

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.

Mr. G. R. S. Mead, in 'The Theosophical Review,' launches a veritable torpedo against the detractors of 'H. P. B.,' and especially against the people who still persist in citing the 'S. P. R.' report which condemned Madame Blavatsky as a mere cheat. He says:—

You who believe in the S. P. R. investigator's account say that Madame Blavatsky was a trickster. You did not know her personally; nor as a matter of fact did the Committee who adopted the investigator's account. Even the investigator himself had to get the data on which he based his theory from others when he arrived at Madras. It is thus all at second hand at the best; even the investigator saw nothing at first hand. Like the investigator, and like you who believe in his theory, I too was not there; I, therefore, have no means of judging at first hand. I can only put the very ample written testimony and the still ampler unwritten evidence of her friends who were present in favour of H. P. B. against the accusations of two dismissed employes adopted by the missionaries, and afterwards endorsed by the S. P. R. investigator, who at that time seems to have had no first-hand acquaintance with the simplest psychic phenomena, and to have felt himself compelled to exhaust every possible hypothesis of fraud, even the most absurd, before giving Madame Blavatsky the benefit of even the slightest doubt.

Since those days, however, such a change has come over the general opinion of the S. P. R. with regard to psychic matters, and Dr. Hodgson himself has so fundamentally altered his own position owing to his now mature first-hand experience, that one need not be held to be departing entirely from an impartial judgment in thinking it more probable that Dr. Hodgson's inexperienced hypotheses with regard to Madame Blavatsky are not to be preferred to the many years of testimony in her favour brought forward by her friends in all countries.

Mr. Mead then goes on to tell how, three years after the issue of the Report, he became her confidential secretary, and, in the end, while perfectly familiar with all her faults of temper and behaviour, became an ardent believer in her. He says:—

H. P. B. was a warrior not a priestess, a prophetess rather than seeress; she was, moreover, most things you would not expect as an instrument for bringing back the memory of much that was most holy and wise in antiquity. She was indeed, as it were, the living symbol of the seeming foolishness of this world, whereby the wisdom was forthshadowed. In this birth, I am persuaded, I shall never look upon her like again; she alone has given me the feeling of being in contact with someone colossal, titanic, at times almost cosmic. I have sometimes wondered whether this strange being belonged to our humanity at all—and yet she was most human, most loveable. Had she run away from some other planet, so to speak? Did she normally belong to this evolution? *Quien sabe?*

A good many ministers, who ought really to be more staid, are, in their sphere, qualifying as rivals of Houdini,

'the handcuff king.' Bound hand and foot with all kinds of old Creeds, Confessions, Trust-Deeds and Pledges, they are wriggling out of them and 'singing the battle-song of Freedom'; and so numerous are they that very seldom are there sufficient defenders of the Faith to refasten their manacles and lead them back to their cells.

Here, before us, is the latest record of the claim of one of these buoyant adventurers. He says:—

My creed has come down to, or rather gone up to, this:—essential religion is pure spirituality before the essential deity, breathing gentle charity at all times to everyone. It all comes to this, nay this is the All in All,—the True, the Beautiful, and the Good—in thought, in word, and in deed. Live honestly before God and kindly with all men. I see nothing else before us. Is not this ambition for a more noble social life creed enough?

The recorder of this breezy utterance rightly says:—

The principle involved in this summary seems to express the drift of the age—toward altruism rather than individualism in our creed-making. We no longer believe so much about our own salvation as about the advancement of humanity. We have lost sight altogether of an angry God and a Day of Judgment. Our own fears are forgotten in the desire and determination to make the world a happier world, and all human beings children of the Father. This change in creed has come about as a sort of national evolution from the expansion of the steam age. We have been brought in contact commercially with all sorts of people; and we are thinking less of their faults than of their good qualities. It would be impossible nowadays to write a book speaking of all the nations of the world as necessarily going down into hell at death because they did not know anything about Christianity, or believe in the Trinity and the Atonement. The sincere struggle of our fathers to convert the world to their own ways of thinking and feeling was honest, without question; but it was a failure, and even the missionary efforts of the present day are of a different sort. Not a few of the missionary stations run something very closely akin to business colleges, and are concerned more with the worldly welfare of their pupils than with their rescue from eternal torture. . . . Shall we fear to let go of the old creed? We do not believe that anything has been gained, or will be gained, by retaining as standards of faith that which we privately recognise to have been outgrown.

We entirely agree with 'The Christian Register's' vehement protest against the base use of the press by certain proprietors or editors. The reference is to New York, but it all applies just as well to London and elsewhere. It is indeed an evil sign of the times that the following should be needed, and urgently needed, too:—

We should like to write a paragraph which would reach the authors of the outrages that are perpetrated by newspaper publishers daily in various parts of the country. We mean by 'outrages' what is called news, representing either in exaggerated description or in horrible pictures all the worst crimes that are committed. . . . Occasionally it is necessary to show the frightful nature of some crime for which the public can in a sense be held responsible, because the crime is the act of a mob representing active influences and sentiments which are encouraged by those who would not commit the crimes. But to lay before the public the details of murder, outrage and robbery, does harm in several ways. . . . Even in regions where there is little danger, many would now fear to travel, and would not dare to live, because of the imaginary fears which fill the darkness with horrors. That publicity, of the kind which we deplore and our readers will recognise, is harmful, all psycholo-

gists know. The spirit of the mob is infectious, and may take possession of those who have lived harmless and honest lives if once they come into sympathy with it. Much more dangerous is the effect upon those who in private dwell upon the details of unnatural deeds, until every wayward impulse in their own natures is aroused. That which one reads with interest, however bad it may be, he is in danger of reading with sympathy, and with an impulse to repeat the act. The more crimes we have published in this way, the more crimes we shall have to publish.

'The Manchester Guardian,' with the very best character for reliability, says:—

An extraordinary story, so grim as to rather suggest the fantasies of a melodramatic imagination than sober fact, is reported from Egerszeg, near Buda-Pesth. A young woman, Helena Fritsch, by name, the daughter of a local farmer, died, or was supposed to have died, and was buried. For some reason or other her favourite trinkets were buried with her, and this, being noised about, came to the ears of two men who determined to rob the body. They gained access to the grave, and had so far succeeded in their grisly work as to be in the act of removing the rings from the fingers, when, to their unutterable horror, the supposed corpse raised itself and groaned. The thieves fled screaming, the cemetery attendants were aroused, and the girl discovered. She was taken home to her parents' house, and at the time when the report left was still alive.

What of the unfortunates who are not visited by thieves? Incidents such as these greatly strengthen the case for making 'death' a scientific certainty, and for cremation.

From an anonymous pamphlet, circulated, we believe, for love and not for money, we gladly take the following thought concerning Religion:—

It is not Religion to talk about it, or to argue about it, or to invent pretty pictures of it, or write poetical rhapsodies about it, or to analyze it, or to dry it like herbs and keep it in an album, or to preserve it in a bottle with spirits, or with corrosive sublimate.

Religion is to feel the Spirit of Man and of God, and personally to give one's self up to its impulse, and to live and move and have our being in God, in Spirit and in Truth, and, so inspired, to lead every brother and sister to like humble exaltation.

Amiel, in the 'Journal Intime,' teaches the same truth, and states perfectly the Spiritualist's view:—

Religion is not a method, it is a life, a higher and supernatural life, mystical in its root and practical in its fruits, a communion with God, a calm of deep enthusiasm, a love which radiates, a force which acts, a happiness which overflows. Religion, in short, is a state of the soul. This is why I feel so little interest in ecclesiastical struggles. It is religion, the sense of a divine life, which matters.

We have much enjoyed looking through an immensely breezy book by Elizabeth Towne, entitled 'Joy Philosophy.' It contains seventeen brief chapters, every one wholesome and every one eminently readable: but not one entirely free from matter that might ruffle a placidity or start a debate: but we like the cheery style and the plucky tone of it. The burden of it all is;—Care less for money, prosperity and comfort: be independent: scorn fear: face dangers and difficulties with the assurance that the will is stronger than them all. The book may be obtained from Mrs. Towne, Holyoke, Mass., U.S.A. The price is one dollar.

On Sunday, May 22nd, Mr. J. Page Hopps will conduct the Sunday evening service at Mansford-street Chapel, Bethnal Green, London, at seven. The subject of Discourse will be, THE GOD IN EVERY ONE OF US.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many shrines).

Father, may Thy light shine upon our way and Thy strength come into our hearts, and may we follow Thee to-day and evermore. Amen.

'REINCARNATION RECONSIDERED.'

I am glad to see the replies to my article under the above heading. But the writers, in their perfect sincerity, fall into some of the very errors against which I tried to warn them. Where, for instance, does Mr. Nuttall get the very erroneous notion that I have ever denounced the esoteric philosophy? I have been extremely careful to avoid even the appearance of anything of the kind. Mr. Nuttall seems to imply that his presentment, being theosophical, is therefore esoteric, while mine, being avowedly an attempt to harmonise theosophical teaching with other views not less esoteric, is therefore superficial. But when he trims down my attempted exposition to fit his neat theosophical frame, it then becomes esoteric!

In fact, I have pleaded for a more esoteric consideration of fundamental ideas. I have deprecated the imperfect and superficial way in which certain concepts are commonly presented, and the assumption that these ideas are the exclusive possession of 'Theosophists and advanced occult seekers in general,' though what the latter phrase includes is not clear, unless Theosophists are made out to be occult seekers *par excellence*. Nor do I think that 'every Theosophist' takes as high a view as that set forth by Mr. Nuttall.

The question of reincarnation was debated nearly as warmly from the third to the fifth centuries of our era as it is to-day, and arguments were advanced on both sides with great skill. The presentment given by me was partly, but not entirely, based upon that of Anna Kingsford in 'The Perfect Way,' and it is to be noted that when Mr. Sinnett, about the time these lectures were given in 1881, returned from India bearing with him what purported to be the latest teaching of the Masters, he, as recorded by Edward Maitland ('Life of Anna Kingsford,' Vol. II., p. 19), rejected the doctrine of reincarnation, as well as that which is now, under the name of Karma, so prominent an article of the theosophical creed. These, however, are only two of the modifications that the Theosophist doctrine has undergone since Madame Blavatsky very slightly alluded to reincarnation in 'Isis Unveiled.'

In spite of all assertions to the contrary, Theosophy is largely a doctrine of authority, for although it claims to be a doctrine of reason and conviction, and not of dogmatism, those who do not accept the teaching of the moment are barely 'tolerated,' being regarded with an assumption of superior knowledge verging on contemptuous pity.

Mr. Nuttall tells us dogmatically that the law of evolution compels us to incarnate life after life. That is the question—Does it? I agree absolutely that evolution carries the man, the spirit, upwards by successive changes. But, after having reached 'the ineffable splendour of the heavenly region,' we are asked, Does he stop, advance, or return? The two replies given are not consistent; first, 'he is not bound to reincarnate unless there is something in his past that binds him to earth.' Good. But further: 'Why does he not still progress? Simply because the man has nothing in his composition that can respond to the vibrations of the heavenly life.' There is a vast difference between having something that cannot, and nothing that can, allow him to progress. In the latter case he has almost everything to acquire, and in this case I hinted that the idea of reincarnation was not lightly to be set aside. But in the former case, is it necessarily consistent with justice, with the law of evolution, that the nearly purified soul should be again plunged in the muddy waters of earth?

This brings me to one of the points I am asked to specify, as to the arguments I regard as repugnant to common-sense. One of them is, that justice and necessity require that a certain course should be followed, for it involves that the Divinity

'Existent behind all laws, that made them, and lo, they Are,' must necessarily have made the laws in one form and in no other. Note that I am considering the question of necessity apart from that of fact.

Nor am I satisfied that the change corresponding to death is so markedly repeated in the after-states as is represented by Mr. Nuttall. But here I must refer him back to my original article,

I must allude to one other point, in order to defend myself from the charge of misrepresenting Theosophy. Mrs. Besant rightly complains of the Western tendency to 'materialise the spiritual,' and even permits herself a fling at the Spiritualist conceptions of the after-life, which, on their own plane, are at least as well authenticated as the theosophical counterblasts. I am referring to the section on 'Devachan' in her 'Death—and After' ('Theosophical Manual,' No. III.), in which she does all she can to repair the ravages caused by the crudities of the ordinary theosophical teaching, which has given rise to the inadequate and arbitrary arguments and repugnant notions of which I complain; such as, for instance, that we must all go through every form of experience, an idea that Dr. Peebles seems to think worth the effort of replying to. The care Mrs. Besant bestows in correcting these arbitrary teachings is proof enough that they have been largely prevalent even among Theosophists, let alone the less instructed outsiders. Even at best, it is admitted in substance that for a very large majority of humanity there is a more or less aimless waiting in Devachan, surrounded by forms which are simply there in appearance because needed to complete the happiness of the resting, waiting soul. It seems to me that these aimless souls have done nothing to merit this illusive happiness, continued during a period equal to many earth-lives. Better far go back at once, if go they must, or else be kept in the lower spheres until the soul has learnt the value and blessedness of work, and, as Mrs. Besant truly says, 'assimilates his experiences on earth, still partly dominated by them, but gradually freeing himself more and more as he recognises them as transitory and external, until he can move through any region of our Universe with unbroken self-consciousness, a true Lord of Mind, the free and triumphant God.' Such is the triumph of the Divine Nature manifested in the flesh, the subduing of every form of matter to be the obedient instrument of the Spirit.

Bravo! I like that; I can enjoy reading Mrs. Besant when she lets herself go, and speaks from her exalted consciousness of What Ought to Be, what Must Be, and what therefore Is.

JOHN B. SHIPLEY.

A perusal of Mr. Nuttall's letter suggests the following questions:—

(a) Are people likely to accept, upon the writer's bare assertion, his allegation that 'even in the next world the change called death once more arrives'?

(b) From the Biblical statement that 'Flesh and blood cannot be heirs to the kingdom of God,' is it fair to infer that 'that which is of a carnal and evil nature cannot possibly stay there'? 'Flesh and blood' surely refer to man's material body, whereas the other description denotes a low order of mind, and to identify the two seems hardly justifiable.

(c) If, as Mr. Nuttall implies, the only people who escape the doom of reincarnation are those 'who have risen above all that is earthly and selfish,' does it not logically follow that all who 'stay' in the spirit-world are already morally perfect, and that there is, therefore, no growth or progress there—at least of a moral sort?

(d) If, when a man reaches Hades he has 'many more lessons to learn,' in what way will they help him, if, when reincarnated, he has no recollection of those earlier ones which his former experience of incarnation is supposed to have taught him? What men have taken to be a natural law—*Experientia docet*—is, it would seem, no law, since on the large scale of whole earthly lives it does not hold at all.

(e) If, as Mr. Nuttall says, reincarnation is 'a law of Nature,' why does it not, like all her other laws, follow the rule of resting on ascertained facts? E. D. G.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE IN LONDON.—We are requested to announce that Mr. W. J. Colville will be in London for a few weeks only. He will commence his lectures at 22, University-street, W.C., on Tuesday, the 24th, at 8 p.m., and in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on Wednesday, the 25th inst., at 3 p.m., and also at the 'Higher Thought' Centre, 10, Cheniston-gardens, on Saturday, the 28th inst., at 3 p.m. See advertisements on the front page of this issue of 'LIGHT.'

TELEPATHY—OR SPIRIT CONTROL?

I was present at Dr. Washington Sullivan's lecture and listened with great interest both to it and to the subsequent discussion. May I suggest that the truth probably lies between the two apparently opposite views which were advanced?

While many phenomena can only be explained by the action of discarnate spirits, it seems probable that telepathy from the living, and the action of the sub-conscious mind, are sufficient to account for many of the messages received by automatic writing, planchette, and slate writing, and that the forms described by clairvoyants are often either reflections from the minds of those present, or actual thought-forms created by will power.

In Hudson's 'Psychic Phenomena' he gives many instances in his own experience in which answers were only obtained by slate writing when the facts were in the sitter's own mind, but when unknown to the latter, a failure invariably followed. In Leadbeater's new work, 'The Other Side of Death,' he mentions a case where, at a séance, he intentionally evoked mentally the image of two schoolboys in Eton jackets. They were at once described by the medium as standing behind a lady present, and stated to be her sons, which she naturally denied. A somewhat similar case occurred to myself a few weeks ago. I was having a sitting with a medium who is a good psychometrist, and gave her a packet containing, as I believed, my mother's hair. She at once said that it was my mother's hair, then saw her standing behind me, gave an excellent description of her appearance, and her Christian name (an unusual one), and other convincing details. It was not until after her departure that I discovered that I had, quite inadvertently, given her a wrong packet, which really contained a man's hair, and thus conclusively proved that the description was drawn from the image evoked by my own mind.

In A. J. Davis's book, 'The Great Harmonia,' Vol. I., after describing the clairvoyant condition, he states:—

'In this condition the person can read the memory of another, relate circumstances of youth, describe distant scenes, and absent friends, whether in or out of the body, in proportion to the accuracy with which they are defined in the memory, and can separate or combine every thought pervading the mental atmosphere of the room occupied. . . . Ask the sensitive to reveal the source of his knowledge and he will refer to spiritual influx, prophetic power, and give all manner of explanations, but he only repeats acquired opinions or those unconsciously held by those present.'

A. J. Davis goes on to state that the higher or independent stage of clairvoyance is very seldom reached, perhaps not more than by one out of seventy-five millions, and that in that stage the spirit leaves the body, which is then deeply entranced. Although telepathy cannot and does not account for all phenomena, yet even when there is real spirit control is it not probable that the two causes may often act simultaneously and thus produce the confused and inaccurate statements which are sometimes given? It appears only logical to suppose that discarnate spirits would only endeavour to communicate when there was some urgent or important need for their advice or presence, and that they would not be likely to attend every casual circle, or every partly developed medium. The sitter's thought forms are, however, always near him, and as the sensitive sees them with great distinctness he quite naturally believes them to be the spirits of departed friends.

I think the cause of Spiritualism would gain and not suffer if the above facts were more clearly understood, as it would no longer be necessary to credit discarnate intelligences with the trivialities, unfulfilled prophecies, and mistakes which cause much perplexity to investigators, but which are all created by their own sub-conscious minds.

A. Z.

MR. J. J. MORSE requests us to announce that all communications concerning his few disengaged Sunday dates in 1905, should now be directed to Miss Morse, at 26, Osnaburgh-street, London, N.W., as she is making all the rest of his engagements for next year.

LETTER FROM DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

The following breezy letter from Dr. J. M. Peebles was read at the meeting of the Union of London Spiritualists, at South-place Institute, on Wednesday last, of which a report will appear in our next issue. Our old friend wrote:—

Having both through your secretary, Brother William J. Pitt, and our mutual friend and co-worker, A. J. Cash (in whom are combined both knowledge and zeal), been informed that the Union meeting of London Spiritualists convenes in annual conference the third week in May, I stretch a warm hand across the Atlantic waste of waters, waters that serve all nations and races alike, and clasp yours in the spirit of friendship, good cheer, and fatherly love,—that love which is pure, peaceable, and altruistic.

On my way recently from San Diego to Battle Creek, Michigan, some three thousand (3,000) miles, I lectured—as well as my travelling (trance) companion, Dr. W. G. Thurber—a dozen times or more. Besides the halls, two Unitarian churches were secured for us. The receptions along the way were literally ovations, afire with a glowing enthusiasm, relating to Spiritualism and the moral bravery of its old pioneers—pioneers who fifty years ago were often mobbed and pronounced heretics and infidels—pioneers who could say with Paul, 'In peril often by land and by sea and among false brethren.' Such enthusiasm is ever encouraging and uplifting. Richly do I enjoy, at times, the outspoken hallelujahs of the Wesleyans. I would be a Methodist if it were not for their unreasonable church doctrines. Do you remember that the Wesleys had spiritual manifestations in their Epworth home?

Some unwise pessimistic Spiritist of my country reported to the English Press a few months ago that Spiritualism was 'on the decline in America.' Nothing could be further from the truth. The truth never declines. It is immortal. Once born and rooted into human nature as a conscious reality, it abides there for ever. I never knew a genuine Spiritualist to recant. Spiritualism is a fact, and more, it is a grand, a mighty truth, centring primarily in God who is Spirit, secondly, in the moral and religious constitution of man, and thirdly, in messages and test communications, which, coming from the world invisible, demonstrate the continuity of life, and the conscious cognition of those 'over there' whom we knew, living in this mortal state of existence. Therefore, it is priceless. No poet can fully sing its moral beauties, no artist can put its glories upon canvas, nor can angel tones, however tender or thrilling, tell of or number its measureless blessings. Beloved friends, do we fully appreciate it? Do we fully realise that it plants an opening rosebud upon the cold cheek of death, unlocks the tomb's dark doorway, and o'er earth's million cemeteries chants the undying song of victory?

Spiritualism in its broadest and divinest sense is not only cosmopolitan, but is all-embracing, including all that is good and true in Christian Science, Metaphysical Science, Divine Science, Divine Healing and Theosophy; and why? Because its foundation, its topmost keystone, is *Spirit*. Mark it well! The corner-stone of Spiritualism is Spirit—pure, essential, immutable Spirit; and take the Spirit from any of these pretentious 'New Thought' sciences, and they are but empty shells and tinkling cymbals.

He who is ashamed of his Spiritualism is virtually ashamed of Almighty God; for God, said Jesus, is *Spirit*, and Spirit is incisive, energising, all-permeating, and spiritually uplifting. In brief, Spirit is the crowning glory of Spiritualism, and far more Christian than is our present creed-encumbered Christianity. It is the underlying force that inspires all forms of progress, and encourages and appropriates all such spiritual sustenance as kindness, benevolence, faith, prayer, brotherhood, heavenly impressions, visions, inspirations, and all loving angel ministries. 'It is the Spirit that giveth life,' wrote an apostle of old, 'and to be spiritually minded is life and peace.' 'Let us also,' he added, 'walk in the spirit, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace.'

Fifty-five years and more Spiritualism has been my joy by day and my comfort by night. And being now an octogenarian, and more, with hairs whitened in life's varied struggles—with many moral scars won on theological battlefields—and conscious this very hour of spirit presences around me, whispering words of love, I never so prized, never so loved Spiritualism, as I do at this very moment.

Oh! brave compeers! Oh! young comrades, strip for the final battle. The fight is still on. Be your feet swift and your heads clear to defend the truth. The scales may turn against you to-day in certain localities, but to-morrow you will ride in chariots—conquerors. Have faith. Be proud to stand upon the plane of rebellion against the wrong. Temporary misfortune often proves to be a fortune a little later. It is useless to burden the air with laments. Bury the past and push on. Storms purify the air. It is the burnished steel that shines. Many of the most painful phases of life lead up to the richest spiritual blessings. The corn dies in darkness before it sprouts up into the sunshine of an hundredfold. God is good. Angels are guarding us. The world moves. Progress is in the air. Truth is imperishable. The ripening harvest is within reach, and both appreciation and the redemption, if not the canonisation, of the true and the faithful draw nigh; here I am reminded of the cheery words of Edgerton:—

The world will be a better place
In a hundred years!
We'll have a brighter, happier race
In a hundred years!
The isms of old, the worn-out lies,
The ancient wrongs, like mist that flies,
Will melt in the rays of a new sunrise
In a hundred years!

A human soul will be higher priced
In a hundred years!
The Church will be converted to Christ
In a hundred years!
There will be more of faith and less of creed,
Be more of justice and less of need,
Be more of honour and less of greed,
In a hundred years!

There will be more of substance and less of form
In a hundred years!
More love will keep the world's heart warm
In a hundred years!
The laws will aim at the common good,
And religion be for brotherhood—
While toil will be honoured as it should,
In a hundred years!

There will be less misery and less wrong
In a hundred years!
There will be more gladness, and more song,
In a hundred years!
Baptized in a new humanity,
Each man to man will a helper be,
While the toiling slaves shall all go free
In a hundred years!

Waiting a hundred years is too long. We want all these poet-pictured good things now. We want Heaven right here and now in our hearts and our homes. 'What wilt thou have?' asked our Emerson of Concord. 'Find it, pay for it, and take it.'

Considering the indifferent and materialistic status of the world, spirit phenomena are necessities. Test messages are indispensable; God and the holy angels bless all mediumistic message-bearers, who bring us good tidings from the summer-land zones that encircle our planet. The principles of Spiritualism are as wide as all races and nations. Its philosophy is divine. One of its clearest expressions is evolution, and its destiny is the synonym of the world's universal religion—the world's redemption—the resurrection of the beast into the Christ. Liberal Christians, Christian Scientists, New Thoughtists, Theosophists, and other 'New Cults' are doing good work in their way. We hold out to them the olive branch of peace, and bid them and all other reform branches of thought and purpose God-speed, just so far as they 'abide in the Vine,' which Vine is *Spirit*, the spirit of truth. 'Other sheep have I,' said the martyr of Nazareth, 'which are not of this

fold, them must I bring also, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.'

Greatly do I admire the phraseology that distinguishes your organisation—The Union of London Spiritualists—for in union there is strength. Let there be union among you, then, O! beloved souls! in all essentials, and liberty and charity touching all non-essentials. Well do you know that in all finely-balanced minds the widest diversity may exist in perfect unity.

In closing, permit me to enlarge your well-chosen name as follows: The Union of all racial, National and Inter-National Spiritualists, whether occidental or oriental, the wide world over, into one sympathising brotherhood,—one mighty, serried host of inspired reformers, battling for that spiritual truth which demonstrates immortality, encourages all good works, sweetens the bitterest cup of life, illumines the darkest day, cheers the sick, lifts up the fallen, educates the orphan, comforts the mourner, brushes the tears from weeping eyes and wreathes the white foreheads of the faithful with the coronets of fadeless splendours, remembering the meantime the stirring words of Napoleon when amid Russia's drifting snows—*'Officers, Soldiers, the eyes of all Europe are upon you—do your duty.'* Spiritualists, the eyes of the thinking, reading world are upon you, do your whole duty.

J. M. PEEBLES, M.D.

Battle Creek, Michigan.

THOUGHT INFLUENCES.

'A dear friend of mine who has just passed to the larger life disused the form of asking, on entering our house—"I hope you are well to-day," and substituted for it a far more rational salutation—"I hope you are good to-day." If we were only good we should be much more likely to be well.

'Plainly, if our philosophy of life be sound, the first and best way to create health is to cherish thoughts of health; to fill our minds with the ideas of health. Every thought is creative; every idea is an energy tending to materialise itself. Each image is an action of the imagining faculty wherein is the true creative power, by which God is forever making the Universe and by which man is forever making himself, whether he knows it or not. Habitual thoughts of health tend to create the condition, the environment, the atmosphere of health. Strongly to believe in one's being well is to make one better. Phillips Brooks used to say that he thoroughly believed that the way to make one what he ought to be, in any respect, was to make him believe that he was just that.

'So to cherish, habitually and systematically, thoughts of goodness must tend to the creation of health. Disease must be disorder, lack of harmony, a condition other than the divine, beautiful order. And the divine order is at heart an order in mind.

'Sweet and kindly and loving thoughts must make for the harmony even of the body itself. Sour, unkind, and hateful thoughts must disorder the secretions and poison the blood and disarrange the vibrations of our bodies. It cannot be otherwise. Mental serenity must produce physical calmness. Moral pureness must work toward physical cleanness. To be right, then, in the soul must be the first condition of being right in the body. There must be therapeutic potencies in spiritual thoughts and emotions. If God, the Eternal and Infinitely Good Being, is the heart of the creation, then the inner spring of all its forces must be moral and spiritual energies. As with the Universe, so with the human body and mind. If a man can make himself habitually right in his thought and desire, right in his will and purpose, he must become right in the tissues built up out of the mind's action.

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, even His righteousness, and all other things—matters of health as well as of character—will be added thereto."—REV. HEBER NEWTON in 'Mind.'

LET US HAVE FACTS.—'There are plenty of people who still need to be convinced that our case rests upon facts. Theories may prove useful when we have facts to stand upon, but let us first have the facts! The hold which Spiritualism has taken upon the public mind is because of its facts enabling it to speak positively as to the reality of a life hereafter. Let us formulate our facts and discover their relations to science, morals, and religion. In the light of the conclusions then rendered possible we shall be able to more correctly appraise the value of the various schools of reformatory thought in the realms of society, industry, medicine, politics, and humanitarianism in general.'—'The Banner of Light.'

'ANCIENT SPIRITUALISM.'

No doubt most thoughtful inquirers into spiritual subjects have reached the conclusion that the ancient Pagan mysteries were in truth real initiations into spiritual knowledge, and not merely obscene Saturnalia, as a jealous rival priesthood has tried to make out.

Trollope's 'Life of Cicero' contains the following passages:—

'When at Athens Cicero was initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries—as to which Mr. Collins in his little treatise on Cicero says that they "contained under this veil whatever faith in the Invisible and Eternal rested in the mind of an enlightened Pagan."

In this Mr. Collins is fully justified by what Cicero himself has said, although the character thus given to these mysteries is very different from that which was attributed to them by early Christian writers. They were, to these pious but somewhat prejudiced theologians, mysterious and pagan, and, therefore, horrible.

But Cicero declares in his dialogue with Atticus, 'De Legibus,' written when he was fifty-five years old, in the prime of his intellect, that:—

'(Of all the glories and divine gifts which your Athens has produced for the improvement of men, nothing surpasses these mysteries, by which the harshness of our uncivilised life has been softened, and we have been lifted up to humanity; and as they are called *initia*—by which aspirants were initiated—so we have in truth found in them the seeds of a new life. Nor have we received from them only the means of living with satisfaction, but also of dying with a better hope as to the future.'

And here is a quotation from the oration of Demosthenes, *Æschines v. Ctesiphon*, regarding oracles:—

'In consequence of this oracle the Amphictyons decreed, and Solon, the Athenian, was the first mover of the decree (the man so eminent for making laws, and so conversant in the arts of poesy and philosophy), that they should take up arms against these impious men, in obedience to the divine commands of the oracle.'

Were Solon and Cicero men to be deceived and taken in on such subjects? And yet most modern writers pass over such passages in the classics with a shrug of the shoulders, or a sneer at man's credulity.

If there were any unworthy rites practised they were either a veil to hide the true meaning from the vulgar or a fraudulent imitation.

The ancients were far wiser, in this as in most other matters, than many people to-day calling themselves Spiritualists who try to convert people utterly unworthy and unprepared.

Spiritualism would make better progress, I think, if initiation were limited to those reverently and carefully prepared for it.

A. V.

SOME GOOD ADVICE.

'If you would increase your happiness and prolong your life, forget your neighbour's faults. Forget all the slanders you have ever heard. Forget the temptations. Forget the fault-finding, and give little thought to the cause which provoked it. Forget the peculiarities of your friends and only remember the good points which make you fond of them. Forget all personal quarrels or histories you may have heard by accident, and which, if repeated, would seem a thousand times worse than they are. Blot out, as far as possible, all the disagreeables of life; they will come, but they will only grow larger when you remember them, and the constant thought of the acts of meanness, or, worse still, malice would only tend to make you more familiar with them. Obliterate everything disagreeable from yesterday, start out with a clean sheet for to-day, and write upon it for sweet memory's sake only those things which are lovely and lovable.'—*Anon.*

MR. J. J. VANGO wishes to intimate to his friends that he will be out of town from May 20th till the 24th.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
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PROFESSOR BARRETT ON SPIRITUALISM AND MEDIUMSHIP.

III.

Professor Barrett concludes his outlook upon Psychical Research with, on the whole, a serious and kindly reference to Spiritualism, which he calls 'the extreme or advanced wing of psychical research.' The fluttering of that wing is felt and heard in Professor Barrett's Society, but it creates, he tells us, 'considerable differences of opinion.' He pleads for mutual tolerance and charity, and, as to 'spiritualistic phenomena,' he says:—

With regard to these we must all agree that indiscriminate condemnation on the one hand, and ignorant credulity on the other, are the two most mischievous elements with which we are confronted in connection with this subject. It is because we, as a Society, feel that in the fearless pursuit of truth it is the paramount duty of science to lead the way, that the scornful attitude of the scientific world towards even the investigation of these phenomena is so much to be deprecated.

This is good doctrine which we hope will bring forth fruit. There is plenty of stoney ground waiting to be cleared, and plenty of trampled soil waiting to be ploughed. We, on our side, are rapidly succeeding in stopping 'ignorant credulity,' and we cordially bid God-speed to Professor Barrett's friends in their efforts to put a stop to 'indiscriminate condemnation.' Why should not the left wing and the right beat together?

Professor Barrett gives well merited praise, and a tribute of thankfulness, to the pioneers of earlier days—to the sturdy and truth-loving men and women who, in their little parlours or 'upper rooms,' demonstrated what 'the wise and prudent' are now considering. The passage in which he does this must be quoted entire; and, though there is nothing in it beyond bare justice, we thank him for it. It is a payment which has long been due, but we never wrote it off as a bad debt. He says:—

We ought not to forget the small band of investigators who, before our time, had the courage, after patient inquiry, to announce their belief in what, for want of any better theory, they called spiritualistic phenomena. No doubt we can pick holes in their method of investigation, but they are just as honest, just as earnest seekers after truth, as we claim to be, and they deserve more credit than we can lay claim to, for they had to encounter greater opposition and vituperation. The superior person then, as now, smiled at the credulity of those better informed than himself. I suppose we are all apt to fancy our own power of discernment and of sound judgment to be somewhat better than our neighbours'. But, after all, is it not the common-sense, the care, the patience, and the amount of uninterrupted attention we bestow upon any

psychical phenomena we are investigating, that gives value to the opinion at which we arrive, and not the particular cleverness or scepticism of the observer? The lesson we all need to learn is that what even the humblest of men *affirm* from their own experience, is always worth listening to, but what even the cleverest of men, in their ignorance, *deny* is never worth a moment's attention.

The acute and powerful intellect of Professor De Morgan, the great exposé of scientific humbug, long ago said, and he had the courage publicly to state, that however much the Spiritualists might be ridiculed, they were undoubtedly on the track that has led to all advancement in knowledge, for they had the *spirit* and *method* of the old times, when paths had to be cut through the uncleared forests in which we can now easily walk. Their *spirit* was that of universal examination unchecked by the fear of being detected in the investigation of nonsense. This was the spirit that animated the Florentine Academicians and the first Fellows of the Royal Society 250 years ago; they set to work to prove all things that they might hold fast to that which was good.

Backing this up, Professor Barrett reminds psychical researchers of instances of conversion to the 'spiritualistic camp,' of 'most acute and careful inquirers, trained psychical detectives we might call them, who, having begun with *a priori* reasoning and resolute scepticism,' have 'gone over' after they had given the necessary time and patience to the investigation. 'They may be right or wrong in their present opinion,' he says, 'but we must all admit they have far better reasons for forming a judgment than any of us can have.'

This spirited home-thrust is followed by as full a confession of faith in our main teaching as any one could desire. The Professor contends that this at all events is undeniably established 'that human personality embraces a far larger scope than science has hitherto recognised: that it partakes of a *two-fold* life, on one side a self-consciousness which is awakened by, and related to, time and space, to sense and outward things; on the other side a deeper, slumbering, but potential consciousness, the record of every unheeded past impression, possessing higher receptive and perceptive powers than our normal self-consciousness, a self that, I believe, links our individual life to the ocean of life, and to the Source of all life.' This personal expression of belief is followed by references to Kant, who thought it was possible that the human soul even in this life is in communion with the spirit world; to Swedenborg, who held that man is so constituted that he is at the same time in the 'spiritual' world and in the 'natural' world; and to Plotinus, the Neo-Platonists, and the later mystics, who also taught this; all of which, of course, we steadfastly believe. In Professor Barrett's presence, we do not, indeed, see any line of demarcation, except the distance that lies between 20, Hanover-square, and 110, St. Martin's-lane.

On the subject of Mediumship the Professor is sensibly serious and distinctly enlightening. To the man in the street, he says, the notion of mediumship affords perennial amusement: but, from a purely scientific standpoint, there is nothing remarkable in it. Recent discoveries have shown us that a few substances possess radio-active powers, and that these substances have an inherent and peculiar structure of their own. Why should not a few persons have peculiarities of structure which endow them with unusual powers?

Professor Barrett, standing here on his own ground, is highly suggestive:—

Furthermore, physical science gives us abundant analogies of the necessity of some *intermediary* between the unseen and the seen. Waves in the luminiferous ether require a material medium to absorb them before they can be perceived by our senses. . . . And the more or less perfect rendering of the invisible waves depends on the more or less perfect synchronism between the unseen motions of the ether and the response of the material medium that absorbs and manifests them.

Thus we find certain definite physical media are necessary to enable operations to become perceptible which otherwise

remain imperceptible. Through these media, energy traversing the unseen is thereby arrested, and, passing through ponderable matter, is able to affect our senses and arouse consciousness.

Now, the nexus between the seen and the unseen may be physical or psychical, but it is always a specialised substance, or a living organism. In some cases the receiver is a body in a state of unstable equilibrium, a sensitive material—like one of Sir Oliver Lodge's receivers for wireless telegraphy—and in that case its behaviour and idiosyncrasies need to be studied beforehand. It is doubtless a peculiar psychical state, of the nature of which we know nothing, that enables certain persons whom we call mediums to act as receivers, or resonators, through which an unseen intelligence can manifest itself to us. And this receptive state is probably a sensitive condition easily affected by its mental environment.

Professor Barrett here starts the very suggestive hypothesis that on the other side mediums may be required, and that it may be more difficult to find a spirit medium there than here. In his opinion, our intercourse with the spirit-people turns upon the transmission of thought through gross matter on both sides. Hence the enormous uncertainties of mediumship, and the difficulties and confusions which puzzle us so much. As one of Professor Barrett's correspondents remarks: we are apt to lay too much stress on memory, or the want of it, as a test. We do not know what we call 'memory' may be to a discarnate being, nor do we know what tremendous difficulties may attend the attempt to convey through a material and an alien brain what we call 'facts.' We have need of infinite patience and charity in any intercourse with the unseen people.

We cannot conclude this study of Professor Barrett's Address without a brief reference to his thoughtful remarks concerning Old Testament denunciations of spirit-communion. His judgment as to this matter is largely based upon the fact that psychical knowledge and psychical phenomena were, in the old days, seized upon and closely guarded by the priestly caste, the upshot of this being that the whole thing was exploited by magic-mongers for superstitious and evil purposes. Hence the far-seeing statesmen and prophets of the Hebrew nation prohibited mediumship and séances because they tended to lead astray the people, and to draw them away from the sane and orderly worship of Jehovah. Wisely does Professor Barrett say:—

With no assured knowledge of the great world-order we now possess, these elusive occult phenomena confused both the intellectual and moral sense, and so they were wisely thrust aside. But the danger at the present day is very different. Instead of a universe peopled with unseen personalities, the science of to-day has gone to the other extreme, and, as Mr. Myers once eloquently said, we are now taught to believe 'the Universe to be a soulless interaction of atoms, and life a paltry misery closed in the grave.' Were the Hebrew prophets now amongst us, surely their voice would not be raised in condemnation of the attempts we are making to show that the order of Nature contains an even vaster procession of phenomena than are now embraced within the limits of recognised science, and that behind the appearances with which science deals there are more enduring and transcendent realities.

Once again we thank the scholarly and fair-minded President of the Society for Psychical Research for a wise, comprehensive and instructive Address.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications from J. H. Gledstones, 'Circumspice,' 'John J. H.,' 'C. K., and others are necessarily held over.

UNIFORMITY NOT DESIRABLE.—Writing in the 'Banner of Light' Mr. W. J. Colville shrewdly observes: 'Though Unity is highly desirable, Uniformity is not to be desired. United in heart we can stand and pull together, but uniform in method we should soon stagnate. The very ferment in the spiritualistic ranks may be a source of strength as well as an evidence of life, for people do not contend earnestly over matters about which they care but little. Spiritualism is a vital movement, full of energy and push, and for that very reason its barque does not sail in excessively smooth waters.'

VALUE AND EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

Many useful and illuminating articles have appeared in 'LIGHT' concerning the value and efficacy of prayer, both as a means of obtaining ends desired, and as a factor in our own spiritual progress, a means of attaining a higher spiritual level.

We have been told that prayer is essentially placing ourselves *en rapport* with the Unseen, the uplifting of ourselves to a higher plane of thought and sensation. An ancient mystic (Plotinus) said: 'Let us invoke God, not by pronouncing words, but by raising our soul to Him in prayer. Now the only way to pray is to advance alone towards the One who is alone. To contemplate the One we must collect ourselves in our inward conscience, as in a temple, and remain quiet there, in ecstasy . . . contemplating Him as His Nature requires.' Prayer is in fact the attempt to attune ourselves with the Divine, and its highest form is when we adopt the words of the ancient model, 'Thy Will be done.'

But what does this mean, and what steps do we propose to take in order that our prayer to this effect may be realised? Are we to pray that God's will may be done, and then do nothing to carry out this pious desire? Shall we not say, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? Teach me to know Thy Will, that I may help to accomplish it.' But instead of this, we are apt to utter these words in a spirit of resignation, as though God's Will could not possibly be our will, and as though all that was necessary for us to do was to stand aside and endure whatever trials it might please God to send upon us. Seldom do we think that it means the active ranging of our own will on the side of God's Will, in order that that Will may find in us joyful helpers and instruments, to our own rich reward and blessing, as well as that of others.

But instead of this, what do we most commonly pray for? Does not our petition far more often take the form, 'Lord, not Thy Will, but mine, be done! Lord, do Thou as I would have Thee do!' Or perhaps we attempt to make a compact with the Divinity, 'Lord, give me the desire of my heart, and I will then serve Thee in return.'

These, then, are false forms of prayer. But there is yet another side to the question. It is that which I may call Anti-Prayer.

Whenever we form a strong wish or desire, even without uttering the words, or even without any conscious definite expression of it, or when the desire takes the form of a purpose on which our mind is set, of a state which we earnestly wish to attain, the image of a thing we would greatly like to have, then that desire, the formation of that image, is in itself a prayer. And how many of our desires are such as we would care or venture to formulate in a spoken prayer? Some of them are such as we should not like to be heard to express openly. Others are so trivial that we do not associate them with the notion of serious prayer. There is an old story, told in many forms, of the man who was granted three wishes, and through hasty and ill-considered utterance lost them all, and imperilled his soul into the bargain. Well, if we were to set down on paper all the wishes that arise in our minds from moment to moment, we should be startled to find how few and indefinite were those which we should ever venture to include in a formal petition.

More than this, we should find that the wishes that we form at the moment are not only, when good, the most trifling, but when most vivid and powerful are apt to be least worthy of our better natures, and such as, if granted, would do more harm to ourselves than to others, thus exemplifying the proverb, 'curses, like chickens, come home to roost.'

Let us cease for a moment to look on prayer as an act of petition. Let us look at it as *action*, or attempted action, by ourselves—as an attempt to carry out and to realise what we pray for. Shall we not gain a far different notion of the importance of what we are doing, when we thus allow desires to spring up in our mind? It is in this sense that Christ told us that whosoever hateth his brother without a cause—that is, who sends out a wave of evil thought and feeling against another without being justified in so doing by the consentaneous action of the Divine Will,—commits murder in his heart. He has not, perhaps, visibly harmed his brother, but he has sent out a shaft which, had it been sped by the consent of the Divine Will, would have proved fatal to him.

This, then, is Anti-Prayer, when the action figured in our minds is contrary to the Divine Will, or when we imagine to ourselves events as happening which we should never dare to ask for in set terms.

What, then, is to be our attitude? Let us desire that we may only think towards others as the Divinity thinks, and who will then think hardly of another without just and holy cause? If we believed that we had each an armoury of weapons, and also a supply of means of help, which we could discharge or utilise at will, should we not oftener pray that we might in fact only act and think in accordance with the Divine Will? By so doing we should range our own will along with the Divine Will, so that the Kingdom might come within us and rule us, and that the Will of God might be done through our instrumentality on earth, as it is done by the angels of God in heaven.

S.

'GUIDES.'

Writing in a recent issue of the 'Sunflower,' Mrs. Mattie Hull gave some sensible advice to a correspondent who asked: 'When my guides urge me to do things against my will, in other words, against my better judgment, what would you advise?'

Mrs. Hull replied:—

'If your "guides" are good, intelligent and wise people (spirit guides are men and women, nothing more), they will not urge you to violate in a single act your better judgment, without giving you a reason for doing so. If they refuse to do this, give them a "wide berth." No intelligent or wise spirit, man or woman, will seek to dominate your individuality. It is always a happy thought that we may be assisted in any way by the spirit people—that they are at times enabled to co-operate with us and sometimes "show unto us a more excellent way," but no man, woman or child has any moral right to yield his personality to another.'

It would perhaps have been clearer had the words been added to the concluding sentence—'against his better judgment.' A sensitive may surely enter into friendly relations with, and yield his personality (his brain and body), to a wise and trustworthy spirit friend in temporary co-operation. It does not follow that a trance medium loses his or her individuality because of such association.

Dealing with the general question of mediumship Mrs. Hull wisely remarks that:—

'There is no "royal road" to mediumship, any more than there is to mathematics, philosophy, or poesy. Following set rules will never create nor endow mediumship, because mediums are not made. As far as any school is concerned, all the schools of the world have not the power to confer mediumship. Mediumship depends upon the temperamental organisation of the individual; it is not something that can be bought or sold, although scores of heartless "professionals" (?) advertise that they can impart, or develop, any desired phase of mediumship for a money consideration. All such persons should be given a wide berth.'

ALL who are yearning to become conscious of their loved ones 'over there' should bear in mind that Love unites and binds, and that Selfishness separates and divides.

THE CONTINUITY OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

Dr. W. R. Washington Sullivan gave an Address to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, on Friday evening, the 6th inst., on 'The Continuity of Spiritual Life'—Mr. H. Withall, Vice-President of the Alliance, in the chair.

DR. WASHINGTON SULLIVAN said: It seems to me that there are two aspects to the question of survival; there is the purely phenomenal, illustrated by apparition after death and the manifold evidence industriously collected by your own and similar societies, and there is the *spiritual* aspect, by which I mean the disclosure of the mental, moral, and religious life of those who have passed away. What do we know of that? How far is that revealed by any of the methods whereby the departed endeavour to get into communication with earth? What account do they give of themselves, of their mental condition, of their occupations, of the object they have in living? Do we really know anything of the after life beyond the bare fact of its existence? Have our experiences disclosed to us, so far, any information on the world-problem and the mystery of life?

Now, here the present speaker can only claim such authority as the ordinary reader may acquire, or such as may be claimed by one who has been brought into association (which he has greatly valued) with well-known experimenters and men eminent as investigators both of psychical and occult phenomena, and expositors of their history. And I may say at once that nothing I have read or heard throws light on these, the most interesting problems of all—the moral and spiritual life of departed souls.

Now this, be it observed, need be no reason for surprise, still less for discouragement. The most pronounced agnostic, in the present tendency of thought, does not dogmatically exclude the possibility of light from the beyond. All he contends is that the evidence before him is not, so far, adequate to prove such a prolongation of terrestrial existence. And it will be admitted by most, I assume, that the *evidence is not positively apodictic*, compelling assent like mathematical certainty, or the united ocular testimony of thousands of people to any given occurrence. Psychical observation, of a scientific kind, is still in its infancy, and it is possible, with further research, that an explanation of its indubitable phenomena may be forthcoming which will dispense with the present prevalent assumption that we are actually in communication with deceased personalities. The nature of spirit, or reality, is so little known; we have penetrated so little behind the veil of the phenomenal by which we are surrounded; the powers of the mind are so undeveloped (judging by the wonders disclosed in hypnotism and suggestion), that it may well be the fact that the hypothesis of communicating personalities energising in a sensitive may be largely abandoned in view of future discoveries of that still unexplored wonderland, the soul of man. As a matter of fact, the present solution is the easy and obvious one, and as such may be suspect—much as textual critics warn us that the easier reading is generally the wrong one. May it not possibly be the case that here, as in other matters, we are acting in obedience to Comte's law, and invoking wills as causes of phenomena which we do not yet completely understand? Theologians have done this from time immemorial, ascribing the phenomena of Nature, especially its more violent and unwelcome manifestations, to the agency of powers or wills like our own, only of greater potency; and I suggest—for in a matter so obscure one can do no more—that we may have been prematurely induced to do the same with regard to psychic phenomena.

As far as I am able to judge, the old contemptuous attitude of the materialist (as he was once called) is being largely abandoned, at all events by people of intelligence and culture. Spiritualism is no longer derided as a science of ghosts; its facts are too numerous and impressive. A halt seems to have been called, and its supporters invited to inquire still further as to the possibility of an explanation of the phenomena which will not involve the existence of, and communication with,

departed personalities. Spiritualists are asked whether they are sure that there are no unexplored recesses in the soul or in the flesh capable of producing the results with which all are now becoming familiar. So much that once seemed to demand intervention from without is now explained by agency from within, that the same may well be the case in the present instance. It is well known, for example, that both physical science and philosophy are moving farther and farther from transcendence in favour of immanence; that Deity is synonymous, not with the magnified copy of humanity banished to invisibility, but with the abiding Soul and Life of worlds, and not distinguished from them. Physicists take radium in their hands and watch it giving off the vapour of helium, undiminished in energy, and the solemn doctrine of the Unity of Substance, of the All-Oneness of things, is most powerfully suggested. So that, it may be said, another and a more difficult and more wonderful solution is proposed to us, viz., that the Indescribable is accomplished here, on earth, and from earth, by agencies and powers unsuspected, which are resident in the Universal Soul, in which we all share.

My suggestion at this point, therefore, is that the phenomenal side of Spiritualism, its disclosures of truth in the trance state, or through the medium of suggestion or automatic writing, may be due, not to communications from without but from within; disclosures of fact made by the Common Soul, in which all share, yet so wonderful, so unexpected, and apparently inexplicable, that our impulse is to ascribe our knowledge to super-normal sources. May it not be that the undoubted facts of telepathy may account for it all? If we indeed share in a Universal Mind; if the One-Soul, or Over-Soul, is the first and last of spiritual realities, then, in a very real and impressive sense, there is 'nothing hid but shall be revealed,' and the secrets of the heart shall be no more private than the truths of science.

'There is no great and no small
To the Soul that maketh all;
And where it cometh, all things are;
And it cometh everywhere.'

After all, have we not witnessed wonders as great through the agency of clairvoyance as from the Beyond? And clairvoyance is the intenser sight born of the overflow of the Universal Mind in the sense and imagination of an elect individual. It is *in-sight* and genius applied to lesser things, the exact analogy of the exceptional power which revealed the laws of motion to Newton and guided Galileo along the pathway of the stars. As Goethe says, 'The Indescribable—here it is done.'

And with regard to those crowning manifestations of the spirit world, the materialised forms of the departed, the reappearance of the dead in ætheric bodies, I would venture on a suggestion which may seem bold, possibly extravagant, but which may claim a basis in physiological fact. The forms which appear before us, speak with us, and act altogether as though they were still in the flesh, may be the result of the creative effort of those present, directed by the controlling energy of the sensitive; so that such mental life as is disclosed is not that of an individual in the Beyond, but of the medium, or a product of the combined activity of those present at the séance.

Let me explain more fully the suggestion. It is well-known that what we call the Soul, or principle of life, was considered by Christian philosophy generally to be directly infused by supernatural agency into the organism when duly disposed to receive it. Here we have an admirable illustration of the tendency to acquiesce in a facile and obvious interpretation of facts as long as deeper inquiry is not encouraged, or when, as in this case, it was positively forbidden. It was not clear how the blind act of generation could result in anything so wonderful as a thinking soul, so the only alternative was to ascribe the 'vile body' to the parents, and the soul to the Divinity. The Schoolmen, of course, with their perverted views of human nature, were responsible for this travesty of facts, utilising a speculation of Aristotle's for the purpose. Physiology, which has taken this department out of the hands of the scholastics, is now satisfied that what we call soul, or the life and thought

principle, instead of coming last, comes *first*, and that apart from it there would be no foetus, no organism, at all. It is the psychic monad, called popularly soul, which initiates the entire process whereby a germ becomes a man. Around that the bodily organism grows, like a plant from a seed that is sown. It is *that* which attracts and assimilates appropriate nutriment, and disposes it in such fashion that the wonder of the human form emerges at last. It is the soul that creates the body, which sustains it in being, repairs its losses by fresh assimilative efforts—which, in a word, prolongs its initial creative impulse until the instrument it has produced breaks, as it were, in its hands, and is no longer serviceable.

Now, if one may make an application of this fact to our present purpose, it might be urged that soul-power is always adequate to the production of the appearance called body; that what it did once it can do again; that, under definite conditions, the occult, but undeniable, power which is actively engaged in the maintenance, in the sustained creation, of fleshly bodies, may likewise concur in the production of the *ætheric* body from the same materials as do ultimately avail to the production of our own bodies—namely, the gaseous elements of the Universe. For what is a body, animal or human, but an amalgam of materials, gaseous or ætheric, in the last analysis, made to assume its appropriate form by the indwelling principle called Soul? I suggest that the phantasmal appearance is the product of the sitters, directed by the medium, the phenomenal result of mental or spiritual effort exercised by them collectively, and that its mental life is not its own, but the reflection, dim and confused, of that of the sensitive, or the circle, or a joint product of them all. The personality may not be one who has separately lived, but is *one of the phases of personality* either of the medium or his assistants, a fresh presentation of the Universal Soul.

And, the mention of personality suggests another reflection which may go to sustain the present hypothesis. The phenomena disclosed by suggestion and hypnosis go to show that what we call personality is not the thing popularly described as some simple, spiritual, indivisible entity or centre of mental and bodily activity, which is essentially permanent. That old view, wrapped up with scholastic theories, which the Reformation made no attempt to disturb, is that universally prevalent among distinctively Christian thinkers; indeed, the entire fabric of popular theology demands it as its foundation. The phenomenon of idiocy or madness did not disturb it; for that was universally ascribed to demonic agency. The soul was displaced by a demon, and so the principle of individuality could not function. Likewise, a case of loss of memory, and consequently of identity, was referred to malevolent powers, and appropriately treated—another example of Comte's wonderful generalisation, the ascription to persons of facts whose natural causes are unknown.

This facile interpretation of personality held its ground until Mesmer and Braid, and their innumerable successors, made it clear that others than demons could modify, or entirely change, the principle of personality, so that the person under suggestion became a distinct individual.

Moreover, quite apart from such artificial methods, a closer study of abnormal psychology showed that natural changes, an accident or a shock, frequently produced the same result; and hence, the view now entertained of the individual is that he is not the embodiment of a simple, spiritual, immutable principle, but the temporary exhibition of one out of many, possibly innumerable, phases of life; that, under will power, one phase remains predominant, and stamps us for what we are, while, if that controlling influence is relaxed or impaired, we become somebody or something entirely different. The suggestion is, therefore, that in the materialised form, in so far as its mental activity is concerned, we are witnessing nothing but another phase of the medium's or the sitter's individuality, or a phase which is the resultant product of them all, temporarily projected into the ætheric body.

And if this were so we should understand how unnatural it is to expect disclosures from our visitants as to the conditions of the other life; why our knowledge remains very much where wise men have long since left it; why, with the accumulation

of evidence pointing, in the judgment of so many, to the unmistakable *fact of survival*, the conditions of the after life remain still obscure. The suggestion is that the forms we see are our own doubles, and so give us back merely the echo of our own voices and our own thoughts.

The explanation is apparently a simple one, but as a matter of fact it involves as great a wonder as the generative process itself, the production of a new form by an immaterial act of will and thought power. The spirit or soul, we have seen, is actually the source and origin of the material body, as it is its sustaining power. I see no reason for doubting its capacity to become the centre of other forms like itself, when acting under supernormal influence, when its energies, so to speak, are relaxed from the care of its own individual body.

And, I have been told by one well-known experimenter, whose knowledge and experience are, I should judge, second to none in this difficult matter, that the conscious effort of the circle, especially of the medium, has been found to affect the distinctness, the clearness, of the phantasmal form; that the form gradually fades as that effort (which is incapable of being long maintained) relaxes. I believe, too, that students of occult matters recognise that the mediumistic office is unfavourable to the natural procreative functions. There is but one centre of creative energy in the individual frame, incapable of dispersion. Given to the supernormal production of ætheric forms, to the projection of self, as it were, in an externalised shape, it lacks energy in other directions, much as we notice in the great creators of art, literature, or philosophic thought. It is indeed so, I believe; the reproductive energies of the Universe, physical and spiritual, are gathered into a point and focussed in man, and here, as in other matters, the poet's words are a true forecast:—

‘Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping
something new,
That which they have done but earnest of the things
which they shall do.’

Man has stumbled on this, as on other of his most wonderful powers. It has scarcely begun to be exercised yet, still less developed. I suggest that the new experimental psychology, which abandons old *à priori* speculations and axioms of the schools, should take the remaining phenomena associated with Spiritualism under its charge, and submit them to the same patient investigation as any other manifestations of the wonderful soul of man, which it has already admitted as valid.

Now, what has been done so far is to point out that possibly we have been in error in tying up the undoubted phenomena of Spiritualism with obsolete philosophical assumptions, and notably with that of Individuality or Personality. Since it has become only too clear that personality, like all else in a world of evolution, is something fluid, inconstant, and impermanent, we may have reason for believing that the fact of bodily dissolution, the shock of death, may lead to further integrations and disintegrations of the human individuality than we are even familiar with here; that is, what we know of individuality, as we know it here, may be lost—that ‘the dew-drop slips into the shining sea,’ as Arnold expresses it. And thus we may be enabled to account for the fact noted at the beginning of the address, that whereas numberless facts purport to illumine the phenomenal aspect of the great question of Futurity, and to guarantee the fact of individual survival, very little, if anything, is forthcoming to throw light on a question obscurer still, on the development and perfecting of the departed in another and higher sphere. Our knowledge, derived from the unexplored land, has not surpassed that bequeathed to us by elect spirits here; indeed, I think it would be admitted generally that whatever is new or peculiar to spiritist revelation does not reach the level of the inspiration of earth, and that often it falls immeasurably below it. Many explanations, natural and plausible enough, have been advanced of the poverty and paucity of ultra-mundane spiritual ideas; but there the fact remains, that *Reason* has been a more inspiring guide than Experiment as to the discipline of the After-Life; the living wise have had more to tell us than the dead.

At this moment Evolution, or the light that is thrown by that commanding idea, seems to suggest the most reliable explanation, that there is no break at death; that the law of Unity and Continuity still holds good; that ‘spiritual evolution will follow the same laws as physical evolution; that there will be no distinction between terrene and post-terrene bliss or virtue, and that the next life, like this, will “resemble wrestling rather than dancing,” and will find its best delight in the possibility of progress, not attainable without effort so strenuous as may well resemble pain.’ (Myers’ ‘Science and a Future Life.’)

This is virtually the conception of Kant in the ‘Critique of the Practical Reason,’ and the treatise, ‘Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason.’ He is convinced of a future life, not on grounds of experiment, not even the supreme fact of the corporeal resuscitation of the central Figure of the Christian Faith, but on grounds of Reason, on the Stoic ground of the ultimate reasonableness of the Universe, on his conception of the world, produced by a method of development, being in essence an expression—more or less perfect—of Reason. He could not bring himself to believe that man could be put to permanent intellectual confusion by the shocking contrast afforded by the illimitable hopes and boundless aspirations—*le long espoir et la vaste pensée*—of man, and a humanity doomed to extinction. With no miracle or prophecy to guide him; with nothing but the lamp of reason in his hand, he showed a way to Futurity by pointing out the long and careful preparation for it in the moral and spiritual education of the race, which, incomplete here, would be carried on in another sphere. Man would still be called to walk in ‘the way everlasting.’

I am not forgetting that many things have happened since the Gospel of Ethical Religion, based on ‘God, Freedom, and Immortality,’ as postulates of the Practical Reason, was first given to the world by the Sage of Königsberg. Neither Science nor Philosophy now gives the same interpretation to the great conception of God; and Freedom, or Liberty of the Will, has been found subject to limitations and restrictions not suspected in his day, while physical science, by positively locating many of our mental processes in definite molecular changes in the brain, has provided what, at first sight, appears to be a conclusive argument against the possibility of survival at all. And yet, in spite of all, the great ideas themselves of God, Freedom, and Futurity—the things-in-themselves, as Kant would say—still survive. The atheism of Holbach and Lalande has been gradually abandoned, and a suspensive and wistful attitude of mind has succeeded, full of reverence and of the spirit of true religion, reluctant to affirm, still more fearful to deny, the tremendous facts involved in those three words. The world and man are disclosed in even more wondrous form with the fresh discoveries of our time; and as man is more and more identified in origin and nature with the great Cosmos which is without beginning of years or end of days, absolutely eternal, so is it becoming more difficult for the once-called materialists to dogmatically decide that there is nothing in the world but the appearance, nothing in man but the breath of his body. That truly great and grand man, of whom our country should be proud indeed, Herbert Spencer, seemed to feel increasingly the strength of this difficulty as years came on, and I know nothing so moving as the final chapter in his last published work, ‘Facts and Comments,’ on Ultimate Questions:—

‘It seems a strange and repugnant conclusion that with the cessation of consciousness in death, there ceases to be any knowledge of having existed. With his last breath it becomes to each the same thing as though he had never lived. And then the consciousness itself—what is it during the time that it continues? And what becomes of it when it ends? We can only infer that it is a specialised and individualised form of that Infinite and Eternal Energy which transcends both our knowledge and our imagination; and that at death its elements lapse into the Infinite and Eternal Energy whence they are derived.’

(Applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN, after thanking Dr. Sullivan for his able address, said that probably some of his hearers would dissent from his suggested explanations of the phenomena they had

witnessed. Before inviting expressions of opinion, or questions, Mr. Withall mentioned an incident which he thought could not be accounted for in the way suggested by the lecturer. On one occasion when the President of the Alliance, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, was at a séance with Mr. Eglinton—and while the medium was standing by himself, isolated from the sitters, directly under a gaslight in the middle of the room—he saw a form gradually materialised by the medium's side; and having done so it left the medium, came direct to Mr. Dawson Rogers, and shook him cordially by the hand. He then, to his great surprise, saw that it was beyond doubt the form, distinct and unmistakable, of the Rev. Edward Miall, formerly editor of 'The Nonconformist,' with whom, as a journalist, Mr. Dawson Rogers had been personally acquainted.

MR. E. BERTRAM asked if the lecturer would kindly say how many materialisation séances he had attended.

DR. SULLIVAN replied that he had not been present at any such séances, but had based his suggestions upon the testimony of a well-known Spiritualist, who had attended and conducted a large number of séances, at which materialised forms had appeared, and with whom he had had frequent and lengthy conversations.

MR. BERTRAM expressed the opinion that when Dr. Sullivan could speak from personal experience he would entertain very different opinions regarding the nature of the phenomena.

MR. MACBETH BAIN offered some remarks, which we regret to say we could not hear distinctly.

MR. RONALD BRAILEY said he thought it was a good thing that such addresses as Dr. Sullivan's should be given before the Alliance, and that all theories should be carefully considered, but his experiences had convinced him that the speaker's suggested explanations were altogether inadequate. He then related how a lady known to him was visited by a spirit, in a materialised form, who requested her to write to a friend of his and arrange for a séance, so that he could communicate with his friend and obtain his pardon for a private transaction in which he had been wrong. The lady did as requested, and the séance was held, and although the spirit did not materialise he communicated with his friend, through the lady's mediumship, and the pardon he desired was granted.

DR. ABRAHAM WALLACE said that he thanked his friend, Dr. Sullivan, for his interesting address, but could not agree with his suggested explanations, although he thought greater attention ought to be paid by sitters to the conditions necessary for successful results, and cited the remarkable séances held in Cardiff, at which Mr. George Spriggs was the medium, when friends of the sitters appeared in full form and were recognised. 'Only a short time ago,' said Dr. Wallace, 'while sitting with a medium, who is present to-night, a spirit friend made his presence known to me, and among other things said that he was very anxious about his wife. I did not know of any cause for his anxiety, but a few days since I met a mutual friend, from whom I learnt that his wife had recently sustained a serious attack of apoplexy.' This was only one instance among many which Dr. Wallace felt could not be made to fit in with Dr. Sullivan's attempted explanations.

DR. BERKS T. HUTCHINSON said that he had had considerable experience with mediums and had witnessed many materialisations of a most conclusive kind, and therefore he claimed to know that Dr. Sullivan's suggested explanations were not in accordance with facts. He could remember the time when the last speaker, Dr. Abraham Wallace, entertained ideas similar to those advanced by the lecturer of the evening, but further investigation had led him to accept the fact of spirit return, and he had no doubt that such would be the case with Dr. Sullivan if he would continue his researches patiently and thoroughly.

MR. E. W. WALLIS pointed out that Dr. Sullivan's theories were practically those of many Psychical Researchers, and he thought it was very significant that Mr. Myers, Dr. Hodgson, and Professor Hyslop had all been compelled by the force of facts to abandon those theories and to admit the spiritualistic explanation, in certain cases at least, and had confessed their convictions that they had held communion with their deceased friends. The answer of the Spiritualist to those who contended that the spirit explanation of the origin of the phenomena was 'too simple and obvious,' was, that truth is very often simple, and that it is the only one which adequately fits the facts. As Dr. A. R. Wallace says, 'no theory is satisfactory which does not cover the whole ground of the facts observed,' and while the telepathic, multiple personality, and sub-conscious theories may meet some of the difficulties, the spirit explanation was the only one which covered all the admitted facts. If the spirit is the body-builder, and possesses all the wonderful powers attributed to it by Dr. Sullivan while embodied, he thought that was an additional reason why after death it should possess the power

to manifest itself, and even build up materialised forms for the purpose of recognition. As to the power of the sitters to strengthen the form by their concentrated mental and psychical powers, that only indicated that they were assisting the spirit operator, who is admittedly dependent upon the medium and the sitters for the substance out of which the form is fashioned. Spiritualists were such, as a rule, because they had been convinced of the identity and the real presence of their friends as the result of their own personal experiences, and he (Mr. Wallis) was reminded of the case of the late Rev. Thomas Greenbury, who at first thought that Spiritualism could all be explained by mesmerism, clairvoyance, and thought-reading. He was advised to investigate, and fortunately did so with a good private medium, through whom he received most conclusive proofs of the presence and identity of a much-loved spirit daughter. Mr. Wallis ventured to think that if Dr. Sullivan continued his investigations he, too, would become convinced as the Rev. Thomas Greenbury and so many others had been. He concluded by moving a cordial vote of thanks to Dr. Sullivan for his able and suggestive address.

MR. W. J. LUCKING seconded the vote in a few well-chosen words, and said he thought we were practically at one as regards the methods by which the phenomena were produced, but differed as regards the causes, and that difference could only be settled by fuller investigation. There was one point which he thought should be borne in mind, and that was that the materialised forms themselves always affirmed their independent existence and denied that they were in any sense the sub-self, or under-personality, of the medium, and they frequently gave evidence in support of their claim to be distinct individualities from both the medium and the sitters.

The vote of thanks to Dr. Sullivan was adopted with much applause and suitably acknowledged. In a few closing words Dr. Sullivan expressed his pleasure at the kindly manner in which his suggestions had been received, and said that his mind was open upon the subject; indeed, he was aware of some occurrences which, like those related by the several speakers, seemed to make the spiritualistic explanation the necessary and only satisfactory one. (Applause.)

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.

Some Curious Questions.

SIR,—In a Spiritual Prayer given in your issue for May 7th, the following lines occur: 'Blessed be Thou, O Lord, who bringest forth on earth, and out of earth, every living thing, and makest man after Thy likeness, to rule the earth, and crownest him with blessing.' The italics are mine.

I can find no authority anywhere for the generally accepted idea that the human being on earth is the man made in the image of God, to whom was given dominion over the animal world.

As a child I was told that God is spirit, without limitations. How can physical humans be in His image?

Can any of your readers bring forward any real proof that original Man and earthly Human are one and the same?

And can anyone explain why Christ invariably spoke of Himself as the Son of Man. The expression Ben-Adam occurs over fifty times in one Gospel; and Ben-Adam means the Son of Adam, or the Son of Man.

Does not my second query explain my first to those who bring the light of intuition to bear upon it?

ELLEN TIGHE HOPKINS.

'Strange Mental Phenomena.'

SIR,—The strange experience narrated on p. 239 by 'A Seeker after "Light"'—presuming it had no purely physiological cause—may possibly be interpreted in the following manner:—

The brilliantly flashing diamond symbolises the pure white light of Truth. The sapphire emitting its blue rays is emblematic of the light of Love. The stars shining in a deep blue sky may represent individual spirits, shining with the light of Life Divine enbosomed in Infinite Love. The brilliant white light of the Divine Spirit, with the human heart in its centre, from which heart a yellow flame proceeds, may indicate the position of the Wise and Unfolded human spirit. Yellow symbolises the Wisdom which is more precious than gold or gems. The heart indicates Life and Love. Hence the enfranchised man, grown wise, and pure, and loving through discipline and pain, becomes the interpreter of the Divine Law of Love and Truth, and begins to understand as God understands, and so reaches the centre of All-Good.

INTERPRETER.

Reincarnation.

SIR.—While the subject of reincarnation is so much on the *tapis*, the following may interest those whose views are negative on the subject :—

Some few weeks ago I had a sitting with the well-known sensitive, Mrs. Paulet, and she suddenly said, 'You passed out once before by water; it will again be an enemy in the form of dropsy.' (I know medically that this is very probable later on.) In conjunction with that remark the following coincidences have made me reflect on the subject :—

As a child I lived near a large reservoir. It was my one horror, but my nurse's favourite walk. I was fascinated by the great mass of water, but when I heard the roar caused by its filling up I suffered agonies of fear. I have always said that I cannot live near reservoirs. When any of our dumb friends have had to be destroyed I have always said, 'Anything but drowning.' Some time ago I was on the sea with my sailor son, a young midshipman, and though I love the sea the sight of some big waves coming towards us made me shriek and say, 'If there's anything in reincarnation I must have suffered drowning. Oh! the cruelties of the sea!' I have had many interesting and helpful sittings with Mrs. Paulet, but chiefly on private matters. I had never discussed reincarnation with her, nor had I any preconceived ideas in favour of it; so the remark was spontaneous and convincing.

'A SEARCHER AFTER "LIGHT."'

Notes and Queries.

SIR,—May I ask Mrs. Lewis (p. 213) if she can tell us a little more clearly the true inwardness of the latter portion of the 'unexpected séance'? It is not clear *who* was the controlling entity who desired to touch the dog, nor the reason for hesitation in mentioning the word.

What does Mr. Kelly (p. 215) mean by increasing the myopia? A short-sighted person can usually see objects *more distinctly focussed* by half shutting his eye, and looking through a small hole has the same effect, but with loss of brightness, and of lateral range of vision. Perhaps 'every schoolboy' is not myopic—we will hope not, though alarmists tell us that the tendency is that way.

Mr. Girdlestone (p. 213) suggests that an angel who had never been incarnated might be a human spirit. Is not this a contradiction? Can a being be called human who has never lived a human life on earth?

The question of 'guardian angels' is a very difficult one. May not Christ have referred to the higher portion of the Ego, which had not yet become, as it were, entangled by the temptations of a prolonged earth-life, and, therefore, was still in a state of purity? There is an ancient belief that not until the child reaches a certain age does the higher soul become enmeshed in the body, and I believe it is a matter of remark that young children often display psychic faculties which they lose as they grow older. 'Children live in a world of their own,' it is sometimes said; and I am not sure that that world is entirely made up of 'childish fancy.'

In reply to another remark, it has often been pointed out in these columns that 'being born without material bodies into a non-material world' is a relative statement only; that world must have its own form of 'matter,' though not our form, or no one could be born into it. We need a word to express the analogue of matter on other planes.

S. G.

'A Timely Note of Warning.'

SIR,—With reference to the article in 'LIGHT' of the 14th inst., entitled 'A Timely Note of Warning,' I understand that the object of the National Union is a laudable one, viz., to establish a standard of efficiency for platform advocates of Spiritualism and to ensure that only persons of good moral character shall be employed as 'exponents' or 'demonstrators.' I am informed that 'there is great need for some such effort, as a very deplorable state of things exists in some districts.' Admitting the need, the question then arises, Does the end justify the means? or rather, will the desired result be attained by the methods proposed? A number of thoughtful Spiritualists think it will, and a number of others think it will not. The latter, of whom I am one, incline to the opinion that the fault lies with the promoters of the societies and must be remedied by them, and that no real good, and probably much harm, will result from this attempt on the part of the National Union to do what the committees (or individuals) engaging speakers or mediums are too short-sighted, or too indifferent, to do for themselves.

Your correspondent, 'A Watcher,' seems to base his statement of the case on the bye-laws of the Union; but a later document has been issued by the Council which seems to me

to be contrary to the stipulations of the bye-laws and to render them null and void. To illustrate my contention briefly: The bye-laws specify that 'candidates' *must be proposed* by a member of the Union, and the proposal must be in writing, signed by the proposer and the candidate. Further, candidates *must* undergo an examination, and 'every candidate shall, at least thirty days before the date of the examination,' state in a written notice to the secretary the subjects in which he or she proposes to be examined, and the name of the town where he or she wishes the examination to take place; and, still further, his or her character shall be *certified to* by at least two well-known and recognised Spiritualists! Thus far the bye-laws; but the later document issued by the Council dispenses with the examination of the exponents and demonstrators 'at present serving the cause,' and issues an 'application form' which is *not* a proposal by a member of the Union. Further, it is enacted that those 'at present serving the cause' shall, on application, be *entitled to receive, as a matter of course, the certificate of the Union without examination*, unless someone objects on the ground of their gross inefficiency or moral unfitness! This, too, in spite of the fact that the bye-laws specify that *every* candidate *must be examined*, and shall be *certified to* be of good character by two or more well-known Spiritualists. Apparently any person who is so disposed may, after the names of candidates have been published in the Spiritualist Press, write and object to certificates being granted to certain candidates—and then the *inquisition*! Thus the Council sets at naught the bye-laws passed by the Conference, and acts, as it seems to me, in an illegal manner, or, at any rate, contrary to the definite regulations adopted at the Conference, that every candidate *must be examined* to test his or her qualifications, and *must be certified to* be of good character. If the Council can thus *override* the bye-laws, how are the desired results to be achieved? If the Council is to sit in judgment on the speakers and mediums, who is to examine the examiners? and how are they going to excommunicate those they condemn, seeing that but one-third of the societies have representative members in the Union? How are they going to compel those societies that are represented in the Union to abide by their decisions? Surely bitterness, heart-burnings, and strife are likely to be the outcome of this policy! Have we reached 'the parting of the ways'? Are we to have 'official' and non-official Spiritualism in the future—an orthodox and a heterodox Spiritualism? If so, I, for one, prefer to be a servant of the spirit-world and a

FREE LANCE.

SOCIETY WORK.

Notices of future events which *do not exceed twenty-five words* may be added to reports *if accompanied by six penny stamps*, but all such notices which exceed twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns at the usual rates.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST - ROAD.—On the 11th inst. Mr. Ronald Brailey gave excellent illustrations of his psychometric powers. On Sunday last Mrs. Roberts, of Leicester, gave a trance address on 'After Death, What?' and also fifteen clairvoyant descriptions, twelve of which were fully recognised. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Webb will deliver a trance address.—W. T.

CHISWICK.—AVENUE HALL, 300, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Jessie Greenwood spoke, under spirit control, on 'Angel Voices.' Her address was much appreciated. On Monday last Mr. E. S. G. Mayo discoursed ably on 'My Other Self.' On Sunday next, the 22nd inst., at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Fielder; subject, 'Genesis.' On Monday, the 23rd, social amusements, music, &c., from 7 p.m.—K.

CAVENDISH ROOMS.—51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last a brilliant oration was delivered by the guides of Mr. E. W. Wallis upon 'What Spiritualism Is, and Does.' The subject was treated at some length by the controls in a lucid manner, which won the closest attention of all. Prior to the address Mr. Wallis gave a suitable reading. Mr. G. Spriggs officiated as chairman. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Ronald Brailey will give clairvoyant descriptions. Doors open at 6.30 p.m.—S. J. W., Hon. Sec.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Friday, the 13th inst., Mr. Ronald Brailey gave good illustrations in clairvoyance and psychometry to a very large audience. On Sunday evening last Miss Violet Burton's trance address on 'The Cultivation of the Soul' was very spiritual and inspiring. The Chepstow Band gave valuable help. At the after-circle good clairvoyant descriptions were given. On Friday next, at 8 p.m., Mrs. F. Roberts, of Leicester, will give clairvoyant descriptions. Speaker on Sunday evening, Mr. J. Adams, of Battersea.—C.