no wise affected unless to sympathy and tenderness—a condition to be preferred to the light gaiety which often accompanies a selfish and callous heart.

Mourning for the loss of a loved one indicates a loving heart, and is the natural outcome thereof. I think it indicates spiritual health, not ill-health.

The persons whom Mr. Thurstan objected to were bereaved mourners who were eager to get some proof that their lost ones were not dead. My last word on the subject is that we Spiritualists owe it as a duty to such mourners to help them, as far as lies in our power, to get the knowledge which will bring consolation, and thereby lessen the sum of sorrow in the world, and if we lose a little in gaiety thereby we shall deepen our spiritual joy.

J. S. H.

Evolution?

SIR,—The constant reiteration of the word 'Evolution' excites my ire in much the same manner as the proverbial exhibition of a red rag excites a bull. Are we 'evolved,' or are we born? Is our life process here on earth an evolution, or precisely the contrary? Is it not rather a continual reception into our life of the lives of others, producing a complex within of innumerable currents, again producing concentric waves of feeling and consciousness—vortices, out of which new thoughts and feelings are born? Are our perceptions and thoughts the simple ones of childhood? The more knowledge we acquire, the more we reflect and think, the more we see reason to think that we have to go on, on and on, for ever on, acquiring fresh knowledge, and as a consequence greater wisdom and power. But this wisdom and this power is not an evolution, rather it is a birth from the union of knowledge and love. Love, speaking spiritually, is the male principle, the prime actor; its effects are proportioned to the extent of knowledge acquired by its recipients. God is Love (I make no apology for using old-fashioned phraseology), and His creation, altogether, is the female principle; my own term for that is one of femininity. All creation is feminine and motherly, and all things are *born*, not 'evolved.'

The word 'evolution,' as originally used in this connection, implied, if I am not very greatly mistaken, a wish to make Natural Law a substitute for Supreme Will—as if we were in any position to know what is 'Law' in the universal sense! But did it ever occur to those who harp so continually upon these words, 'evolution' and 'natural law,' that our earth lives are very short, and that our perceptive powers are excessively limited? The sequence of 'causes' and effects is not nearly so immutable as they suppose, and they may clearly see if they open their eyes to the patent fact that there are continual breaches in that sequence owing to the interference of 'causes' unknown to them. But our Father has no will to cause us utter confusion, therefore there is for us a temporary regularity of action with which to deal in this our humble condition, and upon this fact, rebellious—more frequently ungrateful and forgetful—sons set up their hypotheses anent eternal and infinite matters, and talk of 'evolution' as if it explained everything, and ignore Him altogether; while in Him alone we live and move and have our being.

R. FADHAM.

Mrs. Serris.—In response to the appeal made last week on behalf of Mrs. Spring, Miss Mack Wall begs to acknowledge the following contributions: Mrs. S.E.C., £5; A.M.W., £2; J. Ascoug, £1 1s.; Miss Wood, 10s.; L., 10s.; J.A., 7s. 6d.; G.W., 7s.; Mrs. Brantley, 5s.; Miss Mulahy, 5s.; Revan Harris, 2s. 6d.; G., 2s. 6d.; 'Nemo,' 2s.