

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 933.—VOL. XVIII.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

The meeting of the Alliance on December 2nd is an experiment which ought to interest all, whatever is put first, whether personal edification or the general good. We are entirely in sympathy with those who say that we must not end in phenomena, but go on to idealism and philosophy; but the fire must be fed, and facts feed it. If we would climb we must have solid ground: and it is precisely the solid ground that we shall look for at our 'Experience Meetings.'

We do not ask for the telling of great wonders only: we as cordially invite the minor experiences,—the apparently trivial incidents which are often so precious and convincing to those who experience them. And, even apart from incidents, we invite those other experiences which, to some, are just as precious,—the mental and spiritual experiences which bear witness to the blessedness of our faith and hope.

These remarks may serve to show what is wanted, and how far afield we may go. We cannot yet expect the telling of the deeper and more sacred confidences of the spirit, but we may hope that the experience meetings, the first of which will soon be held, will do much to draw us together as fellow-pilgrims and friends.

We do not quite understand Dr. Coit. He admits the accuracy of our report, and our report stated quite plainly that Dr. Coit said he would 'join in burning as a witch' any person who could 'surreptitiously enter the mind of another, and plant there, or take from there, any image or impression.' But now he seems disposed to insert the words 'persisted in violating,' as though the criminality lay in suggestion &c., in spite of warnings to desist.

But it does not matter much. In any case, we frankly say that in this utterance Dr. Coit has distinctly harked back to an obscurantism and to a temper which we supposed we had all outgrown. Odd, that we should find both in the dainty form of Ethical Culture!

Has Dr. Coit seriously considered what a host of devilries would be let loose if his sinister suggestion were taken up? If not, he had better read the records concerning the hunting of witches. But, in spite of his grotesque seriousness, we decline to take him seriously: and this we do out of respect for him.

'Doctrine and development': University sermons by Hastings Rashdall, D.C.L., M.A. (London: Methuen and Co.), is a typical book. The preacher of these sermons is a Fellow and Tutor of New College, Oxford, and in every sense a

representative University man. It is noticeable, therefore, that he should select for special prominence the testimony that the doctrine of the Church needs restating, nay, 'reconstructing,' to use his own word. This, he tells us, is 'the great intellectual task upon which the Church of our day is just entering.'

He gives us many specimens of the reconstruction which he thinks necessary, and all of them are on subjects hitherto considered finally settled by direct revelation from above. A very significant phrase is this—'reconstruction of Christian doctrine.'

Dr. Rashdall is cautious, but, reading between the lines, we see little to choose between him and Dr. Martineau. In reality, he is a blend of Dr. Martineau and, say, Alfred Russel Wallace. It is a typical book, and, in the highest degree, significant as to the revolution which is transforming all things.

The search lights come our way with such startling frequency from the Established Church that we find it difficult to record or even to follow them all.

Here is one from the Bishop of Lincoln which specially concerns us. It relates to the invocation of saints and prayers for the dead. The Bishop insisted on the fact that the Prayer Book 'emphasised very strongly the truth that the time of probation, the time for repentance, the great time of spiritual cleansing, was concluded in this life,' and therefore, he said, prayers for the dead could be allowed only for 'the faithful departed.' For 'the lost,' there was no hope of rescue, and for them, therefore, there was no room for prayer.

Is it not miserable, odious, shocking?

Starting from this subject, 'An obscure layman,' writing in 'The Church Gazette,' makes an excellent point. He says:—

In your summary of the Primate's charge, these words occur with reference to prayer for the dead:—

'There is one argument in favour of it, that it seems to give reality to the Communion of Saints; but this is, after all, based on imagination, not reality; and we have no right to lift the veil which God has thought fit to interpose.'

But has God done anything of the kind?

I am not a Spiritualist. I have never spoken to one, and have never attended a séance, but I have had occasion to study some of the spiritualist literature, and it seems to me to be of vital importance to the future of Christianity. The point is this. As Christians we believe that the Bible, and especially the New Testament, presents a truthful record of numerous events which cannot be explained by the ordinary physical laws. But even the leaders of science are beginning to admit that, outside the known physical laws, there is a vast body of law still unknown, or very partially perceived.

If we believe that the universe is governed by a system of law, we must expect that the experiences of one generation should be repeated in another; in short, that the so-called miracles and the appearances of the dead were no arbitrary interference with the Divine arrangements, but the calling into play of forces which have always and will always exist.

In John xiv. 12, Jesus says:—

'He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do.'



Why have these 'greater works' never yet been done by the Church? Is it because the really spiritual foundation of our Lord's life and teaching have been so ignored, that at last we have the leader of the English Church discussing the communion of those in different portions of their Father's house (which he daily professes to believe), as 'based on imagination, not reality'?

If the psychic and spiritual conditions reported in the Bible really obtain to a greater or less extent in the present day, the aid to faith of the establishment of such a fact would be incalculable.

Some day, that point will be profoundly appreciated,—that Modern Spiritualism enables us to believe in the marvels of the Bible. If they knew what was good for them, the ardent believers in the Bible would anxiously come to terms with us.

Dr. Peebles, writing in 'The Banner of Light,' says:—

The bitterest enemies of Spiritualism are those who know the least about it.

It has always been surprising to me that Swedenborgians, calling themselves New Churchmen, should in any way oppose Spiritualism, inasmuch as Swedenborg himself was a very remarkable spiritualistic medium. He says:—

'It has been granted me, now for several years, to be constantly and uninterruptedly in company with spirits and angels, hearing them converse with each other, and conversing with them.'—*'Arcana Coelestia,'* No. 5.

'It has been permitted me for thirteen years to associate with angels, and to converse with them as one man with another, and to see the things which are in the heavens and in the hells, and to describe them from experience.'—*'Heaven and Hell,'* No. 1.

'It has been granted me to have fellowship with angels, and to speak with those who are in hell. . . . Also to speak with all those of the dead whom I ever knew in the life of the body, with some for months, and with some for years. Also so many others that I should come short if I reckoned them at one hundred thousand, of whom many were in the heavens and in the hells.'—*'Last Judgment,'* No. 15.

This Swedish seer, though conversing with different grades of spirits and angels, was himself subject to obsessions.

The writings of Swedenborg are a wonderful mine concerning spirit-communion, and some of his 'Memorable Relations' are beautiful or sublime: but one needs to be on one's guard while reading him. And yet when do we not need to be on our guard when spirit messages are about? We shall have something to say about Swedenborg soon.

The following is from 'The Progressive Thinker':—

For twelve years Mrs. William Sutherland, of Webster City, Iowa, had been crippled and unable to walk. She had been treated by the best physicians of the State without avail. Her husband recently interested her in the case of Mrs. Van Syke, also of that city, who was reported as cured of a like malady by Chicago 'Faith Cure' healers, and a week ago she received word from them that to-day at ten o'clock they would pray for her.

Another message came this morning that prayers would take place for her recovery at that hour, and suggesting that she have friends pray with her at home. The house was surrounded at ten o'clock, and ten minutes later shouts from the inside notified the waiting crowd that something unusual had happened. Describing her feelings afterwards, Mrs. Sutherland said she felt a thrill pass through her body as soon as the prayers commenced, and that she had all she could do to keep from attempting to rise to her feet long before she did. She now walks easily, and says she feels not the slightest pain.

Many claim that it was the excitement and her determination that effected the cure, but Mrs. Sutherland insists it was the efficacy of prayer.

The above from the 'Times-Herald' may seem wonderful, but so many similar cures have been made by these people, who do not themselves understand the philosophy of their treatment or the real cause of these favourable results, that they have come to be matters of general news in the secular Press, whose editors long since gave up hope of a solution of the problem.

Prayer is the means of concentration of many minds upon the one susceptible person and 'cure' vibrates upon that concentrated mind-current to the patient. The patient had the suggestion that at that time there would go up a concerted prayer for her restoration. Mind is superior to body. A general concentration of minds upon the con-

scious mind in control of the afflicted body helped it to correct the errors of that body and restore equiformity to body and mind. Not all persons can be reached, and not all errors can be corrected.

Mr. Barrett, in his Report as President of the American National Spiritualists' Association, says:—

Professor William James, of Harvard, instructor in psychology in that great university, devotes one-third of his forty-five lectures upon psychology to spiritual phenomena. Some of the professors in other universities in the United States have, during the past year, also taken up this subject and devoted from one-third to one-half of their time to spiritualistic phenomena in their relation to the science of psychology.

Our own professors are, as usual, rather conservative; but they will follow, without fail, in due time. And there is really no hurry. The truth will not bolt.

'The Banner of Light' says:—

A few days since it was remarked by a gentleman of culture, a broad-minded, progressive man, that he had noticed in the columns of the spiritualist papers many references to the great work Spiritualism has accomplished in the past fifty years. From the platform he had heard the same statement made over and over again, until he began to wonder why this great work had not become more apparent to the world. 'I fail to see any objectified forms of that work in the United States,' he continued. 'You cannot show me one endowed school in running order; you cannot point to fifty well-equipped temples of worship; you cannot show any charitable work or missionary effort such as the Unitarians and Adventists exhibit, and they have not one-fifth of the followers that Spiritualism has. The proof of the real worth of any institution is the influence for good that it exerts upon the people who have attached themselves to it. Such an institution always makes itself objective as well as subjective, and its followers never appear to shirk their full duty. . . . Either you Spiritualists do not believe what you profess to believe, or you have sought Spiritualism for the purpose of escaping certain well-defined duties to your fellow men. In either event, it would be wise for your people to have evidence at hand to substantiate their claims, or they should refrain from making them.'

'The words of this gentleman made a deep impression upon the minds of his auditors,' says 'The Banner of Light.'

#### 'THE SOUL OF A PEOPLE.'

We have just been reading and immensely enjoying 'The Soul of a People,' by H. Fielding (London: Macmillan). It may seem like excessive praise to say that we can scarcely remember a book whose style, for its charm of simple beauty, can be compared with it. The writer of it is or was a British official who had serious work to do in Burma, before, during, and after the late war. During this time, he became deeply interested in the people, and learned to admire them and their thoughts and ways in many respects; and he dedicates his book to them, having written of them 'as a friend does of a friend.' And he writes like a friend,—tenderly, admiringly, and with a certain undertone of pathos, suggesting loving pity and longing.

We hardly know what to call the book,—whether story, appreciation, analysis, or history. It weaves in everything,—religion, government, business, politics, social life, character pictures, ethics; but the end of all is to take us behind all, and make us feel what 'The Soul of a People' is.

The result is simply a fascinating study of character and life; and, while we are charmed with it, we cannot keep back the hot blush of shame as we think of our treatment of a people we were too ignorant to understand and too masterful to consider; and we rather think that the gentle note of wistful pathos all through the book is the outward and visible sign of the writer's knowledge of this.

The closing chapters on 'All life is one,' 'Death, the deliverer,' 'The Potter's wheel,' 'The forest of time,' and 'Conclusion,' give curious and touching glimpses of Burmese beliefs concerning life and death and the unseen. Here we should like to quote, but dare not begin. It is all exquisite and very human.



## TRANSMIGRATION AND EVOLUTION.

## II.

The question as to the origin of the human soul is one which has been much debated from the time of the early Christian Fathers. It was claimed by some in these early times that each soul is created directly for each body; but to this it was objected that in such a case the child born would be free from original sin. Others claimed that the soul is transmitted from the father to the child; but against this, also, grave difficulties were raised. In fact, St. Augustine concluded that it was impossible for mortal man to get to the bottom of the difficulty, and hence it was allowed to the faithful to hold either theory.

Now I am not aware what theory the opponents of reincarnation hold in regard to this question, or, indeed, whether they have any definite theory at all; but it seems to me that if they adopt the theory that the soul originates with the body, then the conclusion is irresistible that it must also perish with the body. But we know that the soul does not perish with the body, and hence, we have presumptive evidence that it must have had a prior existence. Moreover, does it not seem a monstrous thing to imagine that a mere physical act on the part of a pair of humans could have the effect of so arousing the Divine Creative Energy that an entirely new immortal soul is at once created and despatched into our world, it may be, very much to the grief and shame of the unworthy parents?

Therefore it seems to me that such a theory cannot be entertained for a moment on rational or philosophical grounds. A very pertinent question was asked of Dr. Peebles on one occasion by the control of a Hindu medium, viz., Whether he considered that the *instrument* or the *player* upon the instrument was first in point of time? However, the question does not seem to have had much effect on the good Doctor, as he appears to be still amongst the opponents of reincarnation.

Seeing, therefore, that the idea of a special creation of each individual soul at, or subsequent to, the conception of the child is irrational and unphilosophical, while the transmission of the soul from father to child is equally untenable, it seems to me that we are shut down to the only other alternative, viz., the pre-existence of the soul.

In my former article (October 1st) I showed—conclusively, I think—that the doctrine of the transmigration of souls is the natural corollary of the doctrine of evolution; that, in fact, the Darwinian theory is simply a re-discovery of that ancient doctrine, perverted, however, by the materialistic conceptions of the age. If I am right in this—and I think it cannot be disputed—then it must be evident to every unprejudiced mind that Mr. Darwin's doctrine of '*descent* with adaptation' must be radically and completely wrong. That man is not *descended* from animal progenitors, is proved by the science of biology, which shows clearly that, in the animal kingdom, there has been one continuous *ascent* 'from specks of animated jelly' at the foot to man at the summit of the animal kingdom.

Thus we find that Darwinism stands in direct opposition to the science of biology, the one speaking of *descent* in connection with the evolution of living beings, while the other speaks of '*ascent*.' And as these terms are contraries which cannot be reconciled by any method of reasoning whatever, so the ideas associated therewith must be utterly at variance.

Now I think it was made sufficiently clear in my former article that it is the soul of man, the *essential* man, which has been evolved, through numberless forms of animated being, from the very lowest depths of Nature. Of this we find a reminiscence—or evidence of '*transcendental heredity*,' as Herbert Spencer terms it—in the evolution of the human embryo, which successively passes through all the varied stages of embryonic animal structure before reaching the human form. From all which the conclusion must be that, instead of being a *descent* from animal progenitors, man is the very highest product, the crowning glory, of Nature.

The importance of this conclusion must, I fancy, be evident to the ingenious reader from the following considerations: If man be thus the highest product of Nature,

and if Nature be the visible manifestation of God,—or the 'living, visible garment of God,' as it has been called,—then it is clearly manifest that the law of evolution offers the most complete scientific and philosophical demonstration of the truth of that ancient philosophy which regarded man as being a microcosm of the great macrocosm, or a seed of Igdrasil, the Tree of Existence, these being the exact equivalents of the doctrine of Jesus of Nazareth, that the son of man is also the son of God, the infinite Father in heaven. And thus it will be seen that we have the very fullest confirmation, based on the deductions of a godless and materialistic science, of those fundamental truths which have formed the essential basis of religion in all ages.

Now it seems to me that these considerations ought to satisfy your correspondent 'X.O.' whose letter appeared in 'LIGHT' of October 15th, that reincarnation, or the transmigration of souls, is not in any way inconsistent with Infinite Love and Infinite Justice. For if—as we have shown to be the case—man be the son of God, the Infinite Father revealed to us by Jesus of Nazareth, then surely it must be evident to anyone having the smallest spark of filial affection in his soul, that whatever He ordains is wisest and best, and that it must be dictated by perfect love and perfect justice. If it be His will that we should go to school, and remain at school until we have properly mastered our appointed task, then, methinks, it is for us to acquiesce in His superior wisdom, however hard it may seem to us. Let 'X.O.' put it to himself in this way: Supposing him to have a son who desires to escape the necessary training of school or college, because he has found it irksome, would not both love and justice prompt him to say, 'No, my boy; you must return to your tasks for a few more sessions. But, take courage, work hard and get your certificate, or take your degree, and then I will start you in a profession, so that you may take your place in the world as a man fully qualified to do useful work.'

Thus it seems to me that man's earthly existence can only be fitly likened to that of a boy at school. Some are more advanced than others; but each has to return term after term, gaining wisdom from experience, through pain and sorrow and labour, until he has mastered his appointed task; until he has learned to choose the good and refuse the evil; until he has learned to know the substance from the shadow, the reality from the illusion; and until, by renunciation and self-sacrifice, the *at-one-ment* has been completed, and man loses himself, only to find himself in an infinitely higher degree.

I must confess that I could not at first quite discern the purport of 'X.O.'s' question. But it is quite apparent that he has been wont to look upon the world and Nature as a mere dead machine, governed by blind mechanical laws. If he would understand the philosophy of transmigration he must learn to regard Nature from a very different point of view, and look upon the world as a living, sentient being of whom man is the highest product, of whom, in fact, humanity may be regarded as being the *soul*. Love! Ask the mother if she loves her babe! Ask the father if he loves the child whom he has begotten! Ask the tree if it loves the blossom and fruit which it has borne! Yes; God, the Infinite Father, whose name is Love, cares for even the unconsidered sparrow, feeds the raven, and clothes the lilies of the field; how much more, then, does He care for man, His own offspring, 'O ye of little faith!'

There is much to be said on this important question, which is a confessedly difficult one, did time and space permit; but I must forbear. That but a few are able to accept this doctrine is not at all surprising when we reflect that it is opposed by firmly rooted prejudice, based upon some sixteen centuries of erroneous teaching. But there is nothing in the New Testament writings which is directly opposed to it; while there is much which can be construed in its favour. If Jesus did not teach the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul, then, I would ask, what did he mean when he said to the people, 'Before Abraham was I am!'

JOHN SCULLER.

PARIS.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Mons. Leymarie, 42, Rue St. Jacques.



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The moving cause of this modern attempt to take a sober, historical and yet sympathetic view of the psychological characteristics and labours of the saints is the trend of modern knowledge. 'One by one the strange facts recorded in saints' lives which were scouted by the hot-headed scepticism of a century ago, and considered to discredit all hagiography, are now recognised as instances of well-known psychological manifestations. It is little to the purpose that they are explained as due to hypnosis, thought-transference, expectant attention, or other "word causes"; the point is, that the philosophy which once denied these things as superstitious, is now convinced of superstition in that very denial.'

That keen thrust is very well deserved, and very well delivered: and, as we have seen, it is as helpful towards an understanding of 'witches' as it is convincing in our summing up of the psychology of the saints. But, of course, there is more behind, when we think of the saint, not only as a psychic, but as an instrument of the divine spirit, which, indeed, works everywhere and in all. 'Not indeed that all are capable of sanctity, which is the heroism of charity,' says M. Joly, 'but that all can drink in some measure of the chalice which the saints have drained.'

But saints vary just as sinners do,—and as widely, in various ways;—all the way, for instance, between the uncleanness of a St. Benedict Labre and the exquisite and sane sweetness of a St. Theresa. So did the characteristics, the uses, and the psychical manifestations of the saints differ. The Old Testament abundantly illustrates this, and so does

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To begin with, there is danger of the illusion which mistakes the echo of voices, proceeding from these inner depths where pride and sensuality thrive almost unsuspected by the soul, which is a prey to them, for heavenly inspirations. After countless experiences, a St. Theresa may end by distinguishing clearly when the soul is speaking and when it is listening, but it will cost, even to one like her, not a little to get as far as this. Therefore it is that St. John of the Cross is so careful to warn souls against the temptation of thinking that they are listening, when, in reality, they are only talking to themselves. 'There are persons,' he says, 'scarcely able to meditate, who, when they hear certain inferior words, fancy that these must proceed from God. Their love of listening to these words, and the desire they have of hearing them, make them answer themselves, and then they persuade themselves that these answers come from God. These persons fall into great absurdities.'

And yet the victims of these 'absurdities' may be true mediums, and only need experience, patience, humility, purity of intention and ripeness in order to become 'saints' in the sense of the Church of Rome. It is all a question of mediumship and character: and it is in the highest degree necessary to grasp well the fact that genuine mediumship varies all the way from hag witchcraft to Christ's divine mediation between heaven and earth, just as character varies all the way from petty selfishness to heroic self-sacrifice.

In this, on the whole, discriminating book, M. Joly seems to us to give in too readily to the common vulgar error of putting down to the Devil whatever is rudimentary or unpleasant, just as once upon a time diseases were attributed to demons. But health has all natural grades, just as spiritual conditions have. We may readily agree with M. Bonniot that possessions are cases of hypnotism, in which the evil spirit plays the part of hypnotiser; and, so far, all we can do is to abide by the good old Gospel rule: 'Ye shall know them by their fruits.'

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## 'TIEN' IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS.

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QUESTION: 'Is there such a thing as an accident?'

ANSWER: 'If you can eliminate God from the universe, yes. If you retain the Central Power there can be no accident. Indeed, it seems to us an incongruous question if you believe God's laws are supreme. The unforeseen may occur, and so, because of your lack of knowledge concerning it, be considered an accident; but a careful inquiry will reveal the fact that some circumstance has led up to it. "Accidents" are in all cases the results of the laws governing the universe, and why they are called accidents is because you do not possess the chain of sequences involved in their occurrence.'

QUESTION: 'If as Spiritualists we claim that life is continuous, having no finality, are we right in assuming that life never had a beginning, and that the idea of creation is purely speculative?'

ANSWER: 'The particular universe with which you are associated necessarily is growing, evolving; therefore we presume that at one time it was not as it is now. It requires a very small effort of logic to carry the argument still further backwards, and to conceive of a time when this present universe was very much *not* as it is now. But we will limit the argument to the world on which you live. The testimony of the chemist, the physicist, and the geologist all goes to show that at a far distant time in the past this world was very much not as it is to-day—it has been "becoming." It is conceivable to go back into the geological history of the world to the time when it was absolutely different in every respect to what it is to-day. It is even possible to predicate the time when it was evolved, like its predecessors and successors, from the breast of the solar mother. Evidently it had a commencement; but mark, if you please, that is not saying that the elements which composed the world had a commencement. If we assume that the universe comes from God as the Sole Centre and Fountain, then we must conclude that the whole of the elements which constitute the universe originated in and from the Central Source, and we candidly confess we are quite incapable of conceiving the beginning of God. The problem is too staggering altogether. Assuming that the existence of God is an insoluble problem to your judgment and ours, as it really is, we may be content with the supposition that while the universe had a beginning, the elements which make up the universe existed co-eval with the source from whence they came. And as the universe is God made manifest, one may reasonably conclude that as long as God exists the universe will continue, and that will be long enough, we think, to suit the desires of the most ambitious person.'

QUESTION: 'Do you believe that persons can be cured of their ailments through prayer, as asserted by "Christian Scientists"? If so, is it through, or by means of, external or internal influences?'

ANSWER: 'Mental states affect bodily conditions, and bodily conditions create mental states. A great many people imagine themselves to be seriously ill. They are "run down," morbid imagination dominates them, and the consequent lack of tone in the nervous and psychical systems reacts on the organisation as a whole. To brace up physically and mentally, let such people determine that they will not let these vapours affect them, and their determination will act as a tonic. It is simply a question of the will-power of the individual, and no matter by what agent it is set in operation, it will produce its result. It may be stimulated by faith in a particular form of belief or prayer (which is only aspiration—man's effort to climb to higher things), it may be by some kindly counsel; but whether you call it Christian science, personal will, or miracle, the result is the same; and when you realise the enormous value of the will, you will cultivate it more than is generally the case to-day.'

QUESTION: 'In cases of materialisation, is it not possible for the operating spirits to produce forms of other spirits without their knowledge or consent? And is it not possible for such impersonation to be frequently resorted to?'

ANSWER: 'As a phase of what we may call spiritual

chemistry, such operations are quite possible. If it is possible to materialise a form pertaining to a person with that person's consent, it is possible—if you have a sufficient knowledge of the process—to build up an image representing another person without that person's consent, just the same as it would be possible for you to make a picture of some person you know without asking permission to do so. But from that to the statement that such things are frequently done, and done with disastrous results, is a wide step indeed. As a justifiable experiment, or to meet some special and exceptional need, it may be resorted to, but it is certainly not usual as in the sense of the question.'

From an inquirer who may have been either aggressive or merely playful, came a question that has for ages been the delight of the more callow apologists for special creation as against the idea of evolution:—

'Which came first, the chicken or the egg?'

ANSWER: 'We should be inclined to say both, because the possibility of one or the other was in each case latent in the universe from the foundation of things.'

QUESTION: 'In one of Mrs. Richmond's recent orations, speaking of the "after life," she says "we know *nothing* about it." If, after fifty years of earnest research, we end in "knowing nothing about it," is it wise to continue the study? Why not play at skittles?'

ANSWER: 'One would imagine that this is a part of the game of philosophical skittles. After fifty years of intercourse with the world of spirits, after literally millions of messages and descriptions from and of the spirit world, even with all their discrepancies and apparent contradictions, after all the painstaking researches of Spiritualists all over the world, if the spiritualistic mountain has laboured and brought forth so trivial a mouse, one may indeed as well play skittles. We venture to think, sir, that a careful comparison of the results obtained by Spiritualists all over the world, if they were tabulated, would give you such a consensus of opinion on the general principles of spirit life, as related by the people in that life, as would serve to show that Spiritualists *do* know a few things about that life. We are not disposed to say that you know all about that future life, but of a certain few things you are as well assured as you are of matters relating to other countries which you may not yourself have visited.'

QUESTION: 'Do animals survive in the other world?'

ANSWER: 'Their psychical elements survive in some cases for a greater or less period, but as permanent spiritual existences they do not.'

QUESTION: 'Is vivisection approved of on the other side?'

ANSWER: 'By lately departed vivisectioners, yes. By those who know something of the clairvoyant powers we detailed in a previous answer, in regard to the examination of the human body, no. Our opinion is that when clairvoyance is developed sufficiently for medical purposes there will be no necessity to resort to vivisection to trace out the causes of diseases.'

QUESTION: 'Can spirits be seen while rapping? And how are the raps produced?'

ANSWER: 'In various ways; sometimes by the direct action of a partially materialised hand of sufficient ponderability to make the actual rap on the table. This is exceptional, but it is one of the ways; usually it is more in the form of an electrical discharge, controlled by the will of the operating spirit, and accomplished by means of a combination of the psychical elements, in relation to the chemical elements of the atmosphere and certain forms of electrical power that are too refined for the instruments you have in use in such matters. By the combination of these elements electrical discharges of a greater or less intensity are accomplished. Sometimes they are caused by a disturbance produced in the very atoms and molecules of the table itself—a disturbance that is allowed to re-arrange itself. These raps are very tiny and faint, however, and not like the larger and heavier raps produced by the other methods mentioned.'

QUESTION: 'Are spirits able to tell the future of persons through a medium?'

ANSWER: 'One may slightly re-model the question, and put it that as spirits do foretell the future, how do they do it? We have often used an illustration of this kind:



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QUESTION: 'In cases of materialisation, is it not possible for the operating spirits to produce forms of other spirits without their knowledge or consent? And is it not possible for such impersonation to be frequently resorted to?'

ANSWER: 'As a phase of what we may call spiritual

chemistry, such operations are quite possible. If it is possible to materialise a form pertaining to a person with that person's consent, it is possible—if you have a sufficient knowledge of the process—to build up an image representing another person without that person's consent, just the same as it would be possible for you to make a picture of some person you know without asking permission to do so. But from that to the statement that such things are frequently done, and done with disastrous results, is a wide step indeed. As a justifiable experiment, or to meet some special and exceptional need, it may be resorted to, but it is certainly not usual as in the sense of the question.'

From an inquirer who may have been either aggressive or merely playful, came a question that has for ages been the delight of the more callow apologists for special creation as against the idea of evolution:—

'Which came first, the chicken or the egg?'

ANSWER: 'We should be inclined to say both, because the possibility of one or the other was in each case latent in the universe from the foundation of things.'

QUESTION: 'In one of Mrs. Richmond's recent orations, speaking of the "after life," she says "we know *nothing* about it." If, after fifty years of earnest research, we end in "knowing nothing about it," is it wise to continue the study? Why not play at skittles?'

ANSWER: 'One would imagine that this is a part of the game of philosophical skittles. After fifty years of intercourse with the world of spirits, after literally millions of messages and descriptions from and of the spirit world, even with all their discrepancies and apparent contradictions, after all the painstaking researches of Spiritualists all over the world, if the spiritualistic mountain has laboured and brought forth so trivial a mouse, one may indeed as well play skittles. We venture to think, sir, that a careful comparison of the results obtained by Spiritualists all over the world, if they were tabulated, would give you such a consensus of opinion on the general principles of spirit life, as related by the people in that life, as would serve to show that Spiritualists *do* know a few things about that life. We are not disposed to say that you know all about that future life, but of a certain few things you are as well assured as you are of matters relating to other countries which you may not yourself have visited.'

QUESTION: 'Do animals survive in the other world?'

ANSWER: 'Their psychical elements survive in some cases for a greater or less period, but as permanent spiritual existences they do not.'

QUESTION: 'Is vivisection approved of on the other side?'

ANSWER: 'By lately departed vivisectioners, yes. By those who know something of the clairvoyant powers we detailed in a previous answer, in regard to the examination of the human body, no. Our opinion is that when clairvoyance is developed sufficiently for medical purposes there will be no necessity to resort to vivisection to trace out the causes of diseases.'

QUESTION: 'Can spirits be seen while rapping? And how are the raps produced?'

ANSWER: 'In various ways; sometimes by the direct action of a partially materialised hand of sufficient ponderability to make the actual rap on the table. This is exceptional, but it is one of the ways; usually it is more in the form of an electrical discharge, controlled by the will of the operating spirit, and accomplished by means of a combination of the psychical elements, in relation to the chemical elements of the atmosphere and certain forms of electrical power that are too refined for the instruments you have in use in such matters. By the combination of these elements electrical discharges of a greater or less intensity are accomplished. Sometimes they are caused by a disturbance produced in the very atoms and molecules of the table itself—a disturbance that is allowed to re-arrange itself. These raps are very tiny and faint, however, and not like the larger and heavier raps produced by the other methods mentioned.'

QUESTION: 'Are spirits able to tell the future of persons through a medium?'

ANSWER: 'One may slightly re-model the question, and put it that as spirits do foretell the future, how do they do it? We have often used an illustration of this kind:



Supposing you live on a certain line, and your vision extends so many miles in any direction; but supposing also that at one end of the line there is a very lofty mountain. We commence the ascent of the mountain, and when we have proceeded a certain distance up the mountain, we discover that we can see so much further than we could when we lived on the level plain. Then we go a little higher, until at last the summit is reached; but each time we pause on our upward way we find our range of vision has been extended. Now this is the whole mystery of the matter, so to speak. The spirit is able to see a little further, to reason a little more accurately and closely, to deduce a little more carefully than you are capable of doing on the level, although even in human life we hear of people who possess these faculties to a certain extent, and who are considered to be wonderfully "smart" and "far-seeing" people. Now the spirit, with more extended vision and more acute faculties, is able to see, estimate, and deduce more accurately than you are capable of doing, and may see the army coming long before you are able to detect its approach. When you are told of the matter, some of you may, perhaps, be incredulous, but in a few hours comes the sound of hoofs beating, and of the drums and trumpets of the marching host, and you say: "How wonderful!" But it simply means that the man over there on the higher level sees farther and more clearly than you can see, and tells what he beholds in the distance. He may make some mystery about it, and wrap it up in mystical language, but the same explanation applies in all cases.

QUESTION: 'Is man really possessed of the faculty of free will?'

ANSWER: 'Within the boundaries of his own limitations, yes. You are all free to do exactly what you are able and capable of doing—nothing more. You may wish to carry St. Paul's Cathedral, but one brick would tire you if carried for a day. You may wish to be angels, but you can only essay to be ordinary human beings. But your abilities are constantly expanding, the sphere of your powers is constantly enlarging, and the limitations of to-day break down before the expansion of to-morrow; but your will is only free within the limits of your abilities. We would add one observation here. Your abilities are usually sufficiently extensive for you to be able to exercise your will to much greater advantage than is usually the case.'

QUESTION: 'What are the causes of dreams, and is there any ground for belief in them?'

ANSWER: 'There is one potent spirit with sad face, wicked eyes, and ungracious mien, who waves her wand across the sleeper and makes him dream. The medical fraternity, from Galen and Esculapius downwards, have tried to master her and failed. Humanity alone will exorcise her, and then her reign will end. They call her *Indigestion*. There is another cause for dreams, however; the mind may become so absorbed and so filled with thought upon particular topics that even the sleep of the body, the insensibility of the bodily organisation, is not sufficient to quench its activity, and it will make its efforts felt upon the brain that is struggling for rest, and fitfully stir up the forgotten problems of the day. Unconscious clairvoyance may thereby be set in operation, and the solution of the intricate problems of the student, the accountant, or the teacher may suddenly rise up and flash like a glory before the clairvoyant faculty of the sleeping person, and haply be remembered in the waking consciousness of the morning. Such things have frequently happened; there are innumerable records of their occurrences. Again, when the tired body has been rested, and the nervous forces restored to their normal condition—in that strange hour of the early morning, when the mind seems to hover on the borderland between sleep and waking—the psychical faculties may start to work, the clairvoyant faculty may unfold its powers, the gates may unroll upon their hinges, and you may even obtain a glimpse of things far distant, or of friends long absent. You may even gain a hint of guidance on some particular thing, for in the early morning, when such dreams come, they are usually reliable. Nevertheless there are so many complicating causes with regard to such abnormal state of consciousness that we really urge you to rely upon your reason, judgment and experience, more than upon even these better class dreams we have just referred to.'

The few remaining questions, as dealing with matters of a general nature, may be briefly summarised as follows.

Replying to a question regarding the best method of preventing the brutalities of war between nations, the speaker said two suggestions might be offered. The first was expressed in the good old sentiment, 'Let those who make the quarrels, be the only ones to fight.' The other was that all the crowned heads, princes and potentates, all the politicians and prime ministers, should become such good Christians that they would be real followers of the Prince of Peace. But the speaker feared that neither of these propositions would carry any weight; for while it was true that one potentate was desirous of summoning his fellows to a Peace Congress, yet all the time rivets were being hammered into ironclads, and military and naval preparations were in full blast. The gospel of Spiritualism, with its facts, its philosophy, its revelations of what the next life is, was one of the silent but powerful factors in the world, ultimately making for universal peace. When men learned that the empty honours of material life were of no value beyond the grave, that it was only moral qualities that were of account in the world beyond, they might be less eager for territorial aggrandisement, for national wars, with all the sad scenes that were associated with politics and governments to-day. 'If,' said the control, in conclusion, 'if you wish to see the world abolish war, you, the people of the world, must take the question in hand yourselves, and when you show that you are the ultimate masters of every state and principality your rulers will speedily come to reason.'

Replying to the question, 'Is there a personal devil?' the speaker said: 'Having a very profound respect for the Established Episcopacy, and believing that the early Fathers of the Church were very honourable men whose reputations need scarcely any vindication to-day, and feeling that there is a certain respect to be paid to the Holy Inquisition—having all this respect for these constituted authorities, we wish we could say there was a devil! But we are quite unable to make the affirmation; and however much it may reflect upon constituted authority, we are afraid, sir, that to us the devil is a spectre conjured out of the superstitious fears and imaginings of a bygone ignorant age.'

'But why this anxiety about the devil? Those who ought to receive his attentions are most particularly desirous of proving that he does not exist, while those who will never stand in need of his attentions are always most anxious to prove that he does exist, until one comes to the sorrowful conclusion that most people believe in the devil for the benefit of their fellows!'

It was perfectly true, the control continued, that there were evil disposed people on the other side of life, and that they were occasionally dominated by some particular mind. But between saying that and asserting that there is a mysterious being who is permitted by God to play the part that the orthodox devil is supposed to play, there was a very wide difference. Belief in a personal devil ante dated the origin of the Christian system and dealt with ancient forms of magic, invocation, evocation, and necromancy, belonging to an age when superstition dominated the minds of men, and ignorance was the prevailing condition of the human intellect. It became incorporated in the Christian system as a sort of peace-offering to the older systems, but to-day men had learned that there is a natural explanation for all the facts of existence, and that the whole universe was ruled by law. There was absolutely no need of a devil or any number of devils to punish either an individual or a community of wrong-doers, for this reason—action and reaction were absolute principles in morals as well as in mechanics, and the saying that 'Whatsoever a man sows that also shall he reap,' was absolutely true. When the power and possibility of punishment was inherent in the individual, when virtue was its own reward and vice its own avenger, in every individual case, there was no need for God to make a devil to discharge His functions.

You may (said the lecturer, in conclusion) dismiss this portentous figure from your minds, and in place of it establish the divine truth, that you experience the consequences, good or bad, of all the actions you engage in while on earth.

The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks both to Mr. J. J. Morse and to 'Tien.'



## BRAIDISM OR HYPNOTISM.\*

BY DR. DURAND DE GROS.

NOTE BY 'QUESTOR VITE.'

(Continued from page 565.)

Liébeault's alternating active and passive modes of consciousness would, from the above explanations, appear to be functionally correlated with normal innervation of the sensor-motor system, by the cerebral condenser neurones, alternating with the suspension of that innervation, accompanied by the storing of the energy in the neurones. But this does not account for the fact that the latter passive state, once it has been induced, persists as in natural and in experimentally induced sleep (or so-called secondary, sub-conscious, psychic, astral, intra-normal, mediumistic, mesmeric states and secondary alternating personalities). Further, while hyper-innervation from accumulated storage of nervous energy presents a rational explanation of intensified faculty and sensation, yet it does not explain why it is not accompanied by the awakening of the perceptive into the state normally accompanying innervation from cerebral cells.

Recent research (Cajal, Branly, Tison) has shown that the neurones in our nervous system are isolated from each other; that they constitute a non-continuous, interrupted conductor of insulated units; that these only become a continuous conductor and transmit, under reception of a stimulus of a vibratory character.

It cannot fail to be noticed that all the modes of 'sustained uniform excitation' above referred to, whether practised by psycho-physiological experimentalists, or by mystics, occultists, &c., entail a vibratory stimulus, effected by the active, positive, waking consciousness. Now why is this vibratory action followed by the emerging into persisting activity of the passive consciousness, accompanied by intensified faculty and sensation?

The suggestion arises, considering that our nervous energy has been shown to be akin to electricity, that this vibratory positive action may be analogous to electrical induction; that it may entail a 'polarising' of the atoms of the subject's electro-vitality, similar to the re-arranging of the molecular currents in polarised order which occurs in a bar of iron when an electric current is passed through it, or when submitted to 'passes' from a magnet. The sustaining of this vibratory induction may induce a negative, magnetic, passive but volitional state, as contrasted with the normal, positive, awakened state, which has been shown to be an electric condition.† But this alternation must be accompanied by an intermediary, depolarised, static, involuntary stage, entailed by the arrest of innervation, as occurs in the electro-magnet when the electric stimulus is suspended. This is the suggestible state.

These definitions would present the advantage of coinciding in the electrical domain with the definitions presented in the psychological domain by Dr. Liébeault, in describing man's consciousness as comprising alternating active and passive modes; the active would consequently be an electrical, positive mode and the passive, a magnetic, negative mode,‡ with an intermediary static mode.

This definition brings the further advantage of presenting a common basis for hypnotic and mesmeric phenomena; of showing the possible reality of the much contested magnetic influence, as pertaining to the same energy as that inducing hypnosis. Our nervous energy has been shown to be akin to electricity. It follows consequently that, like all other conducting bodies or dynamos, we must radiate a field of induced energy, and all induction is vibratory in mode. (This magnetic aura is visible to sensitives; it has been made to imprint photographic images which show resemblance to a magnet's field.) It is evidently the lines of force of this

magnetic vibratory field that constitute the basis of the exteriorisation of sensibility and motricity; of mental suggestion and of telepathy.

Verbal suggestion again constitutes vibrations carried by the intermediary ether to the subject's sensor-motor system, and impinging on the circuit of nervous energy therein, is carried by virtue of its 'plasticity' (sensitiveness) to his sensorium, and, establishing a reaction therein, registers an image or an idea, which again entails an action—realisation.\* The difference between a normal, spoken suggestion and hypnotic suggestion consists, as regards the latter, in the precedential production of an artificially induced temporary sleep or state of external passivity, which Dr. Durand calls 'hypotaxie,' and which appears to be a depolarised, static, involuntary condition, entailed by the suspension of the stimulus from the cerebral, volitional cells, that induces conductivity in the neurones, which consequently become insulated temporarily. This entails a neuropathic stage (and therein confirming Charcot's definition of the suggestible state) or state of temporary independent, incoherent functioning on the part of the insulated neurones, or soul-nomads of the sub-consciousness. This constitutes the involuntary, suggestible state.

But the effect of persistently sustaining a uniform vibration coming through either of the senses, or by means of the vibratory induction effected by another person's magnetic field, in the form of 'passes,' if maintained up to a certain point, appears to reinduce polarisation, but in the converse, negative, passive mode. It is the negatively polarised condition so induced, apparently, that constitutes somnambulism, in which volition reappears, with motor command of the organism but discredited memory. It is this conversely polarised state that accompanies sustained secondary alternate personalities; mediumistic entranced personifications and inspirational discourses; occultists' astral experiences; deep sleep states called dreamless; telepathic relations, &c. And this negative, passive but volitional, subjective state will persist till the polarity is again reversed and the positive, active, objective personality again re-emerges.

The unity of nature underlying the three processes of Braidism, mesmerism, and hypnotic suggestion consists apparently in the inductive effect entailed by vibrations.† And it is for this reason, no doubt, that, as Professor Boirac says, these two agents, suggestion and magnetism, which at first sight appear dissimilar in kind, may replace and also condition each other.

Man appears to be an electro-magnetic mechanism; he generates electrico-vitality by absorbing it from the atmosphere as a dynamo does; his ganglions and grey cells of his brain appear to combine both condensing, telephonic receiving and phonographic registering functions; while the white fibres of his nervous system may be compared to receiving and transmitting conductors, and his reflex-centres to converting relays. And like all electro-magnets he radiates a field of induced attracting and repelling energy. As Liébeault has shown, it is the vital energy flowing through man's nervous system that carries omnipresently the power of attention, of sensation, and of movement. The reactions entailed in these several attributes appear to occur from the interaction of the positive and negative polarity implicit in this electro-magnetic energy. It is because these attributes are inherent in this single triune, basic energy that interference with its normal circulation entails inhibition of the phenomena of consciousness, of sensation, and of movement simultaneously (lethargy, anæsthesia, catalepsy).

\* This is confirmed by recent electrical research, in which it has been found that a very large number of messages transmitted on induced currents of different pitch (number of vibrations) may be carried distinctly on a single electric circuit.

† All induced currents are vibratory. It would be but a natural conversion of energy if vibrations reproduced induction.

‡ Dr. Durand points out that Yogis, who have practised Braidism for several thousand years, suspend their breathing while concentrating their attention on a fixed spot and idea, in order to induce an ecstatic secondary state. This may be for the purpose of diminishing the inflow or intake of fresh vitality, so as to facilitate the polarising of the vitality already stored in the subject's system. The insensibilisation induced by chloroform is caused by a temporary diminution in the intake of oxygen, and the intake of oxygen diminishes also during normal sleep, it should be noted. Dr. Durand points out, on the other hand, that the secondary state may always be expelled by holding a piece of charcoal (carbon) to the subject's nose.

\* 'Cours de Braidisme.' Paris: Alcan.

† Dr. V. Burq's discovery of the specific influence of different metals on the innervation of different patients, may have rested on this basis, establishing a foundation for his claim that he was able to diagnose mesmeric sensibility by these means.

‡ This would coincide with the terms of Dr. Durand's definition, that hypotaxie (induced receptiveness) consists in a modification induced in the subject's vitality, though that modification to him is one of distribution and not of polarity.



That it is the same energy that also builds up and renews our organism is shown by Dr. Branly's illustrations, that vibratory electrical radiations not only act most efficaciously in effecting the cure of anaesthesia and paralysis, but they also produce most satisfactory therapeutic results in cases of impaired digestive functioning. The fact that electrical vibratory radiations can stimulate both nervous and organic functioning, demonstrates that the force without and the force within is a 'common element.' That this must necessarily be so follows as a consequence of the fact that man absorbs his vital energy from the same source of all-pervading storage as that from which electricity is drawn by the dynamo or the battery.

Students of psychical research will no doubt feel grateful to Dr. Durand for his demonstration that the process by which thaumaturgic effects are obtained by theurgists, mystics, &c., rests on the same basis as that by which the secondary, passive state of experimental psychology is induced, and that this basis consists in the purely natural powers inherent in our nervous, *i.e.*, psychic, energy, the synthesis of which psychic faculties, he tells us, is comprised in man's soul.

### SPIRIT IDENTITY.

There are persons with minds so constituted that no amount of evidence will cause them to alter their preconceived opinions. The more strongly evidence points in a direction to which they have a natural antipathy, the more eagerly do they formulate hypotheses by which they may avoid the conclusion that appears inevitable. And their explanations require explaining.

Others are open to conviction on sufficient evidence. Alexander Pope has well said that 'a man should never be ashamed to own he has been in the wrong, which is but saying, in other words, that he is wiser to-day than he was yesterday.'

I obtained lately the following proof of spirit identity, among others. It will interest those of the latter class of mind:—

A trance medium was recommended to me by an authority as absolutely trustworthy, an opinion the justice of which has been several times confirmed to me by others, as well as by my own experience. Like Mrs. Piper, he goes into trance. He is then controlled by a female spirit; and the voice, accent, and mode of expression are all perfectly distinct from those of the medium.

At the sitting I refer to, held on Wednesday, July 27th, 1898, in a drawing-room in London, in full daylight, at 11 a.m., she told me that many of my spirit friends were present. She described one who she said was close to me: a fine looking man with strongly marked features, high forehead, good nose, deeply set eyes, thick eyebrows; whiskers, beard, moustache of dark brown mingled with grey; abundant hair of the same colour and arranged in natural curls all over his head. The initial letter of his first name was W. She could not get that of his surname. He passed over from lung trouble. He had been, she should say, a cheerful, jocular man; that was the impression he gave her. He was now about to illustrate his earth life in symbols to aid me in identifying him. He was standing by a horse and patting it. He meant to convey the idea of an open air life, with plenty of riding. Now he was showing her a number of small bottles, and now pushing them away from him. She thought he meant that he had been a doctor, but had not followed up the profession. 'He says you carry about with you something that formerly belonged to him. I see it lying on his hand; it is of a bright yellow colour; it is gold; it is a pencil case, and now he is dipping it in the ink; he means that there is a pen to it also. Do you recognise who it is I have described?'

I had remained passive and let her speak, as I did not wish to give any hint. I now said I recognised the friend she had very accurately described. He was not in my thoughts when I went to this séance.

Here I must pause in my narrative for a moment to enable the reader to follow the above:—

For many years a great friend of mine was one named William ——. He was a handsome man and highly intellectual; full of anecdote and mother wit—a delightful companion. His hair arranged itself in natural curls over his

head—a rare thing in a man. He was educated at one of our large public schools, and then engaged in sheep farming in New Zealand, where he made a competence, retiring at the age of forty, and settling in Edinburgh. A life of leisure did not suit his tastes, and he studied medicine at the University there, and took a qualification. He afterwards engaged in practice for three months, and then gave it up, as he found the work uncongenial. He passed away, while still in middle life, on November 16th, 1891, having contracted inflammation of the lungs, ending in a form of consumption.

At the time of his death I was absent from England, and his sister sent me his gold pen-and-pencil-case, as a memento of a dearly cherished friendship. This pencil I carry about with me, but it so happened that on this particular day I had left it in the house at which I was staying in London.

When the control had concluded I asked whether the spirit described could control the medium and speak to me through him. She assented, and after a movement or two on the part of the medium, I heard a perfectly different voice, saying 'I am very pleased indeed to be able to talk to you once more, dear friend. It is difficult. Remember I am using another person's voice and another person's brain.'

I said, 'Who is it speaking to me?' Quick as thought came the answer, 'Will.'

The voice gathered strength as it proceeded, and we had some ten minutes' highly interesting conversation, of too private a nature to permit of my reproducing it here; but I may state that matters were referred to relating to the past, and in such a characteristic manner that I had no doubt I was again in communication with my old friend, and once again I realised the truth of Longfellow's beautiful lines:—

There is no death! What seems so is transition,

This life of mortal breath

Is but a suburb of the life elysian,

Whose portal we call death.

Southsea.

HENRY A. ROOME.

### NEW PUBLICATIONS.

'The Soul of a People.' By H. FIELDING. A Study of the Burmese. London: Macmillan & Co., Limited. Price 14s.

'The Theosophical Review,' for November. London: 26, Charing Cross, S.W. Price 1s.

'The Exodus.' By URSULA N. GESTEFELD. New York, U.S.A.: The Gestefeld Publishing Co., P.O. Box, 106, Madison-square Branch. Price 10 cents.

'The Review of Reviews,' for November. London: 125, Fleet-street, E.C. Price 6d.

'The Church Gazette,' a Weekly Review of Liberal Religious Thought. London: 18-20, Temple House, Temple-avenue, E.C. Price 2d. weekly.

'The Power of Silence.' An Interpretation of Life in its Relation to Health and Happiness. By HORATIO W. DRESSER. Being No. 2 of The World Beautiful Library. New and cheaper edition. London: Gay & Bird, 22, Bedford-street, Strand, W.C. Price 3s. 6d.

'The Theosophist,' for November. London agents, 26, Charing Cross, S.W. Price 2s.

MR. GEO. HORATIO BIBBINGS gave an able address on the 18th inst. to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance on 'Bible Spiritualism and Modern Spiritualism Compared.' We shall give a report of the address in due course.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.—We learn from the 'South Wales Daily News' that Mr. Walter Howells gave an address on Sunday last, in the hall of the Cardiff Psychological Society, on 'The Healing Art and Christian Science.' In the course of his remarks Mr. Howells said that the mind had great power over the body, and in cases of cure by touching relics, &c., it was faith which healed. This explanation also covered those cures said to be made in answer to prayer. Dealing with the position of the Christian Scientists, Mr. Howells claimed that though Mrs. Eddy, of the Christian Science College in America, now disowned Spiritualism, it was a Spiritualist and medium in Lewistown, Maine, who first drafted a system of mind cure and gave the same to Mrs. Eddy when she was a Spiritualist. Christian Scientists taught that everything material was a delusion, whereas the speaker maintained that diseases were danger signals notifying that which needed adjustment—they were not an error of the mind, but a true perception. But Nature was, after all, the great physician—doctors should be co-labourers with it.



## 'SLOW OF HEART TO BELIEVE.'

Not only slow, but very determined never to believe, and, curiously enough, some even unconsciously so, are many otherwise liberal and earnest-minded people. We should all guard against credulity as well as fraud, and respect honest doubters, but determined opposition is hopeless and best left alone. Yet this blind unbelief in any and all of the phenomena which help to prove the continuance of life after the death of the body, is a mystery to every loving soul which has experienced the comfort of spirit communion. How impossible it seems that anyone could lay the body of a dearly loved friend or relative in the grave, and feel the hungry longing, which at times seems almost to eat up the heart, to see the loved face again, to hear the merry laugh of the young, or receive the sweet counsel of the old, and clasp the loving hand once more, and yet refuse to consider any facts which would help to prove that the supposed dead are not dead but living, and, like guardian angels, possibly still near us. Yet even with unbelievers we should have patience, for we are not all constituted alike; some are spiritually born blind, others become so by over study on materialistic lines. 'As the twig is bent so will the tree incline'; as a mind is trained in early life so will it continue to develop in after years. But as the spirit of man is from God there is always hope.

Instances of psychic phenomena occurring to outsiders or unbelievers in Spiritism have always special value. The following was related to me by the aunt of a little girl who died. The mother passed away when her baby was only about a year old, so there could not be much remembrance of her. The child herself died when about four years old. A few days before passing away, while lying wearily in her cot, her face suddenly brightened, and holding out her little arms she said: 'Pretty lady!' What did she see? 'All delirium,' says materialistic science. 'Her mother,' thinks her aunt; for thereafter all the child's thought was to go to the 'pretty lady.'

Telepathy is a word we often hear now-a-days to explain phenomena supposed to be otherwise unexplainable, as if that did away with the mystery, or disproved spirit communion. The following might come under the heading of 'telepathy from the living.' The incident occurred many years ago, before we knew there was such a thing as either religious or scientific Spiritualism.

Our youngest brother had sailed for South America, and about a week after the event, at the social hour of the five o'clock tea, my sister said, 'I don't know how it is, but Jack has been in my mind so much to-day, and it seems to me as if he were coming home again.'

'That can scarcely be,' replied my uncle, who alone was present at the time, and still remembers the incident, 'for he was seen to sail, and will by now be far away from England.'

'It certainly does seem to be an impossibility, and I don't understand it; yet, the thought has come to me again and again that he is on his way home and will be here to-night.'

'Then you won't have long to wait to know the truth,' quietly responded my uncle.

Nothing more was said just then, but later in the evening my sister again returned to the subject by saying, 'I'm sure he's coming back, uncle.'

When bed-time came she pleaded to stay up a little longer, and to humour her my uncle complied. But as time passed and no Jack came, he reminded her that it was getting late. Still she pleaded for 'just a little longer'; but when midnight came and still no Jack he urged her to go to bed and forget this silly fancy. Her faith, however, was strong; so, though she retired to her room, it was not to undress, but just to lie down on the bed as she was, leaving the door wide open. Presently the gate swung to with a bang, in the old familiar style; my sister ran down to open the door, calling out triumphantly, as she passed uncle's room, 'Jack's here!' And Jack it was, looking very surprised to see someone waiting up for him. When asked how it was that he had returned home, he said they had had nothing but storms and misfortune since sailing, and had, consequently, put into Milford Haven for repairs; and as they

would remain there for several days he thought he might just as well spend the time at home.

If telepathy really is the explanation of my sister's having this strong and true presentiment of Jack's return, when known facts were so much against imagination playing her any tricks, it was, anyway, unconscious telepathy. The next incident is a case of telepathy from the 'dying to the living.'

A friend of ours, named Tom, was at the time living quite alone, not even a servant in the house. His mother, while on a visit to a sister, had been taken seriously ill, and it was found impossible for her to return home. The illness was a very long one, and she had already been in bed many months. One night, however, after the usual visit to see how his mother was, Tom returned home with a light heart, for that day there had apparently been a decided change for the better. But in the middle of the night he was roused from a sound sleep by hearing her calling to him in great distress,—'Tom! Tom!' So real did it seem that he jumped up and put on his dressing-gown to go to her, forgetting for the moment that she was not at her own home. When remembrance of the real state of affairs came to him he thought he must have been dreaming. Yet what a vivid dream! He could still almost fancy he heard the voice calling for him. He had been too much disturbed for further sleep; yet to present himself at that time of night at his aunt's house might be very disturbing and alarming to his mother, so he decided to wait till morning. The greeting he received as soon as he saw his aunt was, 'Oh! Tom, I wish you could have come sooner—or rather I wish you had not gone home last night—for your mother has been continually calling for you. It has been "Tom! Tom!" all night through; and after twelve o'clock she became so restless we could not leave her for a moment.'

Though that was the only time the mother had that form of delirium, and the only occasion when the son heard her calling to him, he still thinks it was only a dream and a coincidence, and therefore of no account.

Sometimes it is the dying who become clairaudient or receivers of telepathic messages, but in their case it is usually from some dearly loved soul who has preceded them through the valley of the Shadow of Death. It was so in my father's case. The night but one before passing away he suddenly opened his eyes and asked, 'Who is that calling me?' When assured that there was no one calling he said, 'Oh! I remember now.' Then, repeating my mother's name two or three times, he continued, 'She calls me! I shall be with her soon!'

'Delirium,' again many may think, but we who were near at the time believe differently; and in believing rejoice. W. ILFRACOMBE.

## 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.*

## The Press and Spiritualism.

SIR,—I have certainly no reason to complain of the courteous criticism of the two journalists whose letters have appeared in your recent issues, and I would not have again trespassed on your space had it not been necessary to correct a statement in the letter which appeared in 'LIGHT' of November 19th. I never said, or even implied, that journalists had not 'brains enough' to 'grapple with and understand spiritual truth.' I yield to no one in my admiration of the facility with which most journalists acquire a knowledge of any public or social question, and are able to deal with it in the columns of their paper in articles written oftentimes in the 'small hours of the morning,' with compositors waiting for their 'copy.' But what I did, and do, contend is, that their whole training and frame of mind are unsuited to the patient, exhaustive, and (often) disappointing investigation of problems in psychology. Besides, as I said before, the whole aim of the modern journalist is to make his paper as attractive and popular as possible, and Spiritualism 'does not pay' anyone who writes regarding its many complex problems. Can any of us who are familiar with the literature of Spiritualism



say that, with the exception of Miss Marryat's book, 'There is no Death,' and Mr. Stainton Moses' 'Spirit Teachings,' any of our writers on spiritualistic phenomena ever made anything but loss out of their literary and propagandist efforts in the cause? No; Spiritualism does not pay with the British secular Press, and therefore it is either ignored or ridiculed.

Before closing let me give your readers one of my own experiences with the Press. For a number of years I contributed a weekly letter to a prominent and ably-conducted provincial paper. In one of my communications to this journal, giving the weekly record of the literary, artistic, and political gossip current in town, I was tempted to break a resolution, long ago formed, never to write to the secular or religious Press on the subject of Spiritualism, and on this occasion gave what I deemed to be an interesting description of a séance had by me during the week with a powerful trance medium. What I half expected happened; my gossip on the town events of the week was all duly inserted, save the one paragraph as to the séance, which was carefully suppressed. Comment is superfluous.

AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.

#### Death to Telepathists!

SIR,—As nearly as I can remember my own words, spoken quite extemporaneously, your reporter has quoted them accurately. But I have no predilection for 'burning' over other forms of capital punishment. On the contrary, were the alternative open of a painless death, it certainly should be applied to persons who—if there were such—persisted in violating the minds of other men by telepathic operation, as to any other class of malefactors.

I would call your attention to the peculiar circumstances which would render capital punishment the only adequate means of deterring a telepathic agent—if there were such—from his immoral practice. Imprisonment would restrain a thief or a murderer, or an incendiary; but even from the seclusion of a felon's cell the telepathist, it is affirmed, could send forth, by ethereal vibrations, the image and thought he wished to plant surreptitiously into the souls of his unwary victims.

STANTON COIT.

Surrey House, Victoria Embankment, W.C.

November 17th, 1898.

#### Time and Space.

SIR,—Madame de Steiger's letter ('LIGHT,' November 5th, p. 545) calls for consideration and courteous acknowledgment on account of the manifest desire to instruct your correspondent. A student of Synthetic Philosophy, however, finds his difficulties increased rather than otherwise by Madame de Steiger's exposition.

Take one sentence as an example: 'We must submit to acknowledge, as it is clearly a fact, that our present consciousness, being consistent with our senses, cannot persist after the condition of our sensuous, or physical organisation is changed, as we know it must be at death.' (Italics mine.)

Here, and now, 'consciousness is rendered possible only by ceaseless change of state' in the mind or spirit. Does Madame de Steiger mean that consciousness will be something other than this in the next stage? May we not say that consciousness will persist in a new environment; consciousness of more things and other things, simply because the spirit persists? Surely it is the same spirit, and affected by the new environment in the same way as by the old one. But what authority is there for saying that 'it is clearly a fact that our present consciousness cannot persist'?

Madame de Steiger says (P.S.): 'But "Scriba" has doubtless already been told by spirits, in and out of the flesh, that time and space, as we know them, belong only to this world.' Never by spirits out of the flesh. They all and always give the idea that time and space are, to them, the same as in earth life. With equal uniformity and persistency they say they know nothing of reincarnation. Can this be accounted for? The various Christian sects have different views of the person and nature of Christ; of the nature and importance of the Sacraments; of the nature of sin and the conditions of salvation. So we have diverse views and theories of the nature of life and of political and social problems. Will these divergent views persist for a time in the next stage of existence, and be gradually

displaced by other and truer views of things? All change is gradual with us here, and the phenomena of to-day arise naturally out of the phenomena of yesterday. May it not be that the communications from Imperator, given through 'M.A. (Oxon),' and all the various and divergent ideas given through the different mediums at public séances and in private homes, including both Spiritists and Theosophists, are only the opinions of some in the early stages of spirit life? Probably all social distinctions will be left behind us when we 'cross the bar,' and all intellectual distinctions become gradually evanescent. Here we have not 'equality of opportunity'; there it may, and probably will, be otherwise. 'The man—the spirit—is the gold.' Here some are like alloyed gold, polished, or with 'the guinea stamp,' others, like gold in the ore and in the mine; but the alloy and the dross may be left behind, and the gold, purified, may gradually take on the stamp of another mint.

We are apt to idealise ourselves and each other also there in spirit life, and to lose sight of the *oneness of nature* in the human race. The difference between common knowledge, scientific knowledge, and philosophy is not a difference in *kind*, only in *degree*. So the difference between one man and another is largely due to accidental conditions and influences, a difference in the *measure of attainment* and not in the *essence of being*.

SCRIBA.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

ISLINGTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, UPPER-STREET, ISLINGTON.—On Sunday last Mr. Strong gave a reading, bearing upon the 'Life of Joan of Arc.' Mr. Brenchley spoke on the same subject. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Brenchley will take for his subject 'The Lord's Prayer'; Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle for members only; medium, Mrs. Brenchley.—C. D. CATTO.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday last our president Mr. Kinsman, opened the meeting with a short and excellent address, followed by Mr. J. A. White, who gave successful clairvoyance. Thirteen out of fourteen descriptions were immediately recognised. Next Sunday, at 6.45 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Weedemeyer.—OSCAR HUDSON, Hon. Sec.

SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL FEDERATION.—The National Propaganda Committee invite applications for assistance in Mission work from societies wanting aid for that purpose in their districts; or from district committees already established; or from new or declining societies. Speakers and mediums willing to render assistance in propaganda work for the National Federation will also oblige by communicating with the Propaganda Committee at once.—Address, Jas. Swindlehurst, 159, Hammond-street, Preston.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 14, STROUD GREEN-ROAD (end of the passage).—On Sunday morning last the conversational meeting on 'Rewards and Punishments' brought out some good thoughts. In the evening, Mr. Jones in the chair, the subject was 'The Good, or the God within Man,' followed by Mr. Brooks, and an excellent address from our friend Mr. W. Walker. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Tuesday, at 8 p.m.; Wednesday, at 8 p.m., members' circle.—T.B.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday morning last our public circle was well attended. At our evening service, Mr. Long gave an interesting address on 'Spiritualist: From Quaker to Shaker.' Mrs. Winstanley rendered a solo, 'Killarney,' and was followed by Miss Earl, who gave a zither solo. On Sunday morning, at 11 a.m., public circle, door closed at 11.15 a.m.; at 3 p.m., children's Lyceum; at 6 p.m., lending library; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long on 'Dr. Stanton Coit and Telepathy' (see Exodus xxii. 18).—VERAX.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESEBACH-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD, N. (near Alexander Theatre).—On Sunday last Miss MacCreddie occupied our platform, and gave fifteen clairvoyant descriptions, all of which were recognised. Several old Spiritualists present expressed the opinion that 'Sunshine' has never been more successful in public in the exactness and clearness of the descriptions given. Madame Nellie Cope again ably rendered a solo, 'The Better Land.' On Sunday next 'Evangel,' our president, will give an address, 'Death and After.' On Monday, at 8 p.m., at 51, Bouverie-road, circle for members; also on Thursday, at 8 p.m., at 59, Barratt's-grove. Friends are requested to note that on Wednesday, December 7th, at 7.30 p.m., we are giving an entertainment and dance. Tickets, 1s. each, can be had of the secretary, A. CLEGG, 37, Kersley-road, Stoke Newington, or of any members of the committee.



HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK ROAD, — On Sunday last our meeting was conducted by Mrs. Boddington. Mr. Adams spoke in his usual manner, while short addresses were given by Mrs. Gould, Mr. Stebbings, and Mr. Pascal, who related some interesting experiences. A song was sung by Miss Pierpoint. In the park a very successful meeting was conducted by Mrs. Boddington and Mr. Adams. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Miss MacCreadie. Thursday, at 8 p.m., developing class. Friday, at 8 p.m., discussion meeting, to be opened by Mr. Adams. Saturday, at 8 p.m., members' and friends' social meeting. — H.B.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W. — The great interest taken by the large audience in the address delivered at these rooms, on Sunday last, by Mr. James Robertson, of Glasgow, was plainly manifest throughout, and the applause which greeted Mr. Robertson as he concluded was of an exceptionally enthusiastic character. It is hoped that this address, which was entitled 'Spiritualism and its Great Revelments,' will very shortly appear in print. The kindness of Mr. Robertson in assisting the Marylebone Association so ably and materially, serves to still further strengthen the bonds of fraternity which exist between the Marylebone Association and the Glasgow Society. Miss Samuel again delighted all present by her rendering of an arrangement of the famous hymn-poem, 'Abide with me' (S. Liddle). Next Sunday at 7 p.m., Miss Rowan Vincent, address: 'Spiritualism: Imposture, Delusion, or Fact?' Miss Vincent will also give some clairvoyant descriptions. Doors open at 6.30 p.m. — L. H.

BIRMINGHAM SPIRITUALISTS' UNION. — One of the most successful gatherings yet held by this society took place on Monday, the 14th inst., at the Temperance Institute. It was a special 'ladies' effort,' the object being to clear off a small adverse balance left at the end of the last financial year, and to afford the opportunity for a pleasant social reunion. Refreshments were provided and all expenses paid by the lady members and friends, and the services of Mrs. Place (of Leicester) were also given gratuitously. General conversation, musical entertainment, and refreshments continued from 7 to 8.30 p.m., thus offering every opportunity for a free and happy intercourse, which was entered into in a very hearty manner by the large company present, including friends from Walsall, Smethwick, Stetchford, &c. The musical items were most effectively supplied by Mrs. Haughton, and Misses Davis, Conner, and Laurance, whose vocal and instrumental music was much appreciated. Some little doubt was entertained as to the propriety of introducing clairvoyant delineations, but the chairman, Mr. A. J. Smyth, pointed out that the descriptions of forms and objects about to be given by Mrs. Place could not consistently be regarded as an item of mere entertainment in the ordinary sense, because of the profound significance of the problems to which they were related. After an appropriate song by Mr. Rooke, Mrs. Place proceeded to give names, ages, and specific details in so clear, pointed, and lucid a manner as to make the recognition of the spirit people easy beyond cavil or quibble. At the close cordial votes of thanks were given to Mrs. Place, to the ladies for their 'special efforts,' and also to the musical friends who had contributed to the harmony of the evening.

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