

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.

We welcome the sixth American edition, revised, of Dr. Franz Hartmann's 'Magie, white and black: The Science of Finite and Infinite Life' (New York: The Metaphysical Publishing Company). This remarkable book was first published sixteen years ago. The writer's object all along has been to distinguish between mere Spiritism and what we intend by the word 'Spiritualism.' He notes the tendency of the scientific circles of the West to 'materialise the spirit; that is to say, to drag down spiritual truth to the lower material level and make it comprehensible to the semi-animal intellect, without taking the trouble to try to raise one's self spiritually to those heights where alone the light of truth can be perceived in its own purity.' Dr. Hartmann prefers the mode of the East, which is 'to spiritualise the body, to render ourselves more spiritual, so as to be able to receive, feel and grasp spiritual truth.'

In this new edition, the author thus defines 'black' and 'white' magic:—

Magie is that knowledge of the spiritual powers hidden within the constitution of man, which enables him to employ them consciously and intelligently. If he employs them for the purpose of attaining perfection through the realisation within himself of the highest ideal, common to all mankind, it is called 'white magic'; and he may use these powers for beneficent purposes and in harmony with the universal law of love and justice; if he employs them for low or selfish purposes, or in opposition to divine law, he makes the high subservient to the low, he degrades the spirit, and with it himself. This misuse of divine powers is called 'black magic,' and it was not my object to teach this art, but to warn the readers against it.

An old correspondent, who is beyond doubt perfectly sincere, and who has frequently described to us his wonderful visions, revelations and communications with or from the Almighty, writes now to say that stranger things than ever have happened, that the 'Revelations' are ready, and that, furthermore, a Commission is to be appointed to 'revise the Bible, eliminating obsolete matter, and incorporating as much of the new Revelations as should be deemed desirable.' We are told that 'there is not a volume of Theology extant that is worth the paper on which it is written.' Then comes the following final declaration:—

Besides 'The Three in Heaven,' who give the bulk of the Revelations, they have allowed Adam and Eve, and their mother, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, Jonah, Paul, John, and others, to give their own story in their own way. In addition to these we have Plato, two of the Pharaohs, Madame Blavatsky, Mrs. Booth, Josephus, and others. The Bible becomes a new book.

We should think it does! We specially like the idea

of the mother of Adam and Eve. That is something like a revised version!

We strongly recommend our much-believing correspondent to give fewer openings to the enemy, lest 'the unskilful laugh' and 'the judicious grieve.'

A Paris correspondent of 'The Morning Leader' gives the following brief account of the exhibition of Fernand Desmoulin's 'wonderful mediumist drawings,' now being shown at the Galerie Georges Petit:—

The mediumist drawings of Fernand Desmoulin are extremely wonderful and most alluring. They are coloured chalk or pencil drawings, admirably executed in quite a different style from the artist's general work, and were produced under the influence of a mediumist trance, most of them being drawn upside down!

Even the most unconvinced materialist must admit the weirdness, the strange subtlety of M. Desmoulin's marvellous though uncanny pictures. They are mostly heads, with wonderful expressions of countenance, enveloped in voluminous flames of hair.

Most of the heads have abnormally developed foreheads, and this I notice constitutes a special feature among all the mediumistic drawings I have ever seen.

M. Desmoulin's works—or the works of the spirit who produced them by means of the artist's unconscious hand—defy all description. They must be seen.

'The Banner of Light' broods over the colossal salary of the manager of the great Steel Trust—one million dollars a year! Here are some of its broodlings:—

Let us meet combination with combination, provided ours be the combination of the sweetest, holiest and truest of soul emanations.

Material wealth is as ephemeral as the snowflakes, and so are all material combinations that ever have been or ever will be made. By forming spiritual essences into one grand whole, the attempts to overreach the weak on the part of the strong can be overcome. By putting forth the all-potent thought that Right will surely triumph, victory for spirituality is already more than half won. By combining the highest expressions of soul-endeavour the powers of darkness will be defeated by and through the flashes of truth's rays athwart their pathways. By combining our noblest spiritual efforts, the world can be led to recognise the realities of the soul, and turned away from the glare and glitter of seeming material splendour. By a union of spiritual forces, all organisations of capital and labour, physical and creedal, can and will be spiritualised and a true civilisation for all mankind established on earth. Spiritualists, let us work together to establish the great Steel Trust of Spirituality, through which salaries of greater worth than a paltry million dollars per year will be paid to all the children of men. Through such a Trust, salaries of Love, Honesty, Truthfulness, Kindness, Justice and Mercy will be paid daily to every child of God, and the sun of Altruism will shine in glory over a spiritually redeemed and emancipated humanity. Spiritualists, will you do your part in this great work, or will you leave it for others and thus miss your one chance to prove that you have made the world better for your having lived in it? The choice is yours; make it and abide by it.

'The Temple' Publishing Company, New York, sends us Mr. Paul Tyner's 'The living Christ: an Exposition of the Immortality of Man in soul and body.' We are afraid Mr. Tyner is getting over fanciful: but he retains his ability as a picturesque writer. He announces 'a discovery

which, it is verily believed, must mark the dawn of such glory of human development in every department of life as shall, within the next hundred years, place man as far in advance of his present position as that is beyond the point reached by the beasts that perish.'

This discovery he sets forth thus :—

The man living in absolute consciousness of his oneness with the Father,—with Eternal Life,—is no longer subject to death ; is no longer subject to the final destruction of his physical body, nor to any of those lesser degrees of death which we call disease, deformity, infirmity, and old age. He may, if he chooses—so obeying the law of life—live perpetually in the body of flesh, putting on immortality in place of mortality and incorruption in place of corruption.

'Lays of Ancient Greece,' by Eudemus (London : Arliss Andrews), includes poems on Marathon, Thermopylæ, Artemesium and Salamis, Plataea and a Recitative. They are sufficiently scholarly, but we imagine the writer might have done quite as well—perhaps better—if he had frankly stuck to prose.

'What the world wants : or hints on self-help,' by G. B. Moore (Chicago : Self-culture Society), is a blithe, thoughtful and wholesome guide to right living. 'The Self-culture Society' for which it speaks has a sufficiently breezy notion of the value of self-advertisement ; but it has a good cause. We wish it success. The poor old world needs all the moral gardeners it can get.

Earl Dunmore's 'Daily Mail' papers on 'Christian Science' are almost as odd as their appearance in such an organ. Their indications of Bible knowledge and their outlook upon life are extremely limited. The following paragraph is the clearest :—

Thought is one of the chief factors in the everyday transactions of the world. Thought dominates the concerns of mortal man and rules the destinies of empires. Thought, governed by Fear, which we may call Fearsome Thought, is as much the immediate producer of sickness and disease as is Sinful Thought the primary instigator of sin and crime. Fearsome Thought, as well as Sinful Thought, is Thought directed into a wrong channel ; but Christian Science shows us how to counteract these evils in demonstrating how this Thought of the human mind, if directed into a right channel, can heal both sickness and sin.

This is not particularly new, but it puts briefly the whole case for 'Christian Science' on its rational side : and it is on this side that we have all along seen its basis of fact and sense.

THE NEED FOR PHENOMENA.

Writing in the 'Banner of Light,' Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond forcibly emphasises the necessity for the continued presentation of phenomenal evidences of spirit presence and action. She says :—

'The preservation and perpetuation of the phenomena of Spiritualism are subjects of most serious consideration in view of the fact, that, under the form of "Psychic Research," many scientific minds have recently come to accept the phenomena as actually occurring, and have tardily followed in the wake of Hare, Mapes, Denton, Wallace, Crookes, Flammarion, Zöllner, and more than a score of others who for years have given the results of their researches and investigations to the world. The serious point of inquiry is, will the coming generation of scientists give as little heed to the somewhat narrow investigations of Professor James and Professor Hyslop as the latter have given to the brilliant array of minds above named, any one of whom would have been considered an authority on any subject of science receiving as much of his attention and attestation as did the phenomena of Spiritualism ? "Scientifically," it seems necessary for each one of these *savants* to rediscover the phenomena of Spiritualism. Unless the evidence is cumulative, as is the case in all other realms of human investigation, the next generation and the next are just as liable to doubt the validity of the investigations of Messrs. James, Hodgson, and Hyslop as they were to doubt the value of their illustrious predecessors already named.'

SOUL AND SPIRIT.

I echo the inquiry of 'Searcher' (p. 240) : 'Why is there so much controversy and argument concerning the exact meaning of *soul* and *spirit* ?'

The reason, I think, is that the traditional and, I may say, the accepted meaning of the words is altogether ignored by writers such as the author of the paragraphs quoted by 'Inquirer' from the 'Banner of Light' (p. 197), and 'Searcher' himself.

In discussing this question (*vide* 'The Spiritualist,' February, 1876), 'M.A. (Oxon)' maintained that it is merely one of words, and that 'if we had to invent our terminology it would be well to use some such expressions as "physical body," "spiritual body," and "soul." But, as was cogently observed by Mr. St. George Stock :—

'That is precisely what we have not to do. There is a terminology ready-made for us, with the prescription of centuries to recommend it, which it is well to accept, instead of introducing wanton innovations. The word "soul" was employed by our translators of the Bible to render *ψυχή*; the word "spirit" being reserved for the Greek *πνεῦμα*, with which it is synonymous. There can be no doubt about the sense of the words in Christian psychology. Mr. Fitz-Gerald's very apt quotation from Justin Martyr : "The body is the house of the soul, and the soul is the house of the spirit," expresses exactly the sense of St. Paul in 1 Corinthians xv. 45-46, where he says : "There is a soul-body and there is a spirit-body. For so it is written : the first man Adam became a living soul, but the second Adam became a life-giving spirit. It is not the spirit-body that is first, but the soul-body, and after that the spirit-body." By soul-body is obviously meant the physical organism, which now serves as the vehicle of the soul, whence it is rendered in the English version "natural body," a translation in which one-half of the original expression is lost sight of. If most people understood by "soul" the highest principle in man, it is only because, as Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald points out, the Western Church has sunk into a lazy dichotomy, unable to appreciate the psychological distinctions of St. Paul and the Greek Fathers. The trichotomy, in the ascending order of body, soul and spirit, is the genuine doctrine of Spiritualism, which, if not true, cannot at all events be denounced as a new-fangled invention.'

That higher principle of our being in virtue of which man alone, of all animals, has been held to be immortal, is that which has been termed *spirit* ('*pneuma*,' '*spiritus*,' and perhaps, '*ruach*,'—the nearest approach in Hebrew to the Greek and Latin terms). If the control of Madame Montague asserts, as stated by 'Searcher,' that 'soul can be destroyed, but the spirit never,' he would seem to know more about the doctrine of the tripartite nature of man than most spirits, in or out of the somatic body, below the seventh spirit-sphere. It seems strange that this doctrine should so often be ignored by professing Christians when we consider that the Pauline trichotomy is so frequently enunciated in our churches ; a most usual form of blessing being : 'I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless.' In regard to the nature of the *πνεῦμα*, or any direct and distinctive proof of its existence, the immense development of scientific knowledge during the last century only serves to render evident our absolute ignorance and inability in these directions. A finite being cannot comprehend itself, but only a portion of its surroundings.

The same statement applies in great measure, but perhaps not with such hopeless stringency, to our knowledge of the nature of the *ψυχή* ('soul,' '*anima*,' and perhaps the Hebrew '*nephesh*,' translated 'life'). This is the developing, formative, embodying principle. This it is which determines that of these two minute seeds one will develop into a *begonia*, the other into a *mesembryanthemum* ; that of these two particles of protoplasm, consisting of a minute egg-cell and a single microscopical sperm thread, the one will ultimately become a frog and the other an elephant ; that of these two *fetus*, in somewhat different stages of growth, but almost undistinguishable from each other, the one will, if they survive, inevitably become a dog, and the other a human being. Thus every living thing—bacterium, infusorial, cryptogam, plant, tree, or animal—has a *soul*, and, with the exception of man, is bipartite, or at least assumed to be non-spiritual.

DESMOND G. FITZ-GERALD.

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LITERATURE AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

'The English Johnson,' says Teulfelsdröch, 'longed all his life to see a ghost; but could not, though he went to Cock-lane and thence to the church vaults and tapped on coffins. The great lexicographer shared the vulgar error that phantoms are commonly found in the vicinity of coffins. Foolish doctor! Did he never with the mind's eye, as well as with the body's, look round him into that full tide of human life he so loved; did he never so much as look into himself?'

This desire to 'see things' is a noticeable trait in the characters of most men and women of letters. Byron, Shelley, Blake, Lamb, Thackeray, Lytton, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Marie Bashkirtseff, and innumerable other writers, great and small, have witnessed manifestations of spiritual power. While there is no evidence to prove that Dickens ever saw an authentic ghost, his writings show that the subject had for him an irresistible fascination. Mr. Stead has stood at midnight at the Devil's Punchbowl in longing expectation of seeing the spirit of the departed sailor who is supposed to 'revisit the pale glimpses of the moon' at that spot, but so far without success. Only the other day Mr. Hardy announced to Mr. William Archer his desire to see, and his readiness to believe in, ghosts, and expressed his dissatisfaction with the 'explanations' usually given to account for the appearance of apparitions. 'I do not believe in ghosts,' said Madame de Stael, 'but I am afraid of them.' 'I do not think,' writes Shelley, 'that all the persons who profess to discredit these visitations, really discredit them; or, if they do in the daylight, are not admonished by the approach of loneliness and midnight to think more respectfully of the world of shadows.'

A rather interesting account of a visit from a ghost was given some years ago by the late George Augustus Sala. This story does not appear to be generally known, and is well worth repeating:—

G. A. S. was a young man of twenty-two at the time of this visitation, and was following the profession of an artist in Catherine-street, Strand. Before retiring to rest one evening, the idea occurred to him that a walk around Covent Garden, and a cigar, would be a pleasing relaxation after the toil of the day. On stepping out into the hall he distinctly saw, in the bright moonlight that was streaming from the fanlight of the door, the figure of a man fashionably attired in the prevailing costume of twenty years earlier. After gazing at it for several seconds, Sala advanced towards it, when it slowly melted from his sight. A short time after this he paid a visit to his mother, the famous prima donna, to whom he related this singular occurrence. After asking a number of questions in reference to the dress, height, colour, and general appearance of the spectre, Madame Sala took from a cabinet a miniature and placed it before her son. One glance was sufficient for Sala to recognise his nocturnal visitant, whose portrait he had never before seen. 'That,' said Madame Sala, 'was your father, who died several months before you were born.'

With the exception of Lytton, few great writers have turned their occult experiences to account for the purposes of fiction. The reasons restraining them must be obvious to all Spiritualists. The vulgar prejudices of the day, the fear of being misunderstood, and the feeling that the seriousness of the subject and their insufficient knowledge of it did not warrant them in dealing with it in such a popular form as fiction, had due weight with these writers. The fact that fifth-rate romancists have written much on the subject does not affect the case. These gentlemen are ready to exploit any motive for the purpose of filling their pockets with money and the public belly with the east wind.

Of modern writers of note who have thus utilised their knowledge of spiritual manifestations, Messrs. Besant and Rice may be cited as the most eminent examples. Many of our readers will remember the chapters in 'This Son of Vulcan,' describing the strange happenings in Bastable's house:—

'In truth, Mr. Bastable's house was the principal scene at that time of what has since become so common as to be passed by either with a grin of contempt or a deprecatory wave of the hand. "Do not," said a lady to me once, "do

not take to table turning and spiritual séances. You are fit for better things." After all it was no great compliment, but it illustrates the attitude which people assume towards pretensions which may or may not be true, but which are, nevertheless, supported by those whose veracity, *si qua fides*, if there is any trust to be placed in position, education, honour, and the responsibilities attaching to the grand modern word of gentleman, ought to be beyond all doubt. It is not my purpose to write a treatise on spiritual manifestations, either here or anywhere else. I only record what Jack saw and experienced during his stay in the house of the Bastables. . . . It was an uncanny house. Noises went on everywhere by day and night, at which Mrs. Bastable continuously trembled. When the boy went up and down the stairs he heard voices, and felt invisible fingers in his hair or on his cheek; any one of these things, indeed, which occurred in that house was enough by itself to make the fortune for ever of an ordinary haunted house. But here they were comparatively unnoticed. The master went about as unmoved as Prospero; the mistress shook and trembled but expected them; Jack listened and wondered. Whatever the real truth about these manifestations, one thing is quite certain, that Jack preserves to this day a clear and distinct recollection of things for which no intelligible cause can be assigned. Handbells placed on the table rang; pencils moved about on their pointed ends; rappings came from behind the fireplace; tables lifted their straight and foolish legs; laughter and groans came from unexpected quarters when there was, so far as Jack and Mrs. Bastable saw, no one to produce them. The boy listened and was not afraid.'

Modern Spiritualism having had its rise in America, it is natural that the literature of that country should have been more strongly influenced by it than the literature of our own. The most prominent spiritualistic novel yet published in America is Hawthorne's 'House of the Seven Gables.' Who can read that beautiful romance without feeling conscious of the nearness of that world of spirits towards which we are all journeying? 'Those rapping spirits that little Phoebe told us of the other day,' says Clifford, 'what are they but the messengers of the spiritual world knocking at the door of substance? And it shall be flung wide open.'

Poets are ever the heralds of the dawn, and the American people have every reason to be proud of those whom they have produced. Has not grand old Walt Whitman, the greatest of them all, said?—

'The dead advance as much as the living advance;
The future is no more uncertain than the past.'

Poets often give expression to truths of which they are themselves but dimly conscious, and not seldom voice aspirations which they themselves feel not; but it will be apparent to anyone who understands Spiritualism and who reads Longfellow, that that sweet singer was a conscious Spiritualist. He has told us himself, in words which the simplest can understand and appreciate, that:—

'All houses wherein men have lived and died
Are haunted houses. Through the open doors
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide,
With feet that make no sound upon the floors.

We meet them at the doorway, on the stair,
Along the passages they come and go,
Impalpable impressions on the air,
A sense of something moving to and fro.

The stranger at my fireside cannot see
The forms I see, nor hear the sounds I hear;
He but perceives what is; while unto me
All that has been is visible and clear.'

To non-Spiritualists all this is poetic fancy. To Spiritualists it is living reality.

Perhaps in the years to come a book bearing the title of this article will be written. The author will continue on the lines I have all too feebly indicated. In that book the name of Longfellow will occupy an honoured place, not because he was one of the greatest poets of his age and country, but because he more than any other brought home to the simplest the consciousness of the never-ending here-after, and the possibility of seeing—even in this life—the faces of their dear departed ones, and of listening to the golden voices of 'the choir invisible whose music is the gladness of the world.'

ARTHUR RONE.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION BODY.

The following contribution, from the pen of one of our own valued contributors, appeared in the 'Church of England Pulpit' for May 18th, the Editor of which is justly entitled to our recognition of his kindly feeling, shown in the admission of such an article into his columns:—

THE RESURRECTION.

'May I be allowed, as one of the laity, to express my gratitude to the writer of the sermon on "Easter Day" for his frank and sympathetic statement of the difficulty of "honest thinking men" with regard to the Resurrection? We are particularly grateful for his avowal that the isolated uniqueness of the Resurrection of Christ (as commonly taught) has been a "difficulty with him for years." Such straightforward admissions on the part of the clergy go much farther than dogmatic statements to render us true help and to produce a sense of mutual understanding and confidence.

'It is just this uniqueness which is the crux. To many of us, miracle now offers no difficulty at all; we have learned to recognise that miracle is another name for the intervention of a higher law, which is, as the writer well says, "but a process of some part of Nature which is beyond our understanding." The real difficulty lies in acceptance of a belief concerning Him, who loved to call Himself the Son of Man, which separates His experience completely from our own, and that in relation to an event which claims to be a pledge to us of the security of our highest hopes, a witness for the universal destiny of mankind.

'Following the writer's courageousness, we will state the difficulty uncompromisingly.

'We are told by St. Paul that, "if the dead rise not, Christ is not raised." His argument seems to base belief in the reasonableness of faith in the risen life of the Christ on the fact that resurrection is universal. He does not say, "If Christ has not risen, you cannot hope to rise"; he reverses the proposition. We ask ourselves: Is this a cogent argument, if, as we are told, so far from being universal, no one has as yet risen from the dead, but Christ? Again, St. Paul uses the analogy of the seed: "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die," &c. That is to say, if a living seed is put in favourable circumstances a germ is quickened within it which springs up as the husk decays. But how can this analogy be fairly applied to the commonly-received view of the Resurrection? That view is that the dead body of Christ was itself revived; and in our case, that after the body has been dead for thousands of years, somehow, somewhere, out of its dust will emerge a new living body. This is bad logic; the illustration is not analogous, and we think St. Paul cannot fairly be made responsible for this bad logic; for saying, in fact, that the springing of a living plant from a *living* seed, as the husk decays, is any argument at all for the expectation that a living body will spring from a *dead* seed long after the external matter has decayed. Life can only spring from life; the husk that dies does not live again.

'Personally, we hold that St. Paul was quite logical; that his argument maintains that all human beings in their incarnate state are living seeds; that the decay of the body, which goes on more or less from the time of birth, is but the disintegration of the husk of flesh; that at death the living germ is liberated as an ethereal resurrection body, and this spiritual body develops in the Unseen, leaving for ever its unneeded husk of flesh to be resolved into its earthy elements.

'And we cannot so far separate from our experience that Blessed One who came to share all our conditions, and Who is the revelation to us of our own true being, as to suppose that with Him the process of resurrection was utterly different from that of the rest of mankind. Were it so, how could we appeal to His resurrection as the guarantee and assurance of our own? We believe that He too arose at death in a spiritual body, and that, thus quickened, He manifested Himself in the realms of the departed, leaving for ever the husk of flesh which was laid in Joseph's tomb.

'The question arises: What, then, became of that crucified body? When considering this difficulty, a couple of years ago, we were struck by the description (on which Dr. Latham lays stress in his recent work) of the disposition of the grave clothes. As we gazed, in imagination, into the empty grave, the collapsed wrappings appeared to us most impressively to suggest that the husk of that precious seed had instantaneously been disintegrated and dispersed, hence, "saw no corruption." But undoubtedly, when He manifested Himself to His disciples, with the prints on hands and feet, His appearance was material; He assumed the conditions of matter; that which they saw was not the perfected glory of His purely spiritual body. He materialised, and took on even the appearance of wounds, in order

that they might have conclusive evidence of His identity, and might be convinced that it was indeed He Himself, and that He had passed through the event of death unscathed.

'To a student of psychic matters this fact offers no difficulty whatsoever. Psychical students know that this supreme manifestation of the representative Man, Christ Jesus, is no isolated instance of spirit return; that it is not only possible for discarnate spirits to reassume temporarily the conditions of matter and to give tests of identity, but that these materialisations not unfrequently occur; that they, too, can be handled and seen, can speak and be spoken to. And we can give but one answer to Professor Henslow's question: "Is there any necessity for any one else to come back from the dead?" That answer is a strong affirmative. When we consider the gloomy views of death held by many orthodox Christians, we are convinced that a large proportion of them only half believe their Creed. And a little intercourse with non-churchgoers leads us to the conclusion that the suicides which are so prevalent are a logical outcome of materialist and pessimist views. Conviction of the present reality of spirit-return has strengthened the faith of thousands in the reality of life beyond death. We may be told that such evidence ought not to be needed. But the question surely is not what *ought* to be the facts but what *are* the facts. Probably, as souls advance spiritually, such evidence ceases to be needed; but Christ came not to call the advanced, but sinners. He stood with us on the lowest step of "the great world's altar-stairs that slope through darkness up to God," in order that He might lead us step by step from the bottom to the very top. We bless Him for His condescension and His pity, so full of comprehensive sympathy for our weakness. He stooped to eat and drink with His disciples after He had risen; and He gave Thomas the sign he had demanded with despairing incredulity. It is in keeping with His merciful action, then, if the Divine Spirit uses similarly material methods to convince our slow minds still.

'The writer is glad of this opportunity of testifying that the great difficulties which have seemed to hedge round that Life we so deeply love and reverence, have been almost entirely removed by careful sifting study (spread over a period of six or seven years) of the evidence which exists for the psychic nature of man, and for spirit-return. A study which can have such results well repays the time spent upon it. The Gospel records and present facts mutually interpret one another, and many things fall into place in the great unity of Nature, which formerly seemed to stand apart from it.

H. A. D.

—REINCARNATION. *Humburg*

'If the spirit world offers us an unlimited field for future development, why should we be compelled to return here to gain that which we can have for the taking?' asks Elizabeth A. Bryant, in the 'Progressive Thinker.' 'I am convinced,' she says, 'that much of the fascination of the Hindoo theosophy is due to its obscurity,' and continues:—

'At my first introduction to Theosophy I congratulated myself upon having at last gained the key to the problem of the many painful inequalities that wait upon the human family. Later, discrepancies, illogical deductions from premises laid down, discredited the philosophy; and, brought to the test of practical life, it was found totally inadequate to meet its requirements.

'I met also in Boston Mr. Mazoomdar, the Indian pundit, and author of "The Oriental Christ," and heard him lecture on several occasions.

'He repudiated the doctrine of reincarnation, as taught among us, and stated with emphasis that reincarnation is not nor ever was a tenet of the Hindoo religion. In the ancient religion, long obsolete, the transmigration of soul from debased humanity into that of the animal in harmony with him, had obtained, but only in the remote past.

'As Mrs. Humphrey says, Nature offers no analogy upon which to build the theory of reincarnation.'

THE MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION.—In another column we publish an account of a presentation made to Mr. Leigh Hunt, the former secretary to the Marylebone Association, so well known in connection with the Sunday evening meetings at Cavendish Rooms. It is gratifying to see that a long period of useful and devoted service thus meets with a meed of public approval, and for ourselves, and we doubt not for many readers of 'LIGHT' also, we desire to record our appreciation of Mr. Hunt's work, especially in connection with the numerous reports of meetings furnished to this paper.

THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THE PSYCHIC.

BY ALBERT GRESSWELL, M.D., OXON.

*'Men like soldiers may not quit the post
Allotted by the Gods.'*

My late friend, Sir B. Ward Richardson, in speaking of the varieties of mental attitudes of men, said :—

'In one man the animal nature so prevails that he passes as animal ; another is all emotion ; a third is cold, thoughtful, hard. The members of the marked animal type are not as a rule of long endurance, but while they live they go through everything—through pain, through physical work, and even through drink and Bohemian fury—with exceptional facility. To intellectual eminence and distinction they never rise by pure mental capacity. The members of the emotional type are also not of long endurance, but keen, over-earnest, and led by impulses which appeal at once to natures like their own. They light up conflagrations of controversy. The members of the intellectual type are enduring, though rarely great men. Work does not injure them, either by its penalties or its pleasures ; they are not ostensibly or actually rough, for they have no animal rudeness ; they are not sympathetic, for they are deficient in emotional surface ; but they reason well and, judging of men and things calmly, wait for the progress of events, bring into play what powers they have with precision, at the proper season, and, caring little whether they gain or lose, for all things are alike to them, remain simply as wise men.'

There are, of course, combinations of these types of men. There are those who are of animal and emotional combination. Not a desirable union. There are those who are of animal and intellectual combination, men of great power, men who can fell a tree or govern a nation with equal facility ; men whose animal faculties quicken and feed their intellectual, and in whom the opposites of their nature act as foils the one to the other. There are men of emotional and intellectual nature, good and philanthropic, literary and scientific, and who are splendid patrons, whatever else they may be. And lastly, there are men of equally balanced combination ; men who are trusted in all respects.

In one family, indeed, we may meet with every type, and as the mind of the child is like clay in the hands of the potter, how necessary it is to have a skilful master. How necessary it is to form some judgment of the mental attitude of children before placing them in conditions for which they are totally unfitted.

The purpose of these remarks is to show of what paramount importance is physical health to those who, by their highly sensitive nervous mechanism, possess powers which, by the ordinary animal and intellectual man, are looked upon as supernatural. Supernormal such powers are, and they are of the very highest and deepest importance to humanity. In fact it may be said they are essential for the successful grappling with the many social problems which the world as yet has not solved.

Now the point is, how can an ordinary man differentiate between the abnormal manifestations of a disordered mental state and the supernormal functioning of a brain in the highest state of mental health possible to the human race ?

To begin with, these highly differentiated and ennobling faculties, commonly styled supernatural by the ignorant man, are found in varying degrees of power. It is this variation in power which so confuses the ignorant man, who does not stop to consider how all powers of men vary according as they may be well or ill, according as they may be quiet or overwrought, according as they may be fresh or exhausted. And in the case of the sensitives the slightest influences, such as the fall or rise of the barometer, will often have a marked effect. By their powers shall they be known.

The question also has to be answered how the psychic himself may know whether his bodily health is sufficiently robust for him to be sure that he is in the best possible condition for the manifestation of high powers. In answer it is to be admitted that the psychic manifestations are but too often the source of exhaustion ; but the same is true of the brain overwrought by too close application to study. It is true of psychics generally that they too often waste

their energy ; and it is true, too, that some, being imperfectly developed, attempt far more than they are able to accomplish. As well might an untrained man or a weakling attempt to row in an 'eight' at Henley, as a poor psychic attempt to delineate when the power is too feeble.

One point on which the public is especially confused is in the expectation that the psychic power of the intellectual man should *a priori* be of the highest. They fail to see that a man may be intellectual in many directions, while in others he may be warped, as indeed he but too often is, by hardness of his nature and failure to see the high destiny of man. The purely intellectual man is no better than his predecessors of ancient Egypt, Greece, or Rome ; he is no better unless he adds to his capacity a power to grasp the truths unsolvable except through the now increasing psychic powers recognised by the greatest thinkers of the world.

In conclusion it will be readily seen that as the animal man may abuse his powers and be ill, as the intellectual man may overstudy and become a mental wreck, and as the emotional man may wear himself out by struggles, so the psychic man, found more especially among the emotional, may become ill and confound the realities and the unrealities of the spiritual world. He has, therefore, the greatest possible need to maintain his health in perfection ; and should he find any untoward symptoms of *malaise*, he is under the imperative necessity to avail himself of scientific advice.

John Slater told the writer a few years ago that many people who consulted him while here did so from ignoble motives and he was under the necessity of administering sharp rebukes to some of them. Such people are comparable to those who would apply brute force in settling mundane affairs, or would use intellectual gifts for the furtherance of personal ambitions, regardless of the rights of others.

In conclusion, it may be stated that most people are, after all, open to conviction in matters of truth. Though they may not apply the truths yet they may admit them. A practical man of ability but very sceptical was, in the writer's experience, utterly dumbfounded a short time ago by a clairvoyant, on a Saturday evening, reading to him all the events which afterwards occurred in regular sequence on the following Thursday. Even the minutest details were clearly and unmistakably foreshown. The mental health of the medium rendered this possible. The writer was present on the Saturday evening, and can bear witness to the absolute truth of the forecast and its verification.

A MORNING PRAYER.

Let me to-day do something that shall take
A little sadness from the world's vast store,
And may I be so favoured as to make
Of joy's too scanty sum a little more.

Let me not hurt, by any selfish deed
Or thoughtless word, the heart of foe or friend ;
Nor would I pass, unseeing, worthy need,
Or sin by silence where I should defend.

However meagre be my worldly wealth,
Let me give something that shall aid my kind—
A word of courage, or a thought of health,
Dropped as I pass, for troubled hearts to find.

Let me to-night look back across the span
Twixt dark and dawn, and to my conscience say—
Because of some good act to beast or man—
'The world is better that I lived to-day.'

—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

ORGANISED HOLIDAYS.—The Co-operative Holidays Association presents a tempting prospect in its prospectus of summer holidays in wild Wales, and the dales and fishing villages of Yorkshire, the Isle of Man, the breezy Atlantic Coast of North Ireland, and Scotland, where the association has recently opened a beautiful new guest-house. These holidays are so planned that four days of each week are spent on whole-day excursions, led by enthusiasts in all that is most interesting in the districts visited. Full particulars can be had by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the secretary, the Abbey House, Whitby.

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THE WITNESS OF WHITSUNTIDE.

We have just finished the keeping of 'Whit week.' The sea-side, the parks, the exhibitions, the pleasure gardens and the publichouses have helped us to keep the great holiday, and millions have enjoyed themselves, each one after his kind. We wonder how many remembered, or even knew, what was at the bottom of it, as a commemoration: or how many knew the meaning of the word 'Whit': or how many cared to know anything beyond the nearest way and the cheapest fare to Bushey Park or the Crystal Palace.

There is a sense in which Whit or White-Sunday-Tide is the greatest festival of the Christian Church, commemorating as it does the descent of the Spirit upon the young church in a way which vividly suggested its universalism. The record of the scene, as given in the Acts of the Apostles, is of unspeakable value, and should be specially dear to the heart of every Spiritualist. It is, in effect, a record of a great séance. The followers of the departed Christ were gathered together in his name, and suddenly there came a sound as of 'a rushing mighty wind,' accompanied by 'cloven tongues like as of fire,' well known to Spiritualists as 'spirit lights'; and then, speaking under control, the disciples began to discourse in various tongues, so that men of various nationalities could understand: a marvellous baptism of the Spirit for the new-born Church!

This speaking in various tongues by the unlearned disciples may be variously interpreted, but we take it as an expressive symbol of universalism, very similar to the charming symbol of universalism in 'Our Father's Church' on the Mount of Olives, in the cloisters of which thirty-two tablets have been set up containing the Lord's Prayer in thirty-two different languages. These symbols are in harmony with that sublime saying of Peter's, 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that revereth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.'

It is a common lament that religious belief is fading: and the lament is not entirely unjustified. Religious belief has very much dwindled into an affair of texts and creeds and old mutterings and maledictions. Of course the modern mind and temper drift the other way: and it is well that they should: that is a symptom of health, not of disease: it is not decadence, but growth. The fading of religious belief is a great deal disguised by the extraordinary uprising and success of a religion of ritual—priestly, musical and spectacular. It has yet to be seen

whether that can last. It is almost certain that it only veils, and does not help, the fading of religious belief.

What is needed? What but a return to the old faith in a living, inspiring God? We need not be iconoclastic; we can be gentle over it: but we must clear away the old pictures of God, that we may see Him: we must go to Him for ourselves; we must find Him amid the silences and sanctities of the inner self. Very wise and wonderful was that saying of Christ's, that we must become as little children before we can enter into the Kingdom. Yes: we must find our way to the Father as children, not as anti-quarians. We must follow in the footsteps of the heroic and believing souls of the Old Testament, and not sit around their sepulchres. The inspired men of the ancient world believed in a present inspiring spirit. We must follow their example. When the ancient lawgiver of the Hebrews put himself at the head of a crushed and despairing people, he did so because he believed that God had called him to do it. When the old Hebrew poets wrote their lovely songs of Zion, what other inspiration had they but the faith that they had a God who was not afar off but nigh? When the prophets flung their burning words at mobs or kings, and made a stand for righteousness, they dared to say, 'The hand of the Lord is upon me.' When Jesus lived and taught and suffered and died, what was the secret of his confidence and devotion but this—that he was in 'the bosom of the Father,' and that the Father told him what to say and do?

None of these was infallible, but all were inspired: and they were inspired because they believed. But what had these ancient seers and prophets that we may not have? Did God teach Moses, and had He nothing to do with our Alfred the Great? Did He inspire the Psalmists, and leave to themselves our George Herbert, our Wesleys, and our Watts? Did He speak through the great reforming prophets of Palestine, and had He no part in what Luther and Wycliffe did? Impossible! No: but Peter was right in his splendid generalisation, that 'God is no respecter of persons'; and the descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the great Magna Charta of the Church.

Max Müller, who did such superb service in the field of Comparative Religions, said finely:—

If we believe that there is a God, and that he created heaven and earth, and that he rules the world by his unceasing providence, we cannot believe that millions of human beings, all created like ourselves in the image of God, were, in their time of ignorance, so utterly abandoned that their whole religion was falsehood, their whole worship a farce, their whole life a mockery. An honest and independent study of the religions of the world will teach us that it is not so; will teach us the same lesson that it taught St. Augustine, that there is no religion which does not contain some grains of truth. Nay, it will teach us more; it will enable us to see, in the history of the ancient religions, more clearly than anywhere else, the divine education of the human race.

At the root of these thoughts—if we trace the matter home—we shall find the deep truth that God works by absolutely universal and impartial laws. Chosen men undoubtedly He has, and chosen periods: but these are determined by circumstances; and the choice is as much the choice of law, and not of mere will, as the choice of plots of ground for harvests, and the time for harvest-home. 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh shall reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit shall reap everlasting life.' It is all of law. Does it matter whether a prince or a pauper plants the tree? Nothing tells but skill. Neither does it matter whether Jew in Palestine or Gentile in Britain essays to drink at the immortal well. 'It is the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding.' Does not even the Church pray for the Holy Spirit now?

For the first few years of its life the Church, in the main, kept true to the promise of its baptism. It was a

Church of charity, mercy, peace. It called in all who wanted a Heavenly Father and an earthly friend. It put love above opinion. Its salvation was emancipation from misery, fear and sin. It lived in close communion with the spirit-world. Alas! that is true of the Church which Wordsworth said of childhood and the man:—

Heaven lies about us in our infancy.
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy;
 But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy.
 The Youth, who daily farthest from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended.
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

This great spiritual festival of Whitsuntide is an abiding protest against the usurpation of mere ceremonies, opinions and phrases, and a standing reiteration of the great saying by the Master himself: 'God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.'

OLD-TIME EXPERIENCES.

(Continued from page 243.)

One of the problems connected with materialisations is where the substance of the forms comes from. Some think that it is condensed from the atmosphere; others that it is taken from the mediums and the sitters. On the first supposition there would be almost an explosion in the case of sudden dematerialisation; for to reach even the meta-gaseous state, matter must pass through the gaseous, and the volume of gases that would be set free from a materialised form would fill a balloon.

One evening, at one of Mrs. Gray's sésances in New York—her son, Mr. Hough, being in the cabinet, and she as usual standing outside—the idea occurred to me that I should like to be inside of the cabinet myself. It was as if I had spoken out loud, for Mrs. Gray at once called to me that the spirits wanted me in the cabinet. I was placed standing beside the sitting medium, one hand on his shoulder, the other on his thigh. When the curtain was let down it was pitch dark, and I heard and felt nothing. A spirit girl presently left the cabinet, and at that moment, and not before—not while the spirit form might be supposed to be in process of being built up—I felt the medium collapse under my hands, shrink and shrivel up to half his size. I was considerably startled; but when the spirit returned to the cabinet again, the medium expanded to his natural size as suddenly. It is to be presumed that each tissue gave its proper proportion of matter—bone, muscle, nerve, and so on. It seems to me that the process by which a form gets its matter from the medium, is a direct passage of matter, *in a solid, but protoplasmic, condition*, from one point to another, without passing through the intermediate space—it goes by the short-cut that is called the 'fourth dimension.' The phenomenon of 'matter passing through matter' would then be only a special instance of this fourth-dimensional jump.

With another medium, a spirit who has constantly met me at these sésances came to the curtain one evening and asked me to feel the back of her head, her face being perfectly formed, and turned towards me, and her voice just as usual (a clearly articulated whisper). I put my hand round to the back of her head, and got quite a shock to find the head hollow. There was no back, only front and sides. I told her that she ought not to startle me like that; and she said, 'Now try again.' I did so, and felt a solid back to her head, covered with her thick hair. She apparently knew that she was not fully materialised on that occasion—perhaps she felt it, perhaps another spirit told her—but I have known her several times to stay out of the cabinet too long, and then her face would dematerialise in part, like wax melting—one side of it, or the

whole lower part, would 'run'—and of this she was apparently unconscious until I told her of it.

On another occasion, a spirit came over to where I was sitting, and as there was an empty chair beside me, I suggested to her to sit down; and she proceeded to do so, but in so hesitating and 'gingerly' a fashion that I asked her if the chair was hot. 'No,' she replied, 'but I am not quite sure if I am fully materialised behind.' This, of course, might have been a little joke, but if not, it shows that there can be no very distinct feeling on the part of the spirit of being 'in the form'—or rather, I should say that an unmaterialised spirit must feel as substantial all the time as when materialised, or he would know the difference, and be aware of breaks of continuity in his texture.

On another occasion I asked permission to go into the cabinet (Mrs. Caffrey being the medium this time). It was granted, and I was seated some eighteen inches from the medium, who was not entranced apparently, and did not shrivel up. The curtain was not let down as usual, so there was a pretty good light. Presently, from the floor between us (as if up through the carpet) there rapidly rose a male form, with a black beard, who said he was John King, but he had neither John King's big voice nor powerful frame. He gave me his hand and we stepped out into the circle. He departed as he came, by suddenly going down into the floor, with a curious noise like a 'whishist.' And yet, the breath of this spirit, which indubitably was a genuine materialisation, smelt strongly of onions!

One evening I asked the spirit who had shocked me with her hollow head if she would let me cut off a lock of her hair, which was thick, black, and wavy. She said that if I would get a pair of the medium's scissors, she would cut off a lock for me herself. She did so at the next sitting, and made passes over it to make it permanent. I examined the hair with a microscope and found indubitable particles of dandruff in it; yet it was undoubtedly cut from the head of a materialised spirit. Was this dandruff taken from the medium's head by being entangled in the living matter she supplied? Or was it the materialised spirit or 'astral' dandruff appertaining to the spirit itself? If the spirits built up the form artificially for identification, one would not think that they would go to the trouble of finishing it off with such microscopic accuracy and realism as to sprinkle little particles of dandruff in the hair. If it were handfuls of the medium's hair that were transported bodily to the spirit's head, one could understand the dandruff coming with it; but it is supposed to be only 'emanations' of matter that the medium gives off. If it be the spirit's own astral dandruff materialised, spirits must have a scarf-skin which wears away and is renewed. This spirit afterwards cut another lock off for me, for she said the first hair was straight 'just like the medie's,' and not a bit like 'her own beautiful hair.' This second lock also contained particles of dandruff, but it differed from the first in being wavy. These locks of hair got lost some years afterwards, but they had gradually diminished to about one-fourth of their original size.

'CHRONOS.'

(To be continued.)

DECEASE OF MR. MATTHEWS FIDLER.

We learn with much regret that our good friend, Mr. Matthews Fidler, of Gothenburg, Sweden, after a long and painful illness, passed away on Tuesday, May 21st. He had been for many years a warm supporter and defender of Spiritualism, and we think we are right in saying that much of the success of Madame d'Esperance's mediumship, as recorded in her valuable work, entitled 'Shadowland,' was due to his prudent counsels and unfailing encouragement. We tender to Mrs. Fidler the assurance of our fullest sympathy.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—We are asked to announce that the next Social Meeting of the members and friends of this Association will be held in the French Room, St. James's Hall, at eight o'clock on the evening of Monday, June 10th. Tickets, 1s. each, including refreshments, may be obtained from the secretary, Mr. Stanley Watts, 2c, Hyde Park-mansions, N.W.

THE UNIVERSE A LIVING ORGANISM.

In an eloquent discourse delivered by the Rev. Minot J. Savage, of New York, the fact was forcibly emphasised that even the materialists themselves have had to abandon the materialistic theory of things, viz.—

‘the idea that the universe is made out of any substance called “dead matter” that has been wrought upon from the outside by a creative power, and that it has had these forces and these qualities impressed upon it by some divine artificer.’

Dealing with recent scientific discoveries, and the results of psychical research, Mr. Savage asked :—

‘What if we should come to the conclusion at last that the universe is a living organism instead of a mechanism? that it is a living being, thrilling with life in every particle?’

Yet that is the conclusion to which we are being scientifically driven! It would appear that Pope was gifted with rare insight, or clear inspiration, when he wrote his memorable lines :—

‘All are but parts of one stupendous whole
Whose body Nature is and God the Soul!’

Summing up his arguments in the following luminous passages, Mr. Savage clearly recognises the implications of the claim that the universe is the body of the Infinite Life—the manifestation of Divine Intelligence—and as beautifully as suggestively concludes that the universe is on the march, fulfilling a divine purpose, and that religion, to be vital, must be expressed in motive, love and service, or, in a word, Life. But we will let Mr. Savage put it in his own suggestive and stimulative way :—

‘The universe is an intelligent thing, whichever way we turn. Wherever we pursue our investigations, we find an intelligible order, perfect of its kind. That which matches our intelligence, and that which is intelligible, we can only interpret as the manifestation of intelligence. I believe, then, that this universe is a living organism, and that it is intelligible and intelligent from circumference to centre.

‘Not only that. In the second place it is beneficent. In spite of all the evils, in spite of all the sufferings, the pains, and the sorrow, the universe is a beneficent organism. In the nature of things, if we stop and think of it a moment, it cannot be anything else. Life and joy are the result always of keeping the laws of this universe. Pain, sorrow, what we call evil, death—these are always the result of law-breaking. The universe is in favour of the keeping of its own laws. It is in favour of life, of joy, of good, which are the result of the keeping of these laws. It seems to me that this is demonstrable truth.

‘Then the universe is the embodiment of a purpose. We can trace an intelligent advance from the first beginning of our investigation up the ages until to-day; and we can see that the universe is still on the march—it is not through. To quote the trite words again, it is reaching towards

“Some far-off, divine event,”

as Tennyson has sung.

‘We cannot escape the conclusion that the universe is moving with a purpose towards an outcome—living, intelligent, beneficent, advancing, progressing. Such is our modern thought of this marvellous universe of which we are a part.

‘Now ethics in a universe like this, the laws of right and wrong, cannot be something imported from outside, cannot be external legislation, cannot be arbitrary enactments, with arbitrary rewards and punishments attached. Right and wrong are in the nature of things. Law-keeping is right—that is, living in accord with this infinite and eternal life; and law-breaking is wrong, living out of accord with this eternal and beneficent life.

‘And religion cannot be something imported from without. It cannot be a thing of ceremonies or creeds. I say nothing against ceremonies. If ceremonies express a real feeling, and help to cultivate a real feeling, well and good. They may be of service. I say nothing against creeds. If a man believe rightly it will help him to act rightly. So far important. But the idea of a creed, or believing such and such a thing as a matter of importance in the sense that somebody is going to be offended if we do not—that is all wrong. These things are not important in that way.

‘The one thing that is essential and vital in religion is life—living in accord with the infinite life of the infinite Power manifested in the universe. Whatever helps that life helps our religious culture and development. Whatever stands in the way of these stands in the way of our religious life. But the life itself—the feeling, the love, the consecration, the service—these are the religion.’

FINITE AND INFINITE COMPREHENSION.

I have followed with great interest the papers on Christian Science, by Mr. Harte. He says very truly that it is ‘very difficult now for educated people to focus together, so as to form one image, the “Loving Father,” who looks after our small personal interests, and sympathises with our little joys and sorrows; and the Infinite and Eternal Spirit of Life, on which countless myriads of Solar Systems, and all they contain, depend for existence.’ Quite so—but surely this is just the difficulty one must expect ‘educated people,’ with finite, not infinite, grasp of such questions, to experience!

All intelligent people recognise this difficulty, and some understand that it can only be met adequately on the plane of spiritual perception; because the Intellect—in its honoured place—deals with phenomenal existence, whilst the spirit of man alone can perceive spiritual or eternal truth.

I cannot agree with Mr. Harte’s conclusion that the advancing, but still limited, *intellectual* conception is the truth, and that the Personal Father idea is the childish error which drops off as a ‘burden of dead belief.’

Here, as elsewhere, *les extrêmes se touchent*, and the child’s conception, rightly repudiated by advancing intelligence, is taken back again (cleared of its old childish idea of monopoly) in the ascending spiral of awakened spiritual perception.

The difficulty which is very real to advancing ‘educated intelligence’ loses its force when the spiritual consciousness expands. Then we begin to lose our terror of number and size and space as a limiting condition to Deity. For after all, it is a limit to see things as great and small; important and unimportant; trivial and weighty. These are terms belonging to our imperfect vision and comprehension.

It must be as easy for Omnipotence to prevent a human being *falling over a coal scuttle* or *catching a cold* as to keep a planet or a whole solar system in its true orbit.

The idea that it is right and fitting for Deity to concern Itself with planets and solar systems, but wrong and undignified (I speak in all reverence) to notice obstructing coal scuttles, arises, I think, from the fact that people often fall over the latter and hurt themselves considerably, whereas the solar system is kept, so far as our experience goes, to its true centre. But this, after all, is quite consistent.

Faith is a spiritual Faculty to be apprehended and exercised by *man*, as well as a Spiritual Force in its action. The World of Nature, comprehending planets and solar systems, and the mineral, vegetable and lower animal kingdoms, is under a Divine guidance which does not exact from *latent* consciousness the exercise of laws possible to awakened consciousness. The infant is carried in arms; the child is taught to walk upright through many tumbles. The planet is kept in its orbit, whilst the awakening man is allowed to fall over coal scuttles and worse obstacles, moral and physical, in learning to exercise that faith in Divine Protection which never yet failed any who honestly and entirely put their trust in it.

There is here no Calvinistic favouritism. The man or woman who doubts this result of Faith, and therefore cannot exercise it (all of us are but imperfect pupils in that school), is simply spiritually a babe who might as well complain of favouritism because his older brother is learning to walk. We attain certain results by the exercise of Faith as surely as we reach certain localities by getting into railway trains or motor cars.

Spiritual law cannot be *less* dependable than physical law, or the higher would be more imperfect than the lower—*quod est absurdum*.

To resume—the microscope is surely the best proof in the physical world that *our* conceptions of what is trifling and unimportant, and those of Creative Deity are greatly at variance? May it not be the same in the spiritual world?

It was the proud boast made for the Nasmyth Hammer that it could crack a nut or crush an elephant. Why should we expect of Deity only to notice the elephants and dismiss the nuts as trivial?

With regard to Mr. Harte’s evident difficulty in accepting

the idea of Personality in Deity, I am tempted to quote a few lines received by a young Swedish lady—a friend of mine—from a Hindoo gentleman with whom she corresponded, and whose acquaintance she had made during a cold weather trip in India. She had written to him from Mr. Harte's standpoint, and this is an extract from his answer, which impressed me as much by its true spiritual perception as by its terse and excellent expression in what was to him a foreign language :—

'My God is personal and impersonal. Impersonal, for He is not what I think Him to be. He is higher than my highest conception. He is personal because there is a very near relationship between Him and me. He is personal to me because He is the highest conception of my Being in its highest development. In my imperfect vision I see Him, but not as He really is.

'But I see Him nevertheless, and live and hope.'

I should also like to remind your readers of the beautiful Eastern story put before us by Sir E. Arnold in his 'Pearls of Faith.' Allah sends his Angel Gabriel on a two-fold mission of equal importance—to root out deadly sin, and preserve the magnificent Potentate of the East from unworthy action, and to help a little overburdened aunt to reach its home. Something appeals to every heart in these exquisite lines, for they embody an eternal truth of that sublime Essence to which there is neither great nor small—for these terms belong to Conditioned and not to Absolute Life.

Let me end these remarks by a quotation from the same poet's description of the waiting messengers who carry out the will of the Infinite :—

'And unto these, nought is too high or low,
Too mean or mighty if He wills it so ;
Neither is any creature, great or small,
Beyond His Pity which embraceth All—
Because His eye beholdeth all which are ;
Sees without search, and counteth without care.
Nor lies the babe nearer the nursing place
Than Allah's smallest child to Allah's grace.
Nor any ocean rolls so vast, that He
Forgets one wave of all that restless sea !'

E. KATHARINE BATES.

PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

Your correspondent, Mr. Dutton, after a seven years' perusal of 'LIGHT,' still asks, 'Is Spiritualism true?' and proceeds to say : 'We get no tests or satisfactory proofs from those we have known in the flesh ourselves. . . . There could hardly be a fairer or more honest man than the late H. R. Haweis, and yet, as you say, "we want proofs that he is there."'

I am happy to say that Mr. Haweis has given most unmistakable proofs, for on three occasions since he dispensed with his earthly body, he has been photographed ; on March 19th, surrounded by spirit drapery ; on March 29th, wearing his surplice ; and on April 14th, in his clerical coat and collar, and showing his watch chain and a small cross depending therefrom. Our spirit friends apparently can clothe themselves by thought.

These photographs have been easily recognised by some of his friends and the officials at his church at Marylebone, and I shall have pleasure in sending copies to your office, where no doubt many of your readers will be glad to inspect them. The conditions under which they have been taken were given in your issue of April 6th ; since then Longfellow, Thomas Carlyle, and Bishop Phillips Brooks have, in accordance with promises made in Canada, been photographed with me in London, and given excellent likenesses. Charles Dickens recently appeared as he was in later years, in compliance with a request made to him at a séance the week before ; he had previously shown as a younger man when living at Bleak House, Broadstairs.

On several occasions I have been accompanied by a clairvoyant who has noted the description of the spirits present, and these have been afterwards verified by the negatives, which are always developed before I leave the studio.

And now let me give a further proof to show that some of us do get satisfactory tests. On two occasions at Mr. Husk's séances a friend materialised, whom I at once recognised, though the lower part of her face was covered,

presumably owing to want of power. A few weeks afterwards she was photographed with me ; and subsequently at a private séance, only four of us being present (not at Husk's), she again showed herself, this time with all her face visible, and in the direct voice requested me to send her photograph to her mother and including a loving message.

To my mind photography, under careful and obvious precautions, supplies the most irrefragable proofs of individual continuity and the fact of spirit return. It is greatly to be regretted that this particular gift is such a rare one, as, though I made diligent inquiries when recently in New York and Boston, I could not hear of a psychic photographer and I only know of two in England. One of these is an elderly man, and, being far from strong, has requested me not to give his name ; and the other does no public work at all.

H. BLACKWELL.

151, Queen's-road, N.

[Will Mr. Blackwell put the committee, appointed by the London Spiritualist Alliance to investigate this subject, in the way of obtaining conclusive evidence of the genuineness of psychic photography ? They do not question the fact but they want proof at first hand.—
ED. 'LIGHT.']

NEW THOUGHT OF RELIGION.

By GEORGE H. HEPPWORTH, IN THE 'NEW YORK HERALD.'

The past century has given us much, but nothing that calls for such gratitude as the new thought of religion. It is like a glowing fire in the grate on a winter's day. The Israelites had to pass through the wilderness before they could tent on the green fields of the promised land, and we have passed through many a religious terror before we learned that love alone is omnipotent. The musician makes discord before he makes music. It is his apprenticeship. So we, in the persons of our ancestors, trembled and shivered before we could get close enough to God to feel the guiding and loving pressure of His hand. The pillar of cloud and the thunder of Sinai have given way to a new revelation, and the Christ teaches us how to live content and to die as a child falls to sleep in its mother's arms. The thorns of theology are concealed by the flowers of faith, and the whole outlook on life is more inspiring and more productive of good deeds and holy thoughts.

To grow old and yet to feel none of the effects of time—that will seem very strange to us when we get to heaven. The soul will take no note of the fleeting years, will at last become unconscious of their passage, as one fails to regard the links of an endless chain which is being unwound, and that will be a new and blissful experience. The soul will not know weakness or decrepitude ; its faculties will not become dim, but will increase. Age means an ebbing tide of physical vitality with us at present, but over yonder the tide will never ebb.

To be in the same world with those whom history holds in her embrace, who have changed the current of men's thoughts, have by their genius and their characters made progress possible—that will constitute a revealing environment. All the past, back to the dawn of creation, changed to one eternal present, all ages made contemporaneous—that is one of the conditions of the future life.

To find ourselves once more in company with those from whom we so regretfully parted, to look into the faces of loved ones, with no more partings to be dreaded ; to live under God's roof with those whom for years we have seen only with the eye of faith—all this makes us dream of another life as a consummation devoutly to be wished.

Let the years speed as they will, then, since time counts for nothing. We are hastening toward the stars, leaving the transient behind and approaching the permanent. We are beckoned on by those who have gone before, who are waiting for a reunion of hearts, whose love is still as bright as ever. With heaven ahead, we will walk with cheerful steps until the shades of evening fall, and then lie down in the sleep which precedes immortality.

A HAUNTED HOUSE IN ROME.

The May number of the 'Uebersinnliche Welt' gives some particulars of a ghost story from Rome, copied by Herr Kaibel from the 'Messaggero,' a Roman newspaper.

The time was February and April of last year, and the place the third storey of the old Palace Bozonni, in the Piazza Santa Croce di Gerusalemme, now belonging to the Bank of Italy, and let out in apartments. This storey is let to two families, a strong floor separating it from the one beneath. A Signor Emilio Barbieri, with his wife and two little girls, occupied one part, while a Signora Cecilia Bocchini lived in the other. It was in the early part of February, 1900, presumably the 10th, that both families were first alarmed by heavy blows upon the wall, shaking it to such a degree that pieces of the cornice fell. These blows were repeated day after day at irregular intervals, morning, noon, and night, but the closest investigation could discover no cause for them, though the architect and police were called in to investigate the matter. The heaviness of the blows, which seemed as though made by a catapult, increased to such an extent that both families had to leave, as they said 'they could not share their rooms with ghosts,' and the landlord gave them other apartments; and after the families had gone, the blows became weaker and at last ceased. The police had in the meantime shut up the 'Geisterhaus,' but as the ghost seemed to have taken its departure, both families came back. Signor Barbieri returned on March 15th, only to ask the Bank of Italy for another dwelling on April 2nd, as the haunting had recommenced. The blows sounded more heavily than ever, shaking the wall, beds, and furniture; and to this day the talk in Rome is of the ghosts of the Piazza di Santa Croce di Gerusalemme, as narrated by the 'Messaggero' in two articles of February 12th and April 2nd.

The principal interest of this somewhat commonplace ghost story lies in the theories set up by three different scientific investigators to account for the undoubted facts.

The first of these, promulgated by Signor Enrico Carreras in the March number of 'Il Vessillo Spiritista,' is simple and probable. It is that among the two families inhabiting the floor there was some strongly mediumistic person; and that the tiresome ghost, who probably for some reason or other haunted the place, took advantage of the presence of a medium to make this hideous din, and frighten people out of their senses. What pleasure these 'polter-geister,' as the Germans call them, can take in such silly performances is a mystery, but that they are of no very infrequent occurrence is undoubted.

It goes without saying that the editor of 'Il Messaggero,' Professor Cecchetti, will have nothing to do with any supernatural explanation. He advances the following theory: 'Vesuvius seems as though preparing for another eruption. The blows are therefore probably due to an earthquake, which would shake walls at a distance.' As to this Herr Kaibel remarks that, 'given the fact that previous to an eruption of Vesuvius slight shocks of earthquake are sometimes felt at a considerable distance, how would this account for the circumstance that no seismic disturbance was experienced in the neighbourhood or in the palace itself except in that particular wall on the third storey?'

The third theory offered in solution of these occurrences is suggested by Herr Kaibel himself, who falls back on the popular animistic hypothesis, more far-fetched, to my thinking, even than the earthquake theory. I will give his own words:—

'In Carreras' article he says that on the second floor of this house lives a lady who had once taken part in spiritistic séances, but had, as she said, given the thing up. It may be that these noises were indirectly due to the earlier attempts of this lady; but another point turns up. The lady says that near her, and therefore just under Cecilia Bocchini's rooms, lives a poor little invalid woman, who often has attacks of fainting. Perhaps, if the matter were inquired into, it might be found that this poor woman is somnambulistic, and that her fainting fits coincide with these noises, and it may be possible that these thundering blows are *animistic manifestations of the transcendental subject of this woman's double*.*

* Italics are mine.—M.T.

What a grand sentence! But is it not rather hard on the poor invalid—of whom we know nothing except that she sometimes faints—to credit her with having a subliminal self or double which, when she is unconscious, becomes exteriorised for the purpose of frightening two families away from their homes by hideous noises? To what insensate nonsense some people will resort rather than acknowledge the power of discarnate spirits to produce physical manifestations!

M. T.

PERFECTLY CONVINCED.

A writer in 'The Banner of Light' contributes the following spicy story:—

Not long since I was in conversation with a society lady, and I was so rash and forgetful as to say a word in favour of Spiritualism and the apparent sincerity and faithfulness of its devotees. The person with whom I was conversing is a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and pretends to be a follower of the lowly Nazarene, yet she immediately lost control of her temper and spoke in language more forcible and savage than polite. The following questions propounded by me and their answers will serve to show how unreasonable and unfair, if not ignorant, are some so-called Church people in their dealings with Spiritualism, and those who are believers in the great Cause:—

Q.—Do you know anything about Spiritualism?

A.—I do not, nor do I wish to know anything about it.

Q.—Why do you condemn a belief without an investigation?

A.—Because the rector of our church says Spiritualism is a fraud, a delusion, and a snare.

Q.—Has your rector ever attended a séance, or in any way investigated Spiritualism?

A.—I should say he hasn't. He wouldn't lower himself sufficiently to have anything to do with Spiritualists and Spiritualism.

Q.—When and where did your rector make the discovery that Spiritualism is a fraud?

A.—I cannot state positively, but I presume that the prejudice of the Protestant Episcopal Church against Spiritualism is handed down from one generation to another.

Q.—Then your rector must do your thinking for you, and you must not presume to have an opinion of your own on any subject?

A.—Well, that's about the size of it. I pay a certain sum to the church every year for pew rent, and the rector does the rest.

Q.—How would you feel about it if some careless person were to condemn your church and its creeds?

A.—I can think of no punishment too severe for such an offender.

Q.—Then you do not believe in doing as you would be done by?

A.—Oh, yes, I do, for our Church teaches that very doctrine.

Q.—Does it teach you to condemn and ridicule those things which give comfort and peace to many mortals, but concerning which you confess you know nothing, and, further, declare that you do not wish to know?

A.—I must again say that Spiritualism is a fraud because our rector says it is.

Q.—Would you be willing to make an investigation of Spiritualism if the opportunity presented itself?

A.—I would not. I am satisfied that the whole thing is a fraud.

THE PENALTY OF DEATH.—Will you permit me to draw your readers' attention to the fact that an important general council has just been formed, with the object of obtaining the abolition of capital punishment? It will give me great pleasure to receive the names of all sympathisers, and those who are willing to serve on the council, a service which involves no pecuniary outlay.—Yours faithfully, Alice E. Major, New Victorian Club, 30a, Sackville-street, Piccadilly, W.

WHEN my 'Eternal Hope' was published I lived for weeks and months amid a hail-storm of anathemas. Strange that Christians can really believe that a God of love can be happy while the creatures of His hands are writhing hopelessly and for ever in unutterable material torments. There has since been, however, a decided and blessed change of view as to these cruel imaginings. Now the majority of thinking and educated Christians hold the view which I then maintained—that sin, indeed, is always punishment.—DEAN FARRAR.

'RECEPTIVITY OF OTHER PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS.'

Mrs. Helen Wilmans, the editor of 'Freedom,' of Sea Breeze, Florida, U.S.A., is a breezy personality and a writer who takes her readers into her confidence in an unusually interesting fashion, especially so when she deals with psychical matters. In a recent issue of her paper she said:—

'I am really wonderful in receptivity of other people's thoughts. Ada frequently asks me mental questions, and by closing my eyes and banishing all thought—becoming perfectly negative—I will see pictures that answer her questions. When I am in the practice of doing this I can answer every question she asks mentally, provided there is no one in the room but her and me. If Mr. Post is in the room I can answer quite a large proportion of her questions, but not all. If several people are present my answers are haphazard and unsatisfactory.'

'A few evenings ago she asked me a mental question which I answered this way:—

"I am looking into a sort of pen where there is a good deal of straw and litter; there is a large bird in there walking about; his motions are retarded by the litter. I only see his legs; there are boughs of a tree overhanging the pen in a way to hide his body. Now he has stepped clear of his surroundings; his wing feathers and tail feathers, that had been broken and dry and dead, are all coming out glossy and bright and beautiful. He is strutting; his tail is splendid; he is the largest bird of his kind I ever saw."

'Then everything disappeared; in another moment I saw trees, but the trunks were so packed with underbrush that I could hardly distinguish them from their surroundings. In the foreground stood one very gnarled and crooked. Gradually it straightened out until it became a marvel of beauty, casting a broad and genial shade. Then I saw that the brush had all gone from under the other trees, and their boles rose up straight and handsome like splendid pines. After this there came a pink light, low down near the earth behind the tree trunks. The light kept increasing until the sun burst upward from it in a dazzling blaze of glory. Then it vanished.'

'The question was, "Shall I break through my environment; shall I be anything afterward?"

'I have given this simply as an illustration. Her question was too far away from what we had been talking about to afford me a clue. I never want a clue; if I try to think what the question is, I get nothing. I have to put everything out of my mind and become entirely passive in order to have the picture come. I used to do a great deal of this in the family for their amusement, but I don't like to do it now; the position of relaxation necessary to success is not conducive to the strength and positiveness required in treating my patients.'

The foregoing should be helpful to those of our readers who desire to experiment in thought reception and interpretation. Mrs. Wilmans indicates the subtle nature of psychical relationships in the words: 'If several people are present my answers are haphazard and unsatisfactory.' The psychic atmosphere is stirred by the thoughts of every person, and where those thoughts are not centred upon one common purpose, or object, they must of necessity prove distracting to the sensitive who becomes responsive to their impulses.

The attitude of receptivity requires attention, concentration, and keen responsiveness to the slightest psychic 'thrill' or mental suggestion; and at the same time a degree of relaxation and absent-mindedness on the outer plane of consciousness that may be cultivated, but should not be frequently or lengthily exercised. With the development of sensitiveness the student should also strengthen the will and acquire the ability to be positive—impervious to psychic impressions except when voluntarily desiring them.

Those who participate in thought-reading experiments should be careful not to give the 'subject' the slightest clue. Mrs. Wilmans says, 'If I try to think what the question is I get nothing.' That is the usual experience, and it is for that reason that psychics almost invariably succeed best with entire strangers. The subject is an extremely interesting one, but is at present so little understood that records of the experiences of sensitives, and of observers regarding their experiments with sensitives, are very much needed.

PRESENTATION TO MR. LEIGH HUNT.

The Marylebone Association may fairly claim to be the oldest of the spiritualistic societies in London. Of late years it has assumed a prominence unknown in its previous long and chequered career, and has achieved a record of faithful work which would astonish any but those acquainted with the social undercurrents of the movement. This has been due in a very large measure to the faithful and self-denying efforts of a small band of workers, the Executive, and the friends of the Association. Notable amongst these is the name of Mr. Leigh Hunt, who, until his recent resignation, had been for some seven years closely and continuously identified with it as assistant-secretary, and afterwards secretary. His courtesy, modesty, and devotion to his work have long been appreciated by all in any way connected with the Association, and for some little time, under the auspices of Miss MacCreadie, the well-known clairvoyante, and Mr. Willsher, a member of the committee, a movement has been on foot to make some substantial recognition of Mr. Hunt's services.

The movement came to a gratifying conclusion when, on Tuesday evening, the 21st ult., at the residence of Miss MacCreadie, 2c, Hyde Park-mansions, Mr. Hunt was presented with a purse of gold, the gift being supplemented by the cordial thanks and good wishes of numerous friends assembled to do honour to the occasion.

Mr. W. T. COOPER, the vice-president of the Association, who made the presentation, said they had received letters of apology from Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, Mr. Sutton, Mr. Acfield, Mrs. Carshaw, Mr. Francis, Mr. and Mrs. Morse, and others. He referred in high terms to the manner in which Mr. Hunt had carried out his duties as assistant-secretary, and afterwards as secretary, of the Association. He felt he could say without contradiction that the society would not have had the successful career it had enjoyed but for Mr. Hunt's efforts and the help he had afforded to the rest of the Executive. He felt that all present would share with him the pleasure with which he handed Mr. Hunt the token of their esteem and appreciation.

Mr. E. W. WALLIS, on behalf of himself and the other speakers and mediums who had worked for the Association, said that Mr. Hunt had always been courteous, kindly, attentive to his duties, and considerate of the feelings of those whom he corresponded or dealt with on behalf of the Association. If secretaries all over the country behaved in the same gentlemanly way, mediums and speakers would have reason to rejoice. They all regretted that pressure of other business had compelled Mr. Hunt's resignation.

MISS MACCREADIE testified to the general regret that had been felt when it was feared that Mr. Hunt's resignation meant that he had severed his connection with the society. Many people had come to her and expressed apprehension as to the future of the Association under such conditions. Needless to say, they were exceedingly glad to find that he still intended to work with them. She fully endorsed all the tributes paid to Mr. Hunt by the previous speakers.

Mr. Atkinson, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, and Mr. George Spriggs also spoke in a similar strain, Mr. Spriggs mentioning, as an interesting circumstance, that Mr. Hunt's name was well-known to the Spiritualists of Australia, some of whom had grateful recollections of his courtesy and kindness while visiting the old country and attending the services at Cavendish Rooms.

Mr. E. W. WALLIS, speaking on behalf of Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Editor of 'LIGHT,' and President of the London Spiritualist Alliance, said he had first to express Mr. Rogers' regret that he was unable to be present, and second, to convey Mr. Rogers' kindest regards and warm appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. Hunt as secretary of the Association and corresponding secretary. He fully recognised the earnestness and enthusiasm with which Mr. Hunt had always discharged his duties.

Mr. LEIGH HUNT then replied, expressing his gratitude for the gift made to him and the feelings of friendship and appreciation which had prompted the donors. He wished them to understand that the pressure of business had not in any way lessened his affection for spiritual work and his interest in the movement. To this he added many other remarks testifying to his reciprocation of the kindness shown him and his loyalty to the cause, all of which were received with manifest pleasure and approval.

In concluding this portion of the proceedings, Mr. COOPER said they should not disperse without a tribute of gratitude to Miss MacCreadie and Mr. Willsher for the labour of love they had undertaken in connection with this presentation. He moved a vote of thanks to them, which was, needless to say, unanimously endorsed.

During the evening Miss Samuel, Mrs. Picken, Mr. Willsher, Mr. Boyden, and Mr. Hunt sang and played to the company, and after a repast served by the hostess, the guests dispersed, having passed an exceedingly pleasant evening.

G.

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.

Christian Science.

SIR,—In reference to the article on Christian Science of May 18th, the following seems to me a somewhat misleading statement: 'Every time we look up at the stars we feel the absurdity and the incongruity, not to say the impiety, of attributing directly to Deity trifling events, which from their very nature could not possibly be the work of any God whose place in the Cosmos is higher than that of the household gods of the heathen.'

Is anything too trifling for His notice who said, 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father'? Surely it ought not to be difficult to believe that God does look after 'our small personal interests and sympathises with our little joys and sorrows.' Is not all life made up of little things? The smile, the kindly word, trifling though they may seem, are yet the outcome of 'Divine Immanence' in man. If we imply that God is too busy in looking after the solar systems to prevent some unfortunate from falling over the coal scuttle, are we not limiting His power? And of what aid in our search after light can a limited Deity be? And with regard to the 'priestly conception' of religion, have not the priests the truth on their side? In asserting that God is a Father, they are but quoting Him who said, 'When ye pray say, Our Father'; and again, 'Call no man on earth your father, for one is your Father which is in Heaven.' (Matthew xxiii. 9.)

And those priests who have come to a right understanding of the term 'judge,' have not depicted an earthly despot but One who said, 'Neither do I condemn thee.' (John viii. 11.)

CICELY C. KENWORTHY.

Reincarnation.

SIR,—There have recently been many references to reincarnation in the columns of your journal, but I have failed to notice the case for a belief in reincarnation recorded in a sufficiently powerful manner as to give weight to the beliefs of its votaries. Your correspondent, A. K. Venning, in 'LIGHT' of May 11th, writes: 'Mediums should shun the psychological influences of mortals or spirits who proclaim such fallacious doctrines (as reincarnation).' The problem is, are they fallacious?

In my early ardent days of Spiritualism, I disbelieved in reincarnation because I was told so by spirits; because 'Imperator' in 'Spirit Teachings' discouraged the idea, generally but not entirely; because the thought of a weary round of reincarnations from the theosophical point of view was detestable from the standpoint of a mortal struggling to fulfil the duties of his or her environment with all the burdens that spirits in the flesh are heir to. Since those days I have seen visions, I have had spiritual conflicts with spirits. I have had my peace invaded by spirits whom I had held in high esteem, only to find them much worse as spirits than they were as mortals; and this has set me thinking and reading anew. I find that spirits can be so wicked in the next world that they will utter the most terrible lies, taking oaths in the name of the 'Supreme' or 'Almighty God' to entice belief in their protestations. I have known one who was very dear to me in earth-life do such things as a spirit as I am certain would never have been done in the body; and have been told as a reason that the person was a slave to the will of another spirit. I have seen spirits, half human, and half animal by retrogression, come to me in full view, animated by every malevolence. I have seen many such, and know that the writers of stories of enchanted animals, sirens, sorcerers, &c., have every fact in spirit life for the foundation of their stories. I recall Swedenborg's Experiences in 'Heaven and Hell,' in which he states that these sirens and sorceresses, who were once reputable men and women, eventually fade away and become in the process mere skeletons. I have seen an apparently glorified spirit become ultimately so dark, gloomy, and miserable as to look in every aspect an evil spirit. 'Imperator' refers to the adversaries and the constant war waged against them by those high spirits who are ever seeking out mediums to teach the true mission of Spiritualism. As nothing can be destroyed, only change its condition, the reasonable probability is that such degraded spirits eventually become disintegrated as to organised form, and are again reincarnated for their future progress as fully organised intelligent beings.

W. H. EDWARDS,

Boscombe, Bournemouth.

Rev. H. R. Haweis and 'Midland Rector.'

SIR,—I feel compelled to make some comment on the article of 'Midland Rector' in 'LIGHT' of May 18th, and should he not be a reader of the 'Daily Mail,' I would refer him to three articles written by the Earl of Dunmore on Christian Science, which, if rightly understood, will for ever do away with the foolish and pernicious practice of a few belated persons congregated to hear 'unmistakable raps of approval on the table.' It is amazing, and alarming too, that men of intelligence will, for one moment, allow themselves to believe in such very foolish and palpable nonsense. I am glad the 'Midland Rector' says, 'It was only the missing touch of complete personal (Haweis's) conviction which he feels was needed to make them an even greater power.'

LEONARD HALL

Southwick, Sussex.

[Mr. Hall may know a good deal about Christian Science, but it is palpably evident that he knows but little about Spiritualism. As a matter of courtesy, however, we have allowed him to give expression to his feelings of amazement and alarm.—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

Occultists' Defence League.

SIR,—The second annual meeting of the league will be held at Seller's Restaurant, 17, Great Ducie-street (opposite No. 6 platform, Victoria Station), Manchester, at 3 o'clock next Wednesday afternoon, June 5th, when the attendance of all members and others interested in the movement is earnestly requested in view of the great persecution which still prevails throughout the country.

Will all members who do not receive a circular calling the meeting please communicate their present addresses to me immediately?

J. DONSON,
Hon. Solicitor and General Secretary.

Stainland,
Near Halifax.

SOCIETY WORK.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—The monthly conference of this union will be held at the Temperance Hall, White-Post-lane, Manor Park, on Sunday next, at 3.15 p.m., open-air meeting at Station-road; at 7 p.m., public meeting, speaker J. C. Kenworthy; tea at 5 p.m., 6d. each. On Tuesday, June 4th, Mr. J. C. Kenworthy will lecture at Mansfield Hall, Canning Town, on 'Socialism and Spiritualism.'—D. J. DAVIS, Secretary.

CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Excellent meetings were held last Sunday. The address at the evening service was much appreciated, and was followed by an uplifting Pentecostal circle. Next Sunday morning, at 11 o'clock, a public circle will be held, to which strangers are heartily invited; at 3 p.m., children's school; and at 6.30 p.m., a continuation of the series of addresses upon 'Jesus—After Death' will be delivered by Mr. W. E. Long.—J. C.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—The presence of Mr. Alfred Peters on the platform of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists at these rooms on Sunday last drew a crowded audience, who were evidently greatly interested. Of the twenty-two clairvoyant descriptions given, sixteen were pronounced correct, two of these not being remembered until shortly before the conclusion of the meeting. Mr. Peters was warmly congratulated upon the large measure of success which attended his efforts, and much inquiry was aroused. Mr. John Edwards, one of the vice-presidents of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, ably officiated as chairman of this meeting. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. J. Morse, trance address. Doors open at 6.30 p.m.—S. J. WATTS, 2c, Hyde Park-mansions, W.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON.—A crowded and very interesting gathering was held last Sunday to meet Mr. Ronald Brailey, who gave an able discourse upon the subject of 'Immortality.' Good clairvoyance was given by Mr. Brailey, with details likely to bring conviction to the minds of those who received them. Next Sunday clairvoyance will be given by Mr. Alfred Peters. Wednesday, June 5th, meeting for members, with clairvoyance and psychometry by Mr. R. Brailey. Sunday, June 9th, trance address by Mr. J. J. Morse.—A. C.

THE PUBLIC HALL, FORSTER-ROAD, TOTTENHAM.—On Sunday last we had the great pleasure of a visit from our co-worker, Mr. J. J. Morse, who gave an eloquent address to a very fair audience. The addresses given by the controls of our good friend are too well known to need any further comments. Next Sunday, address by Mr. E. Whyte; subject, 'Shibboleth.'—A. CLEGG, 18, Fleetwood-street, Stoke Newington, N.