

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—Paul.

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	397	'New Sayings of Jesus'	403
Has Spiritualism Settled Any- thing?	398	Life After Death	404
The Medium Bailey	398	Spirit Identity	405
Mind and its Functions	399	The Collective Spiritual Entity. No. 8. By John B. Shipley	405
'Palmistry or Otherwise'	400	Spiritual Worship	406
The N. Rays	400	Professor Falcomer's Experiences	406
Mr. Rider Haggard's Dream	401	Spiritualism in India	407
The Unity of the Faith	401	'Necessity for Reincarnation'	407
God in the Darkness and the Evil	402	Mrs. Bathe and Mrs. Russell- Davies	407

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Are we not inconsistent when we reprove the few preachers who still preach Hell, and the descent into it of all who are not correct believers in Christ? We hold that people who believe that *ought* to preach it, and never tire; and we also hold that people who do not believe it should cease talking as though they did. We have come right up to the parting of the ways, and there ought to be no more nonsense about it.

So also thinks a good old-fashioned preacher in America who still preaches Hell (and we believe Hell preaching is more popular in America than here): whereupon a sensible new-style religious paper says:—

But, if hell be a reality, of course it ought to be preached. And that is just the point. It is asserted that we have swerved, under the influence of science and of worldliness, away from facts as well as duty. Is hell a fact? Spurgeon said in one of his sermons, 'Can we go to our beds and sleep, while China, Japan, India, are being damned?' Professor Park used to say: 'Nothing intervenes between death and the judgment. Men who are lost when they die are lost forever.' Rev. Dr. Pond brought this theory to a conclusion as follows: 'It is inevitable that the great body of the heathen are descending, in fearful multitudes, down to the chambers of eternal death. Not less than 600,000,000 of the inhabitants of the globe are heathen,—a broad current rushing down into the lake that burneth with unquenchable fire.' From this standpoint it is quite legitimate that our neighbour should insist that hell is a legitimate theme.

We think that is a reasonable way of looking at it. In fact, the people who believe their neighbours are steering for Hell might be excused if they battered their doors at midnight and cried 'Fire!'

We must steadily keep on insisting that there is no real 'supernatural.' All is natural. What we have to do is to open the gates wider, and to keep them open. 'Nature,' says Dr. J. M. Whiton, 'the comprehensive term for all that comes into being, is a hierarchy of natures, rising rank above rank from the lowest to the highest.' 'Each higher,' he says, 'is supernatural to the nature below it.' That is perfectly true, but that is shuffling the cards over cleverly, inasmuch as it uses the word 'supernatural' with finesse. Dr. Whiton, however, makes his meaning plain, in the illuminating sentence: 'The true supernatural is the spiritual, and not the miraculous; a higher order of nature, not a contradiction of nature.' That is a distinction worth bearing in mind.

The zealous Spiritualist, looking out upon the noisy world with its panting for pleasure, its hot eagerness for

gain, and its apparent immersion in materialism, is apt to ask, 'Why are men less moved by spiritual influences than they were?' or even, 'How is it that morals and manners are less refined than in the old days?'

Here is a paragraph from 'The Christian Register' which may help to answer both questions:—

There is a current belief, based on what are called statistics, that married men live longer than bachelors. An earnest individual, taking the truth of the statement for granted, asked, 'Why do married men live longer?' to which a frivolous friend replied, 'They don't: it only seems longer.' We are often reminded of this question and answer when some of our friends, with an urgent morality and an eager desire to do good, ask why it is that social manners and morals are so much worse now than they were fifty years ago. We say, 'They are not worse: they only seem so'; and the reason for their seeming so is that earnest and enlightened men are at work raising the standard of sentiment, and improving manners and morals everywhere. As the standard rises, friction increases and wrath is generated. We become less tolerant of evil, and more unhappy because it exists. But this unrest caused by the presence of evil is a powerful agency directed against it. For, when anything in this world tends to make the majority unhappy, there is an irresistible instinct which impels them to remove the causes of unrest and unhappiness. Instead, then, of being overwhelmed by the problem of evil, the right-minded and good-hearted should take courage, and turn themselves with renewed energy to the cultivation of right sentiments and the multiplication of right thoughts, while the standard of the ideal life is lifted up in the sight of all people.

'The Key to Health and Happiness,' by F. S. Blizard (London: F. R. Henderson), offers a few 'remarks,' to use the writer's own word, concerning the two precious boons named by him. Here is a summary of them:—Health is the one thing needful, but how few possess it! Doctors are only a delusion and a snare. Air, sunshine, sleep, water, food, and exercise, both mental and physical, are our primary needs, as health-producers. Bad tempers indicate bad health. As for food, cut off flesh and fowl, and eat the fruits of the earth, and grain and nuts. Buy Oldfield's 'Penny Guide to Fruitarian Diet and Cookery,' and Sydney Beard's 'Comprehensive Guide.' Drink plenty of water, not at meals but between them. Sleep with the windows open, and generally live as much in the open air as possible. Learn how to breathe, deeply and regularly. Keep the mind under steady control, practise cheerfulness and hopefulness: 'man does not live by bread alone.'

That is about all, and not a bad code of commandments either. The abolition of meat-eating is a 'counsel of perfection' which, whatever our practice may be, no Spiritualist will scorn.

We often note the name of William Brunton in the more thoughtful American papers. Here is a specimen of his clear thinking and sunny optimism. He seems to be a good enough Spiritualist:—

I never could see why people should fear their friends when they had cast aside the outworn garment of time, for they are clothed upon with immortality, and if anything, are sweeter

and truer than when they walked with us here side by side. Perhaps they are nearer than ever. I shouldn't be at all surprised at it—and it is a pleasant thought that we may cling to as fact. And then when we are willing so to consider it as possibly, probably true, we may have the sunlight flash into our experience. To live reasonably in this thought is to walk in the light of truth, and to be guided by a blessing as precious as the heart may know. We want to be wise in this, and not foolish, or superstitious, or acting as if we were not also immortals and had to learn to carry ourselves accordingly. The truth of immortality braces a man to be his best, to have self-reliance, to wish to make the most of himself, and to see beyond every night a morning, and beyond every winter the goodness and growth of a new spring!

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many shrines).

O God, who art Peace everlasting, give us things holy, calm and blessed; love, joy and peace. Pour out the gifts of the ever-living God, words of wisdom, knowledge and charity, gifts of healing, and working wonders on men's hearts, the clear eye of truth and discerning of spirits. By the indwelling of Thy breath of holiness, peace and truth, hallow us, and in the fellowship of godly men strengthen us. By pure religious rites consecrate us, and let their inner meaning cleanse us, that our scars of soul may be healed, and the wounds of sin done away. And let the peace of God, which passeth understanding, keep our hearts and thoughts in the knowledge and love of God. Amen.

HAS SPIRITUALISM SETTLED ANYTHING?

As there has recently been considerable discussion in 'LIGHT' relating to the question whether Spiritualism throws any light 'upon the moral and spiritual life of departed souls,' will you permit me to say through your columns that all I know—mark the word *know*—about the future life, its conditions and employments, I know through Spiritualism, using the word in its broad and all-inclusive sense.

While conversing with the dwellers in the invisible world for over half a century, and personally conscious of their presence every day of my life, I beg to state, shunning all metaphysical distinctions, Oriental soul-sheathings, and dreamy imaginings, that spirits have revealed, or satisfactorily settled for me, the following subjects beyond question:—

1. Man, a conscious entity, related in his inmost to the Infinite Spirit of the universe as a potentialised portion of God (who is spirit, pure, essential, infinite), continues his conscious, individual life after the event called death.
2. He takes with him to the great beyond consciousness, memory, all intellectual and moral attainments—in a word, his individuality *plus* personality.
3. His life in the invisible realms is just as real as, and more spiritually substantial to him than, it was in this primary earthly sphere of existence.
4. The future world affords equal opportunities to all, and brighter, better facilities for progress than does this selfish, competitive, warring period of time.
5. Man, as a thinking, rational being, and moral actor, is inspired and aided by higher unseen intelligences from the heavens, and is also subject to low obsessional influences from the Tartarean zones of darkness.
6. Within the physical body there is a refined soul-body, the intermediary between the conscious Ego, the immortal spirit, and the coarser physical body.
7. The future life is a conscious, thinking, reasoning, acting, exploring, discovering, unfolding life; and all the good, the true and the beautiful, gained and practically out-lived here, is retained beyond death's peaceful river.

J. M. PEEBLES.

Battle Creek,
Michigan.

THE MEDIUM BAILEY.

SÉANCES HELD BY THE SOCIETY OF PSYCHICAL STUDIES
AT MILAN.

(Translated from 'Luce e Ombra.')

(Continued from page 351.)

Sixth Sitting, Tuesday, March 15th.—The committee, having decided to comply with the wish of the medium, who assured them that better effects would be produced by the presence of a larger number of persons, adopted a special set of regulations which, while providing that nothing be done except by direction of the chairman, left the committee free to apply whatever means of verification might seem most suitable according to circumstances. It also allowed visitors to take part in the searching of the medium, and other verification of phenomena. At the same time it stipulated for the avoidance of loss of time both in opening and closing the sittings. The *apports* and minutes were to be the property of the society, but if an *apport* was brought specifically for a certain person it was to be delivered to him after being examined, and, if necessary, photographed.

The room and the medium having been searched, the latter was enclosed in the bag, which was sealed, and the net was lowered. There were twelve persons present besides the members of the committee. After a short time the control known as the 'doctor-man' (Dr. Whitcombe) said that the medium felt somewhat indisposed that day, and, therefore, the results would be mediocre, and not fully corresponding to the power of the medium.

Darkness was asked for, and the majority of those present observed a phosphorescent luminous spot to the left of the medium. The latter, by request, clapped his hands *without* the light disappearing; it was noticed that, as he did so, the light moved from the upper part of the room towards the floor at some distance from the medium, and still on his left. The red light was then called for. 'Denton' came and spoke for half an hour about the reality of spiritistic manifestations, and the great instruction to be derived from them. Afterwards 'Selim' manifested, and brought, as he said, a *souvenir* for Dr. Griffini, seven seeds of a plant which only bore that number, considered a sacred number by the Hindoos. The seeds in question served as amulets against the evil eye, diseases, and malign spirits. The seeds on being afterwards examined proved to be those of the *Abrus precatoria*, which is believed by the Hindoos to have the magic virtues described by the control.

After again asking for darkness for a short time, 'Selim' brought a small nest with an egg in it. The nest was composed, like the others, of vegetable fibre with a few tufts of cotton. The medium held the nest in his left hand, and in his right a little black-headed bird; he came forward to the net, through which those present were able to examine and verify the three *apports*. After a minute or two, the room being again darkened at the medium's request, the bird, nest, and egg disappeared.

Next the control 'Nana Sahib' (leader of the natives in the Indian Mutiny) made his appearance for the first time. With cries and gesticulations he inveighed against the English and after walking about the room with as long strides as the bag allowed him to take, he went through the action of meeting an enemy, struggling with him, and falling heavily upon the floor. After a moment, during which the personality appeared to change, the medium dragged himself towards the arm-chair, on which he seated himself and became somnolent.

'Dr. Whitcombe' then explained that 'Nana Sahib' generally endangered both Bailey's health and the issue of the séances, and caused the *apports* to disappear as soon as they were brought.

Another entity now manifested, who, at the request of the chairman, had the flower-pot brought to him out of the wall-cupboard in which it was kept, the seals having been removed at the commencement of the sitting. The pot was found still

wrapped up in the newspaper, and was so presented to the medium, who removed the wrapping, when it was discovered, to everybody's surprise, that the plant, which had grown during the previous sances, and which ought to have been found underneath, had, however, disappeared.

Finally 'Dr. Whitcombe' returned, and on being questioned as to the possibility of completely stripping the medium and re-clothing him in other garments before putting him in the bag, replied that the medium's health formed an obstacle to this. In Australia, he said, this procedure had once been adopted, but the medium was very sensitive, and would feel it keenly in such weather. On the expediency of such a proceeding being insisted upon, he concluded by telling them to apply to Mrs. Bailey for information.

Seventh Sitting.—There were present the members of the committee, and nine invited guests. The room and the medium were carefully searched. After the bag had been put on, the medium went into trance, and the net was lowered. The first control ('Dr. Whitcombe') insisted on the severity of the search in order to make sure of the genuineness of the phenomena. The medium then rose on the arrival of the control 'Denton,' who made a long speech on physical phenomena.

Next the control 'Abdallah' presented himself, and after greeting Signor Brioschi, expressed the desire that the latter should deposit in the soil the mango-seed brought two sittings before. (This seed, which had been for a week in the custody of Signor Cipriani, had in the meantime been submitted to examination at our Museum of Natural History, where it was declared to be as stated.) The curtain was raised, and a pot of earth, prepared during the day, placed in a bag, tied, and sealed, was taken from the cupboard in which it had been deposited. The seals being examined and found unbroken, the pot was taken out of the bag and presented to the medium, along with a bottle of water which had been asked for in order to moisten the earth, and a small wicker basket to cover the pot with; both water and basket were examined as a precaution.

Signor Brioschi then placed the mango-seed, handed him by Signor Cipriani, in the earth at a depth of about a centimetre; the medium watered the pot copiously, then covered it with the wicker basket. All this was done by the light of the brighter red lamp. The net having been lowered while waiting for the seed to germinate, the control 'Abdallah,' a native of the Punjab, told a tale of his country, following it with a song in Casruli, an Indian dialect.

The white light being turned full on, the medium brought the pot to the net and asked those present to examine the shoot, which pushed about three centimetres (over an inch) out of the earth; this growth was found to have taken place in twenty minutes. Afterwards the medium took the seed from the earth, opened the halves of the shell, washed the little roots of the shoot, and allowed those present to see and touch it. This done, he replaced it in the pot, which he again covered with the basket; the control asked that it might be placed in the dark until Tuesday, in order to hasten the development of the plantlet.

Then came the control 'Ahmed,' who described himself as a *sonwallah*, or Indian snake-catcher, and said that he held in his hand a small snake. The light was that of the small dark-red lamp, and the control did not wish it to be increased; the great majority saw nothing of what the control asserted.

'Dr. Whitcombe' now presented himself, as usual, to close the sance. To the request of the chairman to make certain of the continued existence of the plantlet now covered by the basket, before putting it away, the control responded in the negative, and only consented after reiterated insistence. The basket being raised, those present were able to ascertain the presence of the plant, which in the meantime had grown slightly. The medium awoke; the pot was deposited in the wall cupboard, on which three gentlemen placed their several seals in wax, and the leaden seal of the society.

(To be continued.)

THE MIND AND ITS FUNCTIONS.

DOES THIS EXPLAIN?

Pondering recently upon the mind and its functions, some inexplicable train of thought suggested a certain mysterious people said to live in part of the Malay Peninsula, named 'Ber—.' I could get no further. I knew it was 'Ber' something, but what? The entire name existed somewhere in my mind, and I had only to concentrate my thoughts, and it would be given to me, as it soon was, the name being 'Berbaleng.' Now whence do we dig or disinter these forgotten fragments? Not from any part of the brain, I am convinced. This suggested the intuitive solution I now offer, and which appears to me to cover much, if not all, the ground.

Without accepting the theosophical analysis of man, I shall use the terms known to Theosophists, and most thinkers, as far as they appear to me to be applicable. I am impressed to divide man into four essential parts, but I do not say these are all—the Sthula Sharira, or Physical Body, through which functions Manas, or Mind; and the Linga Sharira, or Astral Body, which is the vehicle of Atma, or Spirit, which is but Mind on a higher plane. Thus, according to my theory, when we cannot recall a name or a word, we unconsciously interrogate the Higher Mind, which appears to be a permanent register of all our previous experiences or acquirements, and may thus even be the terrible final court of appeal, or the Book of the Judgment. If this speculation is correct, it will account for much. Scholastic acquirements, or academic knowledge, seem to be assimilated by the Lower Mind, but Wisdom can only be assimilated by Atma, or Spirit, and is served out according to the demand of the inferior intelligence. What we know as Memory is a reproduction of the past or present by the Spirit, at the call of the Mind, and we confidently invoke it, being sure, by experience, of a response. Now as Atma or Spirit is the portion of Man in which resides the Divine element, it will not be impious to ascribe to it something very nearly approaching Omnipotence and Omniscience. I merely suggest these as normal attributes of Atma; I do not say they are not perhaps dormant. If this is so, is it not competent for us to reason by induction, and to postulate that, if the Past is available as Memory, may not the Future also be available at the same source as Divinatory Intuition? That we do not oftener get correctly intuitive replies to our half-hearted interrogations, is for the reason that they are half-hearted. We do not interrogate the Spirit as to the Future with the same certainty as when invoking it in the shape of Memory, or I believe we should verily 'be as Gods.' All schools of Occultism are agreed that Past, Present, and Future are but different expressions of one great whole, already existent, and to be read by all those who Know and Dare. If this be truly so, it seems to me to be as reasonable to call upon the Spirit for information respecting the Right Hand, (the Future) as to ask concerning the Left Hand, (the Past) and just as easy for the Spirit to answer correctly. Indeed, the Spirit *does* so answer when interrogated with full faith, and we have in Psychometry the vehicle. But it by no means follows that one's own spirit conveys all the information given. Frequently matter is conveyed by other spirits, our so-called Guides. Probably a very great deal which is usually supposed to be communicated by guides, is, in reality, conveyed by one's own spirit, functioning independently, and by virtue of its own divinity. The Astral Plane is one great reservoir of facts, words, and thoughts, all visible and indelible. There is nothing new in this assertion, but, in view of the theory I have broached, it has a new and illuminatory significance.

I have not become an Occultist through being a Thinker, but am a Thinker because circumstances have conspired to make me an Occultist; and this reversal of the usual course is, in itself, a powerful argument in favour of the view that Wisdom comes from within, and is wholly independent of, or apart from, Knowledge, though the latter may be, in favourable circumstances, the handmaid of the former. To know, to dare, and to keep silence,—these are the great essentials which the Initiate must acquire, but few of us ever arrive at

more than the mere threshold of knowledge. What goes by the name of conscience, is only the appeal to the real self,—to the Spirit. In a similar way, remorse is but the condemnation, or disapproval, of the same higher self, and thus we have within ourselves both Heaven and Hell, in a far more terrible form than is suggested by the mythical localities so named, in which Christians profess to believe,—but don't. I trust these speculations may attract the notice of other students,—not the mystery-mongers who think the use of big words all-essential, for I am convinced that when we *do* know, we shall be astounded at the marvellous simplicity of it all! as in *every* other department of Nature. So I may safely await further light.

BIANCA UNORNA.

'PALMISTRY OR OTHERWISE.'

Now that public attention is being directed to palmistry by the prosecution of exponents of that alleged 'science,' it may be of interest to the readers of 'LIGHT' to read what 'M.A. (Oxon.)' had to tell regarding his experience with a lady palmist in 1890. Under the heading 'Palmistry or Otherwise' in his 'Notes by the Way' in 'LIGHT' of March 1st, 1890, 'M.A. (Oxon.)' related how he was prompted to visit Mrs. Louisa Cotton as the result of receiving a copy of that lady's book, 'Palmistry and its Practical Uses,' for review. Feeling that owing to his profound ignorance of the subject he was not qualified for the task of reviewer, he went to see the author, and offered himself 'as a "vile body" on which she might experiment.' She was so good as to do so, and, said 'M.A. (Oxon.):—

'I am prepared at once to admit that her success was most remarkable. I never knew that I carried about with me such a record of character. It was to me a revelation. As we had never met before, it must be that the delineation of character from my hand was what it professed to be, a reading of what Nature had written down as the resultant of the acts and habits of my daily life. . . I asked Mrs. Cotton whether there entered into her delineations anything of clairvoyance. She was not sure. She could not say that she was aware of it, but I found her rather disposed to recognise such a possibility. It is none the less true that she proceeds by rigid rules, and gives no rein to fancy. She "reads" the hand according to fixed rule; such and such "mounts," lines, and configurations mean so much. They are interpreted according to canons laid down by cheirosophists, and there they are. You may take them or leave them. But, as my experience goes, you will find them substantially true: perhaps more true than most other alleged truths that you run against in your life. . .

'I went to Mrs. Cotton a perfect stranger. In what she sent me as a delineation of character there were thirty-six characteristics—the term being used to denote peculiarities of character—and fifty-six events in life. It is almost incredible, and yet quite literally true that out of these ninety-two tangible points—susceptible of verification—only a very small percentage—not ten at the outside—were inaccurate. The remainder were strikingly true; and, in saying this, I desire to state that I exclude from my estimate anything that was at all vague or uncertain in statement. I am disposed to think that is a very striking record. . . No single item of my public life was touched on, and my private life, of which a very few intimate friends alone know anything at all, was touched on by someone who evidently was not guessing, but who knew. . .

'Mrs. Cotton finds, as might be expected, that she reads the hands of some who consult her more easily and successfully than those of others. That is to be anticipated, and tends to the belief that psychical gifts are in operation. But, be this as it may, the hand is read according to fixed rules.'

Commenting on this experience, 'M.A. (Oxon.)' said:—

'It does seem to me a matter of the very highest import if it be true that the acts and habits of a man's daily life find an imperishable record on his own body, to which "one who knows" can refer, and read there what is written. This is judgment indeed!'

UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—The usual monthly conference of the Union of London Spiritualists will be held on Sunday, September 4th, 1904, at the Church of the Spirit, Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell; afternoon at 3 o'clock, evening at 7 o'clock, tea at 5 o'clock. Speakers: Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn, Mr. J. Adams, Mr. R. Boddington, Mr. M. Clegg, Mr. Such and Mr. Long. At the afternoon session the president will read a paper on 'The Objects and Aims of the Union.' Discussion.

THE N RAYS.

In a late number of the 'Bulletin de l'Institut Général Psychologique' the following passages occur relative to the N rays, in a report of a meeting held last December:—*

'M. D'ARSONVAL: M. Charpentier has observed that living bodies emit the Blondlot radiations or the N rays, i.e., radiations of very short wave lengths. . . They are remarkable in this respect—that they do not influence at all the photographic plate, but that they pass through opaque bodies, even through certain metals, such as aluminium.' [It is worth noting that mediums object to the use of metals at materialising séances, but that an exception is made in the case of aluminium.] 'When they fall on a phosphorescent or on a luminous body they have the property of increasing the energy of the luminous or phosphorescent radiations, so that the recognition of the existence of these rays is a simple matter. It is sufficient to cause the N rays to fall on an electric spark, which is barely visible, and immediately the brilliancy is definitely increased.' [May there not be a clue here to the appearance of spirit lights in the presence of a medium? Assuming that the spirit bodies of those unseen beings who are about us are luminous, but are vibrating at a rate which our eyes are ordinarily incapable of appreciating, it is conceivable that the N rays which are emitted from the body of a medium increase their luminosity. It is well known that at the time of death a column of light has been seen. If a strong physical medium were present it would be interesting to observe whether this column would increase in brilliancy. Also it would be very interesting to know whether physical mediums emit the N rays more freely and abundantly than average persons.] 'This is not, I assure you, a subjective phenomenon. It can be proved by recourse to photography, as Blondlot has proved it, that the variation in the brilliancy is quite genuine. For the small electric spark a jet of blue burning gas can be substituted; the increase in brilliancy is apparent in the same way as soon as the N rays fall on the flame. Similarly, if the rays are allowed to fall on a phosphorescent object which has previously been exposed to the light, immediately the luminosity is considerably increased. The N rays are capable of being polarised, and can be refracted.

'M. BLISSAUD: How can these rays be collected?

'M. D'ARSONVAL: By means of a piece of quartz or aluminium. Certain bodies have the property of collecting these rays, just as certain bodies have an affinity for light; quartz is one of these. When the N rays have been passed through a piece of quartz this becomes a focus for N rays and continues to be so for twenty or thirty minutes. Charpentier observed that the radiations are not only emitted by the bodies examined by Blondlot, but that the muscles and the nervous system particularly, emit them to a considerable degree, and they do so in proportion to the extent of their physiological activity. If you contract a muscle you augment considerably its power of emitting the N rays, as may be seen by the little phosphorescent bodies which are illuminated at a distance.' [There may be some connection between this and the fact that during séances for materialisation the medium is often heard rubbing himself in the cabinet.] ' . . Blondlot has tried experiments, which I am now repeating, relative to the action of the N rays on visual sensibility. A person is placed in a room hardly sufficiently lighted to enable him to distinguish the hands of a clock, and insufficiently so to enable him to read the time. If the N rays are allowed to fall on the eyes, immediately the power of vision is increased and the movement of the hands can be clearly seen. . .

'M. BERGSON: Has any increase in intensity been observed whilst the subject is engaged in speech?

'M. D'ARSONVAL: Certainly. At the moment when an intellectual effort is being made the brilliancy of the phosphorescent body increases. There is a sort of quantitative relation between the degree of psychic activity and the phosphorescence of the screen.

* The observations between brackets are not in the report, but are comments of my own.—H. A. D.

'M. BERGSON: And with regard to sensations?

'M. D'ARSONVAL: With regard to sensations it is just the same. All the phenomena are due to the intensity of the work of the nervous system, whether that be sensation or movement. At first it was thought that this product is muscular; the later experiments have shown, however, that it is connected with the terminations of the nerves. . . . [The obvious connection between this subject and the phenomenon of mediumship was not ignored by this assembly of *savants*. Madame Malvina Gerard's experiences were referred to, and M. Courtier remarked: 'She is very sensitive, and persons appear to her in the dark under the form of luminous columns, as we have observed with another subject. The latter being asleep, told me that she saw me as a luminous red column.' A bright light which he held in his hand appeared to her pale by comparison with this column.]

'M. GOURIEVITCH: It is very curious that in all these sort of experiences the subjects see persons as lights.

'M. BERGSON: It is also desirable to inquire whether sensitives see better in the dark than other persons. Are they able to indicate the acts of this luminous column? Do they say where the head and arms are? Do they indicate in what places the column appears to be?

'M. COURTIER: This subject did so fairly well, and we experimented in a room where the sound of movement in slippers on the carpet was not observable, at least by us.'

Questions were then raised as to whether, nevertheless, sound might not have given a clue in these cases, and whether auto-suggestion might not account for the luminosity seen.

H. A. DALLAS.

MR. RIDER HAGGARD'S DREAM.

In the 'Times' of August 9th Mr. Haggard returns to the subject of his remarkable dream, and states his own conclusions with more precision than in his former letter. After giving reasons for being convinced that the dog must have died some hours before the occurrence of the dream, and, therefore, that 'telepathy,' if such it was, must have been considerably 'delayed in transmission,' he discusses several suggestions that have been made to him, and finds them for the most part inadequate. His own conclusion is stated in the following passage, and so outspoken an utterance deserves to be quoted entire:—

'It is assumed by all the religions that the most degraded human being is possessed of an immaterial part called a spirit. I am, however, sure that poor Bob, notwithstanding the weakness for the unlawful rabbit which, I imagine, brought him to his end, was in various essentials superior to many human beings. Why, then, should he not have a spirit also, and why should not that spirit as it departed hence have reproduced in my consciousness, with which in life he was familiar, the dramatic circumstances of his end, or as much of them as he considered necessary and important? I do not say that this was so; I only say that I can see no overpowering religious or practical reason to the contrary. What is there to show that man has reached finality in his knowledge of such wonders? Surely the daily increasing store of science indicates that revelation is progressive and continuous. May we not still have much to learn as to the fundamental oneness of animal life, or indeed, of all life? A flame set in a vase of pure glass shows brightly; in a vase of porcelain, dimly; in a vase of rough clay, not at all, or only through its cracks and imperfections. Yet the flame may be identical—of the same heat, light, power, and size; it is but the surrounding material that varies, or, in the case which I strive to illustrate, the gross or less gross physical body of the particular creature whereby this flame—i.e., the animating and inspiring principle which comes we know not whence, and goes we know not whither—happens to be enclosed.'

Mr. Haggard adds that he has received a considerable number of letters which seem to prove beyond all question that telepathic intercourse does exist between man and dogs, horses, cats, and even birds, though the experiences quoted are not on all fours with his own. If Mr. Haggard's candid statement as to religious and practical reasons were generally taken to heart, we should have fewer ill-considered utterances as to the 'impossibility' of spiritualistic views.

'THE UNITY OF THE FAITH.'

There is a charming article in the August number of 'Mind' entitled 'The Unity of the Faith.' It is in the 'Editorial Department' and no doubt expresses the thoughts of Mr. Charles Brodie Patterson, the able Editor. Speaking of the new era of thought which is opening up a wider, truer view of religion, he says:—

'Already many are questioning as to whether apparent differences do not exist mainly because of a misunderstanding of the basic principles or a confusion in nomenclature. Now we no longer see the so-called orthodox bodies of Christianity worrying among themselves over the non-essentials of religious life. There is coming, too, a kindlier feeling between Protestant and Catholic, Gentile and Jew; even the faiths of the far-away Orient are now popularly and intelligently considered with much less of prejudice than once animated the minds of Western people.

'The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Humanity have a more intimate, personal, vital value for every thinking man and woman than ever before in the history of the world. Everywhere people are asking themselves the question: "If God is one, if mankind is one, must not religion be also one?" Some one has defined religion as 'the homing instinct of the soul.' Have we not, each and all of us, a ray of what in reality constitutes one great and universal religion, and can we not, indeed, increase our own store of truth through a candid understanding of another's standpoint? Has not the time come for us to put aside differences and seek diligently and earnestly for truth wherever it may be found?'

Mr. Patterson goes on to express his firm belief that any great idea conceived by the minds of men, and held by sincere souls, must of necessity contain within itself the germ of truth. Phillips Brooks said: 'We would fain believe without question what seems so true to a brother man that his life is held light in the balance,' and commenting on this Mr. Patterson says:—

'Unless a faith possesses a germ of vital truth it cannot survive. When a faith which seems directly contrary to another faith enters the minds of men and is espoused with equal earnestness and intelligence, adhered to with equal persistence—then would it not seem as though it could only be through the union of the two, or through the more perfect understanding of each, that the whole truth could be discovered?

'I know that this is not in accord with the tenets of yesterday. Nevertheless I believe that the time will come when the reasonableness, the inevitableness, of this will be apparent to every thoughtful mind sincere in its effort to find truth for its own sake, and caring nothing about the patching of threadbare creeds—the bolstering up of preconceived ideas. The word of the seer-soul is:—"First find out truth; and then,

Although she lead from beaten paths of men
To ways unknown, rough, dark or desertwise—
Follow her heading straight
And bide thy fate."

'Between the extreme materialism on the one side and extreme Spiritualism on the other, it would seem as though there must be a great gulf fixed. But some day that gulf will be bridged. Some day, when we come to understand clearly the relation of the unseen to the seen, there will no longer be two seemingly irreconcilable truths, but one all-including verity of the Universal life.

'Man's salvation is not wrought by any of the external things of life, but rather through the spiritual uses of these things as an aid to its own full and complete expression. All creeds, forms, symbols, are only man's outer word—the expression of his thought of God and of himself. And they must all, of necessity, change as he comes into a deeper realisation of the divine nature. The unity of the faith is not to be obtained through blind obedience to any creed or conformity to any form, but rather through the realisation of the Spirit of God in the life of the individual, and then the recognition of this same spirit operative in the lives of others. The word of the spirit is one, to Christian or Hebrew, Mohammedan or Buddhist, and the summing up of it all is the acknowledging of the beautiful and the good wherever found, and in loving service to humanity.'

WE walk alone in the world. Friends such as we desire are dreams and fables. But a sublime hope ever cheers the trustful heart that elsewhere—in other regions of the universal power—souls are now acting, enduring, and daring, which can love us and which we can love.—EMERSON.

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GOD IN THE DARKNESS AND THE EVIL.

'Did God ever walk the earth in finer weather?' asked Douglas Jerrold, in that loveliest of his books, 'The Chronicles of Clovernook': and so may we say, mindful of this glorious summer which has made belief in God so easy, and which tempts us to continue the quotation:—'How gloriously the earth manifests the grandeur of the Presence! It sparkles in the myriad flowers, consuming itself in sweetness. Every little earth-blossom is as an altar, burning incense. The heart of man, creative in its overflowing happiness, finds or makes a fellowship in all things. The birds have passing kindred with his winged thoughts. In all, he sees and hears a new and deep significance.'

At such a time, and amid such scenes, the mind may profitably ponder the other side of nature and of life—the desolation and the misery, the darkness and the evil. It may at least help to blend the two, and restrain the bitterness of complaining. It may even lead to an appreciation of the immense saying, attributed to 'the Lord' by the prophet Isaiah, 'I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.'

It is the standing world-problem which, unfortunately, becomes darker and more complex as faith in God tends to become more civilised and idealistic. At last we have to face the problem in this desperate form: 'In the presence of these evils, how can there be an ideal God at all?' so that, in the end, the rise and progress of faith tends to its destruction, because, as the standard rises, the inconsistency between the faith and the fact increases, and thus the loftiest faith may end in agnosticism. It is indeed a strange conclusion.

There are two ways of escape. One is the modifying of the old intensely personal conception of God which is responsible for a good deal of the difficulty. The very strongest faith in God is compatible with a very considerable weakening of His personification. So long as we picture God or imagine Him as a person, in the same sense that a man is a person, so long shall we attribute to Him an arbitrary will, alterable and adjustable according to circumstances, or according to His state of mind, or even according to His being pleased or displeased. This is fatal.

The remedy is to identify Him more with Nature's laws and forces—not identical with them but ever-present in them. This, when we dare to think it out, is involved in the idea of His omnipresence: and His omnipresence is involved in the idea of His Deity, without which He would not and could not be God. But His omnipresence involves precisely what Isaiah said for Him: 'I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.' As a person, in our sense of the word 'person,' we could not retain the consistency or the ethical perfection of God; but as the inmost life and energy of the whole we may. If we have courage to do it, we see the profound truth the moment we identify God with Nature's laws and Nature's forces, and bound by them in all their varied and progressive activities; and that word 'progressive' suggests the second way of escape in the recognition of a process of evolution, necessitating what we call 'evil,' and ending in stupendous advances and upliftings.

It is obviously so in relation to the working of Nature's laws, and equally so in relation to the unfolding of human history. The natural forces and processes look like an awful blend of callousness and providence, working for superb ends like a God, but paying for them, or making us pay for them, like a demon. 'He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him,' said a Hebrew poet. Yes! but at what a price! In fifty years, the wickedness and horror of a great war may result in good: but can anything ever atone for the evil? Yes; if the faith of the Spiritualist is valid. We think, with almost unbearable distress, of the tens of thousands blown to atoms by our modern instruments of destruction, but death has only been hastened by a little, and there may be a reckoning day, even in detail, for each victim, and the price may be paid back with interest. That is quite conceivable. But we need to keep long accounts with God; for His decisions and His ways of arriving at them are very intricate.

It is necessary to bear in mind also that 'progression' involves experiment and trial, and that experiment and trial involve much of what we call evil. A vast proportion of human misery is due to human ignorance and carelessness; but human ignorance and carelessness indicate stages, and necessary stages, in the discipline which leads to real progress: and it is difficult to imagine the evolution of conscious, responsible and self-reliant personality without the passing through the stages of ignorance and carelessness. Who was it?—was it Keats?—who said:—

My theory of the world is just this. I believe this old earth finds its chief reason for existence in the fact that it is a training-school, a mental, moral, spiritual gymnasium, so to speak, that is to find its reason for being by and by, in the outcome, the results, of the development through which we are passing, the issue of the experience through which we are going to-day. I cannot understand how men and women could be physically, mentally, morally, spiritually, developed in any other way or in any other kind of world. We foolishly dream—and we accuse God, not on the basis of His wise facts, but on the basis of our foolish fancies—that He might have made a perfect world just as well as this kind of one. But a perfectly developed being morally is something that Omnipotence could not create any more than it could create a century-old oak in six months. It is not something that has any relation to power. It is a question of human and divine possibility. You cannot develop the body of a child without exercise, without training.

God, then, in all things, but not as arbitrary will: in all, as invincible law and controlling power, ever working for life in higher and higher forms, unflinching, inexorable, but infinitely just on the whole and for the

whole, with infinite possibilities of adjustments and repayments for all.

From seeming evil, still educing good,
And better thence again ; and better still
In infinite progression.

'NEW SAYINGS OF JESUS.'

There are two ways of beholding an expanse of water ; we may look at it, or we may look into it. If we focus our gaze on the surface we see something, but we miss much, and that which we see is altogether different in appearance from that which we miss. If, on the other hand, we look below the surface, a variety of objects present themselves to our vision reflected in the depths, and our gain is proportionately greater. This analogy is applicable to the facts of the world and life. If we look at their superficial appearance merely, we are not only unable to understand them, but we are often greatly disappointed or even disgusted by what we see. This is so with many things, notably with regard to the phenomena of Spiritualism ; it is necessary to look *into* the facts in order to discover what is their true importance. When we do this we frequently discover things wonderful and beautiful, the presentation of which reveals to us a sphere of being more real than any that a mirror or surface of water can show to us.

But it is not in this connection that we wish now to apply the analogy, but in another. A document has recently been published under the title, 'New Sayings of Jesus' (edited by Messrs. Bernard P. Grenfell, D.Litt., and Arthur S. Hunt, D.Litt.). Many persons who will eagerly procure a copy of this shilling pamphlet are sure to put it down with a sense of disappointment on account of its fragmentary character. They will tell us that from such broken utterances as these, even if they are genuine, little can be learned. It is only the few, perhaps, who will have the patience to penetrate below the superficial aspect of this discovery and to understand wherein its real value consists ; for, fragmentary, and in parts incoherent, though it be, it may prove of considerable value, especially if further excavations bring to light similar inscriptions.

We would preface a few remarks on this subject by saying that we do not approach it in any critical sense—only experts are competent to deal with it in that way. We merely desire to point out the reason why the document, though disappointing to the ordinary reader, is a valuable contribution to Christian study, and to suggest the point of view from which its importance can be appreciated.

From the comments of the discoverers we gather that they consider that the script cannot be of later date than 140 A.D., and may be much earlier. They also consider it probable (and for this they give their reasons) that the fragment is part of a collection of 'sayings' apparently intended to stand as an independent literary work. The authority of St. Thomas is claimed for it in the Introduction, which runs thus : 'These are the (wonderful ?) words which Jesus the living (Lord) spake to . . . and Thomas.' There is nothing to disprove this claim, and there is one reason at least which favours the supposition—a reason we cannot here discuss.

Now, if it be eventually proved by further research that this fragment, and the 'Logia,' published in 1897, are 'connected in a large measure with a first-hand source, other than that of any of the canonical Gospels,' this discovery will have an important bearing on those Gospels ; it will show, as the Editors tell us, 'that the mystical . . . element in the early records of Christ's sayings, which found its highest and most widely-accepted expression in

St. John's Gospel, may well have been much more general and less peculiarly Johannine than has hitherto been taken for granted' ; for, broken though these sayings are, both fragments which have come to light are characterised by a distinctly mystical tone. The quality of thought and the style remind us more forcibly of St. John's presentation of the Master than of that of the Synoptist, whilst at the same time only one of the 'sayings' is couched in the same phraseology which occurs in the fourth Gospel.

At present we are in the outlying region of hypothesis, and must wait for researchers and experts to establish by further study statements which must now be prefaced by an 'if.' But if they succeed in proving this inscription to be independent of the canonical Gospels, and the document itself to be not only of the early second, but possibly of the first century, critics will be bound to reconsider one of the arguments which led them to treat the fourth Gospel as a more speculative conception of the character of Christ than that presented by the Synoptics. If it can be shown conclusively that this aspect of the Christ was not distinctly Johannine, but was one observed and recorded by other disciples, then, obviously, fresh support will be gained for the opinion, held by many, that whilst each presentation has its own special value, that of the fourth Gospel is quite as true a portrait, and in some respects more valuable, than the others, since it implies a deeper insight and larger apprehension on the part of the person who was capable of thus portraying Him.

It has always seemed to us that there is no real discrepancy between the Synoptist picture of Jesus and the Johannine. If we approach the subject, not as critical experts, but as students of human nature, we find no difficulty in recognising that a richly endowed, many-sided personality will necessarily appear very different and be diversely apprehended, according to the temperaments and capacities of the minds who come in contact with him. No one can discern in another more than he is himself capable of discerning. What we see and know of our fellows is largely determined by what we are ourselves. The disciple most in sympathy with the mind of Christ, and whose nature was most developed on the mystical side, would necessarily be the one to whom that aspect of the Master would become most manifest ; upon the others it would not make so incisive an impression, and the utterances which expressed it would be less likely to be reproduced by them. Nevertheless, there are those who think differently and to whom the difference between the first three Gospels and the fourth has seemed to impair the value of the latter. To these the discovery that the Johannine aspect of Christ is corroborated by other independent witnesses, will probably prove to be an important additional testimony to the historical value of the picture of the Master which the fourth Gospel presents.

We have, as we said, not attempted to assume the rôle of the critic, much less that of the expert, but merely to indicate in what direction to look for the real value of these 'New Sayings.' If they are carefully considered as a whole, with a view to obtain some impression of their general character, it will be recognised that they are pervaded throughout by the same tone of lofty mysticism which characterises the utterances of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel according to St. John, and, thus considered, not only will this document be valued in spite of its fragmentary condition, but the result of further excavations will be awaited with a more intelligent appreciation of the interest involved.

A SPIRITUALIST residing at Bury St. Edmunds would be pleased to meet with any Spiritualists in the neighbourhood. Address, 'Medium,' 67, High-street, Bilston.

LIFE AFTER DEATH.

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT ABOUT IT.

(Continued from page 388.)

The people who come back to us, as we say, from the other side, and convince us of their identity, by so doing prove that they think, act, and express themselves in much the same way as they did before death. They affirm that they possess and use the same psychic organism that they had when here, but that it has become objective and tangible, whereas it was formerly unseen and intangible—save only to clairvoyants. Their outer form was sloughed off at death, leaving the spirit's body apparent and available for use on the spirit plane. Death is therefore a translation, not a transformation—a process of evolution, or progress out of one set of environing conditions into another—a change of state, but not of character.

All the evidence we have goes to show the continuity of individuality, the persistence of consciousness, and the preservation of memory, affection, knowledge, and will-ability. The discarnate man does not find himself in a foreign world, but in a home-land; and the survival of all that makes life worth living—of all that is essential to his progress and well-being—makes his life seem natural and enjoyable. Without such sequential relativity recognition and reunion would not be possible, and the intuitive affirmation made by the loving spirit—'we shall meet again'—which cheers the sorrow-laden ones of earth, would not be prophetic, but false.

The citizen of the after-death world finds his place, and enters upon the career for which he has fitted himself, in accordance with the self-acting and self-registering processes of his moral and spiritual nature, which are unavoidable and unerring. Thoughts, motives, and efforts exert a reactive influence upon the individual who entertains or makes them, so that each one afflicts or frees himself—makes his own hell or heaven—and sooner or later discovers that pure love, earnest aspiration, ardent desire, and benevolent service to others, are the agencies by which he can affect and modify his environments, grow in grace and wisdom, and increase in power and intelligence. Happiness is not sought by enlightened spirits as an end; it is felt as a consequence of goodness and purity.

So far as we are aware spirits are practically unanimous in affirming that they are people—human beings—and that theirs is the real world; to them actual, substantial and objective. Its scenery and local conditions are recognised and enjoyed by those who pass through them, but there, as here, the seeing eye, the ear attuned, the understanding mind and harmonious spirit are necessary to the full apprehension and comprehension of their true significance and beauty.

Each one 'goes to his own place'—the place for which he has fitted himself. Character, worth, and spirituality,—or goodness and purity—constitute the passport that gives right of entrance into any sphere. The status of each individual is therefore determined by what he is, and knowledge, purity, wisdom and love give power and insight, and unlock all doors. Thus life in the unseen is the sequel to the life that now is, and, at the outset, no radical change is wrought in any individual; each one follows his natural bent and expresses himself—his prevailing loves and desires. Students, scientists, artists, teachers, musicians, reformers, workers and healers of all kinds find fuller scope and opportunity for satisfying their desires and realising their ideals, and of taking deeper interest in living than they did when here; in fact, spirit people invariably declare that they would not return to live on earth if they could, for the longer they stay in, and the more they learn respecting, the spirit world—its people, its customs, its conditions and possibilities—the more delighted they become. They affirm that life there is no mere illusion, no idle dreamy rest, but real, active, earnest, social, progressive, and infinitely charming in its variety of experiences, associations and interests. Fettered or free, each individual is what he is, and where he is, as the result of his past life. The consequences of his motives and efforts, loves, hates, desires, and volitions, have all contributed to the formation of his character, and the

aggregate outcome of all experiences is represented in his personality.

While the world beyond death is as substantial and its homes and environments are as tangible to its people as this world is to us, the immediate personal sphere of each individual embodies and reflects his thought-life more immediately and accurately than it does here; hence it is true that each one creates his own hell or heaven. Spirit-substance is plastic to positive volitions, and the environment of each one bears the impress of his moral and spiritual quality—hence his garments, possessions, and home are the thought-forms created by himself; the subtle ethers, moulded by his will, take form and become objective to him, and to all who enter his surroundings. It has been well said that 'Ideas rule the world,' and they rule men both here and hereafter, for 'as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.' Hence false ideas, wrong motives, mistaken conceptions and erroneous convictions of all kinds tend to bind, darken, and imprison us. To break away from old modes of life and thought—from habits, customs, business, self-gratification, or sectarian prejudices—is very hard, both here and hereafter, and one of the earliest duties of the awakening spirit, and one of the most difficult, is to unlearn many of his mistaken ideas, break away from the consequences of past errors and intolerances, overcome the conservative clinging to old conditions, and adapt himself to the new states and larger interests.

Many of those whom death has emancipated were in this life victims of adverse conditions—often more sinned against than sinning—disobedient from ignorance, or from want of thought rather than from design or desire; and, quickened into newness of life over there, with fresh opportunities and more favourable environments, their true nature begins to assert itself, and they learn to adapt themselves to their new social and spiritual surroundings. In all true spiritual unfolding, sympathy and desire to serve, are necessarily awakened; the happy soul calls upon others to share his joy! This spirit of fraternity and helpfulness—as well as the development of power from within—makes reform, or right adjustment, more easy of attainment than is commonly supposed. Those who have stifled and wilfully suppressed their spirit's prompting are in consequence excluded from the privileges of happy association with others; they are self-doomed to darkness and isolation, in which state they remain until a divine discontent is aroused within them as the result of their limitations. Then, when they truly repent and seek to make restitution by loving service to others, they, too, find helpers and enter the light.

Children who leave this sphere in infancy grow in bodily stature and develop mentally and spiritually as naturally as they would have done had they remained here. They are cared for, loved and trained, by foster-parents, and are frequently brought to this earth that they may associate with children on this side. Such companionship proves mutually beneficial—the spirit child exerting an influence for good on its embodied comrade while obtaining, sympathetically, some knowledge of this life and its experiences. Men and women who in this earth life did not know the joys of parentage, the benefits of the influence of children, and the educational results of association with them, by watching over and loving the little orphans from the earth gain experiences for which their affectional natures craved.

The mentally and morally diseased and unbalanced, the insane and criminally inclined, are taken to homes of rest and healing where physicians, who minister to the mind and to the soul oppressed, tend them with wise and sympathetic care, and seek to arouse them to the consciousness of their need and the desire for health and happiness. Thus, among the numerous other occupations of the spirits, that of rendering helpful and sympathetic service to those who have been less fortunate, or who have strayed from the paths of righteousness, continually engages the thought and interest of many earnest and loving souls. There is no 'great gulf fixed' between the people of the different states or spheres over there. Ignorance, wrongdoing, selfishness, pride, hardness of heart and exclusiveness divide people hereafter as they do here, but where repentance and desire for purer and better conditions are aroused in the

spiritually imprisoned ones (who dwell on the threshold), then loving and compassionate spirits find a way to help them. But many people, when they reach the other side, do not realise that they are spiritual paupers and prisoners; they refuse the help and counsel of those who would befriend them; they are not ready to rise, are not receptive, and therefore are unresponsive. There is a sense in which one may be spiritually dead—in trespasses and sin—and spirits in prison, who haunt the earth and besiege (obsess) sensitives, are perverse, sensual, blind, deaf, and isolated because of their selfishness and lack of spiritual unfoldment. Is it not ever true that a man must consciously want the truth if he is to find it, must seek the light if he is to see realities? Must we not become as little children, tractable, teachable, repentant, and aspirational, if we are to find the way out from darkness into 'God's most glorious light'? What a noble work it is, then, in which the 'ministering spirits' are engaged, 'preaching to the spirits in prison'! The love-labour of the teacher, the philanthropist, the nurse, the motherly heart, is not ended by death—it has but just begun, and wise Intelligences who have themselves grown beautiful and luminous, sympathise kindly with those who are in need, distressed in mind, body, and spirit; and when they truly repent their past follies and wrongdoings, assist them to rise to the plane of loving obedience; and when that 'second birth' takes place they will not only be receptive and responsive to the ministrations of angels, but will make supreme efforts for self-improvement, and in turn seek to bless others.

Progress is necessarily slow in both worlds. Groups of people, drawn together by common interests, sympathies, and old associations, constitute communities on the other side, as here, and unless they are progressive, tolerant, and on the alert for new truth, they are not very apt scholars in the new school of experience. But, since progress is a Divine Law running as a beneficent necessity through all modes of life-expression, every spirit must sooner or later learn its lesson and enter into light and liberty. Whether wayward or wilful, foolish or wicked, ignorant or vicious, each one must eventually obey the Divine impulse (even under the compulsion of the misery and pain which result from neglect, perversion, or wrong-doing) and rise to higher states and better things. Suffering sooner or later awakens sorrow and repentance, and teaches the sinner to 'cease to do evil and learn to do well'—or, in other words, to 'arise and go to the Father,' and seek to become at-one with Him. So that over there, as here, experience, effort, perseverance, love and ideals are indispensable. Knowledge of, and conformity to, the good Law, wisdom in the use of power and opportunity, lead to comprehension, and sympathy and love open up the great realm of eternal verities to the Spirit that understands.

STUDENT.

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

Mr. E. Howes, late of London and formerly of Blackpool, has been doing some good mediumistic work in Australia, and the 'Harbinger of Light' of July contained a letter from one of its subscribers, Mr. S. Fizzell, in reference to what he considers a good test of spirit identity which was given to him by Mr. Howes in May last. Writing from 'Millicent,' Bay-street, Botany, on May 29th, to Mr. Howes, Mr. Fizzell said:—

'You may remember on Sunday evening, the 15th of this month (May), describing a lady standing behind me, with a child in her arms, which I could not recognise. She also through you reminded me of trouble about twelve years ago. The trouble I could recollect, but the lady I could not place. A relation of mine received a letter from England, stating that his mother was very ill. On the following Tuesday he read the letter to me. I became impressed that this was the spirit. I thereupon asked him to write out an accurate description of his mother, and I wrote out the description you gave me from the platform; both corresponded exactly. I never saw this lady, but I know why she was attracted towards me. I said to my friend, "I feel sure it was your mother." On Tuesday, the 24th May, he received a letter from his father and brother, stating that she had passed to the higher life on the 19th April, 5.53 p.m. The test to me was complete, and I desire to thank you and our spirit friends for so convincing a proof that "there is no death." Mind-reading is out of the question here.'

THE COLLECTIVE SPIRITUAL ENTITY.

BY JOHN B. SHIPLEY.

VIII.—IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION.

In the former articles of this series we have been considering only secular assemblies as manifesting a Collective Spirit; we have now to see how that spirit manifests itself in a congregation assembled for the purposes of religion. This is a delicate subject, but I hope to be able to touch upon it without offending the feelings of any, which indeed would be far from my intention.

The peculiar solemnity attaching to the fact of a number of people gathering together for spiritual purposes has been recognised from the earliest times. Indeed it has come to be so ingrained a habit that some have even found it difficult to conceive of the act of worship as capable of being performed otherwise than by meeting together in a special place for the express purpose. Every religion has had its organised assemblies; that is to say, its followers have been accustomed to meet at stated times for the purposes of the cult, and special gathering-places or buildings have been set apart for this solemn use. In order to focus the attention of the assembly, a natural phenomenon, such as the rising of the sun, was frequently made use of to secure unity of purpose and simultaneous uplifting of the spirit. Later, ritual took the place of nature, and the minds of the worshippers were concentrated on the various features of the rite, leading up to the most solemn moment, which might be a sacrifice, or an act of special homage in substitution for sacrifice, on the part of the officiating priest. Who that has ever attended the Roman Catholic worship has not felt the hushed awe that pervades the congregation at the approach of the supreme moment of the Elevation of the Host?

This peculiar psychology of religious audiences has been the subject of special study by thinkers, and notably in the recent work by Professor James. The effect of a striking ceremonial, and still more so of an impassioned discourse, is very remarkable, both as regards the whole body and the individual members. The minds of the most careless are drawn into the current, and 'those who came to scoff remain to pray.' In such a congregation there is a distinct feeling of some Presence brooding over the gathering, and it is even possible that this manifestation of something dominating the feelings of all within its reach may at times be mistaken for what it is not, for that of which, as we shall suggest, it may merely be the medium.

Personal experience tells us that in some congregations there are few who can help feeling that 'it is good for us to be here.' We feel as though we have been in transitory connection with a spirit that is not our own personal spirit, and that it has uplifted us to a higher level of feeling. Sometimes a powerful preacher will rivet the attention of the audience, and make them feel as if they were one single individual in close union and harmony with the speaker's own personality. At times this sensation reacts upon the hearer with a singular force and effect, raising him for a moment out of himself, and causing him to exclaim that he has 'found salvation.' Here, however, we must make a distinction between two stages or features in this effect.

The first, or lower, stage is exemplified by a recent experience of a visit to a congregation where the clergyman proved to be one of sheer formalist type, who conducted the service in the most approved professional manner, but rather managed to give the impression of a distance between himself, as priest, and the congregation, as laymen, and thereby utterly failed to focus their thought in unison with his own. Quite at the end of the service one of the beautiful and favourite hymns was sung, a hymn familiar to everyone present, and which never fails to produce an impression. Scarcely had it been started when the whole atmosphere of the church seemed changed. The egotistical clergyman was forgotten, the Spirit of the Congregation had found its unity in echoing the beautiful words, and in making its own the thoughts they inspired.

The congregation was for those few minutes an Entity, and that Entity was engaged in adoration and praise. Had this state been produced earlier, and had the clergyman known how to throw himself into the right attitude with regard to it, leading it and guiding it, so that it might, in the words of the service, accompany him to the throne of the Heavenly Grace, what a different effect he might have produced! This further stage is well known to revivalist preachers, who, moreover, on the least sign of dissipation of the Collective Entity, restore it by giving out a hymn and calling upon all to join in the singing.

This spirit of unity that manifests itself in such a congregation might easily be taken to be a manifestation of the Divine Presence. To our thinking, it is not such a manifestation in itself, but it may easily become the vehicle or intermediary whereby those who are not easily susceptible to deep and intimate religious experience on their own account may find it by joining with the whole congregation, and so receiving whatever measure of spiritual enlightenment is able to flow into the vessel thus prepared for it, from which each can draw off his own portion. In this respect the true evangelist is a leader, a focal point, a medium, a channel for spiritual action. If he is able to draw down spiritual fire from on high, he communicates it to the collectivity, and from that common store it passes to individual members. Under such circumstances he has the chance, if he has the power, to lead the people to the Rock, and, like Moses, to cause the living waters to flow forth, that all may drink of them. And if he can do this, it matters little that his language be crude or his conceptions elementary; it matters little what he says, but very much what he *is*. The true Priest is he who makes the True Sacrifice, the sacrifice of Self—blending himself on one side with the congregation, and on the other reaching out towards the Divine, and thus consummating anew the Great Atonement, uniting the Body which is the Church with the Head, which is Christ.

(To be concluded.)

'SPIRITUALIST WORSHIP.'

On reading Mr. J. C. Kenworthy's article on 'Spiritualist Worship' ('LIGHT,' July 23rd), several thoughts occurred to me which I should like to express. I was struck with the writer's pleading with us to become learners, when it seems to me there are no teachers available, of the kind Mr. Kenworthy has in his mind—shining lights, whose light shall not only illumine themselves and their disciples, but shall isolate the teacher as a king among men. But, for this, we must await a Christ. Apart from a Christ, we are already quite foolishly dependent enough, too easily led. It seems to me far more important that we should learn to think for ourselves, to receive for ourselves those communications from the Divine Soul of which Maeterlinck speaks so movingly and with so much understanding; that we should each make our own investigations, learning from them the lessons they have for us, and for us alone—for one person's experience is not, nor ever can be, of the same value to another that it is to himself. Hence I would far rather encourage a group of independent investigators than a 'group of passive learners.' And as for defending our mediums—what does that imply? I feel convinced that to raise any kind of hedge round mediums is to injure them seriously, since every spiritual and bodily faculty that lies dormant stands a chance of becoming paralysed—and a medium pre-eminently should be vital throughout. Thus on all accounts I feel it is better to meet in the way suggested in the Bible—'two or three gathered together'—of whom all are in agreement, of one aim and aspiration, all probably capable of developing some form of mediumship. The one thing gives scope for unlimited growth, the other limits the growth of the circle to that of its head, its teacher-medium, to whom thought even might become subordinate.

This is not to say we need no teaching. It is to say that as human beings we *all* need teaching. Where I differ from Mr. Kenworthy is in the question of whence, from whom, we shall gather our knowledge. From God; from those spirits who have the power and the will to teach us; from the men and

women around us; from the experiences gained in the struggles of our own souls. Not, I believe, from teachers or priests, either self-constituted, or definitely set apart by us for the purpose. Nor, indeed, can we ever again have a truly great teacher until that teacher recognises, seeks and welcomes the Mother-principle active in God. We still think of God only as a Father—a loving Father who cares for His children; a beautiful idea, but incomplete. God is not incomplete. God is the Complete, the Perfect One; and we, men and women, are made in the image of God. We do not know what that means in its fulness,—only that it is a promise to each one of us that that essential which we find in ourselves is the reflection, the image, of that which is in God. Hence it is useless and more than useless to seek the teacher who is to illumine our darkness from among those who are bound by the old conceits and littleness of belief which have crushed freedom, have dishonoured love, have bound thought—have even poisoned the very sources of religious life and teaching. The old misconception of the Godhead, the limitation of Deity to a Man-God, *must* give place to the realisation of the Perfect Being, the Perfect Whole.

We cannot any longer afford to shut out the light of this blessed and complete Parentage. The limiting bonds that men have sought to bind on the Creator must give way, that the true glory may shine forth. To those for whom It is, the Light shines, and only among those on whom It has shone may we find our supreme teachers.

E. M. BEEBY.

PROFESSOR FALCOMER'S EXPERIENCES.

In a recent issue the 'Harbinger of Light' stated that Professor Falcomer, of the Royal Technical Institute at Venice, has in a brochure of some sixty pages, entitled 'Phenomenography,' described a series of remarkable phenomena, produced through the mediumship of a young Italian lady, Signorina Nilda Bonardi, during the last four years. The lady, who is now only twenty-one years of age, belongs to a good family, and places her psychic gifts at the disposal of a select circle of private friends in the interest of science. The 'Harbinger of Light' says:—

'Professor Falcomer tells us that his respect and esteem for Signorina Nilda Bonardi have gone on increasing in proportion as he became better and better acquainted with the probity of her character, and the fine quality of her mediumship. In the prosecution of his investigation into Spiritualism, that gentleman takes nothing for granted; and neglects no precautions to secure the genuineness of the phenomena obtained. He is satisfied with nothing less than scientific proofs, and is as scrupulous in this respect, when the medium concerned is well-known by himself to be a young lady who is above suspicion and incapable of stooping to trickery or fraud, as he would be in the case of a professional medium of whose reputation and antecedents he knew nothing. And this gives a special value to the narratives he relates; which are likewise corroborated by the spontaneous testimony of ladies and gentlemen of high social standing. The sittings, of which Professor Falcomer gives a detailed account, were thirteen in number, and the phenomena witnessed were levitations, the bringing into the room of objects from other apartments, all of them with closed doors; the touching of the sitters by fingers and hands unconnected with any of the persons present, and numerous and highly diversified imprints, thirteen of which are reproduced, upon paper blackened by smoke. These imprints or impressions were made in response to requests preferred to the spirits by Professor Falcomer. One of these was asked to give his or her name, and replied through the table, "Marguerite, sister of Nilda," and this proved to be the name of a sister who died in childhood, and whom Nilda never knew. One evening the table indicated the presence of a certain "Eugene," doctor in chemistry and professor in the Royal Technical Institute in Alessandria, who had died in the same year, and was the son of Mme. Bonardi; as also of "Anita," who died in 1875, at the age of thirteen, and was the daughter of a Mme. Barbara, there present. At her request, "Anita" spoke to her of circumstances unknown to anybody but herself; and her attenuated arms, her cold lips and fingers became tangible. All of a sudden, with incredible vivacity, "Anita" began to caress her mother's face, to kiss her on the forehead, and to throw her arms round her neck while standing behind her, just as she had been accustomed to do in life.

These proofs were so characteristic in the eyes of her mother as to leave no doubt upon her mind with respect to the actual presence of "Anita." She also shook the hat her mother wore; and dropped from above a natural flower, which brushed her mother's countenance as it fell. On another occasion, Dr. P. Benigno Bianchi, Professor of Ophthalmology, and a disbeliever in the spiritual origin of these phenomena, was present, and in a spirit of scepticism asked if the intelligent force which directed the movements of the table could indicate the names of two of his uncles, deceased, and also reveal a family secret. The table immediately gave the names of both, and proceeded to disclose the secret with so much exactitude that Dr. Bianchi hastily cried out "Stop!" as it was not at all desirable, he considered, that those present should know anything more of it; and subsequently, in a letter he wrote to Professor Falcomer, in which he acknowledged the fact to be true and authentic beyond all doubt, he added with praiseworthy candour: "The entirety of the facts observed and noted by me in the course of various sittings, has profoundly shaken my scepticism; and now I can no longer give myself out to be a sceptic, as, for the time being, numerous facts incline me to believe in Spiritualism."

CUI BONO?

Replying to the question so frequently put by sceptically inclined individuals, 'What is the good of all these researches?' Professor Falcomer very impressively says:—

'Eminent men like Rivail (Alan Kardec), whom Wallace tells me to admire; Du Prel, who has left such deep traces in Germany; like Myers, James, Crookes, and Balfour (the Premier of Great Britain), have already demonstrated that these researches sustain vague hopes of a future life, and calm the dread which that life may inspire; that they give a joy to existence, and guide us to the attainment of a higher felicity; that they consolidate the bases of good, and extend in every direction the boundaries of the true; that they confirm in their essence the revelations or traditions and the intuitions of the human race, while annihilating special theologies and fantastic philosophies. These researches inspire science with the virtue of love; add to religion the efficaciousness of experience, thus abrogating the divorce between religion and science, besides completing the common faith. For both have one faith, which is born of the penetrable attributes of the sensible Cosmos; its uniformity, its cohesion, and its intelligence. Now apart from the differences which these present, veiled or covered with scoriæ, the attributes of the supersensible Cosmos are of an analogous kind; and a faith disengages itself from it which completes the first. But, in order that the supersensible may become more penetrable, and may reveal itself in its full splendour, these researches should be pursued by the agnostic and the believer, the technician and the physiologist, and all those who are endowed with those intellectual qualities of which Myers has offered us such a fine example, a disinterested generosity, a generous sincerity, and an incessant solicitude. To advance along this path there is no need for a priesthood, and it is thus we shall prepare for the universal religion.'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondent and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.

Spiritualism in India.

SIR,—Spiritualism in India is little known, although students of Theosophy and the Vedic philosophy are many, and students of black art are also numerous. As for the fakirs, I think I may fairly claim that ninety per cent. are rascals, living on the superstitions of the people, eight per cent. are ignorant, and the remaining two per cent. are really good men; but the latter are hard to meet, as they live in secluded places and avoid towns.

The country is ready for a good, practical religion, and if the people could only be shown the truths of Spiritualism I am certain that a really good work could be done out here, as the missionaries have taken away the Hindoo's faith in his own religion, without giving him one that satisfies him in its place. A few Spiritualists in Calcutta have been trying to raise a subscription to get the grand old 'pilgrim,' Dr. J. M. Peebles, out here, but as yet we have not succeeded, as we are too few and cannot all afford to subscribe; but we know that the field out here is ready, and we want someone to come and sow the seed—someone who could help to develop the few mediums we have, and who would give us practical as well as theoretical Spiritualism. My wife is a good healing medium, and is

wonderfully good at diagnosing sicknesses; and I have the gift of healing also, given to me by our Father and His angels; but we want to know how you form your Lyceums and many other things, especially regarding circles.

C. C. A.

Calcutta.

'The Necessity for Reincarnation.'

SIR,—As Mrs. Besant has declined to discuss reincarnation in your columns, I should like to be allowed to point out one or two weak points in Mr. Parsons' article in your issue of July 30th.

It is true, as Mr. Parsons says, that John the Baptist does not himself say that he was Elijah, but *Jesus* does. See Matthew xvii. 12 and 13: 'I say unto you that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.' In regard to the 'man born blind,' Mr. Parsons contends that the answer of Jesus: 'Neither did *this man* sin, nor his parents, that he was born blind,' proves 'not the belief of Jesus that the man sinned in a previous existence, but just the opposite.' There is some involvement here, but Mr. Parsons no doubt intends to convey that the answer of Jesus was a practical denial of pre-existence, which of course is the same thing as reincarnation. But surely the form of the answer, 'Neither did *this man* sin, that he was born blind,' requires the postulate of the blind man's pre-existence, if not of his sinning. Whatever was the real view of Jesus, his answer certainly implies that the man existed before he was born; otherwise how could he have been conceived of as sinning or refraining from sin?

On these two counts I think the case would have to be given against Mr. Parsons.

B. STEVENS.

Fulham Society.

SIR,—The Fulham Society propose on August 27th to spend a day at Brighton. We cordially invite any of your readers who would like to join us to do so.

They may obtain particulars by sending a postcard to Mr. T. B. Frost, 9, Uverdale-road, Chelsea, or to Mr. S. Bick, 47, Ringmer-avenue, Fulham. The Brighton Society have kindly promised to make arrangements for us, and to join us at tea. We hope also before leaving Brighton to exchange fraternal greetings with the members of the Brighton Society, by way of holding a short meeting.

W. TURNER,
Hon. Sec.

Mrs. Bathe and Mrs. Russell-Davies.

SIR,—I regret that your correspondent, Mrs. Russell-Davies, has so failed to grasp the spirit of my letter in 'LIGHT' (July 23rd), wherein my purpose was not to vindicate the infallibility of theosophical teaching, but purely to unite with you in projecting heart-felt sympathy towards Mrs. Besant in her altruistic endeavours; and to additionally advocate the cultivation of charitable tolerance towards all those whose convictions differ from our own, whether presuming to judge them from either the standpoint of opposition which comes of knowledge, or bigoted ignorance.

This is what I mean by *true* brotherly love, and I am already aware that in the past both liberality and kindness of thought from Spiritualist to Theosophist has been forthcoming; but there is still need for a good deal more, before some Spiritualists become as broad-minded as yourself.

I have no wish to question Mrs. Davies' right to accept or reject whatever her experience indicates to be best; but at least other people are justly entitled to claim the same privilege; for undoubtedly there exist many varied planes of consciousness upon which the human soul functions, so that an individual may be fully active upon one but totally unresponsive to another: and it is within the realm of possibility that many supernal truths may exist for *mystics*, transcending even the range of *mediumistic* observation.

I am, however, only too pleased to hear that 'my kindly enthusiasm' has made Mrs. Davies smile, for thereby I now know that I have accomplished something—however small! But with regard to her conclusion that my liberal views were the outcome of my 'being personally sore about something' (which, by the way, is delightfully vague), in the interests of truth I wish to point out that here at least her perceptive faculties are sadly wide of the mark, for there is not the slightest ground for such an assumption on her part; although this type of mediumistic impression has long ago ceased to cause me the slightest surprise, and constitutes one of the keenest disappointments associated with psychic investigation.

I venture also to suggest that even 'longer and more practical

experience from a mediumistic point of view' may fail to comprehensively exhaust during earth life the entire area covered by occult truth, especially if investigated almost solely along the lines of Modern Spiritualism, exquisitely blessed as is its mission to mankind.

The further affirmation made by Mrs. Davies 'that a student must not set up as a teacher' lacks weight as one follows the lives of the greatest teachers the world has known; who, amid their unceasing labours on behalf of humanity, rigorously observed special seasons for prayer, study, and contemplation for their own further enlightenment.

'Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;

Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.'

Hence, although there may be mediumistic teachers who have matriculated to their self-satisfaction in the crowded academy of knowledge, the better part appears to me to consist in ever continuing a student, *progressively* learning at the feet of wisdom, and thereby hourly realising through increasing revelation that hitherto undreamed-of heights exist to be explored.

EFFIE BATHE.

16, Loveday-road,
Ealing.

SOCIETY WORK.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Reports of meetings intended for this column must reach us by the *first* postal delivery on Tuesdays, otherwise we are unable to make use of them.

CLACTON-ON-SEA.—**CRAYON HOUSE, COLNE-ROAD.**—On Sunday last a numerous gathering of Spiritualists enjoyed the séance held by Mr. J. J. Vango, at Crayon House, most of the descriptions of spirit friends present being joyfully recognised. Medium on Sunday next, Miss Sophia Todd.

FULHAM.—**COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD.**—On Sunday last Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn gave a very instructive address on the first line of the poem by Whittier, 'The Friends' Meeting,' viz., 'God should be most, where man is least.' On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, of Manor Park.—T. B. F.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mrs. Checketts gave us a very good address on 'Mahomet, a Servant of God.' Our usual public circle followed. Next Sunday our Sunday morning circle, for members only, will be held on Wimbledon Common at 10.30 a.m. Lyceum at 3. The speaker in the evening will be Mr. Rance, of Hackney.

OLAPHAM SPIRITUALIST INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Miss North and Mr. Gerands recounted to an interested audience their personal experiences. Mr. W. P. Slaughter presided. Next Sunday, Mr. Hunt. The weekly public circle for psychometry and clairvoyance will be resumed by Mrs. Boddington on Thursday, August 25th.

HACKNEY.—**YOUENS' ROOMS, LYME-GROVE, MARE-STREET.**—On Sunday last Mr. J. McKenzie, a new and promising worker in our cause, gave a most interesting address on 'Spiritual Experiences,' which was greatly appreciated by an attentive audience. Mrs. Podmore also gave very successful clairvoyance. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., address by Mr. R. Boddington.—W. R.

CAVENDISH ROOMS.—**51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.**—On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey gave excellent clairvoyant descriptions. Thirty spirit friends were described in much detail, and twenty-one of them were recognised. Mr. Henry Hawkins, vice-president, ably fulfilled the duties of chairman. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis will answer written questions; doors open 6.30 p.m.—S. J. WATTS.

BRIGHTON.—**BRUNSWICK HALL, BRUNSWICK-STREET EAST.**—On Sunday last Mr. T. Everitt very kindly related some of his wonderful experiences through the mediumship of Mrs. Everitt, who was also present with us. Specimens of direct writing were shown after the address. Next Sunday Mr. Ronald Brailey will give a séance at 11 a.m., 2s. each sitter; and his guides will give an address in the evening on 'Resurrection.'—A. C.

CHISWICK.—**AVENUE HALL, 300, HIGH-ROAD.**—On Sunday, the 14th inst., Mr. E. MacDonald's controls spoke on 'Angels of Light in the Body.' The address was of a very fervent nature, but somewhat drastic. Mr. Smyth (in the chair), in his concluding remarks, very ably put forward the more tolerant side of the subject without in any way detracting from the seriousness of Mr. MacDonald's expressions. On Monday, the 15th inst., Mr. P. Preyss gave another of his very interesting addresses on 'Cranial Psychology.' On Sunday next, Mrs. H. Checketts, at 7 p.m., inspirational address. On Monday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. L. Atkins.—H. B. KEATS, Hon. Sec.

KENSINGTON.—**44, HOLLAND-ROAD, W.**—On Sunday last, August 14th, Miss M. J. Hamer delivered a fine inspirational address on 'Make the Best of Your Opportunities.' Madame Susae (president), Miss Maryon, and others, spoke very effectively at the close. The after-circle of over twenty spiritually-minded people was most harmonious and elevating. Mr. T. B. Morgan will speak under inspiration next Sunday, August 21st, on 'Soul Growth: How to Attain it.'

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—**73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.**—On Sunday, the 14th inst., Mrs. Atkins occupied our platform, and to a good audience gave demonstrations in clairvoyance and psychometry. Mr. E. Burton took the chair, and gave a reading from one of Mr. Morse's lectures on Spiritualism. A very large after-circle was held. Next Sunday, Mr. Imison, of Chiswick, will be with us; and on the Thursday previous Mrs. Atkins will take the public circle at 8 p.m.—E. B.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—**SURREY MASONIC HALL.**—The morning circle on Sunday last was well attended, and much useful work was done. The attendance at the evening service showed a marked improvement. A deep interest was sustained throughout an address on 'Purgatory,' given by Mr. W. E. Long. On Sunday next, August 21st, the infant children of Mr. and Mrs. Underwood, and Mr. and Mrs. Simes will be received into the church. The service will commence as usual at 6.30 p.m.

SPIRITUALISTS' OPEN-AIR WORKERS' LEAGUE.—The league held their usual open-air service on Sunday last at Manor Park, conducted by Mr. Cecil. We were glad to welcome some old Spiritualists, and to notice how pleased they were to assist. Messrs. Paine (Braemar-road), Rolfe, Rolfe Day (Ilford), and Miss Green took part. Just at the close Mr. Bibbings was noticed in the audience, and by kind request he readily consented to say a few words, which were much appreciated. Wednesday meeting at 9.30 p.m. Sunday at 12 noon.—W. MILLER.

PECKHAM.—**CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.**—On Sunday morning our public circle was well attended, and Mr. W. Underwood's guides gave many of the sitters valuable information and spiritual help. In the afternoon Mr. W. Ray conducted a large and attentive meeting on Peckham Rye. In the evening there was a good attendance. Mr. J. A. Butcher presided, and Miss Violet Burton gave a very uplifting address on the 'Gift of Reason,' which was much appreciated. The after-circle was conducted by our vice-president, Mr. J. Huxley, with much success. On Sunday morning next, at 11 a.m., clairvoyance; at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Huxley; and at 8.15 p.m., circle. The Chepstow String Band will attend.—VERAX.

PORTSMOUTH.—**LESSER VICTORIA HALL.**—On Sunday last Mr. George Cole gave instructive addresses on 'The Passing of Matter through Matter' and 'Our Attitude towards Jesus.'—E. R. O.

TOTTENHAM.—**193, HIGH-ROAD.**—Mrs. Roberts gave an address on the 'Spirit World' on Sunday last, which was listened to by a large audience, Mr. Roberts taking the after-circle.—A. F.

CATFORD.—**24, MEDUSA-ROAD.**—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Millard's address on 'Advancement of Spirit Control' met with a good reception. At the after-circle Mr. Love gave very convincing illustrations of clairvoyance.—R. M.

PLYMOUTH.—**BANK-CHAMBERS, BANK-STREET.**—On Sunday last a splendid address was given by Captain Greenaway, after which Mrs. Trueman gave clairvoyance, the descriptions being well recognised.—E. M.

PLYMOUTH.—**ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.**—On the 10th and 12th inst. Mrs. Kelland was again with us, and our meetings were very interesting. On Sunday Mr. J. H. Evans gave a very good discourse and Mrs. Pollard clairvoyance. A very successful after-meeting was conducted by Mrs. Kelland.—A. W. C.

STRATFORD.—**84, ROMFORD-ROAD (OPPOSITE THE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE).**—A stirring address was given on Sunday last by Mr. Anderson, of Manor Park, on the text, 'Lo, I am with you,' followed by some excellent clairvoyance by Miss Lynn, of Leyton.—W. H. S., Hon. Sec.

BOLTON.—**BRADFORD-STREET.**—We have just finished a splendid week's mission conducted by Mrs. Griffin, of Burnley. On the 7th inst. our first trust anniversary was held. Questions from the audience were answered by Mrs. Griffin and Mrs. Crompton alternately; crowded hall. On Monday we had a propaganda meeting in the hall, which was a great success. On Tuesday and Wednesday Mrs. Griffin spoke to large audiences in the Town Hall-square, with good effect. On Thursday we had a very fine meeting in the hall.—G. G., President.