

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Mrs. Besant has printed, as a tract, her lecture 'Is Theosophy Anti-Christian?' a reply to the Bishop of London, who affirmed that it is. Mrs. Besant denies this, and her defence is undoubtedly clever, if not convincing. She is certainly a superb advocate, and would be that for any proposition.

Her *Apologia* runs something like this:—

The essence of Theosophy is that Man, by virtue of the eternal Spirit within him, may know God. Every great Religion that has appeared upon the earth has come from God. The trunk is the Divine Wisdom, of which all the Religions of the world are branches. The Unity of God, the One Life, the One Spirit, the One Source and End of all beings, that is the foundation stone of Christianity, of Theosophy, and of all the great Religions. The Christian Trinity is the Theosophical Logoi,—Will, Wisdom and Creative Activity. Theosophy teaches the existence of vast hierarchies of spiritual intelligences, who guide the course of nature. The doctrine of the Atonement, according to Theosophy, is the doctrine of the blending of Christ and his brethren, so that in time all may become Christs. Ideal prayer is an effort towards communion with the Supreme rather than asking for earthly benefits. Theosophy recognises in Christ a divine teacher, just as it recognises divine teachers or manifestations of the Second Logos in other founders of Religions. In every Religion worship is paid to the same Being, though a different name is used. Reincarnation is essential in order to account for the evolution of souls.

In relation to every one of these points, Mrs. Besant maintains that the charge of Anti-Christian fails. All we can say is that she has presented us with a programme which every Spiritualist could accept minus the Logoi, which is insipidly arbitrary, and Reincarnation, which appears to us to be a shady inheritance of venerable rags.

'Reason,' in a spirited little Article on 'The claims of Spiritualism,' brings a serviceable gunboat right alongside the big Christian cruiser, and challenges it thus:—

Spiritualism has its witnesses—living, intelligent, honest, scientific witnesses—and they are a vast army whose word no one could dispute in a court of law. They affirm that what they have seen with their eyes, heard with their ears, and their hands have handled, they declare to men. Christianity itself as an historical religion rests on testimony, and that testimony implies the inherent possibility of recognising and identifying among the living one who was dead. If it be not possible for a dead man to come to life and reappear among men and be recognised beyond possibility of cavil or doubt, then Christianity has no historical basis.

Spiritualism affirms that the evidence to-day that the so-called dead live, and can manifest, communicate, and be identified, is a millionfold stronger than the evidence the Christian church can marshal in behalf of historic Christianity.

What right has a clergyman to ignore such claims as Spiritualism makes, supported by such evidence as she offers—dealing as they do with the subject-matter of his teaching?

Will some clergyman favour us with a reply to this very pertinent question?

Mr. Leadbeater's lecture on 'Magic, white and black,' was concluded in the July number of 'The Theosophist.' He is confident about charms and talismans. Concerning these last, he says:—

There used to be a universal belief that a jewel or almost any object might be charged mesmerically with good or evil influences; and, though this idea would in modern days be regarded as a mere superstition, it is nevertheless an undoubted fact that such influence may be stored in a physical object, and may remain there for a very long period of time. A man can undoubtedly pour his influence into such an object, so that this definite rate of a vibration will radiate from it precisely as light radiates out from the sun.

Here we have at once the philosophy of relics. Every one of us has his especial rates of mental and astral vibration, and any object which has been long in contact with us will be permeated with these rates of vibration, and capable of radiating them in turn, or of communicating them with especial energy to any other person who may wear the object or bring it into close contact with himself. Anything, therefore, which has been in close contact with some great saint, or some specially developed person, will bear with it much of his own individual magnetism, and will naturally tend to reproduce in the man or woman who wears it something of the same state of feeling which existed in the man from whom it came.

When charged by a really powerful mesmerist, certain charms will retain the magnetism for a very long period of time. I have myself seen in the British Museum in London, Gnostic charms which still radiated quite a powerful and perceptible influence, although they must have been magnetised at least 1,700 years ago.

In this same number of 'The Theosophist' there is the commencement of a clever Paper by Mr. J. D. Crawford, M.A., on 'A Criticism of the "New Thought" Movement.' This 'movement' he describes as only a surface-sign of a far deeper and more wide-spread movement. It is a 'recognition of the existence in man of powers that show his divine origin and nature, of powers whose exercise means a splendid spiritual development of unlimited range'; of powers that proclaim the indwelling God.

In working this out, Mr. Crawford puts in simple form the doctrine of the 'Subjective Mind.' He says:—

It is not to be understood that there are two minds which are separate and distinct from each other; but that the mind, as manifested in man, is really one, but limited in one direction and limitless in another. The limited direction is that in which it touches so-called matter and becomes objectified and concreted by space and time limitations in this matter; and in the other it loses itself in the infinite mind. As an iceberg is formed in the sea and from the sea, and floats with only an eighth part of its whole volume above the surface, while the remaining seven-eighths are below, so only a small fraction of the mind of man is objectified in his present con-

sciousness, and the remaining part, his subjective mind, is below his consciousness; but it is ever active, powerful and effective, and in constant contact with, or forming part of, the universal mind—God.

But he halts at the word 'God,' and says:—

Rather do I prefer to use a name which conveys the idea of a universal power permeating and infilling all things: which lives in the rippling brook and the rolling ocean; is heard in the whispering wind and loud-voiced storm; which gives beauty to the flowers and strength to the oaks; which is felt in the clasp of a good man's hand and thrills in the sound of a loving woman's voice; which is seen in the painter's vision and the poet's dream—the Eternal Life, the Eternal Love whose vestments are created things and whose thoughts are Men.

A Professor of Christian Theology in America, G. T. Knight, writing in 'The North American Review,' sums up the present situation as regards Hell thus:—

There seem to be, among people in general, four states of mind with reference to this subject. The old doctrine of endless punishment still appears in some books; the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked has also many advocates: a large number are quite non-committal and do not know which way to turn; and, finally, there are many expressions of the larger hope. Among thoughtful Protestants in Germany, France, Great Britain, and America, it is not clear which one of the four states of mind is most largely represented—though in America there is no doubt that endless punishment is commonly taught, or at least held. But the number of those who are to be subjected to its discipline is no longer the great majority of the race; it is rather 'the proportion of those now held in prison,' or even some smaller estimate.

Mr. Knight draws attention to a thought which seems to be involved in the modern idea of God as immanent in all things, and in the theory that God is love. If both of these are true it follows that God suffers in all suffering. He 'began to suffer when the first sin was committed, and He will always suffer so long as men sin. Apparently, all the pains of hell are, by sympathy, God's own pains, as truly as man's. The "endless torment" of man will be the endless torment of God also. The doctrine of a suffering God is an old one, in some of its aspects, but here its import is newly realised; and it seems to reach certain chords of the human heart that vibrate to no other touch.'

It is a startling conclusion to come to, but it seems inevitable, and it is also revolutionary, suggesting as it does that the power of Evolution is the power of God who carries along with Him and shares the fate of the creatures who are being evolved.

We want to do all we can to bring Psychical Researchers and Spiritualists closer together: and truly the distance between us is small. The Researchers magnify the distance. They protest too much. We would kindly remind them of the story of Don Quixote, who hung in terror, suspended by his hand, from a window, and thought with horror of the impending descent. Someone cut the string and he fell—four inches.

The following, from 'The Light of Truth,' conveys an undoubted truth, but, O how we wish all Spiritualists would be grammatical, or learn how to spell!—

That man is wise who tries to stop
The ocean tides with broom or mop,
Compared with he who pen doth dip
To stop the use of Mediumship.

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.

SEVERITY OF BLACKPOOL MAGISTRATES.

As our readers well know, we hold no brief for palmists, but we have felt it to be our duty occasionally to mildly protest against the intermittent, slovenly and unjust administration of an old and effete law. We are, of course, as opposed to charlatanism as any one, whether in relation to politics or palmistry, but we cannot help feeling that the big arm of the law is out of place in dealing with the latter. People ought to be allowed their own humour and to feel their own responsibility in relation to it. It is, indeed, quite an open question whether there is or is not a sort of science in it, and it is certain that its practice frequently results in remarkably accurate communications. But, be this as it may, the administration of the law against it has become a public scandal. At the great Italian Exhibition at Earl's Court, for instance, palmists, in obtrusive and decorated offices, abound, and they are not interfered with. At multitudes of aristocratic parties, charity fairs and even Church bazaars, Palmistry flourishes, without reproof. But every now and then a swoop is made upon a chosen victim, usually with cruel results, and often with a straining of the law and with the help of detectives who were not deceived.

Cases of this kind have just occurred at Blackpool, where a few palmists have long practised for the amusement of the trippers. They were, in fact, as much a side show as the palmists at Earl's Court. Without warning, we believe, some of these practitioners have been dealt with by the police with results that are simply cruel, we had almost written brutal. And in one case a lady, receiving visitors with her husband, quietly, in their private home, has been charged under the Vagrancy Act, not with palmistry, but with pretending to hold communion with the spirits of deceased persons, has been heavily fined, quite beyond her means, and in default, has been sent to prison for three months! It is a sentence which would fit a ferocious assault, and is manifestly unjust, and we should not be at all surprised if it excited enough sympathy to make the Blackpool magistrates wish they had left the matter alone, or dealt with it in an entirely different way.

CRUEL SENTENCE ON MADAME BIANCA UNORNA.

The 'Gazette-News,' for Blackpool, &c., of August 26th, published that Madame Bianca Unorna, having been sentenced to pay a fine of £25 by a bench of Justices of the Peace, in default of payment 'went with the drunkards and disorderlies and other prisoners to Preston for three months' imprisonment,' and I gather from other parts of the paper that the general impression in the town of Blackpool is that the punishment inflicted in this and other cases was not excessive, and that Bianca Unorna's case was a bad one.

I have read the evidence, but it is not for me to decide whether the case is good or bad; but it is admitted that it was provoked, caused, by police action. A leading article states that 'the Chief Constable played possum to some purpose, and laid his plans well, and everything came off as he anticipated, without a hitch.'

Well, Sir, public opinion at Blackpool may be as the 'Gazette-News' says it is. Still there is a strong and correct general opinion that police provocative cases are at least of doubtful character; and I am sure that anyone acquainted with what has from time to time happened concerning cases of the sort I am writing about, has good reason to know that prosecutions under the Vagrant Act, when directed against defendants who have nothing more against them than can be urged by straining the Act so as to make them out to be rogues and vagabonds, are publicly mischievous, and damaging to the accusers, and to everybody that might be similarly accused.

I fortify this view of the matter by citing Sir M. White Ridley's opinion as expressed in a speech uttered in Parliament when cognate cases were under discussion:—

'In my view the important question to consider in determining whether or not it is desirable to prosecute such persons under the Vagrant Act, is whether or not the practice is followed with a view to defraud or other

unlawful purpose.' (*Vide* 'Parliamentary Debates,' No. II., Vol. 85, p. 1,462, 1900.)

This opinion is on all fours with Lord Young's judgment as to the law of Scotland.

I write this letter in hope that there may be readers of your paper having legal experience, and opportunity for taking what action may be necessary to relieve Bianca Unorna and her family from the cruelty inflicted upon them by a sentence of the law that is vindictive, and opposed to the ends of justice.

I enclose with this my cheque for £1, which I doubt not will be added to by your readers in order to get together the pecuniary assistance that may be required for anything that may have to be done to secure Madame Bianca Unorna's release from prison. Ought this family to be ruined in this way?

GILBERT ELLIOT.

Highfield, Mottingham, Kent.

[We shall be willing to receive contributions on behalf of Madame Unorna on the understanding that if a sufficient amount is received to pay the fine and costs, and thus secure her release, the money shall be so applied, and that, if not, it shall be returned to the contributors. There ought to be no difficulty whatever in raising the sum required.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

A CURIOUS EXPERIENCE.

By 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

I have just been reading in the 'Daily Mail' a somewhat interesting article entitled 'The Poltergeist,' based on a narrative of certain mysterious occurrences at the village of Upholland, near Wigan, where a boisterous spirit seems to have lately been 'raising Cain' in the way of tearing paper off the walls, and flinging books, &c., about the room. The article also recalls the case of the Drummer of Tedworth in 1661, and the Bealings Bells, near Woodbridge, Suffolk, in 1834, and as this last quoted case closely resembles one occurring in my own experience, it may not be unprofitable to give the episode to your readers. I may here state that at the time of its occurrence, which was in the year 1878, I was a theoretical believer in Spiritualism, *i.e.*, I had read much of the literature on the subject, and some friends had given me their experiences both in this country and America, but I had no actual knowledge of psychic phenomena—never having sat with a medium; and in particular I had no idea that there were in existence on the other side mischievous spirits who were capable of acting on some objects in earthly habitations.

In 1878 we were living in a large flat in a West End street—the houses of which were occupied by people occupying a good position in society. There were five flats in the house, each occupied by as many separate families, and ours was the second from the street. It was the seventh year of my occupation and up till then nothing had occurred, during our stay, to denote that we were to be troubled by any abnormal experiences. All at once our bell (connected with the main entrance to the flat from the street) began to be rung at intervals of a few minutes. This lasted for periods of an hour, and sometimes longer, occurring generally between the hours of 5 and 7 p.m. The annoyance began about the month of October, after our return from our autumn holiday, and generally took place in daylight but sometimes the manifestations lasted until darkness had set in. At that time no theory occurred to us to explain this abnormal occurrence, except that something had gone wrong with the wires, and accordingly we employed an experienced bell-hanger to give them a complete overhaul, but he could find nothing wrong. As the nuisance still continued we sent for him daily during the first ten days of its occurrence, and although both he and we carefully watched door and staircase, neither outside nor inside the house could any trace be found of any human agency by which the bell was set in motion.

As the matter had now become serious and the daily ringing of the bell a perfect nuisance, I called at the nearest police office and reported the matter; at the same time requesting that three private detectives should be sent, one to watch outside, one to be on the first landing, and one to remain behind the house door, above which the bell was situated.

My request was complied with, and the detectives came to the house at the hours named, but although they used every vigilance, the bell-ringing went on as before, and after a week's watching they gave up the task in despair, and we were forced to admit that the problem was insoluble. Singular to relate, very shortly, *viz.*, in a few days, after the detectives had withdrawn, our annoyance ceased just as suddenly as it had begun, and has not again occurred. At that time, with my limited knowledge of psychology, it never occurred to me that the month's annoyance we had had was due to occult agency, but the larger experience since obtained has driven me to the conclusion that this persistent daily bell-ringing at stated intervals at the date mentioned was due to the action of a mischievous spirit, and may have had for its end the purpose of drawing our attention to the subject of psychology. If so, it was of none effect, as it was not until a severe bereavement occurred in the family in 1889 that we prosecuted an active inquiry into the unseen, with a measure of success far above what I expected, and which has made me and all the members of the household thoroughly confirmed Spiritualists.

Now I have stated plain facts occurring in the experience of a large household, in a building inhabited by five families; and which to this hour can, in my judgment, only be explained as being due to the action of spirits on matter. I have little doubt that there are among your readers some persons with like or at least somewhat similar experiences, and it would be interesting and instructive if they would favour your readers with an account of them.

A WELCOME APPARITION.

Seeing in your paper some little time since a letter from Mr. Bibbings asking for authentic accounts of apparitions, I have thought that the following will be of interest to your readers:—

On July 16th, at 12.30 p.m., I was resting and began to see clairvoyantly the beautiful lights which I am privileged to see frequently. I was interested in watching the various colours, when out of a violet and golden cloud I saw a dear friend of mine emerge, who had been ill a short time. I also heard her say 'Good-bye, Nellie!' A few more words were spoken, but not sufficiently clearly for me to understand. I remained quiet for a time, realising that it was a last 'Good-bye' from a very dear friend, and I then related my experiences to my brother and sister, and wrote to a friend of mine acquainting her with what I had seen and heard. About two hours later I was conscious of a number of spirit friends in the room. I could feel their loving caresses, and I was remarking upon the fact to my sister when a telegram was brought announcing the passing to the higher life of the dear friend whom I had both seen and heard. Then I knew that my angel guides had been near to help to soften the blow. My brother went at once to visit the bereaved family, and told them I had seen and heard the dear one say 'Good-bye' at 12.30 p.m. They told him that that was the time their loved one had bidden them adieu, mentioning each one by name, and saying 'Good-bye, I am going.' She mentioned the name of 'Nellie,' but they could not understand what she meant, but when told they realised that her last thoughts were of me. The appearance and the message were a great consolation to me, for our mutual love was very great. I was unable to visit her during her illness, but she had twice seen my spirit body or soul.

N. G. W.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

'AN INQUIRER—BRISTOL.'—We believe you to be altogether wrong, and if you will kindly favour us with your name and address we will write to you on the subject.

God is difficult to reach only because you make it so with your wrong conceptions of your separateness from Him. You should take the great Consciousness into every thought or act of life; whisper to It in the darkness of the night and It will hear and answer you.—RICHARD INGLESE.

TWO IN ONE—SINNER AND SAINT.

Summary of a Trance Address by Mr. E. W. Wallis delivered in Cavendish Rooms to the Members and friends of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists.

To every newcomer on earth the problem, 'What is Man?' presses for solution. It is a personal question first, 'What am I?' and each one must interpret his own experiences by the light of his own spiritual perception. If he be clear-sighted the vision of the Almighty will dawn upon him, but if he be blind he must grope amid the shadows and difficulties of the outer life until he finds some inkling of its underlying significance—of the meaning of his own emotions and ideals; especially of those supersensuous experiences, those intuitive longings and loves, affirmations and desires, which are expressed in his sense of responsibility; the consciousness of duty to be pure and honourable, to do right and be helpful, and to reverently and lovingly strive to enter into conscious and harmonious relationship with the Spirit Divine. Afterwards the larger question in its impersonal aspect confronts him. The mystery of evil; the inequalities of life; the sorrow and suffering of the race and the seeming tragedy of death prompt him to ask the threefold question, 'What, whence, and whither?'

That man is not merely a 'thinking animal' nor a 'fallen angel,' but that he is a self-conscious spiritual entity is demonstrated by the well-nigh universal belief in all ages that death does not destroy the individual, and that he is related to, and dependent upon, a Supreme Being. These ideas were born in man's consciousness, and they expressed the intuitive longings of his spirit for a more perfect realisation of its relation to the Infinite Life, the All-Good. The power within ever impels him towards ideal conditions of living—of pure, perfect, and loving response to the Infinite Wisdom and Truth, and it is this power which lifts him above the level of the beast to that of the seer and prophet, and proves that he is a responsive son of the living God.

When we speak of man's innate divinity, of the essential purity, beauty, and goodness of the human spirit, certain objectors remind us of the seamy side of humanity, and ask: 'If man the spirit is all that you claim for him, how do you account for vice and crime, craft, cruelty, lust, and wickedness of all descriptions?'

In the old days men made short work of the difficulty by attributing all evil to the devil, but that easy method of shirking the problem will no longer suffice, for few well-informed people believe in the existence of his Satanic Majesty—or, for the matter of that, in the old anthropomorphic idea of God. Few rational thinkers now believe in a king-deity, holding court, issuing decrees, growing angry or pleased, jealous or content, according to the attitude that man assumes towards him. They do not believe that God can be offended, or that man can sin against God and make Him angry, for they recognise that man sins against himself, not against God. He may conform or not to the laws that govern his being, but he cannot break those laws. He succeeds or suffers, endures pain and limitation, or enjoys freedom and health, fetters or emancipates himself according to the nature of his motives and deeds—but always in harmony with the Divine laws that govern him, not against them. Pain is a consequence: not an arbitrary punishment inflicted by an angry Deity. Pain is due to a want of harmony with the principles of order and health and is, reactively, calculated to prompt man to obedience to those beneficent laws which govern his nature—every attempted violation of which is inevitably followed by suffering, and every observance of which results in health and happiness.

The key to the mystery of evil will be found in the recognition of man's dual nature. Those who trace life back to bioplasm deal with but one side of the problem. When they talk of 'evolution,' we ask: 'What caused the rise and progress of humanity?' When they tell us of the 'stream of tendency towards perfection,' we ask: 'Where does that stream arise, what does it imply?' Surely, when everything in Nature seems to conspire together as if to a given end—to work for

good, for perfection—that fact would seem to indicate purpose, intention! If 'good will be the final goal of ill,' we must look somewhere for the directing and superintending Intelligence, for we cannot evolve and express that which was not involved, and we must recognise that man is descended from God—the Supreme Intelligence of the universe—as well as that he is ascending from Mother Nature.

Spiritualism has demonstrated that the body is not the man—it is his for his use, but the man behind the machine is the Spirit-Self. Brain and body belong to him because they were called into existence, materialised by the spirit as agencies to meet its needs. They afford the conditions by which the spirit can become self-conscious, acquire information, self-knowledge, and express itself. It is the man within the man—the indwelling spirit—that sees, hears, thinks and acts, and there is a consciousness in the spirit itself, even in the embryonic life, which directs the processes of formation, and produces the most perfect organism possible under the conditions. Students of psychic science are beginning to catch glimpses of this inner consciousness, or subliminal intelligence, which is other than the consciousness of the memory-sphere of the outer daily life, and to realise that the spirit is never fully expressed by means of, or truly revealed through, the brain and body; and they will learn how to train this sub-consciousness into recognition and expression of its powers, and to link all modes of manifestation of intelligence and purpose into one unifying, synthesising consciousness, in which the involuntary, voluntary, and intuitive modes of self-comprehension and manifestation will give man fuller command of himself and knowledge of his possibilities. It is in this direction and by means of these powers that he obtains a foothold upon a basis of fact for his faith in the innate purity and perfectibility of man, and his continued conscious existence beyond death. It is here that Spiritualism, with its evidences of personal survival and progressive unfoldment, comes to his aid, and by its philosophy gives him the key of interpretation of the mysteries of life.

If man is a spirit served more or less perfectly by organs—if he is compelled to express himself and gain his education through a defective instrument, or one that has inherited certain tendencies which affect the bodily life—it follows of necessity that he will be limited by its imperfections. Since some are born healthy, some diseased; some are born tired while others are vigorous and bright; some with a bias towards vice and others towards virtue; some are carefully nurtured and trained in healthy and moral surroundings, while others are neglected, abused, and prompted to vice and villainy, it follows naturally that there is great diversity of individual capability and experiences. As each child is innocent but ignorant and, while young and plastic, is more readily affected by influences from without than able to consciously and intelligently call upon and use the spiritual forces within, mistakes, follies, and wrongdoings naturally ensue, and, so far as bodily life is concerned, each individual is largely what his conditions, past and present, make him.

Another fact must be remembered which will help us to understand the existence and use of so-called evil. Man's animal body is subject to the laws which govern the animal kingdom, and he shares with other animals the passionate, self-regarding and self-preserving tendencies which, in the sphere of use, are perfectly virtuous. Unfortunately many people regard Nature in certain aspects as indecent, and think that it is wrong to satisfy the claims of the natural man; that they ought to live above the plane of Nature and, as ascetic saints, take possession of the kingdom of heaven before they pass through the death change; while on the other hand many people conclude that the best thing they can live for is to find their pleasure in animal indulgence—eating, drinking, and enjoying themselves on the sensuous plane, as, from their point of view, life ends when the body dies.

Judging from our own observations and experiences, we conclude that every normally constituted individual is practically two in one, having something of the sinner and something of the saint in his nature. The body makes its demands while the spirit strives to realise its ideals, and, therefore, a continual conflict goes on between desire and duty. When the

old-time Spiritual Teacher affirmed 'that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak,' he voiced the experience of most, if not all, human beings. But usually the emphasis is laid on the weakness of the flesh instead of the willingness of the spirit. So, too, the other saying—'When I would do good, evil is present with me'—really affirms the natural desire of the spirit for goodness, for it is only another way of saying that the spirit seeks to rise, to satisfy its longing for purity and freedom, but is fettered by the physical body, which, with its passional tendencies and limitations, is constantly holding it to earth; that, in fact, man is potentially a saint (but actually a sinner), at school for training to develop his angelic powers.

The ancients said that man was driven out of the Garden of Eden because he partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil—yet how else could he be educated into self-comprehension and self-possession? Every child begins his career in that Garden of innocent ignorance, and is compelled to pluck that fruit if he is to develop into a sane and sensible human being. It is a law of his nature that he should want to know. Prompted by an impulse he does not understand, he tries to clutch the glittering flame; the fire burns, the pain endures; he acquires knowledge at the expense of suffering, and is driven from his Eden by those two angels of God with the flaming swords of experience and sorrow, to earn his living on the plains of knowledge by the sweat of his brow; to acquire strength of will, to discipline his body, and obtain self-possession, that he may be fit to live understandingly and wisely here and hereafter; for only by intelligent and cheerful obedience to the laws of health and harmony can happiness be attained.

There is no virtue in involuntary, compulsory conformity to the law, as in the case of animals, who instinctively follow the laws of their nature. An error is not a sin, it is a mistake; but its results are painful, and the individual who endures them cannot again plead ignorance and say, 'I did not know.' Should he persist in attempting to violate the law, he does not break the law but is himself broken on the rack of consequences until he is 'broken in' and trained and disciplined to intelligently and voluntarily follow the law of right. It is when one persists in doing that which he knows is wrong that he is culpable—sinful—just as it is in the wise determination to 'cease to do evil and learn to do well,' or to avoid even the appearance of evil, that he is virtuous.

With this view in our minds we shall see that there is no flaw or failure in God's methods of dealing with man, but that certain principles—inviolable and beneficent—have been instituted for his education. While the immediate consequences of our mistakes, follies and wrongdoings are painful, we are taught to realise that the ultimate outcome of the discipline is corrective and stimulative; for progress comes about by reaction as well as by direct action; there is an uprush from within in rebellion and protest against the sufferings and limitations consequent upon bad or vicious practices. The sense of shame and self-condemnation which ensues becomes overmastering, and the desire for a purer and a better life predominates until the onlooker says that a 'conversion' has taken place—when the fact is that the aggregate consequences of folly and sin have stung and aroused the imprisoned spirit until it has burst all barriers, and the man is 'born again.' His attitude is changed; he looks out towards virtue and righteousness; his spirit is not only 'willing,' but it has proved the 'weakness' of the flesh, and has triumphed over it.

Every individual who submits himself to close self-examination in the court of his own consciousness realises that he is 'two in one': that he is curiously compounded—'fearfully and wonderfully made.' In certain moods he displays his best self; in other moods he exhibits his worst self; but both are imperfect expressions of the real self. A man will sometimes say, 'If I were you I would not do as you do, but would do so and so,' forgetting that if he were the person he criticises he would do as he does, because his actions result from antecedent thoughts and feelings. There is no chance in the physical world, neither is there in the mental or moral life of man. Each one is what he is as the result of his heredity, environment, education, efforts, and experiences. At any given

moment in his career he is where and what he is because of all the influences, external and internal, which have affected him. But, while this is true, it must not be forgotten that man is not a blind unconscious force, not wholly a creature of his circumstances. He is a thinker, a centre of living energies which he can consciously and purposefully employ; a causative being in whom reside creative thought-forces and dormant powers which he can intelligently call upon, awaken and utilise, and as the result of the knowledge he acquires, and the efforts he puts forth, he may, to a large extent, re-organise his body by wise control over his thoughts, and by directing his psychic forces for that purpose. It is possible, by cultivating the will and resolutely maintaining a cheerful attitude, and by persistent endeavour to form the habit of strong thinking and willing, to overcome many weaknesses and tendencies both of body and mind, and make both brain and body the servants of the spirit.

A great deal of the suffering and misery, as also of the health and happiness of human beings depends upon the attitude they assume towards themselves and others. If a man thinks of himself as a miserable sinner—that his nature is depraved—that no good can come of his efforts—that it is useless to struggle—is it any wonder that he loses heart, grows pessimistic, and is unable to keep well and strong, or to be cheerful and successful? If he expects that in some miraculous fashion he will be supernaturally transformed by some external agency, he is doomed to disappointment; but if he encourages the idea and strives to feel that he is a child of the living God, possessing divine powers and possibilities as his ancestral inheritance, but for the present 'cribbed, cabined, and confined' by the 'muddy vesture of decay,' through which he is compelled to express himself and educate his powers, then, having firm faith in his ultimate triumph, confident that he will eventually reach the heights and realise his ideals, he can preserve a serene and self-possessed spirit and, maintaining an affirmative and expectant attitude, he can become the creator of new conditions, and either master his environments or so adjust himself to them that he will get the greatest possible good out of life.

If man were merely an animal he would have no idea of progress or of righteousness, but as he is a spirit, associated with, and expressing himself through, the animal body, he feels that he must acquire control over it, instead of being enslaved by passional tendencies. His longings after purer and better conditions are really the evidences of his innate divinity and prophetic of his ultimate attainment.

(To be continued.)

'SPIRITISM IN THE CHURCH.'

During the Holy Mission held in the month of February of this year, in the hamlet of St. Braz, State of Maranhão, Brazil, by the missionary brethren Angelico and Gandioso, an important instance of materialisation is said to have occurred, and was reported in 'A Fé Christa' ('The Christian Faith'), a Roman Catholic journal published in Penedo, a town in the same State. The fact is said to have been witnessed by more than one of the priests charged with the work of the above-mentioned Mission. Madame Florence M. S. Schindler, of Bahia, Brazil, has kindly sent us the following translation of the narrative:—

'On February 21st several persons who had just made their confession in the local church were awaiting the administration of the Holy Eucharist. The multitude being great, all the priests were at the time engaged in the confessionals, some in the church itself, others in the house of the Vicar. Suddenly a strange priest appeared, walking up to the altar. On reaching it he opened the sacarium, and taking out the sacred elements, he proceeded to administer the Communion to the waiting people. The priest was of medium height and fair complexion, and his tonsure was well discernible. He was entirely unknown to the Rev. Bro. Gandioso and the Father Confessor, who were both in the confessionals—the former in the choir of the church, the latter at one of the sides. Both these ecclesiastics were ocular witnesses of the above-mentioned fact, and also of the sudden disappearance of the unknown priest immediately after the ceremony.'

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SOME INFERENCES.

Fred de Bos, writing in the 'Banner of Light,' some time ago, said:—

Spiritualism which calls us to a great work, and inspires us with great enthusiasm, keeps ever before us a great end. That end is described by an old seer in these words: 'The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ.' Nothing less than this will satisfy our enthusiasm. We want and we will aim to make out of the present kingdoms, with all their corruptions, their superstitions, their ignorance, their jealousies, their wars, their immoralities, a kingdom wherein shall dwell righteousness, a kingdom of universal joy and universal peace, a kingdom of heaven on earth. With this end in view, inspired with the assurance that all the great forces of the spirit are with us in our efforts, we band ourselves to fight corruption in politics, dishonesty in business, drunkenness and lust in society, hypocrisy and false pretence among the brethren. With this end in view, called to this work, inspired with enthusiasm, we must be as strong and immovable as the everlasting hills.

'Christ,' in this animating call to action, may be taken in either of two senses,—as the historical Christ of the Gospels, or as the ideal Christ in every human being; but in both senses, the practical meaning is the same,—that Spiritualism summons us to service on the highest possible plane, and for the noblest possible end.

It is therefore a mistake to suppose that Spiritualism represents only a method of search into the mysteries of the spirit-world, bounded by curiosity and satisfied with experiment. Curiosity and experiment are indeed useful, and may be exceedingly precious; but the results gained thereby may be unfruitful without the drawing of inferences such as these:—

The real personality is the spirit-self: consequently everything connected with the body occupies, or should occupy, a subordinate position,—'a subordinate,' not an unimportant position. The body is the spirit's vehicle or instrument, and both readily rise or fall together; and therefore it is important that the body should be cared for, and kept in right condition for use: but there are numberless cases where the claims of spirit and body conflict. In all these cases, the ideal of Spiritualism is the subjugation of the body, in the sense of subordination; and this may relate to such homely matters as food and dress. Indeed, it is precisely in relation to these homely matters that Spiritualism has much to teach us. The instructed and deeply convinced Spiritualist will naturally feel the incongruity of his Spiritualism and gross feeding, or costly clothing, or any kind of luxurious living in the home. He will be

simple in his habits, clean in his tastes, and swiftly responsive to every monition of the inner self.

Another inference is: *The essential oneness of all human beings.* Spiritualism makes for universalism. As the world goes, distinctions innumerable divide us from one another; and everywhere some form of caste creates barriers which in most cases are insurmountable, and which in many cases turn upon nothing more serious than the possession of money or the kind of work done. Spiritualism entirely fails to do its spiritual work if it does not alter this. It fastens attention upon the real self, in comparison with which all external conditions are 'less than nothing and vanity.' That real self it is which constitutes manhood or womanhood, and values reside there, and not in anything external. This is a hard lesson to learn—much harder than many think who have never really tried to practically live up to it—but it is essential, and is, in fact, one of the very first lessons taught by the discovery that the real personality is the spirit self.

A third inference is: *The great spiritual truths of Spiritualism are applicable everywhere.* Here we come to the quotation with which we started, and its opening trumpet call: 'Spiritualism which calls us to a great work, and inspires us with great enthusiasm, keeps ever before us a great end.' The description of that end carries us not only far afield, but it covers the whole field of human life. Many may shrink from this. 'What,' they will say, 'has Spiritualism to do with political changes, with finance in business, with social imperfections, and with personal habits?' We reply—*everything.* Spiritualism is an ideal and it sets up a standard. It supremely prays, 'May Thy kingdom come and Thy will be done upon earth'; and its vital principle can be kept from nothing, and from no one. Spiritualism means as much of equality for all human beings as is attainable;—equality, at all events, of justice and mercy and sympathy and brotherliness. It means righteousness in ruling because it puts spiritual rights before material forces, and spiritual results before material aims. It means unceasing war against war and war-makers because its very life is the life of charity and good-will, and because it believes in the surrender of material things when necessary for the securing of charity and goodwill. It means a purified and truthful press, honest and pitiful methods of government, and universal intercourse between the various members of the Human Brotherhood. It puts first the fundamental fact of the oneness of the Human Race, and proceeds upon that in all its judgments of men and nations, both at home and abroad; and this it does by virtue of its master principle that spiritual causes and spiritual results are everywhere supreme.

It is sometimes asked whether Spiritualism is a Religion. The answer will always be 'Yes' and 'No' according to the meaning we attach to the word 'Religion.' We should prefer to say that Spiritualism is an Inspiration—that it is a well of water in every desert, a guide in every valley and mountain path, an inciter to good in every field of action; and it will go well with us if we keep the flag flying on this high ground.

THEODORE PARKER AND SPIRITUALISM.—'Theodore Parker always strove to be fair to those from whom he differed, but, like so many others who judged the matter from a distance, he concluded that Spiritualism could only be superstitious wonder-seeking. His engrossing work for mental and spiritual freedom gave him no time to see that above all things it addressed itself to the understanding, the reason, the conscience, and the soul. Yet he was chivalrous enough to say that the Spiritualists were the only body of people who looked forward; that while they emancipated themselves from crude theology they sought to keep the precious truths of the Bible and all that was good in the Church. A better knowledge of Spiritualism would have helped even Parker, although he said he required not any demonstration of the return of the dead.'—JAS. ROBERTSON.

‘THERE SHALL BE TIME NO LONGER.’

Although the statements that come to us from the ‘other side’ are not always uniform, and are sometimes contradictory, there are certain striking announcements which are supported by so universal a consensus of testimony from Beyond that they deserve more consideration than they are apt to receive. That these revealings are not more considered is probably due to the fact that they have a character foreign to the conceptions belonging to our world. We do not know how to deal with them, for they pre-suppose conditions with which we are in general unfamiliar.

One of these almost universal announcements is that in that other state of being ‘There is no time.’

We are so subject to the limitations of what we call ‘time’ in all the concerns of daily life that we have frankly to admit that except, perhaps, in what Professor James might call ‘mystical’ moments, we cannot at all conceive a condition where there is no time. And yet something within us welcomes the idea as a man might welcome the sound of a song that recalled his childhood’s home.

We can feel, if we cannot understand, that ‘time’ is an illusion. And it is with a sense of relief that we anticipate the joy of emancipation from its fetters. What a satisfaction it will be to be rid for ever of that ready excuse which so often hinders response to the claims of friendship, of love, or even of duty. Let us thank God that this ‘last infirmity of noble minds’ will finally be cast aside. The plea, ‘I have no time,’ is one heard sometimes from the lips of the worthiest and best; for those who are striving most strenuously to fulfil the tasks of life have the largest claims made on them, and it seems to them well-nigh impossible not to be conscious of ‘time’ as of an iron fetter.

But is it really so? May it not be that their very strenuousness prevents them from using that discrimination between the tasks which should claim them, and the tasks which do, but ought not, to claim them? They need to pause and take breath. After all it matters little how much we do, but it matters greatly *how* we do *what* we do. We cannot do effectually the work which is really ours, if with unwise generosity we surrender ourselves to claims which should not be made upon us. To withhold ourselves from these may seem selfish, but it is not really so, if the withholding is in order to more complete and perfect self-giving.

There is no work in life more important than the contact of spirits, but in order to effect that contact there must be a margin of leisurely feeling round the soul. This margin must be carefully fenced and guarded. The man whose mind is so perpetually haunted by a sense of numerous claims, that he must look at his watch just at the psychological moment when his friend is on the point of unburdening his soul, makes, however good his intentions, a disastrous mistake. The real self in every man is so sensitive that our merciful Creator has provided it with a protective epidermis. It need not show itself unless it wills; and if, at the moment when the protective shell of reserve is breaking away, the consciousness of *time* is thrust upon the opening mind, the result will be a recoil, and possibly a long period will elapse before those two souls can meet in helpful intercourse. It is worth while to spend some moments in wandering over the surface if we may penetrate at last to the real self, and, by meeting, help its true development and our own. But comparatively few realise this, perhaps, or if they do, they regard it as simply impossible with so many duties awaiting them to have the mind at leisure necessary for this kind of converse.

Some persons are, of course, incapable of doing this sort of work; they are not fitted for it; the larger share of all mechanical work should be left to them; but when the

faculties are awake by which the intercourse of spirit with spirit becomes possible, the conditions essential to it should at all costs be secured, if possible, for in this direction lies the highest and most important kind of work that can be done.

The acquisition of a quiet mind is largely a matter of habit. A habit of being in a mental hurry is very easily formed, and on the other hand it is possible to get through a considerable amount of work without letting the mental pace be hurried unduly. We may remember that even the great Virgil is described by Dante as failing once in this respect:—

‘After his feet had laid aside the haste
Which mars the dignity of every act,
My mind, that hitherto had been restrained,
Let loose its faculties as if delighted.’

How true a touch that is! Hurry robs action of dignity, whether that action be merely physical or, what is much more important, mental and spiritual. In either case, ‘Ohne Hast, ohne Rast’ is a principle essential to true dignity and noble progress.

Most of us have probably spent our holiday in contact with Nature, and among the lessons we have learned from this dear and beautiful teacher there is none perhaps more obvious or more valuable than this. ‘Ohne Hast, ohne Rast’ is the principle by which her life is regulated. If we have wandered in the harvest fields we have seen there the results of her slow and steady labour; if we have climbed the mountains and hillsides we have found ourselves in presence of the work of those mighty world-builders, the forces of fire and water, which slowly laid the foundations and reared the structures of chalk downs and granite cliffs by age-long processes in the remote past, and moulding them into their present form clothed them with verdure and delicate blossoms. Or perhaps we have visited some great forest. Nothing speaks more forcibly of the absence of all hurry than these splendid growths. The huge trunks of the oaks, the far-spreading branches of the towering beeches, forbid us to desecrate their sanctuary by hurried steps or the disturbing thoughts of care, which are prone to jostle one another in the crowded streets of a great city.

Once someone who made the remark that he ‘had no time’ was met by the reply, ‘But you have all there is.’ All there is! We shall not want *time* where it is of no account, but we shall have ‘all there is,’ for we shall have eternity. In eternity time is not annihilated but absorbed. Why should we hurry? Indeed, it would be a vast spiritual gain for us if we would discipline ourselves to overcome these restless feelings. Occasionally, of course, it is necessary to watch the clock; even then, if we have but five minutes to spare, or three, let them at least be three whole minutes in which we may quietly give the whole of ourselves to the present claim of the moment. But we shall find that these necessities are fewer than we suppose, that often they are made by our restlessness—or perhaps by our conscientiousness, but a misguided conscientiousness.

Sometimes persons will tell us that they are ‘so busy,’ and really believe that they are so, when the true cause of their sense of hurry is only that they are fussy. Probably they would not own it. It is particularly difficult to own to this fault, and particularly irritating to be told ‘not to fuss’; it hurts one’s self-respect. But if in the secret chambers of the soul we dare to tell ourselves the truth, we shall acknowledge that we are nearly all tarred with the same brush, that there are few, very few, who quite escape sharing in this weakness of the present age.

Those who are most severe in their condemnation of fussiness will often find, if they know themselves, that they are prone to the same disease. For in general we may be

fairly sure that the faults which annoy us most in others are those with which we are most familiar in ourselves.

If in the Great Hereafter we shall know nought of Time, but shall live in an eternal Now of conscious realisation, it is desirable surely that in this life we should mortify the tendency to magnify the importance of what we call 'Time.' Ought we not to strive sometimes to transcend its limitations in our spiritual consciousness? We cannot, and we ought not to, ignore it altogether, but let us at least say to ourselves occasionally, when tempted to be worried by our inability to do half a dozen things at once, 'I have all the time there is; for I am heir to that state in which time is merged in a profounder experience. Provided I am doing the thing God meant me to do, even if that be only standing to wait for a train, all is well. In the great eternity to which I belong I shall accomplish those other things prepared for me, and for which the present is *preparing me*.'

'BETTER THAN SPEECH.'

I cannot resist the desire to write upon the subject which your editorial, of July 9th, has, with such felicity of speech, discussed. In the natural haste that the world makes in its efforts to remove all the ragged shreds of false knowledge, superstitious ideas and beliefs, and the errors which have grown of ignorance, there is always a danger of destroying the good seed of truth with the 'tares' of error. After the age of dark superstition that fell upon Christendom there evolved an Age of Reason, which developed rapidly into an unreasoning denial of every dogma that expressed faith in things 'supernatural' (so-called). This was the age of Infidelity and Atheism. The atheistic phase of religious thought disposed root and branch of all belief in 'supernatural' agencies, good or evil; and the relics of this phase are found in the present-day half-denial of the fact and existence of *Evil*. Even amongst some Spiritualist societies *Evil* is, to all intents and purposes, denied. Depravity, vice, and disease are regarded as not *Evil*, but 'undeveloped good.' Some Spiritualists, in the ebb of the tide of materialistic thought, have failed to recognise that, in the ancient tradition of the 'Fall,' there is a truth, a cosmic and natural fact, however allegorical, and however misconstrued, the Biblical account of it may be as rendered by the orthodox Churches. And yet, is it not to this fact that is attributable the comparative absence of those 'spiritual possibilities' in man which you tentatively suggest will some day bring man 'into possession of his fullest, deepest, and most refined self,' and that 'triumph,' which will be partly realised in the 'spirit's ability to convey thought in its native state, from mind to mind'?

I believe that one of the most momentous needs of the day is the right and true belief and apprehension of the true doctrine of the 'Fall.' Until we have extricated this stupendous fact from the dead and darkening cerements of mere theological dogma, and have brought it into the light of reasonable and scientific reality, the human race can never farther advance in its redemption from the effects of evil and sin, which are only, nowadays, regarded as a theological proposition, and utterly disregarded as a *physiological and psychological fact*. The idea suggested in your article is that the power of communicating thought, without the obscuring intervention of vocal speech, is a matter of *evolution*, and will sooner or later be developed in the human race. However true this may be in the abstract, I would beg permission to point out that this suggestion, in its present crude form of expression, is liable to be misapplied. It gives the implication that, as a matter of *evolution*, such a power has never before existed in the human race; that it is a faculty which, in course of evolutionary time, has for the first time begun to make its existence felt latently in the organism. This theory, which arises from the present aspect of human origins, in the light of the scientific propositions of Darwin and his followers, is not necessarily deducible from the evolutionary theory of Darwin. Even now the theory of Darwin has been proved susceptible of

considerable modification, and particularly is this noticeable in the later deductions of Darwin's greatest interpreter, Herbert Spencer, notably his theory of 'natural selection' and of the 'struggle for existence,' with its natural corollary, 'the survival of the fittest.' The thinking world to-day are not quite as ready to accept these doctrines in the same absolute significance as is given to them in the writings of the Spencerian school. By them they were treated as *eternal* and essential *fundamenta* of cosmogony, as constituting the *basic principles* of organic development and progress, without which the creation of the human race could never have evolved from the lower organisms, from which it is the indisputable fact that they did originally evolve. Has it ever struck the reader that these very lower organisms possess faculties of apparently 'telepathic' communication, independent of any vocalised speech, in a much more advanced degree than is in the present races of mankind? Watch but a flight of swallows, or pigeons, and observe the complete unanimity and perfect solidarity of their numbers in their exquisite revolutions and gyrations in the sky. Follow the movements of a swarm of ants passing to and fro along a prescribed course. Or, even observe the close unanimity of motion in the duller species of insect-life, the locusts, as they move in solid order. Nothing of this kind of unuttered communicability is experienced in the average human race. Strange, that powers of mind and body are observable in lower creatures superior in apparent psychic force to any that are experienced in the human race. Strange, that a period of education and cultivation is required before a man can attain to any of the advantages which raise him above the brute; and even when these are acquired they leave him deficient in those faculties which we are now beginning to find out are superior to mere mental and physical attainments, but which our brute-brethren possess, without cultivation or education. Notice also that the psychic faculties are always to be found more predominant in those races of mankind that have least come under the influences of what we call 'civilisation.' It is a matter of *history* that during the Soudan campaign the Zulu people in South Africa were fully cognisant of the victories, defeats, and movements of the belligerents, often more than a month before the news reached the 'civilised' community through the medium of the press and the telegraph; even immediately after the event had taken place. During the Boer War I was living in the coast bush country of Natal, near to Durban. There I often received information of battles and disasters to the British columns from my *native* neighbours, the veracity of which was not confirmed until, weeks afterwards, I saw the accounts in the local papers. I remember also being present at a spiritualist séance in Durban, when a very aged lady, apparently of the most ordinary type—a simple, earnest soul—entered into trance, and most vividly described a terrible battle, mentioning the formation of the country, the apparent numerical strength, and describing the actual movements of both the forces; the Boers on the 'kopjes,' and the British columns seeking to ascend and dislodge them, and, in fact, giving minute details of the fight. It turned out, from the telegraphic reports received five days afterwards, that this entranced lady had given a perfectly accurate description of the battle of Sanna's Post.

The principle that I would deduce from the above remarks is, that the organic developments of living creatures, of all species, are not by a course of normal evolution, but by a course of *devolution*, or gradual return from an *abnormal* state of organisation (or disorganisation) to a lost state of normal organisation. The teaching which I hold to be the true explanation of the mystery of evil is, that the present races of organisms on this earth are an abnormal hybrid succession from a higher form of species, which became swallowed up and lost, in primitive times, through the unnatural intermarriage and intermingling of the blood of the 'Sons of God' (or the 'Adamic' species) with that of the various rudimentary human and animal-human races then existing. I contend that the natural course of evolution has been *arrested* from the time of the fall of our 'first parents,' the Adamic race, or 'the Sons of Elohim' (God), and that since then the human race (*the head of creation*) has been slowly and surely

undergoing the course of *devolution*, by which, through sin, suffering, and pain, it is gradually throwing off the ancient strain of abnormal heredity ('original sin') acquired by the 'sin' of the Adamic race.

Hence I believe that all these beautiful faculties and latent spiritual and psychic forces, which are being discovered as part of our being, are the shattered *débris* and broken relics of the fall of our first parental race; and that by certain physical, mental, psychical, and spiritual processes, so profoundly taught by Anna Kingsford in her inspired book, 'The Perfect Way,' and further elucidated in my 'Life and Discourses of Jesus,' the human race (the 'head of all creation') will be redeemed from the 'curse' of evil.

The Rectory,
Turks Islands, West Indies.

H. E. SAMPSON.

'AUTOMATIC' WRITING IN PERSIAN.

In an interesting 'Interview' with Mr. Hugh Junor Browne (the author of the 'Holy Truth,' 'The Grand Reality' and other works), published in the 'Harbinger of Light,' Mr. Charles Bright says:—

'Mr. Browne incidentally told me of the remarkable way in which the specimen of hieroglyphic writing (which appears on a fly-sheet after p. 80 in "Holy Truth") was corroborated after many days, and as this account is seen now for the first time in print, it will be of general interest. One of Mr. Browne's sons had been influenced for some time to write what purported to be Persian, of which language he was entirely ignorant. One evening when Mr. Browne and his family were sitting in circle, according to the account given on p. 80 of "Holy Truth," his daughter remarked that she saw the Persian spirit who influenced the hand of her brother to write Persian standing behind him. She said she thought he was going to influence her brother's hand to write, as he had one hand on the lad's head and the other held his arm. All at once the lad's hand went off writing Persian, or what was stated to be Ancient Persian, as fast as a shorthand writer, whilst at the same time the writing was generally as regular as copperplate. Numerous sheets were written in this way, and a *fac simile* of one appears as stated above, with a request from Mr. Browne for anyone able to decipher it to forward the same to himself. But he did not rest satisfied with this public request, and submitted some of the writing to his friend, the late Dr. Figg, of Williamstown, who was an Oriental scholar. The Persian spirit had informed Mr. Browne through his daughter that he was a Prince, and had been 600 years in the spheres, and he always appeared, according to her clairvoyant description, in a turban and Eastern military costume. Dr. Figg examined the writing and told Mr. Browne that it was not Persian at all—"You have been deceived, my dear fellow, and been made a dupe of." "We were told *ancient Persian*," rejoined Mr. Browne, "and I will await a confirmation of what I believe to be a genuine communication." Thereupon Mr. Browne gave some sheets to the late Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith at his request, who promised that he would take steps to place them before some competent authority at a University. Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith accordingly submitted them to a professor of Eastern languages at Cambridge, who declared that it was "no language at all," but simply the "figures 23 placed upside down and in every conceivable position." Nothing daunted, Mr. Browne then entrusted his friend, the late Mr. Carson, dear to the memory of many Spiritualists in Melbourne, with some sheets to show the authorities at the British Museum, when he should arrive in England. This he did, and with entire success. The gentleman in charge of ancient MSS. at the British Museum, after carefully scrutinising the pages, announced that they had similar characters written on stone about 7,000 years old in that institution. He said further that the language is what is called "Tartar-Persian," that he had the alphabet of it in his possession and would translate a portion of the sheets for their owner. This he did, and the writing proved to be an elaborated account of what had been told through the mediumship of his daughter mentioned above, namely, that the Persian spirit was a Prince when on earth, had been made to study military tactics by his father, and gave besides an interesting account of ancient civilisation and of his life and doings.'

TAUNTON.—A lady residing in Taunton, and much interested in Spiritualism, would be glad to hear of other Spiritualists in the town or neighbourhood.—Address 'L. S.,' care of Editor of 'LIGHT.'

'THE NECESSITY FOR REINCARNATION.'

No one can doubt Mrs. Besant's honesty in the cause she has espoused, but I would appeal to her, and her followers generally, to deal fairly with passages from which they draw their inferences and arguments. Let me take the first of the two scriptural texts that Mrs. Besant made use of in her lecture, as a sample of what I mean; if necessary I will deal with the second and other points later on.

Mrs. Besant elects to use the scriptural quotation in its literal sense respecting John the Baptist being a reincarnation of Elias. I will accept her ground for the sake of the argument, and I have to ask her, or whoever may deem me worthy of reply (so long as no anonymous signatures are employed), for scriptural evidence of the death of Elijah, assuming that it is necessary for one life to end before another commences.

Nor is this demand in the nature of a quibble. Those of us who have been longest looking into this subject remember the early claim—if we do not hear so much of it now—that the Mahatmas live for a long series of centuries, and surely Elijah might aspire to be of their number. First, then, we need evidence of death previous to reincarnation.

Secondly: The verbal statement of Jesus (Matt. xi. 14) 'And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come,' is decidedly contradicted by John himself (John i. 21): 'Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not.' Thus, statement for statement, the assertion is discredited either way and is of no account.

Thirdly: Assuming again that John was Elias, how does it come about that on the Mount of Transfiguration he appeared in his original character, ignoring his last incarnation when as John the Baptist he would have been so much better known?

Fourthly: If so much stress is laid upon this declaration of Jesus, why do the Theosophists ignore another which was equally definite? In Matt. xvi. 23 we read, Jesus 'turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.' Why do we not hear on the same authority that Peter was a reincarnation of the fallen archangel? Surely his Karma demanded it!

Would it not be better to accept the scriptural interpretation of these texts when it was declared by the angel to Zacharias announcing the coming birth of John (Luke i. 17), 'And he [John] shall go before him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elias'? Certainly we lose the reincarnation argument entirely by doing so, but we arrive at a clear and logical interpretation.

Ilfracombe.

ROBERT JAMES LEES.

P.S.—I notice, since posting my letter, Mr. J. Denham Parsons' communication in your current number, in which he takes almost the same ground as above in relation to the first of the two texts quoted; still I would like my own statement to stand, if you will allow it, in so far as it goes. I think Mr. Parsons misses one very great argument regarding the second text of the man born blind, the which I have deferred dealing with, firstly on account of space, and secondly because I like to settle one point before flitting to another.—R. J. L.

As Mrs. Besant has not accepted Mr. Parsons' challenge in your issue of July 30th concerning the historical aspect of the reincarnation doctrine, I have, in pursuance of what may be termed 'the policy of the open mind,' been endeavouring to follow Mrs. Besant's advice and see how far the fourteen points, questioned by her critic, are borne out by independent investigation. As a preliminary step I have consulted the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' which may be regarded, at least, as an unbiassed authority, and I think that perhaps the following notes may be of some interest to your readers.

Point 2. *Egypt*. 'The Book of the Dead.'—The writer of the article 'Metempsychosis' names Egypt as the place of origin of the belief in transmigration, Herodotus being given as the authority. Whether a full statement of the doctrine is to be found, or not, in the 'Book of the Dead,' it would seem that it was at least generally held in Egypt in the time of Pythagoras (sixth century B.C.).

5. '*Indian scriptures*,' '*Vedas*.'—In the article 'Brahmanism,' transmigration of souls is stated to be a 'post-vedic belief,' and under 'Buddhism' it is described as forming part of the philosophy of the Aryan tribes occupying the valley of the Ganges in sixth century B.C.

6. '*Buddhist scriptures*,' '*Buddha taught that there is no such thing as a surviving soul*.'—In the article 'Brahmanism,' Buddha is stated to have denied the existence of the soul, as a

substance, substituting for the transmigratory soul the doctrine of Karma, *i.e.*, that the individual's good and bad actions in one life determine the character of his next incarnation. [NOTE.—In most cases the doctrine of transmigration appears to have included the possibility of reincarnation taking place in the body of an animal where the mind had become degraded. In the Buddhist scheme, however, reincarnation seems to be confined to the human race, when once the vital principle has attained that degree of development.]

The final goal, the much disputed Nirvana, is here stated as 'the extinction of Karma, and thereby of all future existence and pain.' [NOTE.—In 'Four Great Religions' Mrs. Besant specially controverts the view, adopted by her critic, that the attainment of Nirvana is the extinction of the Ego]

7. *Greece*.—In the article 'Pythagoras' this philosopher is said to have borrowed transmigration from the Orphic mysteries, 'the nature of the bodily prison being determined in each case by the deeds done in the life just ended. This is the same doctrine . . . which meets us in Plato's mythical descriptions of a future life. They are borrowed by him in their substance from the Pythagoreans or from a common source in the mysteries.'

'Greek literature was always hostile to the Orphic religion.' Plato, who denounces the Orphic mysteries, 'speaks of the Eleusinia (mysteries) with great respect.'

The difference between the Orphic and Eleusinian religions is said to be that which exists between the mere observance of ritual and 'a pious and just life.' Notwithstanding, we are told that 'the Orphic theology moulded the Eleusinian ritual' (See 'Mysteries.') [NOTE.—From this fact, as well as from Plato's references to transmigration or reincarnation in the 'Phædo' and 'Phædrus,' it is possible that transmigration was not confined to Orphism but was included in the Esoteric doctrines of the future life, which were common to the Mystery religions of Greece.]

As to points 3, 4, and 8, I do not notice any reference in the 'Encyclopædia' to the belief in connection with Chaldea, China, or Rome, but in addition to the races and religions already mentioned, the doctrine appears to have been held by the Druids, whose 'philosophy was identical with that of Pythagoras,' and it is also to be found in the Jewish Kabbalah.

11, 12, and 13. *The teachings of Jesus and early Christianity*.—Your correspondent 'I. O. M. A.' has pointed out that, according to the 'Gospel of the Holy Twelve,' reincarnation is clearly shown to have been one of the teachings of Jesus. In this connection it may be noted that the modern tendency is to associate Jesus with the Essenes. Now we are told in the article 'Essenes' that their 'doctrines on the soul and a future state . . . closely resemble Pythagorean, Platonic, and even Zoroastrian speculations,' so that we should expect to find reincarnation among their beliefs. Without expressing any opinion as to the authenticity of the 'Gospel of the Holy Twelve,' it may be interesting to quote the following passage, which is selected from several other 'sayings of Jesus' bearing upon the same question:—

'Out of the darkness the sun ariseth and goeth down into darkness again; so is it with man, from the ages unto ages. When he cometh from the darkness it is that he hath lived before, and when he goeth down again into darkness, it is that he may rest for a while, and thereafter again exist. So through many changes must ye be made perfect, as it is written in the book of Job, "I am a wanderer, changing place after place, and house after house, until I come into the City and Mansion which is eternal."'

In summarising these notes, we find that a belief in transmigration or reincarnation existed in the past, in some shape or form, in Egypt, India (Brahmans and Buddhists) and in Greece; that it is found in the Kabbalah, 'the system of theosophy which claims to have been transmitted uninterruptedly by the mouths of the patriarchs and prophets ever since the creation of the first man'; that it was most probably held by the Essenes; and that, according to one version, it was definitely taught by Jesus.

Not being 'one who should be in a position to know,' I have not ventured to criticise Mr. Parsons' conclusions, but I think that, so far as they go, these notes indicate that belief in reincarnation was very widely spread, and, to that extent, bear out the general trend of that portion of Mrs. Besant's argument.

II. T.

The saying of Jesus with regard to the 'man born blind' has been worked to death by both sides, and meanings have been read into it which it is not capable of bearing. The question asked by the disciples was, whether this man's sins or that of his parents was the cause of his being born blind. The first supposition plainly proves that the disciples were at least

familiar with the idea of pre-existence in a state in which sin was possible, that is to say, a previous earth-life, involving reincarnation. They may have chosen this opportunity for trying to obtain a pronouncement from Jesus as to the fact or otherwise of such pre-existence; they may also have desired to learn his teaching as to inherited sin (Ex. xx. 5). At all events they do not seem to have been prevented from putting these questions by any previous teaching to the contrary.

The reply of Jesus was a repetition of the two alternatives given, and the rejection of both, as causes, be it understood, of the man's blindness. Here we have simply a denial that either supposition was the true cause; either or both may have been true or untrue, but neither, even if true, was the cause of the fact. As to the truth of the assumptions, Jesus says nothing, for his words 'Neither did this man sin, nor his parents' (the form of the verb is a repetition of the 'did sin' of the question), do not imply sinlessness, but simply absence of relation of cause and effect, the latter part of the question being understood as intended to be repeated.

Two things, however, may be legitimately inferred from the passage: first, that the disciples were familiar with the doctrine of Karma as well as of reincarnation, whether these were specifically taught by Jesus or not; and secondly, that congenital conditions or accidents of birth are not necessarily the result of evil Karma, whether left over from a previous life or inherited from parents, but that such circumstances and afflictions are sent for a reason which will be revealed in the future course of life, and will tend to final advantage and progress.

J. B. SHIPLEY.

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.

A Victim to Ignorance, Bigotry, and Intolerance.

SIR,—Madame Bianca Unorna, a lady known and respected by thousands, no less for her openness and honesty of purpose than for her exceptional psychic gifts, is now lying in Preston Gaol, not being possessed of the sum of £25 which she was ordered to pay, for 'pretending to communicate with the spirits of deceased persons.' By a brief letter from her this morning I find this has swelled to a total of £29 4s. 9d., though what the odd £4 4s. 9d. is for I may guess, but have no means of knowing. The case was not heard on its merits, but upon those of a preceding one, against a palmist. Madame Unorna was the only psychic summoned, and so, of course, the issues were wholly dissimilar, but the bench accepted the evidence in the prior case as applying nearly enough to that of Madame Unorna, and the maximum penalty under the Vagrancy Act was inflicted—an Act levied against tramps and gipsy impostors, and never intended to be invoked against respectable householders and ratepayers. Now mark, if Madame Unorna had been charged with felony she would, as a first offender, have been entitled to a small or mitigated fine; so it comes to this, that a psychic is treated worse than a criminal. Here we have a lady of some degree of celebrity, one who has not only never done any wrong even in a technical sense, but has frequently gone out of her way to do good—as clients whose fees she has refused when she had reason to fear money was scarce with them can prove—who is known for her upright and honourable use of powers which may easily be misused, who is highly strung and nervous, as are most good mediums, and finally, who is the sole support of an invalid husband and two deaf daughters; such is the woman who has been sent to herd with criminals for the crime of possessing faculties which can now hardly be called occult, so generally are they recognised! Yet when she attempted to uphold the legitimacy of such gifts by reference to St. Paul's dictum, she was not allowed to do so. 'Oh, we can't go into that!' said the chairman. But *why* could they not go into that, or any other matter which might, even remotely, tend to justify an accused person? I maintain it was their clear duty to have heard anything she could advance in her justification, however foreign to their preconceived ideas.

And now just one word as to the legality of the methods employed by the police in this and hundreds of other cases. If it is a technical offence to do a certain thing, it is surely equally an offence to *incite* to do it. Also, it is surely against the public interest that policemen should be encouraged to use and practise the *very arts of deception and imposture* for the supposed commission of which their victim will be subsequently punished. I ask all who have had reason to thank Madame Unorna in the past for assistance or advice in time of

doubt or trouble (and there are thousands of such) to try and get the wrong righted. A little word of timely testimony can do no harm, and even should it not benefit Madame Unorna personally, it will remain to be fruitful in the case of some other poor persecuted psychic, should any other be subjected to such infamy and supposed degradation. Madame Unorna may be the last to be prosecuted for the possession of Divine gifts; it is for the public to say whether she shall or not. Meanwhile, Madame Unorna is but another in the long procession of martyrs to the truth. She is ill, and likely to be so—in fact, to a woman of her Spanish descent and highly-strung nervous temperament, the lunatic asylum is quite within sight, unless she is supported by unseen power, which I confidently believe she will be.

And now, lest anyone should say I have written too strongly, or said more than I can substantiate, let me say I am the one person who is best qualified to know and appraise Madame Unorna and her work and aims. We do not invariably agree, but I have always been proud of her gifts, and the use she has tried to make of them, but never till now have I been half as proud, or thought it so great an honour to call myself

HER HUSBAND.

'Palmistry or Otherwise.'

SIR,—In answer to 'Barber-Surgeon's' interesting letter on this subject in the last number of 'LIGHT,' I should like to say a few words for scientific palmistry, as he seems open to conviction.

Of course it is quite possible that the professor to whom he refers told him his character and incidents in his career by means of thought-transference or clairvoyance, but that need not cause 'Barber-Surgeon' to jump to the conclusion that palmistry is a 'mild kind of fraud,' for, if I mistake not, the gentleman of whom he speaks does not call himself a palmist but a *clairvoyant*, and he possibly merely examines the lines as an excuse to hold the hand, and thus become *en rapport* with his client. If, however, 'Barber-Surgeon' had submitted his hands to a scientific palmist (I mean one who really is what he professes to be), he would have obtained equally good results without the aid of clairvoyance, for the interpretation of the character and outline of the life can be derived purely and simply from a careful examination of the lines and markings of the hand, but it is such an intricate study that few people will take the trouble to really master it.

I have myself consulted numerous palmists and proved the truth of the 'science of the hand' beyond all doubt, but I would also say in the same breath that not one quarter of the people who profess it are qualified to do so; still, for all that, it seems to me that when educated people of full age *go of their own free will* to consult a palmist, clairvoyant, or crystal-gazer, or even a fortune-teller, to learn as much of themselves as the ability of the professor warrants, it is their own fault if they are imposed upon, for they need not have gone, and when only a small fee is charged and it is looked upon in the light of an amusement, it seems absurd to prosecute; also, if fortune-telling is illegal (*true* palmistry is not fortune-telling, though much that is *called* palmistry may be), surely the one who goes to have his or her fortune told is as culpable as the fortune-teller; just as the receivers are equally guilty with the thieves. In some cases, I believe, they are considered more so, for if there were no receivers there would be no thieves, and if no one wished to have his or her fortune told there would be no fortune-tellers.

I shall feel interested to know what other readers of 'LIGHT' think of this side of the question; it does not seem to occur to people as a rule.

En passant, the Blackpool cases seemed to me most unfair, as there was no evidence to show that the police officers had been deceived or imposed upon or told what was untrue.

FAIR-PLAY.

Legal Punishment.

SIR,—The convicts serving sentences at hard labour in the State Prison at Jackson, Mich., publish a weekly newspaper, the name of which is 'Broaden Out!' and beneath the title head is the quotation, 'Within yourselves deliverance must be sought,' giving the key, presumably, to the paper's aims and editorial policy. All the seven hundred convicts in the prison share its profits, and all are privileged to contribute to its columns. Nearly all the convicts, as well as many ex-convicts and other individuals throughout Michigan, are on its subscription rolls; and as the convicts own the printing plant unincumbered and contribute labour without wages, the profits of their journalistic institution are large.

In common with a few others, the State of Michigan has none of the horrors of the gallows or electric chair, for there is

no death penalty on its statute books. Its leniency even extends much further. It offers uncommon liberty among convicts behind its prison walls. It permits baseball, nines, and other athletic teams made up of prisoners, arranges contests with outside organisations, establishes lyceums, debating societies, and amateur theatrical companies, and now and then even lures a circus within the grey walls to amuse a convict audience. There have been instances of abused confidence since the leniency in Michigan era began, but it is argued by the prison officials that the good results outweigh the bad.

Here we have at least an attempt to guard against crime, free from vindictive punishment; and the prison officials think that the good results outweigh the bad. But if there be reasons why reform, admittedly wanted *here*, could not or should not be on lines useful in the State of Michigan, and if, indeed, there be exaggeration of leniency in the system, still, why persist in a course that has against it the fact that the severity of ages has done next to nothing to prevent crime?

It may be urged in extenuation of a conservancy of obstinacy that it is best to proceed gradually and that people are no longer hanged for stealing, say, a pair of boots; but that is slow progress. It is not more reasonable to argue thus than it would be to compare the burning of Jeanne d'Arc with the leniency of punishment in course of preparation for palmists and rogues and vagrants of that sort, who, by the way, are not punishable by the law of Scotland unless fraud be proved against them. Some years back I cited in 'LIGHT' Lord Young's judgment to that effect. Oh, my masters! straining at gnats and swallowing of camels is not good for public digestion.

Addressing your public in particular, and the rest generally, I ask for tolerant consideration instead of lust for punishment. Let us take Mr. Bailey's case, and I, for one, thank you for your very necessary article printed in 'LIGHT' of August 6th, headed 'The Medium Bailey.' Well, even if he have mixed matters a bit, and so much so that no reasonable creature could swallow and digest chupatties sent round India in 1857 made of the same dough as was being sold at Rome while the séance was held there, yet it does not necessarily follow that all phenomena at his, and at all séances, are, as Mr. Maskelyne and other so-called experts assure us, caused just as conjurers do their tricks on the stage. That song has been sung too often in the ears of unprejudiced observers, knowing what their eyes have seen and their ears heard. But knowing what we do know to be genuine, still I ask for the same 'charitable tolerance towards all those whose convictions differ from ours,' as Mrs. Bathe enjoins in her valuable letter published at p. 407 of 'LIGHT' of August 20th. And to avoid controversy of the order Tweedledum v. Tweedledee, I for one, will not call myself Theosophist till I understand Theosophy; and, ah me! who can really be a Spiritualist who lacks spirituality.

GILBERT ELLIOT.

Highfield, Mottingham, Kent.

A Pleasant Gathering at Brighton.

SIR,—Permit me to chronicle a most interesting and pleasant event which occurred last Saturday at Brighton. A strong contingent of London Spiritualists, recruited from Fulham, Manor Park, and Chiswick, came down for a day's outing. In the afternoon they partook of tea at a well-known Brighton restaurant, where they were joined by many local Spiritualists who assembled to show their goodwill and loving sympathy with their brother and sister Spiritualist visitors. Mr. Alfred Cape, Mrs. Russell-Davies, Mrs. and Miss Maltby, Mrs. Effie Bathe, and many members of the Brighton society attended, and the commodious room was simply packed. After tea an adjournment was made to Brunswick Hall, when the president, Mr. Alfred Cape, and Mrs. Russell-Davies cordially welcomed their visitors. Mr. Frost, president of the Fulham society, in a charming speech expressed his thanks and pleasure on behalf of the Fulham society for the sympathy and goodwill extended to them by the Brightonians, or, to use a newly coined and most expressive word—'*Bright-Hovians*' (which will be understood by those who are familiar with the district). Mrs. Roberts, on behalf of the Manor Park society, expressed in an evidently inspired address, couched in eloquent and sympathetic language, her appreciation of the fraternal love evinced by the Brighton society, whilst Mr. Imison, in a few well-chosen words, responded for the Chiswick society. All the speakers urged the necessity of a better fellowship in our great movement.

Several other speakers expressed similar sentiments, and the greatest harmony and goodwill pervaded the meeting. It was a fitting end to a very happy day for us Spiritualists to meet in our little hall, and there, in the twilight of a lovely summer's evening, to humbly express our thanks to the Great Spirit for all the happiness and blessings we have derived from our knowledge of spirit-communion, Spiritualists as a rule

are undoubtedly somewhat isolated from the rest of the world, and they are often misunderstood and misjudged; but so it has always been with the progressive thinker; but the Great Spirit makes up for this want of human sympathy by giving us a host of spirit friends, and so the Spiritualist, although seemingly standing by himself and lonely, is really surrounded by a crowd of loving, ministering spirits, and these are true friends indeed, who, having passed through the tribulations and sorrows incidental to earth-life, can and do sympathise with and love us who are going through our probation. Earthly friends will change and falter, but spirit friends are constant and true. They have no ulterior motives. Their one motive is to gently draw us into the loving arms of the God who made us.

Speaking on behalf of my brother and sister Spiritualists of Brighton, I trust that other societies will at no distant period come and pay us a visit. We will most gladly and cordially welcome them.

ROBERT RUSSELL-DAVIES.

27, Buckingham-place, Brighton.

Clairaudience.

SIR,—In your kind criticism of my 'Primer of Clairaudience' in your important paper of August 27th, my name is given wrongly as 'Barber Smith.'

As a writer on this subject in medical papers for fifteen years I should be glad if you will allow me to correct this error.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,

J. BARKER SMITH.

4, Holmdene-avenue, Herne Hill, S.E.

TRANSITION OF MR. JOSEPH CLAPHAM, KEIGHLEY.

A well-known native of Keighley, Mr. Joseph Clapham, passed away at his residence, 39, Devonshire-street, Keighley, on Thursday, August 18th, at the age of eighty-five. Originally a member of the Baptist communion, he came in touch with Spiritualism in 1853, and eventually allied himself with the Spiritual Church at Keighley, in connection with which he afterwards became an active worker. He married on January 15th, 1849, Miss Sarah Merrall, and the couple celebrated their golden wedding in 1899, when they were presented with an illuminated address by the members of the Spiritualist congregation. The funeral took place on Monday, August 22nd, when the services were efficiently conducted by Mr. Joseph Armitage, of Batley Carr—himself one of the most honoured pioneers of Spiritualism, and who has been called upon to perform the last earthly offices over the graves of many of our early workers. Amongst those who attended the funeral were: Mr. F. Hepworth, resident speaker of the Heber-street Temple; Mr. John Pickles, the last of the 'Old Guard' still left with us; Mr. Joseph Whitaker, Mr. Emmott Waterhouse, Mr. Thomas Houldsworth, co-trustees with our brother Clapham for the Spiritual Temple; Mr. W. Hudson, Mr. T. Shackleton, and Mr. J. Kay. The bearers consisted of representatives from the works of Clapham Brothers, Keighley, and from the Heber-street Spiritual Temple. Representatives from other organisations were also present, in addition to a large number of personal friends. The coffin was covered with beautiful wreaths and a handsome floral anchor.

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.

BRIGHTON.—BRUNSWICK HALL, BRUNSWICK-STREET EAST.—On Sunday last Mrs. Russell-Davies dealt most effectively and in a fascinating and eloquent manner with four subjects chosen by the audience. On Sunday next Mrs. M. H. Wallis; séance at 11 a.m., 1s. each sitter; at 7 p.m., inspirational address, admission free.—A. C.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—GOTHIC HALL, BOUVERIE-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. E. S. G. Mayo gave 'The Spiritualist's Answer to the Materialist.' It was our friend's first visit to us and he confirmed all our expectations. In the evening Mr. Brailey's impromptu address on 'Truth' was full of force and interest. Clairvoyant descriptions followed. Madame Cope and Mrs. Sinclair sang, and both were in good voice. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis.—A. J. C.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—The public circle on Sunday morning last was very successful. Mr. Ray, in the afternoon, held a very large meeting on Peckham-rye. Mr. W. Underwood's uplifting trance address in the evening was much appreciated. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. W. Underwood; at 7 p.m., Mr. W. Ray.—C.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Wright, of Stratford, gave a useful address on 'The Power of Thought,' which was closely followed by an interested audience. On Sunday evening next Mr. F. S. Phillips, well known in theosophical circles, will speak on 'Socialism.' We hope for a good audience.—N. B.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Roberts, of Manor Park, gave a very acceptable address, and Mr. Roberts clairvoyant descriptions. A large after-circle was held. Clairvoyant descriptions will be given on Sunday, September 4th, by Miss Maryon, and on Thursday, September 8th, by Mrs. Roberts, of Leicester.—E. B.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Boddington answered written questions, sent up by the audience, in a very lucid and pleasant style. On Sunday next, September 4th, at 7 p.m., clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Roberts, of Leicester. On Wednesday, September 7th, at 8 p.m., psychometry by Mrs. Roberts.—W. S.

CLAPHAM SPIRITUALIST INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Councillor D. J. Davis delivered an earnest and impressive address on 'Shall we meet again?' Mr. H. Boddington presided, and the string band was heartily welcomed after its summer vacation. On Thursday next, at 8.15 p.m., public circle for psychometry and clairvoyance. On Sunday next, at 7.15 p.m., Mrs. Annie Boddington will give an address.—S.

KENSINGTON.—44, HOLLAND-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. T. B. Morgan delivered an inspirational address on 'The Higher Powers: Ideas concerning War and Peace.' Madame Susac, president, made a few appropriate and instructive remarks. The usual circle followed. Mr. T. B. Morgan, after fulfilling a few engagements elsewhere, will resume his lectures here on Tuesday, September 20th, at 3 p.m., with a public circle the same evening.

CHISWICK.—AVENUE HALL, 300, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn gave an address, and the meeting was well attended. On Monday, the 29th, Mr. E. S. G. Mayo's address on 'The Bridge of Science over the Gulf of Doubt,' was deeply interesting and generally enjoyed by a crowded audience. Mr. Smith bore excellent testimony to Mr. Mayo's good offices. On Sunday, September 4th, at 7 p.m., Mr. Ronald Brailey, clairvoyant descriptions. Special music. On Monday, September 5th, at 8 p.m., Mr. H. Towns, clairvoyant descriptions.—K.

CAVENDISH ROOMS.—51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mr. E. S. G. Mayo, of Cardiff, after a reading entitled 'Singing the Magnificat,' delivered an excellent address upon 'The Influence of Spiritualism on Modern Thought,' which was well received and greatly appreciated. Friends here were glad to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Everitt again after their stay at Brighton, and were pleased to find Mrs. Everitt progressing so well after her severe illness. Mr. T. Everitt presided in his well-known earnest manner. On Sunday next Mr. J. W. Boulding, address. On Friday, September 30th, at 7.30 p.m., social meeting to welcome home Mr. J. J. Morse.—S. J. WATTS.

PLYMOUTH.—BANK-CHAMBERS, BANK-STREET.—On Sunday last Mrs. Trueman gave an interesting address and clairvoyant descriptions, which were well recognised.—E. M.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last, at our annual flower and fruit services, the hall and platform were beautifully decorated with flowers and fruit. Mr. Blamey in the morning, and Mr. Clavis in the evening, gave short addresses. The Lyceum children sang special hymns. Mrs. Grainger, of Exeter, gave good illustrations of clairvoyance to large and appreciative audiences.—C.

STRATFORD.—84, ROMFORD-ROAD (OPPOSITE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE).—On Sunday last a deeply interesting paper was read by our president, Mr. G. W. Lear, on 'The Ministry of Departed Spirits,' and questions were ably answered by the speaker.—W. H. P.

HACKNEY.—YOUNG'S ROOMS, LYME-GROVE, MARE-STREET.—A pleasant and enjoyable evening was spent on Sunday last, when, instead of the usual address, Messrs. Rist, Everitt, Bryeson, Baker, and Rands related remarkable experiences in Spiritualism, and Miss Bixby kindly gave clairvoyant descriptions. Mrs. Dysart and Miss Vandeleur kindly sang solos; and our thanks are due to all friends for their contributions. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Robert King.—H. A. G.