

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.

The constant mercies of God; the common beauties of Nature; how unsurprised are we, how unresponsive are we, before them! We talk of miracle. What miracle could be more wonderful than the sailing of the crescent moon in the blue evening sky! But how seldom we care to lay ourselves out to watch it!

'The glory of the sunlight and the balm of the moonlight!' says Ethelind Merritt. 'We accept these experiences as a matter of course, but if we had travelled a thousand miles to watch the sun flush the mountains, or make a million diamonds flash on the ocean, we would wait breathless until the world became flooded with light.' If only once in a lifetime there came the joy of a perfect Spring, with its wonder of leaves and flowers, surely everything else would be foregone that we might enjoy the amazing sight—the earth-garment of the Altogether Beautiful God. There is something like loss in our great gain of frequency: and the familiarity which ought to add thankfulness to our wonder, proverbially breeds contempt. It is one of humanity's sorrows that we look for God in sudden and arbitrary surprises, and miss Him in the constant, the orderly and the secure.

Messrs. Williams and Norgate have just published 'The Evolution of Knowledge: A Review of Philosophy,' by Raymond St. James Perrin. The subject will not attract 'the general reader,' though the book might. Mr. Perrin gives a highly informing sketch of the contributions to philosophy by the early thinkers, from Thales to Abelard, and thence from Thomas Aquinas to Comte, and on to Herbert Spencer and George Henry Lewes, of whose work he says: 'It is safe to say that, notwithstanding its incompleteness, Lewes has given the clearest view of mental phenomena thus far offered to the world. The conclusion to be drawn from his work is, that mind has a basis far wider and deeper than organic life, or, in other terms, that consciousness is the function of universal conditions.'

The work, incidentally, frequently approaches, and sometimes occupies, our ground.

One of America's brightest clergymen, the Rev. Thomas Van Ness, has just published a discourse entitled 'Proofs of Immortality.' He cites twelve 'proofs':—

This is a world of order.

If ever there was a reason for human existence, there is a reason for that existence to continue.

There is everywhere in Nature an economy of production. From monad to man there is a slow and orderly progress. The universality of this belief. It is impossible to really destroy anything. The greatness of human nature. The incompleteness of life. The latent possibilities in us all. The most righteous souls in all times have believed it. Our inborn sense of justice requires, demands, something more than earth life affords. Its effects on human effort and character.

Upon the last but one of these 'proofs' Mr. Ness makes the following keen remark:—

If we have obligations to God, God has equal obligations to us. If my child, in perfect faith, puts his hand within mine in some moment of danger, then I, on my part, am bound to see him through the danger if it be in my power. A man is indicted at the law for exciting expectations and holding out promises which he never expects to fulfil. Does God excite longings and hopes in the human heart, does He awaken beliefs which can mean nothing? So to think is to charge God at the bar of justice with a guilt blacker than that of the most ordinary of mortals.

It is delightful to mark the curious way in which great ideas, great interpretations, great reconstructions are, so to speak, in the air, and become common property. There, for instance, is the doctrine of the Incarnation. Once, we all agreed to limit that to Christ: now we are all agreeing to make it cover the human race. Here is Mr. E. P. Powell, writing of the late Mr. Phillips Brooks, the great American preacher, of whom he says:—

Mr. Bryce compares Brooks with Wilberforce, Spurgeon and Henry Ward Beecher, and then says that all of these men were possibly more brilliant, more rhetorically effective, yet none of them spoke so directly to the soul. With all of them it was impossible to forget the speaker in the words spoken, because the speaker did not quite forget himself. But with Brooks perfect simplicity of treatment blended with singular fertility and elevation of thought. Probably his power centred in this, that he could not be identified with any church or creed. If identified at all he must be with that marvellous Master who spoke in Galilee. He found no difficulty in reconciling essential Christianity with modern knowledge. All of the doctrines of Christianity were by him interpreted in the terms of science. The Incarnation became the doctrine of infinite divine love feeling its way into humanity, and taking possession of our methods of thought and expression.

What a fine thought that is!—God, or the 'infinite divine love' feeling its way into humanity, and so incarnating itself, not in one only, but in all,—in the whole!

A writer in 'The Christian Register' discusses the problem of 'Conversion by Suggestion.' A favourite method of the older revivalists was that of fear: the later practitioners favour the hypnotic method, and suggest rather than frighten,—a method which this writer condemns. He says:—

It cannot be too vigorously emphasised that such a form of influence is not a 'spiritual' force in any high or clear sense at all, but is rather uncanny and psychic and obscure. And the method itself needs to be greatly refined before it can ever be of any spiritual benefit whatever. It is thoroughly primitive

and belongs with the animal and instinctive means of fascination. In this bald, crude form the feline employs it upon the helpless bird and the Indian medicine-man upon the ghost-dance votary. When used, as it has often been, upon little children who are naturally highly suggestible, it has no justification whatever and is mentally and morally injurious in the highest degree. I do not see how violent emotional throes and the use of the art of suggestion in its crude form can be made servicable even in the case of hardened sinners, and certainly with large classes of the population the employment of this means is nothing but psychological malpractice.

Is not this too sweeping? But the discount may be found in the saving phrase, 'in its crude form.' There is much possibility of good in the right use of suggestion. Is not example a kind of suggestion? or longing? or endearment? In fact, one half of life is suggestion, and perhaps the most potent and natural half.

Austin Bierbower, writing on 'The Religious Crisis,' expresses the opinion that the crisis is that of a standstill. People generally, in relation to the things of the spirit, are 'off with the old love' and are not yet 'on with the new':—

We are in a period when the people want something, and know not what they want. Their sense of the imperfection of things is out of all proportion to their confidence in a remedy. Agitation has persuaded them of the need of reform, but this age is not constructive. In the religious, the political, and the business world there is a period of transition in which the distinction is uncertain. We are less sure of the remedy than of the need of one; and, while everything is wrong, the right is not in sight, so that we are tempted to stand still.

In Theology, men are generally dissatisfied; but, easy as it is to discredit their present creeds, they know not how to adopt new ones. The people will never again agree on a creed: the time of creed-making is past.

With regard to unseen things, the 'want something' is more pronounced, but there is a conflict between the conscious want and a certain excess of the critical tendency:—

There is a demand for belief in the supernatural without the plainly irrational. While rejecting the grosser stories of the Old Testament and of mediæval tradition, many would retain a belief in Jesus as supernatural and in the immortality of the soul. Others cannot accept anything supernatural without more evidence, but think that, if part must go, all should go, especially when we cannot clearly distinguish between the evidence on which the more credible rests and that on which the balance rests. The problem is, What shall we do with our inadequate evidence?

That is really uncommonly shrewd, especially the last remark, 'What shall we do with our inadequate evidence?' for, say what we will, there is a good deal of 'inadequate evidence' about, and it is difficult to know what to do with it. If we go right over to it and treat it as adequate, we are in danger of delusion or imperfect knowledge: while, if we hold back too critically and too long, we are in danger of losing the bird on the wing. The following gives us a judicious lead: 'While the miraculous will always be disputed, the natural may be largely settled, which will dispose of many of the problems.' Perhaps the surest way to the desired end is to dismiss 'the miraculous' altogether, and to make the area of 'the natural' large enough to include the action of the spirit people and the opening of the eyes of the blind.

'Knox Rannock's Prophecy: A tale of the Scottish Church crisis,' by Mark Meldrum (Edinburgh: J. Menzies and Co.), though only published in paper covers and at one shilling, is a production meriting distinct attention. It centres around late events in Scotland, and is evidently written with full knowledge of them, and yet there is interwoven a story of touching beauty. The writer interprets rightly the crisis which he so graphically and dramatically describes.

RECOGNISED MATERIALISATIONS.

On Wednesday, May 3rd, accompanied by six friends, four ladies and two gentlemen, I repaired to Clown to attend a séance. From accounts we had received from various sources, we went anticipating a pleasurable experience, and at the close, when calmly reflecting on the marvellous manifestations we had witnessed, my memory recalled the Queen of Sheba's exclamation, when confronted with the glories of Solomon's Court, 'Howbeit I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and behold the half was not told me.'

The séance was an unqualified success from every standpoint; a grand revelation of the sublimest truth that can possibly come for the comfort and encouragement of the human soul. The manifestations were refined, dignified and graceful, and devoid of vulgarity or manifest desire to minister to morbid curiosity. Our spirit loved ones appeared, clothed again in human form, and held sweet and hallowed communion with us, to our intense delight and satisfaction.

We found the medium a man who commanded respect and confidence, and our sympathy and trust went out spontaneously to him (an essential factor for a successful manifestation of a psychic order), and Mrs. Eldred proved herself to be a most sympathetic co-operator in this sacred mission, a true help-mate in every sense.

After thirty minutes spent in social intercourse, accompanied by five other sitters, including Mrs. Eldred and a gentleman friend who presides at the harmonium, we entered an 'upper room,' where we observed, to our left, a pair of heavy curtains suspended on rings from a pole, behind which was an armchair and some black material hanging down the wall to form a background. At the other end of the room were two rows of seats; the back row being raised above the others so as to afford an uninterrupted view of the room and the curtains.

I took a position on the back row, directly under a gas bracket with which was connected a pipe running into the cabinet behind the medium's chair to the floor. At this junction was affixed a tap, with a large lever handle, placed there so that the spirit friends might manipulate it at will. The door having been locked, the key was given into my possession and the meeting opened with singing, the medium meanwhile passing into the trance condition. He then, under the control of his spirit brother, Arthur, addressed us briefly, asking for a cordial reception to all the visitors and promising to give us the best results possible, but impressing upon us that much depended on ourselves, on our attitude of mind and feeling towards the object to be obtained.

The medium retired behind the curtains and sat down. The light was lowered from the cabinet, and five minutes later it was again lowered, so much so that I was afraid that our chance of close and minute observation was getting very remote. Presently our attention was arrested by a white cloudy substance in front of the curtains, about the height of a man, but without any defined shape, and neither features nor limbs discernible. As our eyes became accustomed to the gloom a 'form' became distinctly perceptible; it advanced a few steps so that head and face could be seen, and then retired. Immediately relief came as the light was increased, and the form, drawing the curtains apart, stood before us in dignified pose. We could also see the medium in his chair, his head fallen on one side, in apparent unconsciousness of his surroundings. The spirit form then stooped down, reached behind the chair, and turned the gas tap, and then, in a good light—although still subdued—he rose, stood by his brother (the medium), threw his drapery over him and, stooping down, kissed him on the cheek. He then came out into the room and showed his hands and feet, affording us absolute proof that he was a separate and independent entity. As we gazed upon the spirit form and the medium, at the same time, there was no room left for cavil or disputation as to the fact: any doubt was for ever dissipated from the minds of all and our hearts rejoiced with a keener sense of realisation of the reality of human life beyond the change called death.

In all, eleven spirits appeared, but only two or three could speak. Two of them came out twice. One was Arthur, and on his second visit he invited (by gesture) Mrs. S. to approach him. She did so, and, standing quite close, scrutinised his face minutely. The other was a young woman about twenty-five years of age, who claimed to come for Mr. Y. He went to her and asked questions, eliciting the information that she was connected in friendship with his mother. At his failure to recognise her, she appeared disappointed and disturbed, retired into the cabinet, but returned in a few minutes. Mr. Y. says that this time her eyes were most indistinct, more like gimlet holes than eyes, void of expression, but in the centre of her forehead there was a beautiful light like a brilliant diamond. It was evident she failed in power to produce a perfect materialisation. Another form soon came into view, purporting to come for Mrs. B., who went forward, expecting to meet her husband, but found her brother, whom she at once recognised, even to the colour of his hair. He spoke in answer to her questions. Following him came another man, who was at once recognised by his daughter, Mrs. J., and her husband. His complexion, colour of the eyes, beautiful teeth, and the sweet smile peculiar to him in earth life, were special points of attraction and recollection, establishing his identity without question.

A female form was observed emerging from between the curtains. She came fully into the room, her drapery hanging in long loose folds and swaying with the graceful movements of her body. She sat down on a chair, and, lifting her hands to her head, put back the covering and revealed her hair. After sitting thus a little while she retired behind the curtains.

Presently a manly form appeared, who claimed to have a strong attachment for a lady present. It appears that this relationship is mutually recognised, and a promise had been given to the lady by this spirit that he would visit her on this occasion. She met him in the centre of the room, as he approached with outstretched arms, and, putting them round her neck, he kissed her on the lips. She felt his lips to be soft and warm, as was his breath upon her cheeks. They engaged in conversation on private matters, but his voice, she thought, sounded very like that of the medium. Sensing this thought in her mind, the spirit at once drew the curtain aside, showing the medium, and said, 'He is there, I am here.' As they were parting she begged for one more touch, and again he advanced, wrapped her head completely in his robe, withdrew it, kissed her again, and, with a few parting words, passed out of sight.

One of the most pleasing incidents was the advent of a little girl, a niece of Mrs. Eldred's, named Maud. In a hesitating, bashful manner, she essayed to come into the room. Encouraged by our kindly invitation, she at last succeeded, and we struck up singing, much to her delight, and she commenced to dance in a vigorous manner, the pattering of her feet being quite audible. An old lady next introduced herself, and invited one of the lady sitters to approach her. She claimed to be the maternal grandmother of this lady; but recognition was not satisfactorily established. A Mr. B., formerly a resident in Sheffield, but a stranger, presented a distinct personality. He had long Dundreary whiskers, and, coming quite close to us, invited one of the ladies to stroke and examine them, which she did.

Omitting one distinguished visitor, for special reasons, I now make record of the entrance into our presence of another notable personage, whose brilliant military career was brought to a tragic termination a few years ago. Stepping out from the curtains, he raised his hand in military salute, then with firm, deliberate tread he marched the length of the room to where we were sitting and looked us full in the face. We struck up singing 'Soldiers of the King,' during all the time of which he stood at salute—a remarkable specimen of materialised manhood—and then retired.

During one or two intervals of these manifestations the room was filled with beautiful perfumes that were most refreshing.

I submit this account from my original record (which bears the signatures of my six friends, who, as eye witnesses,

attest its accuracy), but I am profoundly impressed with a sense of my inability to convey to my readers anything like an adequate idea of what this séance was to us. I entertain a feeling of special obligation to our unseen friends, who are, I believe, incessantly working to promote man's highest interests, and to the medium, Mr. Eldred, for the kindly, courteous, and gentle manner in which he lends himself to their operations for the benefit of all who sincerely and honestly seek through his mediumship to become acquainted with the grand truths of Spiritualism.

Sheffield.

WALTER APPEYARD.

THE HINDU ANTI-THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT.

Miss Edith Ward's letter to 'LIGHT,' of April 15th, is calculated to wrongly impress members of the Theosophical Society and the English public if it is allowed to pass unnoticed from India.

The idea that the criticisms against Theosophy quoted in this journal and emanating from the Indian Press are the work of a few fanatical Hindus, is not correct. Miss Ward, as a leading Theosophist and honest worker, will, I feel sure, welcome the truth, and right information on this matter, however unpalatable it may be, seeing that it concerns the vital interests of her society.

As a member of an extensive Hindu movement recently set on foot, for the promulgation of the higher Vedantic teachings, I am in a position to inform the public, and Theosophists in particular, of the exact state of affairs and the nature of the influences now determinedly working against them by cultured and learned Hindus. Miss Ward's few lines reveal clearly what some of us have realised for a little time, viz.: that London Theosophists are extraordinarily unknowing of what transpires in India between their school and other philosophical groups. Are they wilfully kept in darkness? or do they purposely allow their members and the public to remain in ignorance of certain important facts? Miss Ward must forgive these questions and understand that, as I am here to study and make all the observations possible through the Brahmin philosophical group with which I am identified, duty towards European friends and sincere truthseekers compels me to speak out frankly and acquaint them with the truth on such matters. Theosophists should realise and face the fact that the collapse of their Indian influence is inevitable, and they should know that for the last few years some powerful Hindu coalitions have been steadily working against them, guided by India's philosophers and serious thinkers, the chief reasons being that they strongly resent several statements made in public lectures by Mrs. Besant and others contrary to their sacred books, and because of great inaccuracies in the theosophical teachings which they give out as Hinduism. The Hindus do not trouble to attack any other branch of work dealing with different religions which Theosophists carry out, but they complain seriously of the harm done indirectly to their young English-learning students by fostering an Anglicised Hinduism, mixed with much useless Western occult theories and ideas, and thus evoking a 'curiosity-seeking' spirit which unsteadies the mind. To the educated religious Hindu, the idea that a man or woman, having any pretension to learning or piety, can perform any important duties without the instruction or moral support of a Guru or priest, is more than impossible, it is wholly repugnant; spiritual directorship through a teacher and ascetic being the pivot on which the great Hindu life and religious thought turns. If, therefore, English Theosophists really desire to sympathise with and help Indians, then only through the kindly help of a 'Preceptor' or Mahatma will they ever gain a hearing among the millions of orthodox Hindus.

The complete failure on the part of theosophical leaders to meet certain charges, and the silence with which questions and challenges are met, have lost them India's confidence, and their silence is now viewed as a tacit admission of error and powerlessness. Here a school which purported to be one of

learning and instruction, and which could produce no authoritatively armed scholar to answer public inquiry and objection, would be speedily and derisively crushed. Only English influence and diplomacy has saved Theosophy from such a fate. Since no Gurus or Mahatmas are found willing to teach and support Theosophy, the society has for some little time repeated the error of the early Blavatsky days, and supplied this deficiency by setting up the existence of a 'White Lodge,' which has its seat somewhere in Central Asia, the members of this lodge replacing the ghostly and flying Tibetan Mahatmas of the past.

This letter must not, however, be unduly prolonged, as an Indian devotee is anxious to forward a communication to 'LIGHT' with this, on behalf of his fellow-students, on these matters. But before concluding I should like to remark that it is surely hardly to be wondered at if Christians here refuse to co-operate in the work of a society which exacts something like the deification of a Blavatsky and holds beliefs with which Christian theology cannot agree.

The great Vedantists and their followers are certainly not anti-Christian nor anti-any religion; they say, 'Our Indian religious truths are philosophical and totally unsectarian,' and they allow that all religious systems are necessary until man attains to that position of understanding when he is capable of assimilating the highest truth, the knowledge of the *one* truth of which every different religion is but a manifesting portion. This highest conception of truth and the knowledge of how to realise atonement with God through practical and personal experience, is only to be found in profound philosophies having their foundation in India. Only practical ascetics and Yogins can possibly demonstrate such teachings, and this is one of the great reasons for their hostility towards Theosophists, who, through their leaders, are allowed to believe in the utility of invisible Gurus. 'How could an invisible master instruct in the practical science of Yoga?' they ask; for only through the incessant attention towards the subjugation of the mind and senses on scientific lines could union with the Supreme obtain. Psychic phenomena and faculties are never to be confounded with yogic experiences and practices, but Western students too often confuse these issues. The new Hindu movement which has been recently called into being, is directed by India's chief and most celebrated preceptor, Mahatma Aganya Guru Paramahansa, known to groups of students not only in Europe but in America and Japan. His influence will be one of great importance for the West in its researches, for the object of his work will be to instruct and spread the higher Vedanta teachings, and appoint learned ascetics to speak and teach under his control.

Particulars concerning a society already formed and working under his guidance in England, will shortly be made more publicly known, and this movement, called the 'Parama Siddantha Sabha' (Faculty for the demonstration of the Highest Truth), will endeavour to draw together only such members as earnestly seek and desire the highest knowledge. On coming to India such fit student-members would thus have the great privilege of meeting directly some of India's best thinkers and fellow students, and arrangements are now begun to establish something in the nature of a colony, where permanent bungalows will afford residence to disciples of His Holiness in both hemispheres. It is by this hoped to establish a more real and brotherly sympathy between East and West than any existing society has hitherto had power to accomplish.

J. STANNARD,
c/o King and King,
Bombay.

Vevij Camp, May 5th.

[The letter from the 'Indian devotee,' referred to by Mrs. Stannard, is necessarily held over for our next issue.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. WALTER AND OTHERS.—Next week.

SOUTHWOLD.—We shall have pleasure in publishing your letter if you will kindly favour us, in confidence, with your name and address.

'A CONSTANT READER.'—If you will send us your name and address we will write to you with reference to your communication of May 26th.

RECENT JOURNEYINGS IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND WALES.

BY J. M. PEEBLES, M.D.

Though coming to England for the recreation of change and a sea-voyage rest, I have, since my arrival, been upon the platform for Spiritualist societies every Sunday, and a number of times on week-day evenings. I could not fill one-half of the calls to lecture that I have had. Spiritualism has assumed a more solid and religious character in England, Scotland, and Wales than in America. In Manchester and Glasgow more people (so it was said) were turned away on the Sunday evenings than were able to get into the halls; all of which shows admirable zeal for the diffusion and upbuilding of the truth of present-day angel ministries. In Nottingham and Birmingham I found enthusiastic and prosperous societies. In Sheffield and Leeds, and on down into Wales, I found the Spiritualists thoroughly awake; in Merthyr Tydfil they sang a hymn in Welsh, which deeply interested me. I also suffered somewhat from the echoes of the revival from a chapel just across the narrow street from where I was stopping with friend Davis for the night. In singing, praying, screaming, and agonising, they kept me awake till eleven or twelve o'clock at night. Poor souls!—I pitied them.

In Glasgow I was the guest of that clear, versatile writer, logical speaker, and devoted worker in the interests of Spiritualism, James Robertson; and what much interested me in his lovely home was that his vigorous grown-up children were all Spiritualists, attending and taking part in the Sunday meetings. This fact spoke well for home influence. In America it is very often the case that the children of Spiritualists wander off to fashionable churches, to become psychically imbued with the church dogmas that their parents had strugglingly outgrown. All that I know of any future conscious existence I know through the ministrations of mediumistic sensitives and my own intermediary impressions and inspirations, coupled with occasional psychic lucidity.

When in Glasgow previous to this my last visit, I attended several of the séances of David Duguid, receiving paintings and also fine uplifting messages from 'Hafed' and others. My accompanying friend, Elder F. Evans, the Shaker, who was originally a materialist, wishing for something very positive in the line of manifestations to take back with him to the Shaker brotherhood, proposed that each of us should hold one of David Duguid's hands and see if the materialised hands of Steen and others would produce the paintings. We did so—and paintings were promptly produced. The medium was entranced and the eyes closed before the light was turned off. But to make the fact still more patent, if possible, we bandaged Duguid's eyes, turned off the light, and each took hold of one of his hands, and the paintings were again produced. 'Well,' remarked the Elder, 'this must be the work of God or of the devil or of the spirits.' Continuing, the Elder drily said, 'It cannot be the God of the patriarchs and the prophets of Israel, for they never showed any taste for art; and it cannot be the devil, for I don't believe in him, and so it must be the spirits.'

Is it said—'Aye—but the séance was in the dark'!

Yes, but there is nothing very suspicious or dangerous in darkness. Our earth is in darkness about half of the time. Photographers develop their pictures in the dark, and in America potatoes,—pardon the simile—grow under ground in the dark and the 'wicked things' persist in so doing. And I am sure that they would not submit to the 'test' of being compelled to grow on top of the ground in the blazing sunlight. Light and heat, as Crookes' radiometer proves, are forces, and, as such, may so adversely affect the chemical manipulations of the invisible intelligences as to prevent these manifestations. How little we know of what gravity is; how little we know of the chemistries of the heavens, and how the unseen intelligences use and control the finer forces in the production of visible effects. All force, even pure steam, is invisible. One of the costliest lawsuits ever brought into an American Court was caused by the deviation of the surveyor's needle by his pocket penknife. Such was the testimony in

the judicial trial. It is not wise for us to get too cranially top-heavy when dictating terms to be observed by spirits in producing their varied manifestations.

Permit a fair question : Which are the best calculated, or the more competent, to fix the conditions for convincing manifestations, mortals or spirits themselves ? When I reach the Summerland, which cannot be many years distant, I feel certain that I shall desire to communicate with my loved friends still vested in mortality, and unless I radically change my mind when over there, I shall insist upon suggesting and fixing my own conditions for manifestations, and if cantankerous mortals do not fancy them, they can stay at home and attend to their own business.

While in Glasgow last week I held sances with Mr. Duguid, both in his own house and in the residence of James Robertson. The latter was a rigid test sance. Those present were intelligent, candid, and critical, occupying high social positions. The ladies being asked to withdraw, off went Duguid's coat, waist-coat and so forth, followed by the most careful and crucial examination of his person for cards and concealed instruments used in legerdemain trickery. We found nothing. And here I must confess that I felt ashamed of taking part in this business, considering the fact that David Duguid had maintained the reputation of industry, honesty and the strictest moral integrity for forty-five years in Glasgow, and twenty-five years in the service of Mr. Robertson, giving in the mean time hundreds upon hundreds of sances 'without money and without price'—and all because he conscientiously loved the great and blessed truth of angelic ministries—a truth that brushes away the mourners' tears and is freeing millions from the thralldom of sect and soul-crushing creeds.

The sance formed, cards were passed to us for our private marks. There was David singing a short invocation ; David entranced ; and the light turned off, and very soon paintings appeared upon the several cards, some of which were fine, and each person knew, distinctly knew, his own private mark. There was no tearing off of the corners of cards. During the production of these paintings in the dark, lights were seen flying and flashing about the medium and about the room. Later a large painting was produced in a subdued light with all of us looking at the process, the medium being entranced and his eyes closely shut. The sance was a gratifying and a most perfect success.

There have been, it must be admitted, shameful, wicked frauds practised in America in the name of Spiritualism and generally practised by travelling pseudo-psychic tramps. Several of these I have aided in exposing, and we have learned the lesson through much tribulation that it is indispensable to know the moral standing and character of mediums, especially travelling ones, before trusting too much in the genuineness of their manifestations. To me there is nothing more terrible, spiritually terrible, than fraud in the name of a subject so sacred as immortality—so holy as angelic ministries.

Upon the whole, though my labours have been extremely arduous, I have richly enjoyed this visit to England. Only yesterday I returned from spending a day with the distinguished Alfred R. Wallace. While in his library I felt every moment that it was good to be there. His hospitable home, including the good wife, the scenery, shrubbery and flowers, in every sense is entrancingly beautiful. His firm stand for Spiritualism and his moral bravery in the diffusion of it have endeared him to millions upon millions of English-speaking and Latin people. Under the promise of returning to England again, I leave by a White Star steamer to-day, May 26th, with backward thoughts and soul-felt gratitude for the many kindnesses received during the past two months from English, Scotch and Welsh Spiritualists. My heartfelt prayer is that heaven's choicest and richest blessings may rest upon and abide with them.

MR. CECIL HUSK writes : 'While thanking you for the kind expression of sympathy, in last week's "LIGHT," on my bereavement by the sudden passing away of my dear wife and fellow-worker, permit me to express my heartfelt gratitude to the hundreds of friends who have sent me letters of sympathy and condolence. It is impossible for me to reply to them individually at this time. They who knew her most loved her best !'

RELIGION AND PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

'J.B.,' writing in 'The Christian World,' for May 25th, discusses the question of the relation of psychic phenomena to religion. After alluding to the theories which have been propounded as to the origin of religion in the dream-experiences of savages, 'J. B.' continues :—

'A curious change is coming over opinion. Thirty years ago the dream and ghost theory was being urged as a disparagement of the religious position. The spiritual concept was shown as a product of savagery, and that seemed enough to dispose of its claims. But the modern thinker demands, "Why is it that among all the races of mankind, civilised and uncivilised, there has appeared, and has survived, the belief in a life after death ?"

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'Finally, it is on the great fact of the spiritual world that the New Testament rests. Its whole implication is there. That the visible is the vestibule of a greater invisible ; that the material is symbol of the immaterial ; that body is for the sake of soul ; that earthly conditions are for the working out of Divine conclusions ; that death is but transition ; that the spirit in which we are now doing our work will show itself in consciousness a thousand ages hence ; these are parts of Christ's Gospel and these are carried also in the facts offered us to-day.'

A TOKEN OF APPRECIATION.

We gratefully acknowledge the receipt of £20 from a friend resident on the Continent, 'as an expression of gratitude for the benefit which he has derived from "LIGHT" during a period of several years.' Our friend modestly asks that neither his name nor his nationality should be made public, and of course we accede to his request, tendering to him at the same time our most hearty thanks.

HUMAN RADIATIONS.—Under the title of 'The Talk of the Hour, or the Explanation of the Human Rays,' Mrs. Northesk Wilson (Flora Hayter) has published her observations on the latest riddle that is puzzling scientific men. Mrs. Wilson commences her 'Foreword' with the remark, 'Personal story of how I discovered the so-called N Rays. 1905.' After a serious illness she discovered a luminous aura round her arms and fingers, and it grew brighter and stronger as she recovered her health. She wrote to Sir Oliver Lodge about it, and incidentally, she acknowledges some indebtedness to prior workers in the field. She describes the meaning of the colours, as given by Dr. Stenson Hooker, and corresponding closely with Mr. Leadbeater's analysis in 'Man, Visible and Invisible,' and refers to the healing power of human magnetism, and to man's spiritual nature and latent psychic powers ; but, we are tempted to ask, where does Mrs. Wilson's 'discovery' come in ?

learning and instruction, and which could produce no authoritatively armed scholar to answer public inquiry and objection, would be speedily and derisively crushed. Only English influence and diplomacy has saved Theosophy from such a fate. Since no Gurus or Mahatmas are found willing to teach and support Theosophy, the society has for some little time repeated the error of the early Blavatsky days, and supplied this deficiency by setting up the existence of a 'White Lodge,' which has its seat somewhere in Central Asia, the members of this lodge replacing the ghostly and flying Thibetan Mahatmas of the past.

This letter must not, however, be unduly prolonged, as an Indian devotee is anxious to forward a communication to 'LIGHT' with this, on behalf of his fellow-students, on these matters. But before concluding I should like to remark that it is surely hardly to be wondered at if Christians here refuse to co-operate in the work of a society which exacts something like the deification of a Blavatsky and holds beliefs with which Christian theology cannot agree.

The great Vedantists and their followers are certainly not anti-Christian nor anti-any religion; they say, 'Our Indian religious truths are philosophical and totally unsectarian,' and they allow that all religious systems are necessary until man attains to that position of understanding when he is capable of assimilating the highest truth, the knowledge of the one truth of which every different religion is but a manifesting portion. This highest conception of truth and the knowledge of how to realise atonement with God through practical and personal experience, is only to be found in profound philosophies having their foundation in India. Only practical ascetics and Yogins can possibly demonstrate such teachings, and this is one of the great reasons for their hostility towards Theosophists, who, through their leaders, are allowed to believe in the utility of invisible Gurus. 'How could an invisible master instruct in the practical science of Yoga?' they ask; for only through the incessant attention towards the subjugation of the mind and senses on scientific lines could union with the Supreme obtain. Psychic phenomena and faculties are never to be confounded with yogic experiences and practices, but Western students too often confuse these issues. The new Hindu movement which has been recently called into being, is directed by India's chief and most celebrated preceptor, Mahatma Agamya Guru Paramahansa, known to groups of students not only in Europe but in America and Japan. His influence will be one of great importance for the West in its researches, for the object of his work will be to instruct and spread the higher Vedanta teachings, and appoint learned ascetics to speak and teach under his control.

Particulars concerning a society already formed and working under his guidance in England, will shortly be made more publicly known, and this movement, called the 'Parama Siddantha Sabha' (Faculty for the demonstration of the Highest Truth), will endeavour to draw together only such members as earnestly seek and desire the highest knowledge. On coming to India such fit student-members would thus have the great privilege of meeting directly some of India's best thinkers and fellow students, and arrangements are now begun to establish something in the nature of a colony, where permanent bungalows will afford residence to disciples of His Holiness in both hemispheres. It is by this hoped to establish a more real and brotherly sympathy between East and West than any existing society has hitherto had power to accomplish.

J. STANNARD,
c/o King and King,
Bombay.

Vevij Camp, May 5th.

[The letter from the 'Indian devotee,' referred to by Mrs. Stannard, is necessarily held over for our next issue.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. WALTER AND OTHERS.—Next week.

SOUTHWOLD.—We shall have pleasure in publishing your letter if you will kindly favour us, in confidence, with your name and address.

'A CONSTANT READER.'—If you will send us your name and address we will write to you with reference to your communication of May 26th.

RECENT JOURNEYINGS IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND WALES.

By J. M. PEEBLES, M.D.

Though coming to England for the recreation of change and a sea-voyage rest, I have, since my arrival, been upon the platform for Spiritualist societies every Sunday, and a number of times on week-day evenings. I could not fill one-half of the calls to lecture that I have had. Spiritualism has assumed a more solid and religious character in England, Scotland, and Wales than in America. In Manchester and Glasgow more people (so it was said) were turned away on the Sunday evenings than were able to get into the halls; all of which shows admirable zeal for the diffusion and upbuilding of the truth of present-day angel ministries. In Nottingham and Birmingham I found enthusiastic and prosperous societies. In Sheffield and Leeds, and on down into Wales, I found the Spiritualists thoroughly awake; in Merthyr Tydfil they sang a hymn in Welsh, which deeply interested me. I also suffered somewhat from the echoes of the revival from a chapel just across the narrow street from where I was stopping with friend Davis for the night. In singing, praying, screaming, and agonising, they kept me awake till eleven or twelve o'clock at night. Poor souls!—I pitied them.

In Glasgow I was the guest of that clear, versatile writer, logical speaker, and devoted worker in the interests of Spiritualism, James Robertson; and what much interested me in his lovely home was that his vigorous grown-up children were all Spiritualists, attending and taking part in the Sunday meetings. This fact spoke well for home influence. In America it is very often the case that the children of Spiritualists wander off to fashionable churches, to become psychically imbued with the church dogmas that their parents had strugglingly outgrown. All that I know of any future conscious existence I know through the ministrations of mediumistic sensitives and my own intermediary impressions and inspirations, coupled with occasional psychic lucidity.

When in Glasgow previous to this my last visit, I attended several of the sances of David Duguid, receiving paintings and also fine uplifting messages from 'Hafed' and others. My accompanying friend, Elder F. Evans, the Shaker, who was originally a materialist, wishing for something very positive in the line of manifestations to take back with him to the Shaker brotherhood, proposed that each of us should hold one of David Duguid's hands and see if the materialised hands of Steen and others would produce the paintings. We did so—and paintings were promptly produced. The medium was entranced and the eyes closed before the light was turned off. But to make the fact still more patent, if possible, we bandaged Duguid's eyes, turned off the light, and each took hold of one of his hands, and the paintings were again produced. 'Well,' remarked the Elder, 'this must be the work of God or of the devil or of the spirits.' Continuing, the Elder drily said, 'It cannot be the God of the patriarchs and the prophets of Israel, for they never showed any taste for art; and it cannot be the devil, for I don't believe in him, and so it must be the spirits.'

Is it said—'Aye—but the séance was in the dark'!

Yes, but there is nothing very suspicious or dangerous in darkness. Our earth is in darkness about half of the time. Photographers develop their pictures in the dark, and in America potatoes,—pardon the simile—grow under ground in the dark and the 'wicked things' persist in so doing. And I am sure that they would not submit to the 'test' of being compelled to grow on top of the ground in the blazing sunlight. Light and heat, as Crookes' radiometer proves, are forces, and, as such, may so adversely affect the chemical manipulations of the invisible intelligences as to prevent these manifestations. How little we know of what gravity is; how little we know of the chemistries of the heavens, and how the unseen intelligences use and control the finer forces in the production of visible effects. All force, even pure steam, is invisible. One of the costliest lawsuits ever brought into an American Court was caused by the deviation of the surveyor's needle by his pocket penknife. Such was the testimony in

the judicial trial. It is not wise for us to get too cranially top-heavy when dictating terms to be observed by spirits in producing their varied manifestations.

Permit a fair question: Which are the best calculated, or the more competent, to fix the conditions for convincing manifestations, mortals or spirits themselves? When I reach the Summerland, which cannot be many years distant, I feel certain that I shall desire to communicate with my loved friends still vested in mortality, and unless I radically change my mind when over there, I shall insist upon suggesting and fixing my own conditions for manifestations, and if cantankerous mortals do not fancy them, they can stay at home and attend to their own business.

While in Glasgow last week I held séances with Mr. Duguid, both in his own house and in the residence of James Robertson. The latter was a rigid test séance. Those present were intelligent, candid, and critical, occupying high social positions. The ladies being asked to withdraw, off went Duguid's coat, waistcoat and so forth, followed by the most careful and crucial examination of his person for cards and concealed instruments used in legerdemain trickery. We found nothing. And here I must confess that I felt ashamed of taking part in this business, considering the fact that David Duguid had maintained the reputation of industry, honesty and the strictest moral integrity for forty-five years in Glasgow, and twenty-five years in the service of Mr. Robertson, giving in the mean time hundreds upon hundreds of séances 'without money and without price'—and all because he conscientiously loved the great and blessed truth of angelic ministries—a truth that brushes away the mourners' tears and is freeing millions from the thralldom of sect and soul-crushing creeds.

The séance formed, cards were passed to us for our private marks. There was David singing a short invocation; David entranced; and the light turned off, and very soon paintings appeared upon the several cards, some of which were fine, and each person knew, distinctly knew, his own private mark. There was no tearing off of the corners of cards. During the production of these paintings in the dark, lights were seen flying and flashing about the medium and about the room. Later a large painting was produced in a subdued light with all of us looking at the process, the medium being entranced and his eyes closely shut. The séance was a gratifying and a most perfect success.

There have been, it must be admitted, shameful, wicked frauds practised in America in the name of Spiritualism and generally practised by travelling pseudo-psychic tramps. Several of these I have aided in exposing, and we have learned the lesson through much tribulation that it is indispensable to know the moral standing and character of mediums, especially travelling ones, before trusting too much in the genuineness of their manifestations. To me there is nothing more terrible, spiritually terrible, than fraud in the name of a subject so sacred as immortality—so holy as angelic ministries.

Upon the whole, though my labours have been extremely arduous, I have richly enjoyed this visit to England. Only yesterday I returned from spending a day with the distinguished Alfred R. Wallace. While in his library I felt every moment that it was good to be there. His hospitable home, including the good wife, the scenery, shrubbery and flowers, in every sense is entrancingly beautiful. His firm stand for Spiritualism and his moral bravery in the diffusion of it have endeared him to millions upon millions of English-speaking and Latin people. Under the promise of returning to England again, I leave by a White Star steamer to-day, May 26th, with backward thoughts and soul-felt gratitude for the many kindnesses received during the past two months from English, Scotch and Welsh Spiritualists. My heartfelt prayer is that heaven's choicest and richest blessings may rest upon and abide with them.

MR. CECIL HUSK writes: 'While thanking you for the kind expression of sympathy, in last week's "LIGHT," on my bereavement by the sudden passing away of my dear wife and fellow-worker, permit me to express my heartfelt gratitude to the hundreds of friends who have sent me letters of sympathy and condolence. It is impossible for me to reply to them individually at this time. They who knew her most loved her best!'

RELIGION AND PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

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OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
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APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library, should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

THE ASCENSION.

We have just passed by 'Ascension day,' the day which, in the Church's Calendar, commemorates the so-called ascension of Christ from earth to heaven. 'The Acts of the Apostles,' in telling the story of the ascension, is very naïve. After the utterance of certain parting words, we are told, 'When he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.' The fact probably was that after a certain levitation the slight materialisation of Jesus came to an end, and disappearance followed. We cannot accept the physical resurrection of Jesus. What probably happened was that he was able to appear again and again to his disciples for a certain period (perhaps the accepted forty days), and then came the final vanishing into the spirit-world.

The records are fairly precise as to his appearances, which were never in public but only to his disciples and to those who were in sympathy, and this final appearance and disappearance occurred, it seems, in the presence of the inner circle only. The light which Modern Spiritualism throws upon all this is most precious. It not only unravels the story and explains it, but it also connects it with the resurrection and ascension which are common to us all: and that is for us the vital matter.

What we already have experienced and know makes it highly probable that if a being like Jesus could reappear amongst us, even in unspiritual London, and live his life and gather about him an inner circle of devoted disciples, banded together in the love of him and loyalty to him, the story of the forty days of reappearance after death and of his ascension might be repeated. But such a life in London would probably mean as much scorn and suffering as it meant in Jerusalem. The real lesson of the ascension is found in that. Ascension day is a day which suggests joy after sorrow, triumph after defeat, glorious life after shameful and miserable death. And still it is true that by this dark road of suffering and surrender the ascension into heaven has to be won.

'He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it,' said the Master; and such a promise, glorified by such an example, had a thrilling significance for his first followers; for he led them on, like a forlorn hope, against the combined forces of a selfish and animal world whose victim he became. But they knew him as victorious in

the end, passed on far beyond the reach of the wicked hands that nailed him to the cross, for ever free from the bonds and barriers over which men had power; and so they won the all-sustaining thought that in losing life they might really find it. What wonder, then, that, from his bright world, they seemed to see him beckoning them on, cheering them amid their trials, heartening them in the moments of their shrinking, and, in the fatal hour, whispering the old brave word, 'He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.'

All that, for us, may be only symbol, but, even as such, it may be fact, for it is still true for us that the road to the higher life lies through the solitudes of surrender. Even in this life, and for this life, it is true that the life of the body is not all—is not the highest: but it is ever true that we must pass to the higher stages of the body's life through the upyielding of the lower. Apart altogether from religion and the spiritual life, this is true simply on the lines of human evolution. The march from the merely animal to the truly human can be accomplished only by losing life and finding it.

Then, on the intellectual and ethical planes, how true it is that we can reach the higher life only by surrendering things dear to us as life at certain stages of our development! How often has it happened that men and women have been called to larger ideas, to deeper trusts, to brighter hopes, to an intenser hold upon spiritual ideals, only through the sacrifice and death of narrower and lower ideas, trusts and hopes which, nevertheless, were at the time dear as life itself! No earnest-hearted reformer, breaking away from the old refuges, ever escaped the pain of that tearing away of the fibres that had bound him to the past. No light-hearted revolter, no gay heretic, can ever be the true reformer. With the tears and agonies of their Gethsemanes must all the Christs purchase their ascension days:—

Great truths are dearly bought. The common truth,

Such as men give and take from day to day,
Comes in the common walks of easy life,
Blown by the careless wind across our way.

Great truths are dearly won, not formed by chance,

Not wafted on the breath of summer dream;
But grasped in the great struggle of the soul,
Hard buffeting with adverse wind and stream:

Not in the general mart, 'mid corn and wine;

Not in the merchandise of gold and gems;
Not in the world's gay hall of midnight mirth,
Nor 'mid the blaze of regal diadems;

But in the day of conflict, fear and grief,

When the strong hand of God, put forth in might,
Ploughs up the subsoil of the stagnant heart,
And brings the imprisoned truth seed to the light.

Wrung from the troubled spirit in hard hours

Of weakness, solitude, perchance of pain,
Truth springs, like harvest, from the well-ploughed field,
And the soul feels it has not wept in vain.

So is it with those of us who are not great reformers but only humble seekers after the truth. It is painful to come to the light: it is like losing everything when we are called to strike our tents and go forth into a strange land—perhaps into the wilderness: and no wonder! All old memories, trusts and hopes lie there. The revealer of the truth looks for the time like a destroyer. The light-bringer takes on the appearance of a robber, bent on taking from us the pearl of great price instead of revealing where it really is. But, again, all this is but the repeating of the old experience that losing life is the only way to find it. Yes! we shall never be saved until we are ready to be lost—pushing on to the promised land, to the larger life and duty, to truth and God.

DR. PEEBLES' FAREWELL LECTURE IN LONDON.

The spacious Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists was crowded on Thursday, May 25th, by the Members, Associates, and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, who had assembled to do honour to Dr. J. M. Peebles and listen to the address on 'Immortality: Its Naturalness, its Possibilities and its Proofs,' which he had prepared for delivery at the rooms of the Victoria Institute and Philosophical Society of Great Britain, but which, at the last minute, was rejected by the Council of the Institute, as reported in our issue of April 29th last.

The occasion was a memorable one, and was made still more noteworthy by the re-appearance of the President of the Alliance, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, for the first time this year, after his recent serious illness. Mr. Rogers, after expressing his extreme pleasure at once again being able to occupy the position of chairman, paid a graceful tribute to the long and earnest labours of Dr. Peebles on behalf of Spiritualism, and expressed the hope that, although he was returning immediately to America, he would see his way to come back to England before long. He regretted that Dr. Peebles had met with a discouragement in the treatment he had received from the Council of the Victoria Institute, but he felt that there was perhaps some excuse for them. While in Switzerland recently he had seen a notice exhibited by a smart shoeblack, 'English spoken; American understood,' and he felt that perhaps the Victoria Institute, unlike the intelligent Swiss shoeblack, did not understand American, and were rather alarmed at the doctor's treatment of the subject. (Laughter.) He could not think, however, that the decision of the Council of the Institute expressed the sentiments of the members. Probably there was someone on the Council whose smile was sunshine and whose frown was thunder and lightning, who was opposed to the delivery of the Address, and the others had not the courage to vote against him. However, he was glad to say that the Alliance was to have the benefit of the Address, which would not have been the case had it been accepted by the Institute. Before calling on Dr. Peebles, Mr. Rogers said that he had the pleasure of meeting Madame d'Espérance in Switzerland, and he was happy to convey her good wishes and kind remembrances to her friends and fellow members of the Alliance. (Cheers.)

DR. PEEBLES, who was received with loud and continued applause, briefly explained the circumstances which led up to the preparation of his Address, and related how, at the last moment, when the audience had assembled, he was called into the Council room, and gravely informed that his Address was not appropriate to the occasion. He asked 'Why?' and the Rev. Canon Girdlestone replied that it contained the doctrine of Spiritualism. Dr. Peebles said, 'Yes, there are but two isms, Materialism and Spiritualism, and I am a Spiritualist.' To this he received no answer, except that the Address was unsuitable, and a request that he would withdraw it, which, accordingly, he did.

Having read the 'prelude' to his Address, Dr. Peebles expressed his regret at his inability to see his manuscript sufficiently well to read it, and, at his request, Mr. E. W. Wallis read the Address, which was frequently applauded.

At the conclusion, the PRESIDENT asked, 'Can you imagine that even the members of the Victoria Institute would have suffered from hearing that Address?'

THE REV. JOHN PAGE HOPPS, after complimenting Mr. Wallis on his manner of reading the Address, spoke on behalf of the audience and the Alliance, and expressed their sincere sympathy with Dr. Peebles in regard to the treatment he had received from the Council of the Victoria Institute, who had sinned against light and knowledge and against good manners, and had been guilty of behaviour such as the poorest dockers in the East End would not have practised. Still, Dr. Peebles had the great consolation that his Address was printed and circulated among the members of that Institute, and they had therefore been able quietly to read it, whereas it might otherwise have been buried among their 'Proceedings.' Dr. Peebles

had always been in the fore-front, he was the 'Spiritual Pilgrim'; and in this instance he had, as usual, taken his staff and planted it right ahead of that Institute, and there it remained! (Applause.) During his many years of service to humanity he had accomplished a great work, and wherever he had gone he had been a consoler, a sower of good seed, a humanitarian, a prophet, and a teacher; and he (Mr. Hopps) had much pleasure in proposing as a resolution that—

'This meeting of Members, Associates and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in giving a hearty welcome to Dr. Peebles, thanks him for his spirited and enlightening lecture, congratulates him upon the good work he has so long been able to do, and wishes him a happy journey home.'

Mr. Hopps said that Dr. Peebles would return to his home in America with the loving good wishes of hosts of friends, and, when he came to take that other journey, which all must take sooner or later, he felt assured that he would go to a beautiful home in the Beyond. Turning to Dr. Peebles and taking his hand, Mr. Hopps addressed him personally in feeling terms, expressing the thought that when he did go to the other side it would be to lovers, friends, companions and followers—whose affectionate welcome would make it a bright and happy home-coming for him. (Loud applause.)

DR. A. WALLACE expressed his great pleasure in being called upon to second the resolution. He felt that the Members of the Alliance ought to be especially pleased to see on the platform two such youthful octogenarians as Dr. Peebles and the President, whom, he felt sure, all were glad to welcome back to his old post. Mr. Rogers, he said, was doing a splendid work both in the Alliance and in 'LIGHT,' which he regarded as an epoch-marking journal. (Applause.) With regard to the Address, he sympathised with the Council of the Victoria Institute; he could understand their feelings, it was too much for them, they were not sufficiently receptive to appreciate it; but Dr. Peebles need not be disturbed, the Address would have a much larger audience, as he had just been informed that it would be translated and published in many foreign languages as well as in English. (Applause.)

DR. PEEBLES, who spoke with evident emotion, confessed to a feeling of sadness in having to say good-bye; he was an old man in years, but not in spirit; he had been treated with such uniform kindness by Spiritualists in England, Scotland, and Wales, and had been so warmly received by large audiences wherever he had been, that he felt loth to go. He would be happy to tell his friends in America of the growth of Spiritualism in Great Britain. It was, he said, a glorious thing to know that beyond death we shall meet again and know each other, clasp hands in loving reunion, and walk in white in a day carrying no sunset. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT announced that the lecture had been printed in pamphlet form, copies of which might be had, price one penny each. He suggested that those who appreciated it should purchase copies for distribution among their friends; and several hundreds were disposed of at the close of the meeting.

IMMORTALITY—ITS NATURALNESS, POSSIBILITIES AND PROOFS.

The poet, Leigh Hunt, when late in life, was called the 'immortal boy.' Youth flushed with hope has its work in front of it; while old age, rich in experiences, calmly awaiting the summons, has a grand charm of its own—a serene sanctity comparable to a moss-covered cathedral, within which are devotion, meditation, and uplifting music.

Old age does not hinge upon the number of years lived. The honourable and venerable who have lived in obedience to the divine laws of Nature, and in continuous activity, having some noble purpose in view, have in no sense of the phrase 'outlived their usefulness.' These last are their best days. There is a desert palm in our American west-lands famous for a single flowering bud. The bud unfolds, sheds its fragrance and dies; but the palm tree itself, straight and stately, continues to grow. Life and death are not only natural, but beautiful in their time and place.

The falling and disappearance of the body is incident to the birth of the spirit, which, when passing into the many-mansioned house of the Father, often signals backward and whispers, 'I still live.'

Having passed, by a number of years, the milestones that mark the octogenarian's life journey, and facing—as I calmly do—the fading sunset of mortality, it is only natural that I should very seriously ask, Does man consciously survive death? And if so, what awaits him beyond that cold, grim portal?

In this essay, involving some of the testimonies of the past and some present evidences of a future conscious existence, looking to immortality in the sense of endlessness of being, I do not appear in the rôle of the teacher. Far from it. Nor do I profess in the least to have exhausted a subject that has occupied the attention of eminent minds in all ages; but I appear rather in the character of one thinking aloud—one talking confidentially to himself upon a great, upon an all-important subject—or as one openly exposing his thought-out conceptions and matured convictions, with some of the more potent reasons for entertaining them, as shields and supports, as helps to faith and knowledge, while nearing day by day the boundary limits of mortality.

The greatest and most all-inclusive word that ever fell from human lips in English-speaking countries is—God! The Christ did not say, 'God is a spirit,' but '*Pneuma Ho Theos*,' God is Spirit; and spirit, embodying consciousness, life, purpose, wisdom and will, lies at the foundation of, and is the original generating cause of all things, from the amoeba up to man, who stands upon the very apex of earth's organic pyramid, the crowning glory of Nature.

Belief in the existence of God is intuitive, and in some form and under some name is as universal as the races and tribes of humanity. Circumnavigating this planet several times and meeting some of the lowest specimens of the human species, such as the Bushmen of Australia, the Maoris of New Zealand, the black tribes of Central Africa and the wood-fibre-clad natives of the Pacific Islands, I have no hesitation in stating emphatically that these barbarous and semi-barbarous tribes have some conception of gods, or of an over-ruling, Supreme Being, to whom they rear rude altars, and have some unique forms of worship.

It may be further stated that the God-idea springs up in human nature spontaneously, and belongs to the moral necessity of things. It is deeply rooted in the conscious minds of all reasoning human intelligences. It is intuitional if not axiomatic, and requires in support of faith therein no more laboured and logical proofs than does the existence of space in which minor objects move and planets revolve.

True, there are arches with imperfect keystones; there are temples ill-constructed to architectural adjustment; there are art failures from colour-blindness. These, though misfortunes, are not irremediable. And then, there are intelligent men born with such coronal brain-depressed organisations as to put them in the category of postponed possibilities of full-orbed men. These individuals doubt God, deny the historic Jesus, question a future life, antagonise religion, and strive to find a moral sustenance in the leprosy of a dreary, atheistic materialism.

The much-exploited phrase in the vocabulary of agnosticism, '*The Unknowable*,' rooted in the relativity of knowledge, has few charms for the erudite thinker or religious philosopher. Gravitation, the alpha and omega of our knowledge in physics, is unknowable. We only know something of its effects. Neither scientists nor psycho-physicists can, with the most delicate instruments, verify the presence of ether, yet they say it must exist, because light and heat cannot pierce and pass through perfect emptiness. But whether ether be homogeneous world-stuff, or whether it consists of Leibnitz's monads or of discrete units filling all space, no one knows. It is unknowable. And yet the most advanced philosophers and astronomers believe in it as a frictionless presence, permeating space—believe in it not only as a possibility, but as an indispensable necessity.

'God,' exclaimed the enthused Neo-Platonic Proclus, 'is Causation.' Causation implies intelligence and energy. And conscious intelligence towards a given end implies purpose, wisdom and power. These are everywhere manifest in this measureless and orderly universe. And

unquestionably, finite order could no more plan and constitute itself than books could print themselves, or than Chaos could plan and constitute Cosmos. Neither could order and chance exist together at the same time in a universe of unconditioned Causation. They are direct contraries. Nor could there be order and immutable law without an all-energising and overruling Author—which Author, God, makes life, evolution, order, harmony and morality possible. Further, the fixed motions of the universe, in all their intermingling, tortuous varieties (yet of inherent unity in origin), are strictly mathematical—strictly governed by law, else no eclipse could be astronomically calculated decades of years before its occurrence.

Furthermore, God is not a heartless absentee from this pulsing, mind-thrilled universe of life. He is immanent in the opening bud, in the planetary spaces, and in the hearts of all reasoning men as the highest ideal, the Final Perfection. Indeed, the Divine Existence, as the self-conscious Reality, is self-evident, and that which is self-evident to sane minds and *savants* does not depend upon or require a multiplicity of evidences for verification.

It was Descartes who, founding positive knowledge upon self-consciousness, affirmed this: '*Cogito, ergo sum*' (I think, therefore I am). This was not a *petitio principii*—a begging of the question, as ultra-materialists have repeatedly stated, because in thinking, something is done, which something (the reverse of nothing) implies a conscious actor, the existing Ego. I think—I cognise—and cognition, related to intuition, knows—knows something of Causation, for it is ever existing and ever manifesting as cause and effect. Intuition (I purposely avoid the phrase 'First Cause') being the immediate perception of fundamental and essential truth, antecedent to and independent of reason, education, or experience, knows—satisfactorily knows—that uncaused Causation must be a finality.

Had the philosophising Proclus said, 'God is conscious Causation,' he would nearly have reached the exalted moral altitude of the Christ, who declared, 'God is Spirit.' Evidently God, while pure spirit, is both personal and impersonal, centre and circumference—measureless—infinite. His oneness, His inscrutable individuality, *plus* personality with its attributes, is predicated of consciousness, purpose, and will, and His Divine Personality implies energy, life, design, determination, power, wisdom, and love. These are the major attributes of personality, and are manifest, from seashore sands to the stars and suns that dot the mighty immensities above us.

Be sure, we can never comprehend the incomprehensible; we may never know God in His absolute totality, but we may know, and *do* know enough of Him—enough of this great, good, Almighty Spirit-Presence, through revelation and intuition and through the stupendous works of Nature, to call forth our unbounded confidence and profoundest reverence. God is good, and His righteous presence thrills the measureless universe with mingled mercy and justice, love and wisdom. Encircled in the Divine embrace and leaning upon the loving bosom of this infinite Tenderness—this Divine Reality—is my spirit's abiding trust and rest. 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.'

(To be continued.)

A RECORD WALK.—Mr. George H. Allen, the vegetarian long-distance record walker, has published an interesting account of his pedestrian feat last summer in a little book called 'From Land's End to John o' Groat's' (L. N. Fowler and Co.). In lively style he recounts his experiences, and at the end gives a full review of the circumstances of the walk, including the last week's menu in full. He says, 'The impression that flesh foods are in any single case necessary for the purpose of sustaining the body in the finest physical condition is not only misleading but is based upon ignorance.' He also avoided manufactured concentrated foods, holding that all the food necessary for health and strength can be selected from the *natural* world. His meals were slight, and he usually walked at least fifteen miles before the first meal. He had less than seven hours' sleep each night, and lost little or no weight during the walk. He covered 908 miles in less than seventeen days, averaging 63 miles a day during the last five days, and finishing with 73½ miles on the last day. His philosophy is that 'the only life which can be called life is to be in harmony with our own consciences.'

SOME RECENT SÉANCES.

By 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

On April 10th I had a séance by appointment with that veteran medium, Mrs. Treadwell, at her house in St. John's Wood, and the only two persons who controlled the medium were (1) 'Sophy,' who made a few remarks immediately after trance supervened, and (2) my late wife, who spoke with me for fully an hour. The details of the séance cannot, of course, be given, but I note one or two points: (1) She told me not to sit with Mr. Bournell for spirit photography, as on a former occasion she could not get photographed and was satisfied that, although he was a good medium, he could do nothing at all for me in that way. (2) She said she did not think she could appear and show herself at Mr. Husk's séances, but said that if I went some of the other friends could. (3) She told me she knew of the transition of my oldest friend, and that his wife had met him when he entered spirit life, but it would take him a long time to return to me, as he had so much to learn. (4) She recalled certain matters, known to ourselves alone, which occurred twenty years at least before she passed on, and put a number of interesting questions to me, including one as to the amount of a legacy left to one of our family, and expressed her satisfaction regarding its amount. Just before her control ceased she asked me to arrange with the medium for another sitting to be held later, and I accordingly did so. I will deal with the details of that sitting after describing the one I had with Mr. Cecil Husk, at his residence at Peckham-rye, on April 13th last. On that occasion I was accompanied by a younger daughter, as our clairvoyante was unable to be present. This member of the family is a good sensitive, and an excellent psychometrist and palmist, so she was able to help me in obtaining results. The sitting was a very long one, and in total darkness, and included some of the persons with whom I had sat there on a previous occasion. There were plenty of demonstrations, but I only deal with what happened to ourselves, and I note that: (1) 'John King' showed himself to us by the aid of a luminous slate. (2) My son F. showed his face and spoke a few sentences to his sister and myself. The face was not very distinct, and 'John King' said, 'He tells me he is nineteen years old now'; which was quite correct. (3) My daughter then heard her mother's voice saying, 'I cannot see,' and then the luminous slate came up and disclosed my wife's face to both of us. The upper part of the face was very distinct, but the lower part was not so. She spoke a few loving words to us in succession, patted her daughter's head with her fingers, and, later on, succeeded in doing so to myself and afterwards patted my hands. The fingers were quite warm and human. (4) My brother-in-law, who died in September, 1903, afterwards showed his face and was very distinctly seen by us both. He also spoke a few loving words. (5) 'John King' and 'Uncle' both told me that my lamented friend, so long associated with me in investigations into Spiritualism, and who had often attended at Mr. Husk's when here, was present but unable to show himself or speak, for want of power.

I have only to add that the rest of the circle got similar results to those given to us, and appeared amply satisfied with the whole séance, which lasted for two hours.

About a week later my daughter, accompanied by a lady friend, attended a séance at Mr. Husk's at which I was unable to be present, owing to another engagement. On her return she informed me that my wife and brother-in-law both came on this occasion, and 'the mother' gave 'the daughter' a message for me, which she duly delivered. This was corroborated by the lady who went with her, and who also informed me that she was quite satisfied with the identity of the materialised form which had come to her for the first time at this séance.

This closed my experience with Mr. Husk at this time, and I deal briefly in the last place with a séance I had with Mrs. Treadwell on May 1st. On this occasion, after the medium had passed under control, her guide 'Sophy' came and told me that only three persons would speak, namely my wife's brother, my lamented friend, Mr. J. S. R., who passed on

four years ago, and who always tries to come and make a few remarks, and my wife. These three came in succession, but I only note (1) that Mr. R. said nothing particularly new, or disclosing identity, but I had no doubt from the conversation that it was himself. (2) My brother-in-law was, however, much better than on the last occasion he controlled Mrs. Treadwell, and I discussed several matters with him, including the non-payment of an I.O.U. which I had found in his repositories, and he made some strong but true remarks regarding the character of the debtor, and the sad financial fate in store for him long before he would pass over. Regarding his missing will, he again asserted that the last time he saw it it was in a little black bag belonging to his mother, but, he added, it was such a small piece of paper that some of the family might have accidentally destroyed it. That is hardly possible, as the bag was one of the first things searched. He concluded by saying 'You don't need the will as the family have signed everything over to M.' That is quite accurate, but all the same I would have liked to have it. I may say that on a former occasion he told me that prior to his demise his health was very bad, and he had got to have little or no regard for anything under the sun. This was quite true, but I cannot understand his being so careless as to his will. However, there the matter must rest in the meantime.

(3) Regarding my wife's utterances on this occasion, I can hardly say much, except that she was herself as I knew her for close on forty years. She made a request to me that on my next séance with Mrs. Treadwell, in June, as she wished to speak to my two sons, they should be present, which request will certainly be complied with. It was clear to me that she is a diligent observer of all that is going on in our home, and visits it as often as power permits her. In reply to my questions she informed me that she herself, her brother, and our son had appeared at the first séance at Mr. Husk's, and her brother and herself had come to our daughter at the second; but she added that materialisation, in her view, was rarely satisfactory, as the light was dim, often the features were barely recognisable, and the whole demonstration was a matter of moments; and she rather preferred to speak to me, as she then did, through the vocal organs of Mrs. Treadwell, for a much longer period of time. The séance then closed with a message to me from a Mr. C., whose brilliant career at the Bar was suddenly closed by an attack of angina pectoris, and who has twice come back to me from the other side, spoken in his earthly voice, and otherwise completely revealed his identity.

This closed my present series of séances, but if anything worthy of record occurs at those to be held in June, they will be given to the readers of 'LIGHT' in due season.

[A strict adherence to our recently expressed intention to decline to report promiscuous séances at which due precaution had not been taken to secure the absolute genuineness of the phenomena, would perhaps have justified us in withholding some portions of the above narrative, but we have decided to print it in consideration of the fact that our esteemed correspondent considers that he had sufficient evidence of the identity of the communicants at Mr. Husk's séance, notwithstanding that the sitting was held in the dark.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold a Conference at Tottenham, 193, High-road, on June 4th. Mr. R. Boddington, at 3 p.m., and at 7 p.m., Messrs. W. E. Long and J. Adams.

MR. GERALD MASSEY.—We cordially congratulate Mr. Gerald Massey on having, on May 29th, completed his seventy-seventh year, and heartily trust he will live many years longer to continue his valuable labours for truth and humanity.

THE RESURRECTION.—In a report of an address at Southport, by Father Bernard Vaughan, the 'Daily Chronicle' of May 26th states that he said he 'found nothing in history so completely and abundantly proved from the historical point of view as the death and resurrection of our Lord. . . . To deny the physical resurrection required complete disbelief in the four Gospels, and in the four Pauline Epistles. Anglicans, like Canon Henson, might find difficulty in accepting the literal resurrection of Jesus Christ, but Roman Catholics had none. They believed that our Lord had risen, and that they too themselves could rise from the dead.'

PERSONALITY IN THE LIVING AND THE 'DEAD.'

The May number of 'The Annals of Psychical Science' contains an Address delivered by Professor Richet before the Psychological Institute in Paris, on 'Personality and Changes of Personality,' and an article by Mrs. Laura J. Finch on the question, 'Should the Dead be Recalled?'

Professor Richet defines personality as being 'bound up with consciousness; to be a person means that one is a consciousness . . . which reflects, which examines and studies itself, and which distinguishes itself from others.' Further, personality is dependent upon memory, for 'if one of us were to lose completely the memory of all that he had done, seen or heard, his personality would have disappeared.' Our personality also changes with time, for 'when we have arrived at old age we are no longer a person identical with that which we were at the time of infancy, youth, or mature age.' Sensations form another feature of personality; sensations of our internal organs, of the outside world, consciousness of effort and muscular movement.

Professor Richet goes on to show how the sensations, and consequently the personality of the moment, are modified by circumstances, by the dress one wears, by feelings of hunger, pain, or contentment. He then refers to some of the more remarkable changes of personality, such as the Férida case, that of Miss Beauchamp, and some experiments of his own on hypnotised individuals. One of these, being told 'You are changed into a parrot,' murmured, after a few moments of reflection, 'Must I eat the grain that is in my cage?' Professor Richet says:—

'This indicates to what extent he had entered "into the skin" of the personage. Note, as a curious phenomenon, this use of the word *I*. His personality had not disappeared; he had consciousness of himself, and he said "*my* cage . . . must *I* eat?" Here, then, is a change of personality identical with that met with in dreams. For in a dream one can believe that he is changed into a parrot, and yet the personality has not disappeared; it has been transformed; he is a parrot, but he is a person still.'

Another subject, a young woman, on being told that she was changed into an old woman, immediately assumed one of the most remarkable external aspects of old age, namely, deafness. In this way Professor Richet proceeds by easy stages towards the more complicated cases, and his inference is that all, even the most striking, personifications by mediums (such as Mrs. Piper and 'George Pelham'), are only extensions of the same principle of variation in the normal personality:—

'I have shown you the series of insensible transitions which may be observed between the doubling of the normal personality, the pathological and hypnological alterations of personality, and, lastly, that production of simultaneous and systematic personalities which, in spite of their marvellous appearance, do not seem to me to be anything but the disintegration of a single human consciousness.'

This identification of separate phenomena which shade insensibly into one another is no more convincing than it would be to argue that because we pass by gradual transition from London to Paris, therefore Paris is a suburb of London. The Professor seems to take too little account of the fact that the secondary personage may be absolutely incongruous with the original one.

Mrs. Finch's article, 'Should the Dead be Recalled?' was originally read to a Theosophical Centre in Paris. It aims primarily at reconciling spiritualistic phenomena with theosophical prejudices, and affirms that we have not to decide 'whether the theory of Spiritism be good or bad, true or false, but whether the phenomena of Spiritism exist or do not exist.' If they exist, they are phenomena of Nature, and therefore demand 'the attentive and serious examination of every serious-minded person.'

Mrs. Finch refers to the immense body of 'consentient testimony to phenomena of an abnormal order,' which is found 'everywhere, in every age, in every clime.' . . . 'If we neglect to study these phenomena, we shall have the sad

spectacle before us of a large public becoming the prey of charlatans.' She argues that—

'The progress and happiness of humanity demand the examination of these facts. But, to be able to study the phenomena in question, we must continue to receive them. Consequently we are obliged to evoke the spirits of the departed—since, according to the Spiritualist doctrine, it is they who manipulate, so to speak, that force called psychic; who produce, in short, the phenomena we require. In the name of true Science, I claim that it is not only our right but our duty to evoke the "Dead," and it is a duty which is binding not merely on ourselves, but equally so on the "Dead." In fraternal harmony the "Dead" and "Living" must work together, that out of their united efforts may spring forth a light which will clear away the obscurities enveloping the phenomena, and will lift this nascent science out of its present nebulous condition into one of certainty and promise.'

But Mrs. Finch has more to say, and this is worth pondering by the objectors to Spiritualism:—

'If man evokes the "Dead," it is perhaps because the "Dead" were the first to evoke man. They have called us, they have made us believe—in ways more or less subtle—in their survival after the death-change, and it is they who first showed a desire to open up communication, to enter into communion with the incarnated spirits on earth. In the legends of every age and clime there have been Samuels who were awakened in the night by mysterious voices. The Christ of the Christians, Apollonius of Tyana, Buddha, all heard the voices of the Invisible giving them counsel and guidance in their work of reformation. It was not Socrates who evoked his "demon"; it was his invisible friend who evoked Socrates. It certainly was not Joan of Arc who evoked the Invisible Forces she named St. Michael, St. Madeleine, &c. By evoking the departed—provided the aim be noble and serviceable to humanity—we are but following the examples set before us by the greatest minds who have visited the earth.'

CATHOLICS ON SPIRITUALISM.

A remarkable feature of the 'Catholic Truth Conference,' held at Southport on May 25th, was the prominence given to a discussion on Spiritualism. The first paper read at the conference was one on this subject, by the Rev. T. J. Walshe, F.R.A.S., in which the phenomena of Spiritualism were accepted as real, but its teachings, beyond the fact that man consisted of soul and body, were denounced as anti-Christian. It was clear, said the reverend gentleman, 'that the voices heard at séances were not the voices of the just. The identity of the spirit could not be established.' He quoted the old assertion by Dr. Forbes Winslow (which was refuted many years ago by Dr. Eugene Crowell), 'that in England alone at least ten thousand people were confined in lunatic asylums on account of having tampered with the supernatural.' (We may note here that to say that large numbers of people are the victims of ignorance of psychic laws, is not to infer that they have 'tampered' with the supernatural.) The speaker admitted that 'one good result of the cult of Spiritualism had been the investigation of certain powers of the soul, usually in abeyance, out of sight and out of conscious use'—namely, the powers of extended consciousness and memory displayed in persons under hypnotic control, for he did not admit the Spiritualists' claim of spirit influence. The Church allowed the use of hypnotism, or 'psycho-therapeutics,' but not for mere purposes of ostentation. 'With reference to Spiritualism, it was well known that the Church had frequently, through the Congregation of the Inquisition, condemned its use, and in its most recent decisions the Church had absolutely forbidden her children to give any countenance, even by their presence at séances, to practices that are so fatal to the physical, mental, and moral well-being of the individual and of society at large.'

This is all very well for a peroration, but how about the facts?

In the discussion which followed, a happy remark of Cardinal Newman's was quoted. In one of his sermons he said that they were apt to be surprised when they read of the soul and spirit apparently going outside the body, but what

surprised him (the Cardinal) was not that the spirit left the body, but what kept the spirit in the body.

The usual stale old arguments against Spiritualism were trotted out, but the principal danger feared was evidently that of having another religion substituted for (Roman) Christianity.

LAUGHTER AND HEALTH.

Writing in the 'Daily Chronicle' of April 27th, a 'Physician' says: 'If it were generally understood how salutary the act of laughing is to the bodily health, there might be more laughter than lamentation in the world, and farcical comedies prove more attractive to the invalid than physicians.'

He thinks people grow fat because they laugh—laughing promotes appetite, oxidises the blood, assists digestion, produces the contented body, the fit temple of the contented mind which is said to be a perpetual feast. There is, therefore, distinct benefit to be derived from being able to see the humorous side of men and things.

The 'Chronicle's' 'Physician' further says:—

'Mental worries, real or imaginary, will so prevent nutrition, through the influence of mind on body, as to produce wasting of the muscular system and those other tissues which subservise it. If a melancholy man would look on the lighter side of life, and laugh a little more, his appetite and digestion would improve, and he would be able to acquire that minimum amount of fat which is necessary to the well-being of the body—fat being a necessary constituent of the healthy brain and nervous system. The laughing habit is one, therefore, that is worth cultivating. It is a matter of everyday experience that one feels the better for a good laugh, an explosion of laughter being, in truth, a nerve-storm, comparable in its effect to a thunderstorm in Nature (on a very small scale), doing good by dissipating those oppressive clouds of care which sometimes darken the mental horizon.'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Mediums and Stimulants.

SIR,—I think that the remarks made by Mr. Withall, as chairman at the meeting of the Alliance on May 11th, as reported in 'LIGHT' of May 20th, should be carefully borne in mind by all who act as hosts to mediums and by all members of circles. There is, certainly, a drain on the vital forces of both medium and sitters, for the effects produced cannot be obtained without the necessary force being drawn from the medium and from such of the sitters as are capable of furnishing it. If a recuperative beverage is needed after a séance, let it be cocoa or some similar preparation, or even warm milk, the most natural of all.

While on this subject, I would urge that something practical be done towards carrying out the suggestion which was made by Mr. Withall on the same occasion; namely, that Spiritualists should form a temperance society which all mediums should be specially invited to join. The mere existence of such a society would, I feel sure, set a standard of conduct, and thus exercise a powerfully beneficial moral influence.

SITTER.

Marriage of Miss May F. Walker.

SIR,—The news of the marriage of Miss May Fraser Walker, youngest daughter of Mrs. H. Jeffrey Walker, of Cambridge House, Ealing (for several years a member of the Alliance), to Mr. G. J. Muir, Assistant-Chief of Customs, and (late) British Vice-Consul of Mombasa, British East Africa, will be of interest to many readers of 'LIGHT.' The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Dr. Oliver, LL.D., Vicar, at St. Mary's Church, Ealing, on the 25th inst., at 10.30, as Mr. and Mrs. Muir had to leave early by Continental express en route for East Africa. The youthful bride, who was given away by her father, was picturesquely gowned in white silk. Miss Jocelyne Culverhouse, a tiny maiden of two summers, was a lovely little bridesmaid. The bride's travelling dress was grey tweed and picture hat. The presents were numerous and handsome. The happy pair left amidst a shower of rice and the loving wishes of a large circle of friends.

W.

What is Obsession?

SIR,—Dr. Colles, in his recent Address, as reported on p. 247 of 'LIGHT,' referred to obsession, using the word sometimes in the sense of spirit control, as in trance mediumship, sometimes in that of a peril to be avoided. I believe that a great deal of the acrimonious discussion which this subject has already aroused has arisen from a want of agreement as to what is meant by the word. Obsession is not merely control of the organism by 'some spirit other than that which normally inhabits it,' as defined by Dr. Colles; it is literally a *besieging*, it is the attempt, successful or otherwise, of another spirit to get control of the organism *against the will* of the normal inhabitant.

I believe that Dr. Colles is quite right in saying that obsession is by no means 'a peril peculiar to Spiritists,' and that it is 'more common outside our ranks than within them'; I agree with him that the study of Spiritualism is a safeguard; but I go further, and say that I believe that Spiritualism gives us the clue to, and puts us on our guard against, a lesser form of obsession, which is that more usually known as temptation, or besetting sin. We are told that 'evil communications corrupt good manners,' and in many cases these suggestions, which religious teachers tell us arise from our own fallen nature, may really be 'obsessions' by low-minded entities who take pleasure in leading us astray. In fact, Bunyan's allegory of the 'Siege of Man-Soul' applies exactly to the kind of influence to which I refer. I think much good might be done if, when we receive an inward prompting which we know to be wrong, we were to treat it as a suggestion from an undeveloped entity, and answer back kindly but firmly, taking the ground that neither he nor we can find real pleasure in wrong-doing, and leading both our own thoughts and those of the tempter to higher aims and more enduring pleasures. It is probably not a 'devil' that comes to us with unacceptable suggestions, but merely a brother from the spirit world, whose misfortune it is to be poor in spiritual graces.

CARITAS.

The Problem of Protestantism.

SIR,—I always look forward with special interest to the advent of 'LIGHT,' and the leading article always affords much food for thought. The subject in your issue of May 20th appeals to me very strongly. May I venture to make a few remarks upon it? You say that Western Protestantism is 'cool and non-committal.' Possibly, yet the true recognition of God's universal action surely comes from the West, not from the East. I think it is Wolff who speaks of the religiousness of the Eastern man, who refers all events to God, compared with the Western's reference of things to physical causes. What is wanted is to see that the Divine act is the physical causation.

The Western science is but a suppression for restoration, and the Eastern and Western *must be united for perfection.*

With regard to the 'Fall of Man,' does not God raise us, through falls which do not relate to our individual nature, and so have not the element of *sin* in them as generally supposed?

Trusting that it will never be necessary for us to cry 'Let there be light,' but that it may be always with us.

E. P. P.

With the Yorkshire Spiritualists.

SIR,—It was my privilege, on Sunday, May 28th, to address upwards of two thousand hard-headed Yorkshire folk, in St. George's Hall, Bradford, who were keenly and deeply anxious for my utterances on 'Some Talks with the Dead—Communications from their Lips,' and for one hour and a half they followed me from the opening sentence to the close. The Bradford papers reported the proceedings and many professing Christians have been set thinking of those who have 'crossed the bar' and many were more than convinced that there is a future life. Clairvoyant eyes saw on the platform the galaxy of old workers in the cause of Spiritualism who have 'passed on.' Dear Mrs. Burchall and her husband were delighted with the result of their efforts. Well done, Bradford!

May 29th, 1905.

JOHN LOBB.

'Anti-Vivisection.'

SIR,—Under the above heading, I am glad to see the letter of 'J. M. L.' in 'LIGHT' of May 20th, but should like to suggest that to be effective, thought should, for the time being, be concentrated upon an individual vivisectioner known to one, with all the force of one's will power, desiring his conversion to anti-vivisection.

E. P.

The Origin of Spiritualism.

SIR,—I see that Dr. Colles, in his address to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, reported in 'LIGHT' of May 20th, affirmed that 'Spiritualism does not date from the middle of the nineteenth century,' and it may be of interest to your readers to know that I recently purchased an old book that was printed in the year 1730, and sold by Sam Noble, bookseller in Little Britain, entitled 'Some Manifestations and Communications of the Spirit in a forty days' ministrations at that place, London, by the mouth of Hannah Wharton; taken in shorthand by M. T. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirit."

VINCENT N. TURVEY.

SOCIETY WORK.

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

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mrs. Webb gave us an interesting address and good clairvoyant descriptions. Solo by Mrs. Murrell. Sunday next two well-known workers, Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, will speak, and we hope to have a full hall.—N. B.

BRIGHTON.—COMPTON HALL, 17, COMPTON-AVENUE.—On Sunday morning last our platform was occupied by Mrs. Curry, and in the evening Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker gave an uplifting address on 'The Inner Life.' Next Sunday, Mr. Clarke, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m. Hall open every Tuesday from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. for inquirers, &c.—A. C.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. George Spriggs kindly gave an interesting address on 'Mediumship,' embodying much of his startling and convincing experience. Mrs. Weedemeyer's clairvoyant delineations were all recognised. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Robert King, address.—H. A. G.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. H. Boddington delivered an impressive address on 'The Divine Trinity.' Miss Nita Clavering sang a charming solo. Mr. F. Clark presided. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., service and public circle. Thursday (Room 3), public circle for clairvoyance and psychometry.

MANOR PARK.—COLEIDGE-AVENUE.—On Sunday last Mr. Savage's psychometrical descriptions were all recognised. On Sunday next Mr. Ronald Brailey will devote the evening to psychometry. There will be a charge of 3d. each in aid of the building fund (no collection). Mr. Greayer, the late secretary, will make a statement concerning the working of the society for the past year.—H. C.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday evening, May 17th, Mrs. Roberts gave an earnest address, and Mr. Roberts gave clairvoyance. Sunday last Mr. J. Macbeth Bain delivered an address on 'The Ultimate Human Good of the Spiritual Doctrine.' We hope to have Mr. Bain again. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Porter. Wednesday, June 7th, at 8 p.m., address.—W. T.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday morning last the circle, which now meets in the large upper room, was well attended. Many strangers received advice, descriptions and messages. The evening teaching on 'The States of the Dead' was well received by a good gathering. Friends are cordially invited to the circle on Sunday next, at 11 a.m., to be conducted by W. E. Long. Whit Sunday, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., 'Pentecostal communion.'

CHISWICK.—AVENUE HALL, 300, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. G. H. Harris addressed a large gathering. In the evening Mr. J. B. Frost spoke well on 'Angel Ministers of Light.' On Monday last the general meeting discussed the work for the ensuing session. Mr. J. B. Imison was elected president, and Messrs. Slade and Tidman vice-presidents. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton. Monday, at 8 p.m., Mr. A. Savage, clairvoyance.—H. G. H.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. A. V. Peters gave twenty-three descriptions of spirit friends, seventeen of whom were readily recognised, the remaining six being acknowledged before the audience left the rooms. The details were remarkable; several loving and helpful messages were also given. Miss C. Laugh-ton officiated at the piano, and rendered a solo. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided over a crowded audience. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. W. Boulding, address. Early attendance requested. Doors open at 6.30.—S. J. WATTS, Hon. Secretary.

CARDIFF.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. H. F. Doris dealt ably with 'Our Household.'—G. H.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last the usual service was held. In the evening the address by Mr. J. W. Adams was very much enjoyed.—J. P.

FOREST HILL.—101, BOVILL-ROAD, HONOR OAK PARK.—The first meeting of the old society, reorganised, was a success, and a happy evening was spent.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Burton gave an interesting address. In the evening Mrs. Barton presided, and Miss A. V. Earle gave an encouraging address.

NOTTING HILL.—61, BLENHEIM-CRESCENT.—On Tuesday, May 23rd, Miss Katie Hett, under control, made some cheering remarks, and Mr. Moses, lately returned from Australia, gave clairvoyant descriptions.—J. P.

CARDIFF.—87, SEVERN-ROAD, CANTON.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Dan Morgan delivered an illuminating address on Psalm 48, verses 12 and 13, and Miss Barnstaple gave good clairvoyant descriptions.—J. H.

SOUTHAMPTON.—WAVERLEY HALL, ST. MARY'S-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. E. Oaten gave a fine address on 'The Coming of the Holy Spirit.' After-circle well attended; clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Harvey.—W.

FOREST HILL.—99, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Miss V. Burton's address on 'Faithfulness' was much appreciated by a large audience. At the after-circle splendid clairvoyant descriptions were given.—T.

LEAMINGTON.—PRIORY-TERRACE, NEAR G.P.O.—On May 28th and 29th Mrs. Burrows, of Leicester, gave good short addresses, followed by convincing clairvoyant descriptions. Many strangers come to our new central hall.—B.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Lawrence read an interesting paper on 'The Religion of Deeds.' In the evening Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn gave an address on 'Spiritual Avenues.'—N. T.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—GOTHIC HALL, BOUVERIE-ROAD.—Sunday morning last 'Spiritualism from the Bible Standpoint,' was discussed. In the evening Nurse Graham gave an address entitled 'From Orthodoxy to Spiritualism,' and convincing clairvoyant descriptions.—H. G. S.

LITTLE ILFORD.—CORNER OF THIED-AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD, MANOR PARK.—On Sunday last Mr. George Brewster-Gow gave an interesting address on 'The Romance of Life'; also a cornet solo. Mr. H. J. Abel presided, and conducted the after-circle.—A. J.

STRAFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Phillips gave short addresses, and Miss Bailey's clairvoyant descriptions were very good. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion; at 7 p.m., Mr. R. Boddington. Thursday, June 8th, the Rev. John Page Hopps.

DUNDEE.—GREENLAW PLACE, CLEPINGTON-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last the Lyceum children, under conductor Clark, gave the service and acquitted themselves admirably. In the evening Mr. Charles Dand gave a reading, and Mrs. Ogilvie's clairvoyant delineations were very convincing and well recognised.—J. M.

GLASGOW.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, 136, BATH-STREET.—On Sunday morning last Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave an excellent address on 'Spiritualism: Necessary and Helpful.' It was so, not only to the Spiritualist, but to humanity at large, for all mankind were more or less affected by spirit influence. At the evening meeting Mrs. Wallis answered written questions in a masterly fashion. Successful clairvoyant descriptions at both services.—J. M. S.

PLYMOUTH.—Balfour Hall, Princess-square.—On May 24th a successful concert and dramatic sketch were ably given, conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Dennis. On Sunday afternoon Mr. J. G. Jackson's address was followed by discussion. In the evening Mr. Warner Clark spoke on 'The City of the Soul.' Clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Trueman, and sacred solos beautifully rendered by Miss Wakeham.—S.—*Oddfellows' Hall, Morley-street.*—On May 24th and 26th our usual meeting and séance. On Sunday last Captain Greenaway gave an excellent address on 'Has God's Power of Healing ceased?' Miss Lethbridge rendered a solo very nicely. Mrs. Short gave excellent clairvoyant descriptions.—C.—*Grenville-road Mission.*—On May 24th excellent clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Evans. On Sunday last Mr. Adams gave an interesting address on 'The Secret of Life.' Good clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Evans and Mr. Eales.—H.

MR. THURSTAN'S HOUSE-BOAT PARTY.—On Saturday, June 17th, friends will meet at Paddington Station, main line, for Windsor Station, at 12.30 (noon) for 1 p.m. train. Particulars can be obtained from Mr. F. W. Thurstan, Riversfield, or from Mrs. Walter, 50, Wesley-road, Leyton.