

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.

Swami Abhedananda, in reply to an address of welcome at Bangalore, lately, gave a Discourse in praise of Vedanta in which he again claimed for it that it was the witness-bearer to a genuinely universal religion. Christianity, he says, is centred in Christ, Mohammedanism in Mohammed, Buddhism in Buddha, Judaism in Moses; whereas only the religion which is based upon the eternal principles and the spiritual laws which govern us at all times can claim to be universal. Such a religion, he argues, is Vedanta, which 'embraces the fundamental principles of all religions but does not suffer, as other religions do, when historical personality is taken away.'

The religion and philosophy of Vedanta are universal, he says, for another reason:—

It teaches unity in variety, that the Godhead is one, although the eternal supreme Being is worshiped under different names and in various forms. The God of the Mohammedans is the same as the God of the Christians; He is also the same as the Jehovah of the Jews, the same Father in Heaven, called Siva, Vishnu, Divine Mother and various other names. God is one. Why should we quarrel in the name of God? We ought not to quarrel on account of our difference of ideals, but we ought to examine our ideals and see the harmony that underlies the names and forms of the Divinity. And this truth was given in the most ancient of the Holy Scriptures of the world—the Rig Veda. In it we find, 'That which exists is one, men call it by various names.' Men worship it in different forms, but the real Godhead is one and cannot be many. Other religions do not teach this truth so clearly as it has been taught by the Vedas. We accept the unity of the Godhead and variety of manifestations, and the variety of names and forms. We can embrace all the religions of the world. We can call ourselves brothers and sisters of the followers of the different sectarian and special religions. The true follower of Vedanta is neither a Hindu nor a Mohammedan, neither a Christian nor a Jew, but in principle he is one with them. We can go to a church and worship the Divinity there. We can go to a mosque, we can go to a temple, or sit under a tree, and worship the same Divinity everywhere. The Hindu sees the Divinity in his own bosom and realises that this body is the temple of the living God.

All this is admirable, but is it so very different from the teaching of Jesus who said, 'God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth?' or from the teaching of Peter who said, 'I perceive that God makes no distinctions, but, in every nation, he that reverences Him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him?'

'The Religion of a Layman' (Edinburgh: Waddie and Co.) is a severe but highly intelligent 'Review of the Westminster Confession of Faith,' with wide excursions into the general field of theology: and everywhere the writer

rationalises with genuine Scotch insight and grip. The whole is described as 'The serious reflections of a long life,' and the work is decidedly worth the attention of those who can tolerate, enjoy, or profit by reflections that push the ordinarily accepted creeds very hard.

The writer does not appear to be a Spiritualist in any sense, but he sees that 'the revival of occult science in our day is one of the most curious phases of modern thought,' carrying with it the belief of 'a body of men and women whose character, position in life and learning put them beyond suspicion': and yet 'the average church-goer' looks upon them as mad, or blasphemous, or scornfully tolerates them: but 'to accept of miracles on written evidence two thousand years old, and reject evidence of living men and women of the present day is absurd. If evidence can be accepted to prove the miraculous, the Spiritualists can supply abundance,—not of the dead past but of the living present.'

A great many people are troubled about the age of the various New Testament books, in the light of modern knowledge (the so-called 'Higher Criticism'). Nothing is certain, but the following dates are now generally accepted:—

Matthew	A.D. 80 to 90.
Mark	" 70 to 80. <i>Minus xvi. 9-20,</i>
Luke and Acts	" 90 to 95.
John	" 100 to 120.
Romans, I. and II. Cor., Gal., Eph., Philip- pians, Col., I. and II. Thess., II. Tim., Phi- lemo	" 50 to 60,
I. Tim., Titus	" 100 to 180.
Hebrews, James, I. Peter, Jude	" 75 to 85.
II. Peter	" 100 to 160,
I., II., III. John	" 100 to 120.
Revelation	" 90 to 100.

The Editor of 'The Modern Review' (The Indian Press: Allahabad) contributes to the latest number before us a serious Paper on 'The Decrease of Hindus.' He calculates that, in ten years, the Hindus in India have decreased by 21,357,873. He also calculates that the followers of all the other religions have not decreased. Mussulmans have increased by 8'9 per cent., and Christians by 27'9 per cent. He gives from the Census Report four causes of this decrease of Hindus: Famine; the prohibition of the remarriage of widows among many Hindu castes, owing to which many women of child-bearing age remain childless; the too early marriage of boys and girls; and the conversion of many Hindus to Christianity and Mohammedanism, chiefly to the former. From 1891 to 1901 more than six hundred thousand Hindus became Christians: and he says: 'In seeking to find out from what caste the Christian missionaries obtain the largest number of converts, we find that the majority of recruits belong to those castes which

generally become famine-stricken, or which the Hindus despise and whose touch to them causes defilement.'

The Editor gravely discusses possible remedies for this decrease of Hindus—remedies which are all suggested by the causes: but, although it may and does interest us to take note of these facts, we are not particularly anxious about the decrease which causes our good friend pain. Some of his remedies he is prepared to find will be denounced by orthodox Hindus as un-Hindu. With that he does not agree. Everything is Hindu, he says, which is calculated to preserve the Hindu race and keep it from decay.

'India' is responsible for the following. There is much food for thought in it, and we are unfortunately in a position to think it is probably true:—

The Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, who has just returned from a visit to India, has been telling the 'Christian Age' a story of how an old Hindu came from a distant village to talk with a missionary. The old man had resolved to become a Christian. But suddenly he stopped and asked, 'Sahib, if I become a Christian, shall I have to get drunk, for I should not like that?' 'It is a miserable and humiliating thing to have to say,' adds Mr. Pearse, 'the only drunken man I have seen on this (the Asiatic) continent has been the English soldier.'

The following, from 'The Christian Life,' will interest many of our readers: 'CHELMSFORD. On Sunday, April 28th, Mrs. Page Hopps conducted a very helpful service, and preached an able and instructive sermon from the text, "Rejoice, ye righteous."'

At one of our Lyceums we once heard a dainty little hymn by Marie Corelli which has haunted us ever since. Perhaps the heavenly tune had something to do with that, but the words alone are very winsome. The hymn is a children's prayer:—

In our hearts celestial voices
Softly say:
'Day is passing, night is coming,
Kneel and pray;'
Father, we obey the summons;
Hear our cry.
Pity us and help our weakness,
Thou Most-High.
For the joys that most we cherish,
Praised be Thou.
Good and gentle art Thou ever:
Hear us now.
We are only little children
Kneeling here—
And we want our loving Father
Always near.
Take us in Thine arms and keep us
As Thine own.
Gather us like little sunbeams
Round Thy throne.

'COLLOQUIES WITH AN UNSEEN FRIEND,' by Walburga, Lady Paget (Philip Wellby, 3s. 6d. net), is a collection of automatic writings turning almost entirely on the idea of reincarnation. The experiences narrated purport to be those of a spirit who lived on earth during many periods. He describes ancient Atlantis, the times of St. Francis of Assisi, of the Guises and of the Revolution in France. Various incidents narrated illustrate the theosophical idea that the world is ruled by a band of secret leaders, men of intellect who work in obscurity, and who, among other things, forbade Napoleon I. to invade England. Asked concerning a favourite dog which had died seventeen years before, the communicator said that dogs were already half human, and that this one had reincarnated as a man in an African tribe. In regard to the spread of Spiritualism, he said: 'The best course is to let people know that you feel it to be the first and most essential thing to study—that there is nothing so necessary to man's well-being as a clear comprehension that life does not end with the destruction of the soul vehicle which we call the body.'

THE ASCENSION OF THE BODY.

Thursday, the 9th inst., was a Christian festival, the original observance of which can be traced to a very early date in our era; it is, however, but slightly observed as compared with Christmas or Easter. No doubt this is due in part to the fact that Ascension Day is not a public holiday, but there is probably, also, a deeper reason for inattention to this anniversary, among members of the churches. The significance of Christmas is fairly obvious. Even a man with but little religious sentiment can appreciate in some degree its teaching; Easter Day, too, appeals to a widespread hope, the hope of survival; but as the significance of Ascension Day is not so easily apprehended it is not a symbol that finds much response in the consciousness of the average man.

The festival of the Ascension celebrates the triumph of the body. This lies at the core of the story of the vision seen by the disciples, watching the levitated form of Jesus, the form in which at intervals during forty days they had touched him or beheld him. Whether the vision was subjective or, as Spiritualists will find no difficulty in believing, an objective manifestation of the materialised form of their Master, before that form finally passed into higher and more ethereal conditions, need not be determined. The point to note is that Jesus was seen ascending (no longer held by the law of gravitation) in a bodily form, to a condition described as 'the right hand of power.' This was a vivid object lesson concerning the triumph, not of the spirit alone, but of the body. Although the material with which he had clothed himself in order to be visible to eyes of flesh was dissipated, he was not therefore disembodied (to be discarnate is not to be disembodied), and it seems to have been to assure his disciples of the fact of his continued embodiment that he thus appeared ascending in their midst.

If perfected humanity is, indeed, to be embodied humanity, we are brought face to face with the question, What is the true relation of the Ego to its form here and now? For it is now that we should learn the process of which the ascension to 'the right hand of power' is the culmination. We should seek to understand by what method Jesus attained in bodily form to the ideal expressed in these words. Not by asceticism did he achieve this. Asceticism is the lesser of two evils, and under certain circumstances it is almost a good. The first Christians, like their Master, did not preach asceticism, but it was not long before the Christian churches had recourse to asceticism as the only alternative in the face of the temptations of a sensual world. Asceticism, however, leads to many evils, not the least of which is the re-action which it tends to produce.

The Christ ideal, by living up to which Jesus finally attained to 'the right hand of power,' was that of complete obedience to the law of purpose. His body was used as an instrument for the fulfilment of the purpose for which he had come into the world. There is a law of purpose in every portion of the human organism, and there is a yet more dominating purpose revealed in the structure of the mind and the ethical intuitions of the spirit. With the Christ these were apprehended in due relation, and his whole being was attuned to the fulfilment of the Divine Purpose of his incarnation. The majority of men and women are devoid of this realisation of what we have termed the law of purpose. 'Law' it may be called because it works in an orderly manner, and may be discovered by consideration of the functions of the threefold being of man—his body, his soul, and his spirit—or as we may otherwise denote them, his natural instincts, his reason and his conscience.

We observe that the ethical intuitions, or conscience, of the Christ prompted him to regulate his use of his bodily organism entirely by the principle of service. We are told that early in his career the suggestion was made to him to satisfy his personal bodily desires by the exercise of supernormal faculties, but that he refused to do so. For others he used these powers, but for himself he chose the path of the normal, and along this path attained to perfect self-control and complete service. His supernormal faculties seem to

have been used only for others, never as a means of avoiding the struggles and difficulties which beset his own life. He eschewed all short cuts, and worked his way up, shirking no contests (for to avoid a difficulty is not equivalent to mastering it), but meeting and overcoming, until his perfected vehicle was capable of further evolution, and of rising with him into the sphere of highest power.

In the 'Purgatorio' Dante is represented as addressing a spirit in these words :—

'Spir'to, diss' ille, che per salire te dome.' (Spirit, he said, who, in order to ascend, dost master thyself.)

Purgatory is not a place, but a state. It is here and now, just as heaven and hell are here and now. And in order that the true being, not formless, but in higher form, may ascend from the limitations of the flesh into fullest self-development and fullest power, mastery must be obtained over the instrument through which the soul relates itself to environment.

The recent experiments related by Dr. Duncan MacDougall in the May number of the 'Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research,' seem to bring the scientific demonstration of the existence of 'soul substance,' or what has been called the psychic body, within measurable distance. He tells us :—

'The net result of the experiments he has conducted is that a loss of substance occurs at death not accounted for by known channels of loss. Is it the soul substance? It would seem to me to be so. . . . If this substance is a counterpart of the physical body, has the same bulk, occupies the same dimensions in space, then it is a very much lighter substance than the atmosphere surrounding our earth, which weighs about one and one-fourth ounces per cubic foot. This would be a fact of great significance, as such a body would readily ascend in our atmosphere.'

Dr. MacDougall recognises, of course, that his experiments would have to be confirmed by many others before the results he has obtained can be regarded as reliable data; but 'if proven true,' as he says, 'the materialistic conception will have been fully met.' The importance of this fact, if proven, needs no emphasising; what does want emphasising, however, is that the relation in which the soul stands to its body during this earth life will probably determine the relation in which it will stand to its body after death. If this body of finer substance is within the physical, what shall hinder it from being affected now by the conduct of the physical?

If a man stands as slave to master in relation to the body now, is it likely that the positions will be easily reversed when the finer substance liberates itself from its heavy sheath? The 'right hand of power' is a position only attained by methods of healthy and wise self-mastery, methods devoid of exaggeration and in harmony with ascertained laws of being. Those who live according to these laws will be best equipped for the highest service when the physical sheath is dropped.

H. A. DALLAS.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—No meetings will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane during Whit week, but Mr. A. Rex, the spiritual healer, will recommence his healing work on Wednesday, the 22nd inst.

'THE HYMNS OF HERMES.'—Mr. Mead has just issued, through the Theosophical Publishing Society, the second volume of his handy shilling series of 'Echoes from the Gnosis,' entitled, 'The Hymns of Hermes.' The following passage gives some idea of how the great Source of Wisdom was viewed, in the emotional sense, by the followers of the Gnosis: 'This majestic Reality or Essence of Certitude was conceived of as a limitless Presence, or Person, of Light and Life and Goodness, which enwrapped the contemplative mind of the pious worshipper of God or the Good, of the single-hearted lover of the Beautiful, and of the unwearied striver for the knowledge of the True.' As to the special significance of hymns, Mr. Mead says: 'The singing of hymns on earth is the reflection of a heavenly mystery. Before the man can really sing in proper tune he must have harmonised his lower nature and transformed it into cosmos or fit order.' After stripping off the vices of the soul, the man 'cometh to that nature which belongs to the Eighth, and there, with those that are, hymneth the Father.' These little books form a convenient summary of the vast subject treated of by Mr. Mead in his larger works, and show that 'Hermes and Christ are not, in reality, strangers to each other.'

DR. ANNA KINGSFORD'S ILLUMINATIONS.

The many friends of the late Dr. Anna Kingsford will welcome the re-issue of her work 'Clothed with the Sun,'* which has for a long time been out of print. The original edition was published by Edward Maitland in 1889, a year after the death of Anna Kingsford, under the instruction, as he had reason to believe, of his deceased co-worker, who also supplied the title by impressing his mind, and in the same manner gave the design for the binding. In the preface to the first edition, which is reprinted in the present one, Mr. Maitland, describing how the illuminations contained in this book were received, says that they came by 'the spontaneous operation of the spirit in a soul duly luminous and responsive,' while 'the mind was indrawn and uplifted to . . . the inmost and highest sphere of man's manifold nature, the celestial, or "kingdom within." They were received 'anterior to the recent impulse given to such studies by the importation of kindred knowledges from the East,' and 'the work was carried on in complete independence of extraneous sources and influences,' yet the results were found to be in remarkable parallel with the Hermetic and Kabbalistic Gnosis, and it is interesting to compare these Illuminations with the Hermetic hymns and discourses recently rendered accessible to all by Mr. G. R. S. Mead.

The key-note of the book is that true religion must rest, not on historical records, nor on a reasoned interpretation of them, nor on a faith which takes on trust what it cannot understand, but on enlightened comprehension, the intellect illuminated by intuition, the man-nature instructed by the woman-nature; for 'the man and woman of the mind are the intellect and intuition.' In vivid and picturesque passages we are told that souls and personalities cannot be dealt with like arithmetical quantities; 'the soul is too subtle, too instinct with life and will for such treatment as this'; it escapes and defies all analysis. 'Even words, even pictures are symbols and veils. Truth is unutterable, save by God to God.'

Much is said as to the interpretation of the Scriptures, considered as mystical writings and as allegorical presentations of deep truths. Ancient myths concerning the soul are explained, and we are informed that :—

'Every human spirit-soul has attached to him a genius or daimon, as with Socrates; a ministering spirit, as with the apostles; or an angel, as with Jesus. All these are but different names for the same thing. My genius says that he does not care for the term angel, because it is misinterpreted. He prefers the Christian nomenclature, and to be called minister, as their office is to guide, admonish and illumine. . . . The genii are not fighting spirits, and cannot prevent evils. The genius never "controls" his client, never suffers the soul to step aside from the body to allow the entrance of another spirit. . . . The genius is never absent. Provided the mind is in a condition to see, he is always present. Other spirits need times to be appointed and engagements to be made for certain hours, because they may be elsewhere at any moment.'

This distinction between the ever-attendant 'daimon' and outside controlling spirits reminds us of Plotinus, who said that the 'daimon' was in reality the next higher portion of the person's own nature; a sort of super-consciousness, really part of ourselves, but acting as an apparently separate personality.

Regeneration, as described by Anna Kingsford, is the union or 'marriage' of soul and spirit, and the purification of the individual in all the degrees of his being, which are harmonised into one—the perfected spiritual man, or Christ.

In the different religious systems we find similar truths figured under different symbols, but in the mystery-teaching, reserved for those who were capable of appreciating it, the same truths appear to have been taught, perhaps in different manners. Those who read Anna Kingsford's books with an intuitive recognition of their meaning will perceive that the substance of all the world-religions is here presented, forming, as is said in the appendix, 'a synthesis of the Sacred Mys-

* 'Clothed with the Sun. Being the Book of the Illuminations of ANNA (BONUS) KINGSFORD.' Edited by EDWARD MAITLAND. Second edition, edited by SAMUEL HOPGOOD HART. Birmingham: The Ruskin Press, Stafford-street. Price 5s. net.

teries of the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Hebrews, and the Christians, expressed in terms derived indifferently from all.' This book will appeal specially to those who have read the other works by Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland (lately re-issued by the same publishers): 'The Bible's own Account of Itself,' 'The Story of the New Gospel of Interpretation,' and 'The Perfect Way,' to which latter this book is an indispensable sequel.

A MYSTIC ON SPIRITUALISM.

Although Mr. A. E. Waite has in some recent publications shown himself as an exponent of the mystical idea through personal experience, yet it is chiefly as the interpreter of the great mystics of the past and as the historian of mystical fraternities that he has established his literary reputation. In his recently published 'Studies in Mysticism,'* he goes beyond the strict confines of the subject, and treats of practices and opinions which the mystic pure and simple is inclined to disavow. Among the 'outer ways' which lead, or may lead, to the portals of mysticism, Mr. Waite sketches the rise and progress of mesmerism and hypnotism, and the schools of alchemy and ceremonial occultism.

In the chapter headed 'A Masque of Anarchy,' Mr. Waite gives a history of the Spiritualist movement, and makes special reference to the periodical literature of the subject. He mentions the 'Spiritualist' as having exercised a purifying influence, and says that:—

'It made possible an association of Spiritualists that intelligent persons outside the movement could approach for purposes of inquiry. This association first focussed the movement in England under creditable circumstances. Its council was composed of responsible persons, and included names known in literature; it instituted meetings and debates, and counted Dr. Wallace, Professor Crookes, Richard Burton, Roden Noel, and others more or less distinguished in various walks of life, among its guests and among the speakers at its meetings.'

This was the old British National Association of Spiritualists, of which the London Spiritualist Alliance is the successor. With regard to the establishment of 'LIGHT,' Mr. Waite speaks appreciatively:—

'Some time after the suspension of the 'Spiritualist,' the movement received an entirely new impetus by the publication of 'LIGHT,' which soon passed under the editorship of a man of culture and literary ability, and has now for many years been the recognised organ of Spiritualism in England. The book literature of this subject is not large, and there is, perhaps, little encouragement for its increase. It may therefore be said to be represented most fully, as it is also ably and honestly, by this journal, which has long since attained its majority. The most important occult enterprises of the nineteenth century have been made known to the public in its columns, and many minor interests, which would take their place in an extended history of the subject, have found through the same medium an opportunity to prefer their claims. This is enough to show that the periodical itself is fixed to no special line of thought, at least to the exclusion of others. It has also succeeded, where others have failed, in earning the respect of all sides, and even the sympathy of a section of public opinion outside transcendental circles in England.'

While presenting Spiritualism in rather a dubious aspect, Mr. Waite recognises that it may have a mission to accomplish. In spite of Christian teaching and mystical illumination, there is 'one message which the world needed and still cries for,' namely, the 'divine fact' of an Infinite Love and of a higher ministry in Nature than that which appears. Mr. Waite says (p. 129):—

'If psychic science can and does offer a demonstration of the existence of the soul and of its survival after death, man is at once placed in connection with another order of being than that with which he is at the present time environed, and it is possible to take an entirely different view of the mixed and disconcerting lessons of the natural world. We are at once neither the beast nor its product: we belong to eternity. . . . The first philosophical consequence is that the noumenal

world is within us, and we may proceed to interpret the nature and meaning of our present place in the phenomenal. We shall make in this way an initial step towards the only true natural religion, which is sacramental, and regards the visible universe, with Emerson, as an omen and a sign, or with Saint-Martin, as a great parable which, sooner or later, will give place to a grand morality.'

We further pass, the author tells us, 'to the realisation of the great truth that all real knowledge is within us, and that it is possible for the light and wisdom of the greater world to enter directly into our souls.' There are many earnest Spiritualists who regard the phenomenal side of Spiritualism as valuable principally in leading the mind to a realisation of the deeper truths which are involved in the fact of continued existence, for the mind that is convinced of the reality of a future life must also take into account the illimitable consequences involved by this higher conception of existence; problems arise before us which are not solved by passing through the gates of the spirit world, or even into its apparently higher spheres; even comparatively advanced spirits do not appear to have reached the 'inner sanctuary.' On earth and in the Beyond alike there is room for the mystical 'practice of the soul.'

Mr. Waite describes some of the processes and grades of advancement through which the soul has to pass, and shows how these are figured in the various rites of the Mysteries, of Masonry, and of the esoteric Orders, as to which the author has much to say. Yet with regard to these we are told:—

'Many of the initiations, both new and old, have, no doubt, to some extent missed their way. Perhaps it is an open question whether persons who are most fitted by their natural gifts, or by the inward disposition of their minds, to undertake the experiment of adeptship, have, in reality, much need for the sacramental part, at least, of the experience of initiation.'

The essence of adeptship is the experience known as ecstasy, or rapture; 'the adept possesses a peculiar illumination which is not dispensed to, or needed by, the ordinary faithful.' 'Mystic experience may be defined as the comprehension of the Absolute by means of vivid intuition.' Those to whom this experience comes, we believe, stand in no need of formal initiation into any secret society or mystic Order; and those who are not capable of receiving it will not attain to it by any such means. At the end of the book Mr. Waite hints at a higher guidance than can be obtained from any outward Order—a guidance under which all great teachers have been selected and prepared for their work. The inwardly illuminated—and all real spiritual leaders of mankind have known this inner light—have little to learn from outward teachings, and if Orders have been founded by them or in their name, the life has left these associations as soon as the inward guidance ceased to be felt by their leaders. Mr. Waite's book contains much recondite information as to the connection between the mystic Orders and the spiritual mysteries which their ceremonies are intended to symbolise, and which they perhaps shadow forth to those who are able to recognise the truth independently of its ceremonial presentation.

THE friends of Mr. J. J. Morse will be pleased to learn that he will speak at the May meetings at South-place Institute on Thursday next, the 23rd inst., and, as announced on the front page, at the Spiritual Mission, Prince's-street, Oxford-circus, on Saturday and Sunday, the 25th and 26th.

In a useful pamphlet, entitled 'The Story of the Bahai Movement,' published by Mr. J. M. Watkins, of Cecil-court, Mr. Sydney Sprague explains that 'the Bahai teaches that the essence and truths of all religions are one; he sees the Hindu, Buddhist, and Mohammedan with the same eye, and reverences the prophets of each,' and 'the particular mission of this teaching is to uncover the truth of all religion by removing prejudice and ignorance from the minds of the people, and uniting them in thought, faith and love.' Abbas Effendi is stated to be 'more than a teacher, he is a living example to men of what the Christ life really is; love and kindness seem to radiate from him, and his daily life is an expression of service to man.' Real religion must always be a living force, not a matter of observances, nor yet of mere intellectual belief, and as Mr. Sprague says, such a life as that of the 'Master of Akka' is an inspiration to the whole race.

* 'Studies in Mysticism, and certain Aspects of the Secret Tradition.' By ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE. London: Hodder and Stoughton. Price 10s. 6d. net.

PROFESSOR HYSLOP'S CONCLUSIONS.

In the 'Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research' Dr. Hyslop discusses the experiments indicative of communications from Dr. Hodgson, to which we referred on pp. 87 and 171 of 'LIGHT,' and gives many reasons for recognising, in the 'trance personality' speaking through Mrs. Piper, the characteristics displayed by his friend and co-worker while on earth, though with some peculiarities due to difficulty in communicating and others due perhaps to the effect of his experience of a larger and less trammelled life. Professor Hyslop says of one communication :—

'It serves more or less as evidence that the mental condition necessary for communication, at least in the "possession" type of mediumship, is like a delirious dream of a wandering and dreaming secondary personality. A more important observation, however, is the expression of thoughts which he would not have expressed, while living, in the way they are done here. There is an emotional colour in the communications at times that would have been inhibited in his natural conversation. The presence of this in them points to the existence of a trance condition on the "other side" as necessary for communication with this.'

We think that this 'emotional colour' denotes that the true man can now manifest without the artificial formalities and reticences of earth life. Conversation here is seldom quite 'natural'; it is restrained by conventionality from becoming 'emotional.' Professor Hyslop reminds us that these sittings with Mrs. Piper were held solely with a view to obtaining evidence of personality, and not for the exchange of ideas. In fact, once when Dr. Hodgson asked, through Mrs. Piper, the reason why a certain person had resigned his position, Professor Hyslop refused to answer, because the question and reply would have had to appear on the scrupulously preserved records of the sittings. Yet scraps of Dr. Hodgson's personal experience are allowed to filter through, with the label 'unverifiable' attached. We give a few, and wish there were more of them. Dr. Hodgson said, at various times :—

'It is suffocating here. I can appreciate their difficulties [in communicating evidentially] better than ever before. . . It is, I find, most difficult to use the mechanism and register clearly one's recollections. I have much sympathy for George [Pelham], whom we badgered to death, poor fellow. He gave me all I had to hope for, in spite of my treatment of him. Now just keep your patience with me, and you will have all you could ask for. . . It is delightful to go up through the cool ethereal atmosphere into this life and shake off the mortal body. . . In leaving the body the shock to the spirit knocks everything out of one's thoughts for a while, but if he has any desire at all to prove his identity he can in time collect enough evidence to prove it convincingly. . . The change called death, which is really only transition, is very different from what one thinks before he experiences it. That in part explains why Myers never took a more active part after he came over here. He had much on his mind before he came over, which he vowed he would give after he came over, but the shock [was such] that many of his determinations were scattered from his living memory. This is a petty excuse, but a living reality—a fact. It is unmistakably so with everyone who crosses the border line.'

Professor Hyslop discusses the alleged triviality and confusion of the messages at considerable length, dwelling on the fact that identity is best proved by trivial incidents, and saying :—

'The general supposition which, to the mind of Dr. Hodgson and myself, explains the persistent triviality and confusion of the messages, is that the communicating spirit at the time of communicating (not necessarily in his normal state in the spirit world) is in a sort of abnormal mental state, perhaps resembling our dream life or somnambulant conditions. We cannot determine exactly what this mental condition is, . . . but the various disturbances of the normal consciousness or personality in the living offer clear illustrations of the psychological phenomena which we produce as evidence of spirits when these phenomena are supernormally produced.'

Another source of confusion and error, Professor Hyslop thinks, is in the mental condition, and in the limitations determined by the habit and experience of the medium, which influence the transmission of messages; and again, we do not know what is the nature of the action exerted on the medium

by the communicator. Professor Hyslop says that he is only concerned in finding the hypothesis best supported by facts, and if any better than the spiritistic can be evidentially sustained he will be the first to accept it. At present, as he abundantly indicates, the spiritistic hypothesis is supported by 'the very facts which give rise to the sceptics' most trusted objections.'

MR. FREDERIC HARRISON'S CREED.

Mr. Scott James, reviewing in the 'Daily News' Mr. Frederic Harrison's book 'The Creed of a Layman,' contrasts the author's inward intuitions with the outward results of his Positivist system. Mr. Harrison says :—

'I feel that I possess a real, vital, sustaining, unfailling, and inseparable religion—part of my daily life; responding to every appeal, inspiring each act and thought hour by hour; making clear every moral and spiritual problem. This is no metaphysical thesis about the Origin of the Universe, but the present sense of touch with a Providence that enters into every side of daily life. It speaks in every true word which inspires, warns, or consoles us; when we are in doubt, or weary, or in distress; whether by the still whisper of memory, or by the clear voice of our fellow-beings; whether of the living or the dead.'

The reviewer remarks :—

'His religion is that of social service, of justice between man and man, of a life so ordered that our friends and neighbours and the generations that follow us will be the better for it. He believes that the evolution of the world is an evolution not only towards a more definite, complex, heterogeneous type, but to a morally higher and spiritually nobler existence. Such a religion, he says, is near to us, and actual; and it fulfils the requirement of being dogmatic.'

In practice, however, the reviewer thinks :—

'Positivism as a faith must break down for those who are not already good and, it may be said, optimistic. It tends to make the sanction of morality external, rather than internal. It offers nothing to the habitual sinner; it can give him no comfort; it can only offer, for instance, to the criminal the reward of well-doing to a community which he may frankly hate.

'But though we may not sympathise with the cold philosophy of Mr. Harrison, his actual words are instinct with warmth and enthusiasm. He himself is imbued with so much more than the limited faith which he enunciates; the things which he will not know and understand have kindled his imagination, and enabled him to write these vigorous, bold, and often inspiring essays.'

SPIRITUALISM A COMFORTER.

Spiritualism is especially helpful at the time of departure from this life, both for the one who journeys outward and those who remain. This fact is clearly shown in a letter written by Elizabeth Schauss with reference to the 'passing' of her mother, which appears in the 'Progressive Thinker.' She says: 'There was a time when I thought that I would never be able to give my dear mother up, and without the knowledge and comfort of Spiritualism it would certainly have been very hard, but during the last five weeks of her illness her own clairvoyant vision was cleared, and there was scarcely a day passed during this time that she did not tell me of one or more of her own people on the spirit side of life, whom she both saw and heard at her bedside. She also mentioned the names of people "over there" whom I am positive she never knew before, but who were known to me, thus not only strengthening me but likewise arousing the thought and curiosity of others who heard her, so that the crowning glory of her seventy-nine years of long and useful life was to *see* even in death. My father who, although he no longer opposes me in my work as a Spiritualist, feels that his church teachings are nearer right than the philosophy of Spiritualism, heard what mother said, and often asked for explanations, which were gladly given, and which he in turn recounted to others, and so I feel that good has been done. Calm and peaceful she passed on in the full knowledge of immortal life and spirit communion, and I know that she rejoices that she has been able to make a few people think before leaving earth conditions.'

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THE JEWS AND JESUS.

Rabbi Leo M. Franklin lately read a Paper before the Congress of Religion at Ann Arbor, U.S., on 'The New Testament from a Jewish Standpoint,' a subject which specially interests Spiritualists because it inevitably brings up for judgment the question of prophetic mediumship, and the function of the seer: and, of course, it interests the Spiritualist all the same even though the verdict goes against the claims made for the prophet and the seer: for we ought to know, and we ought to want to know, what can be said on the other side.

Rabbi Franklin, in a charmingly naïve way, welcomes the vital thought of the Congress as giving hospitality to thinkers of every school,—so useful a rebuke to the old and still existing 'conceit fostered by theologians' which led them to brand, as intolerable heresy and error, ideas other than their own. 'When we are ready to hear the other side,' he says, 'we have taken the first step towards wisdom as well as tolerance.'

Wisely narrowing the field of inquiry, he confines himself to the most important topic of the relationship of the New Testament to the so-called prophecies of the Old: and he says quite frankly that in his opinion the essential purpose of the Gospels and other writings of the New Testament was to prove the fulfilment of the promise of Israel's prophets through the advent of Jesus of Nazareth. This does not suggest duplicity, though it does suggest bias and desire.

Paul and other early Christian writers, says Rabbi Franklin, desired to set forth the passing away of the Hebrew code, and its supplanting by the Christian dispensation. 'Therefore, Paul and the Evangelists invariably prop their arguments upon the Hebrew Bible, candidly adding to their references, "In order that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, &c."'

Now, says the Rabbi:—

I hold that if it can be shown that the prophecies thus quoted did not refer to the advent of Jesus and the events connected with his life, but if, on the contrary, proof is furnished that they referred to contemporaneous conditions or to situations at least close at hand; if, moreover, it is possible to show that the prophecies are mistranslated and distorted, the rules of Hebrew grammar being utterly ignored many times, and that words are given meanings which they never had before or since, it is reasonable to conclude that the Jew

is justified in regarding the New Testament as a work written, not as history, but compiled and edited with the specific purpose of giving to the missionaries of the new Church an instrument to bear out their contention that the old dispensation had by the decree of Providence been supplanted by the new, and as such a work, whatever its ethical value, without binding authority upon anyone.

Rabbi Franklin, quite dispassionately, but also quite frankly, faces the consequences of his assertions. The writers of the New Testament, he argues, misunderstood the true nature of Hebrew prophecy, just as modern Englishmen have done. They treated the prophet as a predictor, a supernatural foreteller, which he never was. The Hebrew name for him is 'Nabi,' a speaker, and is derived from the root 'Nobo,' to bubble over, or to overflow with words. The word, says the Rabbi, 'can by no stretch of the imagination be made to refer to one who could tear the veil from the future.' 'If the prophet had predictive powers, they were those of the clear-sighted statesman, who with reasonable accuracy may foretell the outcome of presently existing conditions.'

The truth of this will clearly be seen by anyone who will undertake a fresh, original and frank perusal of the so-called 'prophetic books.' The writers of those books were not magic men; they were politicians, patriots, and, in a sense, seers. They were intensely interested in the fortunes of the nation and in the events of the day; they were, in fact, statesmen, in so far as statesmanship existed in their time, but they were also preachers of righteousness and religious reformers; and it can be abundantly demonstrated that their writings relate entirely to the current events of their day, and not in the slightest degree to events hundreds of years ahead. All that they say glows and throbs with present passion concerning passing events. Thus Rabbi Franklin refers to the famous fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, with the remark that it is not written in the future tense as prediction, but in the past as history.

The writers of the Gospels, possessed by the idea that Christianity superseded Judaism by realising and fulfilling it, honestly enough proceeded to find parallels between the old writings and the new events, and pushed this home with the reiterated formula—'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet,' &c.: this, as often as not, being manifestly a forced interpretation. As a specimen of this adjustment, Rabbi Franklin gives the following example:—

The Gospel of Mark has it that Jesus met his end between two thieves, and Mark naïvely remarks, 'In order to fulfil the Scripture that he was numbered with the transgressors.' But it was a very poor way of fulfilling Scripture, for it is a well-known fact that neither the Jewish law nor the Roman law permitted the execution of thieves, and Mark, who came from Egypt, where it was customary to punish thieves with death, evidently thought that the same was true in Rome and in Judæa, which was then a Roman province, and so, to fulfil the Scripture, Jesus had to die between two thieves who were ready at hand for the purpose.

The supposed predictions concerning Christ chiefly cluster in the Book of Isaiah, and the suffering 'servant' of God in that Book has been identified with Christ. It is an obvious error. The 'servant' of the Book of Isaiah is the faithful part of the nation, or even the whole of Israel, whose sufferings were destined to work for the nation's purification. Israel was supposed to be the chosen people of God, destined by Him to be the light of the world: hence His servant; and hence the need of discipline and purifying.

In conclusion, Rabbi Franklin cites the famous passage in the seventh chapter of Isaiah which has been used thousands of times as a prediction referring to the birth of Christ, but which has again and again been demonstrated

to be keenly local in its entirety : and, assuredly, a learned Rabbi has a right to be heard on such a subject, though, indeed, his help is not absolutely necessary. But this is what he says :—

Of the mistranslation of Scripture for the purpose of forcing prophecy to foretell Jesus, I think of no more forcible illustration than the oft-quoted seventh chapter of Isaiah, verses 14-16 : 'Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before he shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.'

These are the words of that first Isaiah who lived during the eighth century before Christ, during the reign of wicked King Ahaz and his successor, the splendid Hezekiah. The kingdom of Judah is surrounded by threatening enemies. Samaria and Syria, just north of her, were leagued against her, and Ahaz is about to invite the all powerful Assyrian to make an alliance with him against them. And it is against this that Isaiah cries out, for he sees in the Assyrian a far mightier foe than in either of the others, who once having gained a foothold in Judea, would perhaps crush it under his heel. He warns and denounces the king, and waxing in enthusiasm, he points to a young woman, pregnant with child, among the onlookers—it may be she was his own wife—and he says of her that she shall bear a child whom she shall call Immanuel (God with us), and before that child shall be old enough to refuse evil and choose good, the lands now dreaded (*i.e.*, Syria and Samaria) will be deprived of their kings.

The Hebrew word, translated 'virgin,' the Rabbi goes on to explain, 'invariably means a young woman' and 'is here without warrant and without truth translated *Virgin*,' a conclusion which the margin of our Revised Version confirms, and with which the large majority of modern Christian scholars agree.

The Rabbi concludes with an appreciation of Jesus, and says, 'We Jews, in common with our fellows of other faiths, respect him and honour him.'

REVELATION AND DUTY.

We should say that the Baptists, as a body, are not generally favourable to Spiritualism, but here is one who recognises the progressive knowledge of spiritual truth. Preaching at Westbourne Park recently, the Rev. T. E. Ruth, of Liverpool, took for his text a passage from Deuteronomy : 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God ; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.' He said :—

'The Christian is the true Agnostic. The reverent Agnostic is the man who receives revelations. The man to whom duty is divine has really solved the enigma of life. . . . Secrets and revelations are related, for revelations were secrets once. It was because they were secrets that they became revelations. . . . I do not know much of hell or heaven. If you had asked me here to preach five years ago, I could have told you all about both places with accuracy and confidence. But now!

'I know there is a judgment. I know that even now the Judge is passing sentence. I know that here and now, in this service, there is heaven and hell. Two men are sitting together in one pew ; one is in heaven, the other in hell. The man next to each of them may not know it, but to each of them has come a revelation which has made their life a hell or a heaven. . . . Doing is a condition of knowing. There is a progression of knowledge, but it comes through the exercise of duty. Revelation is given not for the mere satisfying of curiosity, but for the development of character, for the making of manhood. Some of you are perplexed, and you hardly know which way to turn, but you know the duty that lies at hand. Do it. Take the revelation and follow on to know the secret. Do the next thing, and all God has shall one day be yours.'

To CORRESPONDENTS.—Owing to the pressure upon our space a number of letters in reply to Mrs. Effie Bathe, and others, are held over until next week.

'PHILOSOPHY VERSUS SPIRITUALISM, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.'

BY MR. J. W. BOULDING.

An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday evening, May 2nd, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall ; Mr. H. Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

(Continued from page 226.)

The power that spirits have, under certain conditions, to communicate with us through clairvoyants is often marvellous. When I was in Birmingham some time ago I was staying with my friend, Mr. Holden, and while we were sitting on the lawn talking to Miss Holden, a clairvoyante from a neighbouring country village was announced. Miss Holden went to receive her, and said, as she went, 'If I can bring her out to you I will. She does not know you, and if she can see anything for you it will be a good test.' Presently she did come out, and almost immediately she said to me : 'There is an old gentleman coming towards you who says he knew you when you were a boy, and his name is John Tanton. With him comes his daughter Fanny, who also knew you when you were a boy.'

I thought this was very remarkable. The gentleman, John Tanton, was my aunt's father, and his daughter Fanny was, of course, my aunt's sister, both of whom I had never seen since the period referred to. Indeed, I had forgotten the name of my aunt's sister, but on making inquiry I found it had been correctly given by the medium, who had never seen me before. John Tanton and his daughter lived in East Kent, yet this medium saw and described them correctly, and gave me both Christian and surnames immediately after she saw them. What makes it more singular is that Mr. Holden told me that although he had known this medium for years, and she had described his dead friends again and again, yet never once had she been able to get a single name from any one of the spirits she had described to him. If a more reasonable explanation of this experience than that of spirit return can be suggested, I shall be happy to hear it. (Hear, hear.)

I will give you another curious evidence of spirit presence. One afternoon, accompanied by two ladies, I was walking round a gallery looking at the pictures, when a gentleman whom I had never seen before whispered to me, 'Shall I tell you something that I see?' 'Certainly,' I replied ; 'I am always ready to hear anything anybody can see.' He then said : 'I am a clairvoyant, and there is an old astrologer with a globe in his hand standing beside you. He tells me that you are destined to do a great work for Spiritualism.' 'Indeed,' I said, rather pettishly, for I was not then in sympathy with spiritualistic work. Then he added : 'You are a literary man, and you will have a literary success very soon. I can tell you the date ; it will be March 24th, or thereabouts, next year. I should like one of these ladies to take down the date so that you may be able to verify the correctness of my prediction.' She did so, and we passed on. As I did not know to what it referred the prediction soon passed out of my mind, but some months afterwards a poem in the form of a fable suddenly shaped itself in my thoughts. It was singular that it should, because fables were not subjects in my line, and I had never read any since I was a boy. After this they came almost daily, fable after fable, pouring through my brain without anything to suggest them, and, indeed, without any literary effort. As soon as they were finished the volume was published, and as it was well spoken of in all the reviews I felt justified in calling it a literary success. I had forgotten the clairvoyant's prediction, until one day the circumstance flashed across my mind, and I asked the lady who was present if she remembered the incident and could find the note of the date. She found it ; it was March 24th, and when I compared it with the date of the publication of my book I found

it was only one day out—the 23rd instead of the 24th ; and, in justice to the clairvoyant, I ought to remark that he told me it would be that day or thereabouts—in fact, he said : ‘That day, or the day before, or the day after.’ (Applause.)

It is my custom to write all my works a second time, and once, when I had just completed an historical novel, my heart sank, when I looked at the pile of MSS., at the prospect of re-writing it. Writing through my hand, my spirit sister promised that she would help me so as to relieve me of the drudgery—and she did. I felt her fingers manipulating the pen as clearly as if they had been the fingers of a mortal hand. Occasionally she would break down and cease writing, and the breaking down was a clearer evidence in some respects than the going on. Feeling the cessation I asked the cause, and she replied, in writing, ‘The power is exhausted, but I will begin again soon’ ; and so she did, and went on day after day, loyally and lovingly, until the work was finished. I fancy I hear some very philosophic friend saying, ‘What nonsense ! Imagination, Mr. Boulding, purely imagination !’ Well, all I can say is that greater writers than I have had similar experiences, and might be accused of uttering similar ‘nonsense.’ Why, even Socrates himself would be open to the same charge—the man who was not only the soul of truth but who, in his passion to find out the truth, tore all the sophistries and fallacies of his age to shreds. He was not a man likely to be deceived, yet he had a spirit whom he could see and hear, a spirit who prompted him and counselled him from day to day. Now I do not think any of you would venture to call the wise, the learned, the logical Socrates a liar, or even a fool ; and I am, I think, justified by the testimony when I call him the clairvoyant, the clairaudient Socrates—Socrates the *Spiritualist*, one of the wisest of mankind.

There are some critics, I know, who have ventured to say ‘Socrates had a strange delusion or aberration of his great intellect which led him to suppose that a spirit talked to him.’ and they refer to him as a proof that the greatest minds have singular weaknesses, and as an illustration of the proverb that ‘genius is to madness near allied.’ But why should men say Socrates had a delusion, while they affirm that Ezekiel and other prophets had none ? Why not deal out justice and fairness all round ? If Ezekiel, with his strange visions and stranger doings, was a sane teacher, I claim that Socrates was a deal saner. However, we will appeal to the teachers who are considered sane, and to the Book which is regarded as the fountain of all religious sanity and truth, and we find that there are many men mentioned there who see spirits, who talk to spirits, and whose words and deeds are all manifestations of spirit influence and spirit power. In fact, if you take away the spirits and their spirit communications there is little left—the heart of the Bible is gone, its soul has vanished ; it is a dead Book, dead as the men who wrote it—the letter that kills remains, but the spirit that gave it life has departed. (Applause.)

When we read the stories of spirit intercourse in the Bible, and see around us intelligent people everywhere receiving them with absolute confidence in their literal veracity and yet refusing to credit the parallel experiences which Modern Spiritualism is continually recording, we are not only amazed at their incredulity, but at the unreasonable attitude which they assume. Let me recite to you one of the old Biblical stories of clairvoyance, and then, when I have set it clearly before you, ask yourselves whether it is not a fair specimen of the visits which many of you have paid to modern mediums, and judge for yourselves whether there is any difference between ancient times and modern times, ancient methods and modern methods, and whether it is not true that Spiritualism is the same yesterday and to-day, and for ever. It is a story that for human interest, dramatic treatment, and resemblance to the experiences of these modern times is unique among the stories of the Bible.

The Bible historian tells us that Abijah, the son of King Jeroboam, fell sick, and being very anxious to know if the sick child would recover, Jeroboam said to his wife :—

‘Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam, and get thee to Shiloh ;

behold there is Ahijah, the prophet, who foretold that I should be King over this people. And take with thee ten loaves and cracknels and a bottle of honey, and go to him ; he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.’

So the Queen disguised herself, probably put on the garments of a servant or a peasant woman, and set off to Ahijah. The object of the disguise was, of course, to get the truth, for the King no doubt thought that if the seer knew he was addressing the Queen he might be tempted, since even prophets are but men, to hide or soften the possibly objectionable facts so that the majesty of Israel might not be wounded too sorely by his words. Now Ahijah the prophet could not see, for his eyes were set by reason of his age ; but although he could not see with his physical eyes, the eyes of his soul were particularly keen, as the eyes of the blind usually are ; and even the disguise of the royal lady would be no obstacle to their penetrating sight. So when he heard the sound of her feet at the door, before she had even come within his range, he exclaimed :—

‘Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam ; why feignest thou thyself to be another ?’

I can imagine how confused and startled she must have been to find her disguise stripped off and to hear herself called by her own name before she had even entered the house. Ere she recovered from the shock of astonishment sufficiently to explain the situation to the prophet, a second shock was administered to her which was the knell of her hopes :—

‘Arise, get thee to thine house, and when thy feet enter into the city the child shall die.’

Smitten by his words into the silence of grief, she arose and departed, and came to the city, and as she reached the threshold of the royal house the child died.

Now that reads like a very true story : and I have no doubt it is true—every word of it—and it is only a specimen of many parallel stories with which we who have investigated spiritual phenomena are perfectly familiar. The anxiety to know what will happen in some distressing case ; the precautions taken that not a word or sign should betray the secret sorrow to the medium ; the disguise of some assumed name to hide the identity of the visitor ; and then the revelation by the seer of all the existing facts and the prediction of the final result, often verified to the last particular,—all these are experiences with which we are acquainted, and which have happened to many of us again and again. (Applause.)

I often wonder how it is that people who believe the Bible stories, or say that they do, refuse to credit our modern parallels. If those were true, why may not these be true ? What makes the difference ? Has the old world changed its constitution since then ? Are human beings altered ? Have the laws of Nature undergone a transformation ? Have the conditions of human life been reversed ? Have we not the same wants, the same sorrows, the same need of guidance, sympathy, consolation, and support ? Has heaven removed itself further away ? Has man become an exile from celestial sympathies ? Have the angels of mercy forgotten or disowned him, lost him from their memories, or cast him out of their hearts ? If not, why the difference ? And we answer, there is no difference. The things that have been are the things that shall be, and there is nothing new under the sun, and nothing old either, in the sense of being done with, discontinued, or passed away ; and spiritual experiences, like the Great Spirit Himself who is their primal source, are unchangeable in their character and eternal in their years. *In God's world* all these things continue as they were from the beginning : it is only from our little worlds that they have been excluded—from the individual circles of experience that we make for ourselves—it is only from these that they have been eliminated by our ignorance, our materialism, or our disbelief. We have only to open the door of the tiny planets which we have created to revolve about ourselves, and look out upon the great planet that is revolving around God, to see a universe thronged with spiritual beings, and spiritual experiences flooding and filling it, like the sun, with its eternal light and love. (Applause.)

I know perfectly well what the sceptical attitude of our modern times has arisen from. It is a reaction from the ages of blind faith and submission to ecclesiastical authority—the infallibility of the Pope in the first instance, and the infallibility of the Bible in the second, coupled with the unquestioning belief of the people in their religious teachers, and the exponents of that Book. People used to believe too much, or rather, to believe without any reasonable ground for their belief at all. They used to sing :—

‘There is a land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign ;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.’

That was all very well as a poetic idea, but had it a relation to any real land in God’s Universe? It was all very well to sing :—

‘Could I but read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I’d bid farewell to every fear
And wipe my weeping eyes.’

Of course mansions in the skies were beautiful architectural conceptions, and reading one’s title clear was a comfortable experience, but was there any celestial masonry to correspond with the idea, or were there any title-deeds that were realisable documents or negotiable securities? Religious people thought they knew all about that world to come, and they talked as if they had seen it ; as if they had walked the golden streets and waved their palms and struck their golden harps ; talked so glibly, so familiarly, so positively, and without any real evidences whatever, merely Biblical evidences which, to the scientific mind, were no evidences at all, that a great antagonism sprang up amongst thinking people, and they challenged the believers with unanswerable questions : What do you *know* about it? How do you know that what you say is *true*? You talk about hell—have you seen it? You talk about heaven—do you know what it is, or where it is, or if it is at all? What personal proofs have you to give us? You say one part of the spiritual world is down there, and another part up yonder. But your very definitions prove your ignorance : for there is no down there or up yonder in God’s Universe—all is boundless, fathomless, unlocalisable space. What you call the blue sky is merely a reflection of the blue rays of the sun from the earth, while the other rays are absorbed ; and when you talk of heaven being above the blue you speak out of your ignorance, for the blue sky is below you as well as above you, so that astronomically there can be no place for your ancient ideas of these localities at all. You remember how Dante mapped out the whole spirit world in his poetic vision, and no doubt he literally believed, and the people of his day believed, that that poem was a correct description of the three divisions of the dead ; and subsequently Protestant writers, such as Isaac Watts, in his ‘World to Come,’ and Richard Baxter, in his ‘Saints’ Everlasting Rest,’ and many other writers of ecclesiastical eminence and theological distinction, have given us their ideas, not so literally, perhaps, but quite as dogmatically. But the scientific unbelievers, the thinking, reading, reasoning unbelievers, quite naturally challenged these writers, and the readers who believed in them, and asked for proofs that these poetic imaginations and theological dissertations were true. And what was the answer they received? Only the old dogmatic answer that Paul and Peter, and James and John, and Jesus were reported to have said so, and the early Fathers of the Church said so, and the preachers of the present day were saying so still. But the objectors quite reasonably retorted : ‘Why should we believe these reports? They furnish no evidences that we can test for ourselves’ ; and they simply fell back on their ignorance and called themselves Agnostics, and said ‘we do not know.’ I quite agree with the attitude of these men in one respect. I also say that if we have only the words of the ancients we do *not* know. We may *think* that we know ; we may *believe* that we know ; but we do not *know* that we *know* ! (Applause.)

The apostles and others may have had proofs, but we cannot *prove* those proofs. They may have been proofs to *them*,

but they are no proofs to *us*, and unless we can obtain evidences in our own times, in our own houses, with our own senses, our own minds, our own hearts ; unless proofs are gathered and garnered in our own experience, all the rest are like a ship that leaks and cannot weather out the storm, but will sink in the sea of our difficulties when our extremity is greatest. The prime office and use of Spiritualism is that it steps in with this desiderated and indispensable proof. It takes up the challenge of the Agnostic and the Materialist, and says, ‘*We know.*’ It does what the Church cannot, or will not, do—it gives the unbeliever the evidence for which he asks. (Applause.)

If the Church could only have the common sense to understand and the honesty to acknowledge it, Spiritualism confirms by its phenomena the very proofs on which its own apostles and prophets rely for their credentials, and without which, by its own confession, it would have no evidences of its preternatural origin, spiritual inspiration, or divine vocation in the world at all. It is dependent on Spiritualism for its vital evidences, and maintains its hold because of the Spiritualism of the Old Testament, the Spiritualism of the New ; the Spiritualism of the re-appearance of Jesus in his spiritual body ; the Spiritualism of the tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost ; the vision of Saul on his way to Damascus, and the preternatural voice of the living Jesus ; the Spiritualism of the Acts of the Apostles—almost every chapter of which contains a sign or a wonder or a so-called miracle, an angelic apparition, a spiritual vision or a spiritual voice. In a word, the Christian religion was founded on its Spiritualism. It was Spiritualism by which it built itself up, and without which it would have perished like the systems of philosophy and religion which preceded it, and paled before it, and vanished away. (Applause.)

Now when we point out these facts, the usual rejoinder is ‘Oh, those phenomena were only intended for the establishment of Christianity, and were withdrawn as soon as its establishment was complete. They were only required for the launching of the vessel. As soon as the ship was fairly under weigh these heavenly inspirations and influences ceased.’ But, I ask, where are the evidences for these statements? In what verse of the Scriptures is it said that spiritual gifts would be withdrawn? I do not know of one passage in which such a procedure is even implied, much less definitely predicted. I find a good many, on the contrary, in which it is stated that they were permanent gifts and endowments to men. For instance, this one : ‘The works that I do shall ye do also, and greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to my Father.’

And if Jesus Christ really did the wonderful things he is reported to have done, his prediction points to a continuance of those psychic powers, and their continuance in a manner and a measure that the world, as yet, has never seen. As his immediate successors never did any ‘greater works,’ the prediction must refer to times subsequent to the alleged withdrawal of these spiritual powers. Our objectors have also a very neat way of interpreting certain Scriptural passages against us, as, for instance, this one : ‘The Spirit saith expressly that in the later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils’ ; but I fail to see wherein these later times are different from those apostolic days, for John tells us that *in the very days* in which the words were written ‘many lying spirits had gone out into the world.’

It makes no difference whether men are in the body or out of it, the habit of lying clings to them like their skin ; and the reason why the liars from the other side get such a chance and a hearing is because they went from this earth, and there are so many kindred spirits here.

But do not suppose the spirit liars have it all their own way. What about the *true* spirits, the spirits of truth that represent the truth and speak the truth? Do you suppose they let the liars have the ground all to themselves? Why, we don’t do that even here. If a man is known to be speaking a lie there are people always ready to jump up and convict him. There is nothing people delight in more. It is human nature to do it, and it will continue to be so while

there is a single liar left on this planet. (Laughter.) Why, if a number of lying spirits came and told me falsehoods I shouldn't be astonished, I should only say: 'Well, they have gone over there in the lying condition in which they lived, and it is evident they have not yet improved.' And if one spirit came to me and told me the truth—the truth which I could prove and verify myself—I should say: 'There is a complete analogy between that world and this, where there are both liars and truth-tellers.'

The fact is you have to use your common sense in spiritual as in temporal things, and judge them by the ordinary rules of comparison, and if you adopt that wise and necessary precaution it will save you from much misapprehension and many mistakes, and give you a reasonable and *natural* conception—that is what you want—not only of the world that now is, but of that which is to come. The usual device of our opponents is to seize on some passage of Scripture which apparently condemns the practice of spirit communication—a passage which, if carefully analysed, does not condemn it *at all*, or, if it does, it stultifies at the same time all the spirit communications that *were* given, of which the Scriptures are the history; so that in proving so much they prove too much, and overthrow the whole foundation on which the authority of the Scriptures rests. For if spirit communication is impossible now it must have been always impossible; or if, being possible, it is unlawful, then it must have been always unlawful, and the Bible becomes a chronicle of practices that were forbidden arts. The tactics of our opponents are, of course, very varied. Some say it is all fraud, others it is all fancy, and others again acknowledge that while it is quite true it is very dangerous. As if the truth ever was or ever could be dangerous! I know that lies are dangerous and liars particularly so; but I did not know there was any danger in the truth, except to the lie which the truth unmasks, and to the liar whom the truth confounds. (Hear, hear.)

A man, a little while ago, wrote a book on the 'Dangers of Spiritualism,' and subsequently, I believe, he wrote to the newspapers and again waved his silly 'danger flag,' saying, 'Some terrible deception is at the back of these manifestations.' Dear me! How very alarming! What a fright he must have been in, to be sure! But does he imagine, I wonder, that he will stop the progress of Spiritualism with his bit of red rag? Whenever there has been a sign of the advance of mankind somebody has always started up and flung out the danger flag. When the printing press was invented, up went the red flag. When the Copernican system of astronomy was propounded, up went the red flag. When geology revealed to us the story of creation and the antiquity of man, up went the red flag. When Darwin revealed to us the origin of species, up went the red flag—but what is the position of the world to-day in reference to all these deprecated matters? Every one of them has become the heritage of mankind, and the red flag of danger has been exchanged for the flag of victory all down the line. (Applause.)

'By their fruits ye shall know them,' said one of the greatest leaders of the world, and the fruits of Spiritualism are everywhere, wherever there is a hand to pluck them and a heart to enjoy them. Danger, sirs! the danger lies the other way, the danger of ignorance, the danger of stagnation, the danger of the darkness, the danger of the blind. 'A little knowledge' is said to be 'a dangerous thing,' but that is one of the sayings which I feel inclined to challenge; for it seems to me that a little knowledge is better than none at all, even as a farthing rushlight is better than a rush that has no light at the end of it. Besides, we don't act like this in material things. We don't, for instance, stop all the railway traffic and give up going railway journeys because there are occasional accidents and holocausts of people are sacrificed for the public convenience. The danger is terrible and always present. Yet who refrains from going? Who stops at home?

All this talk about danger is, in fact, only the squeaking and squalling of intellectual cowards. The hero goes where? where there is danger! That is the hero's place, and it is his pride to be in it. Suppose you were to say to the fireman: 'Don't climb up that burning house; for God's sake keep

away, man, it's terribly dangerous!' what would he say? He would reply: 'That's what I'm here for; the greater the danger the greater need for me to go!'

But is there any danger in Spiritualism?—that is the question. I answer, 'Yes, there is.' There is the danger that someone will hate you, and sneer at you, and say all manner of things against you for its sake; that is the greatest danger that I know of—the danger that all the reformers and regenerators of the world—in fact, all God's heroes—have had to face from the beginning of the world's history until now. And if you don't want to be numbered with the heroes, then get out of the danger and slink away home like the cowards that you are. There is no other danger unless you be a trifier and a fool, and then I warn you that there is great danger. In fact, the trifier and the fool are always in danger—not only in this but in everything else. (Hear, hear.) Who is going to protect them? Who *can* protect them? Why should they be protected at the expense of the serious and the sane, the good and the true? We are often kind enough to do it—that is, kinder to them than they are to themselves. But it is useless to try to keep them out of danger, to put up red flags, and erect barriers and fences, and all kinds of protective and preventive things, for they *will* get in front of trains, and rush upon the ice, and walk along the edge of cliffs and precipices—they *will* get killed in spite of all your precautions for their preservation and safety. (Laughter.)

The fact is, there isn't a beautiful thing or a blessed thing in all God's world that isn't a dangerous thing if people misuse it. And so of Spiritualism. Obey its laws, use it reverently, be loyal to its purposes, recognise its beneficent ends and uses, and use it as you use God's other provisions, with a rational mind and a thankful heart, and you will realise that it is helpful, healthful, holy, and heavenly. (Applause.)

Depend upon it, Spiritualism is the most energetic and triumphant force in modern society. It is, in fact, ubiquitous. We meet it everywhere. Literature is full of it. The daily Press teems with it. Science, which so long scoffed at it, is able to scoff no longer. The pulpit that denounced it is obliged to grapple with it. In some pulpits it is proclaimed, and those that fulminate against it show by their rancour that it is a formidable opponent that cannot be put down. It will triumph because it is true—nothing in the universe can long resist the truth! We need not be anxious about it, and as for despairing of its ultimate success you could as soon stay the chariot of the sun and bring back the night as stop the progress of this light-bearing truth and involve the world in the darkness of its former denials or doubts. Nor would it be any perversion of a sacred poem if I described it as the 'White Horse,' the pure, immaculate, heaven-bred steed whose rider is called *Faithful and True*, upon whose head are many diadems, the crowns of his conquest of materialism, agnosticism, and every 'ism' that opposes the spiritual welfare and destiny of mankind, and whose occult name is *The Word of God*. And the armies of heaven follow it upon white horses, clothed in white; for pure itself, all that is pure follows in the train of this snow-white steed; and it treads down the nations in its onward course, but it treads but to waken them and crushes but to crown. And its rider, which is the *Truth*, smites the people with the sword of his mouth, and rules them with the rod of his indisputable word; and being what he is, the Voice of the *Spirit*—the word that he speaks, the *word* that he *is*—he hath upon his garments and upon his thigh a name written which it is no blasphemy for him to wear and no idolatry in us to worship—*King of Kings and Lord of Lords*: the Lord of all religions, for in Spiritualism they began; the King of them all, for in Spiritualism they must end—Spiritualism their source, their birth, their creation; Spiritualism their issue, their end, and their crown. (Loud applause.)

At the close, after a few words from the Chairman and one or two members of the audience, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Boulding for his extremely interesting and inspiring Address.

JOTTINGS.

It is said that when Ian Maclaren was asked for a motto for the year he sent the following: 'Be pitiful, for every man has a hard battle to fight.' That is worth remembering—and acting upon.

We have received a circular from the Glasgow Association with reference to a proposal to hold a grand bazaar at Glasgow on December 5th, 6th, and 7th next, and soliciting subscriptions or contributions for sale. A liberal response is invited and anticipated. The bazaar secretary is Mr. Hugh Kerr, of 256, Craig-street, Kinning Park, Glasgow.

Mr. J. G. Meugens, of Calcutta, we learn from 'The Two Worlds,' passed to spirit life on April 7th last, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, the cause being a virulent attack of confluent small-pox. Mr. Meugens was an active supporter of Spiritualism some thirty years ago, and he assisted very largely in promoting the success of the mediumistic work of Mr. W. Eglinton, when he visited Calcutta in 1881.

It was during his stay with Mr. Meugens that Mr. Eglinton gave a séance to Mr. Harry Kellar, the conjurer, who afterwards wrote: 'It is needless to say I went as a sceptic, but I must own that I came away utterly unable to explain by any natural means the phenomena that I witnessed. . . I still remain a sceptic as regards Spiritualism, but I repeat my inability to explain or account for what must have been an intelligent force that produced writing on the slate, which, if my senses are to be relied on, was in no way the result of trickery or sleight of hand.' After attending a second séance, Lord William Beresford, V.C., being one of the witnesses, Mr. Kellar wrote in the 'Indian Daily News' that, 'After a most stringent trial and strict scrutiny . . . there was no trace of trickery in any form.' There was no mechanism or machinery, and Mr. Kellar concludes thus: 'The ordinary mode by which Maskelyne and other conjurers imitate levitation, or the floating test, could not possibly be done in the room in which we were assembled.'

'Legal and Medical Aspects of Spiritualism' is the title of an Address delivered before the Edinburgh Association of Spiritualists by Richard W. Waddy (M.A. Dublin University), which has been printed as a sixpenny pamphlet, and is on sale by H. and J. Pillans and Wilson, 86, Hanover-street, Edinburgh. Mr. Waddy is an ardent Spiritualist, and he deals informally with the important aspects of Spiritualism which form the title of his address. We do not hear so much as formerly of the insanity of those who believe that they can communicate with spirits, and the recent Law Court proceedings in which Spiritualism has been directly or indirectly involved appear to indicate that a more reasonable view of the subject is gradually dawning upon the minds of juries, if not of judges. Anyway, Mr. Waddy has produced a very useful and interesting little brochure, and in its forty-eight pages he gives a good deal of food for thought for both inquirers and Spiritualists.

In a useful letter which appeared in 'The Referee' on May 5th, Mr. R. H. Russell-Davies says: 'I have several times witnessed the materialisation and dematerialisation of a spirit figure whilst the medium—a private lady—was in a deep trance. I do not for one moment believe a spirit can or does clothe itself in human flesh, but under favourable conditions a spirit can take on for a brief period a sort of diaphanous body which it gathers from the atmosphere and the emanations or aura which proceed from the sitters, the medium simply acting as the condenser.'

A queer story comes from Paris. A lady informed a magistrate that as soon as she entered her flat she was 'compelled by some sort of magnetic influence to walk about on her hands with her legs in the air.' She gave the magistrate a demonstration of this feat, and he detained her and sent an officer to her address. The lady's son came and confirmed the story, saying that his mother, his uncle, and himself were all impelled to act in the same manner. The uncle and the concierge gave similar testimony, the latter saying: 'I thought that my tenants had gone mad, but as soon as I entered the rooms I found myself on all fours and endeavouring to throw my feet in the air.' The judge ordered the rooms to be disinfected by the municipal authorities (!) and the applicants went away perfectly satisfied. We are not informed what has been the result,

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 which may elicit discussion.

Mr. Maskelyne and the Rev. H. R. Haweis.

SIR,—I am quite at a loss to determine what Mr. Maskelyne is driving at in his reference to my report in 'LIGHT' of February 23rd, 1901, of what happened on the occasion of Mr. Haweis' death. Having heard the extraordinary noise described, why should it be thought 'a very suspicious circumstance' that I wrote to Miss Haweis to ascertain the exact hour of her father's death? I am quite aware that the time was 1 p.m., and the signal was given to me some hours previously. I am also aware that Mr. Haweis was for a long time 'unconscious,' i.e., on the astral plane, before his actual decease was pronounced to have taken place. I never concluded that he made the sound himself; in fact, he expressly assured me that he did not; but I knew it was intended to arouse my attention to an event which has had a very remarkable bearing on my life.

In reference to Mr. Haweis' belief in Spiritualism, Mr. Weller should know how far his letter to Mr. Maskelyne is calculated to convey a wrong impression. That Mr. Haweis believed in all the highest truths which Spiritualism should stand for, there cannot be the slightest doubt; that he disbelieved in a great deal which passed under the name of Spiritualism is equally certain. Some of it, for instance, was directly anti-Christian in tendency, and some was engaged with phenomena which, if genuine, were of a grotesque and unedifying character. I do not suppose he would have liked to label himself a Spiritualist—he very much disliked all labels—though to all intents and purposes he was one. The first and only time I met him in the flesh was at a private séance in the house of a mutual friend. I think the medium on that occasion made a special effort to give to so notable a person a convincing test such as he had not previously been fortunate enough to receive. This happened only a short time before his death, and the result was failure. I do not forget the look, now of amused incredulity, now of painful boredom, that came into that expressive face. In Mr. Haweis' *post-mortem* communications to me, which were continued for several years, he spoke frequently of how he used to be repelled by the class of medium he came in contact with, and regretted that he himself had never been able to obtain satisfactory personal proofs such as were vouchsafed to others. He also alluded to the reason why tests that many of us have obtained so freely were in his case withheld. He informed me that for many years he had gone deeply into the subject of telepathy and the modes and methods of spiritual control, with a view to the possible exercise of the function by himself later on; that was why he was able to speak so easily through my medium. He expressed himself as strongly adverse to the name of Spiritualism because it was identified with so much that was objectionable, and advised me to keep it out of any books or sermons I might publish. 'Give it them under any other name,' he said, 'and they will swallow the lot.' If he was not a confirmed believer in Spiritualism before death, I could bring plenty of evidence to show that he became pretty accomplished in that science afterwards, but it is useless to try and enlighten those who prefer to remain in their ignorance.—Yours, &c.,

MIDLAND RECTOR.

SIR,—In justice to the Rev. H. R. Haweis, I think it cannot be too widely known that for at least the last twenty years of his earth life he was a pronounced and unequivocal believer in spirit communion. A lady who was, with her husband, a most valued worker at his church had abundant knowledge that this was the case, and being an excellent (private) medium herself, she knew, from personal conversation with Mr. Haweis, that he was well aware of his father's presence with him, oftentimes, when he occupied his pulpit. I can well understand that Mr. Haweis might express himself to a fellow clergyman as having no faith in what so often passes muster as Spiritualism, and what probably the clergyman referred to when he spoke of 'Spiritualism'; for, with his keen spiritual insight, he would regard the so-called 'Spiritualism' of the multitude as too unspiritual to be associated with the (to him) deeply religious idea of spirit communion. To any thinking person, however, who had heard Mr. Haweis preach, and had conversed with him, the fact that he was truly a Spiritualist in the highest conception of that term, as well as in its beautifully natural and personal application, would be most apparent. His sermons on the life of St. Paul, &c., the several occasions on which he had exhibitions of spirit photographs in

his vestry, after his sermons on Spiritualism, and his conversations with reference to those photographs, &c., are, I have no doubt, quite as well known to many other readers of 'LIGHT' as they are to—Yours, &c., LEIGH HUNT.

SIR,—Mr. Maskelyne's assertion about the Rev. H. R. Haweis is quite different from my experience. One Sunday, shortly after Mr. Haweis' address at the London Spiritualist Alliance, he preached on Spiritualism at Margate. I was staying at a town close by, and hearing that I was a medium he asked for and had an interview with me (not a séance). I sat upon the platform with him during the evening, and I still have the signed ticket which he gave me. Also, just before he died, I acted as a medium at a séance at the house of a lady who was a member of his congregation; I am not sure of the date but I think it was about two weeks before his death. We met as Spiritualists, and as I accompanied Mr. Haweis to his cab I spoke to him as a Spiritualist and a full believer. He kindly gave me his autograph on that occasion, and I treasure it amongst my precious things.—Yours, &c., MEDIUM.

SIR,—Referring to the allegation that the Rev. H. R. Haweis had stated he had no faith in Spiritualism, I should like to state that about six weeks before his death Mr. Haweis accepted an invitation from the then Manchester Spiritualist Alliance to give an address to the members; that he came down at some inconvenience to himself to fulfil his promise, associated with the members, and in social conversation as well as in his formal address gave strong evidence of his belief in the phenomena of Spiritualism and his sympathy with its teachings. Those people who have any knowledge of Mr. Haweis' character will know that dissimulation was impossible to him, and that he was not one either to form or change his opinions lightly.—Yours, &c., A. W. ORR.

Interesting Experience at a Private Circle.

SIR,—A number of private sittings have been held at 18, Winchester-avenue, Brondesbury, during the last three months, at which the undermentioned sitters were present. On April 26th, when the last of the series was held, a letter, which contained a few questions addressed by the medium to the chief control, and which was sealed and enclosed in a second envelope and resealed, had accidentally been left at the medium's home, 26, Mansfield-road, Gospel Oak, and the question was asked of the controls if this letter could be brought into the circle so as to obtain a reply. Raps indicated that they would try, and in about five minutes we were told to light up, when the letter was found upon the table intact, along with a time-table taken from the pocket of my overcoat, which was hanging in the hall below. The light was put out again, and in a few minutes raps asked for us to light up, and on doing so we found writing upon the inner sheets of the letter, replying to the questions, also upon the inner envelope, and again upon the outer covering. The reply, being addressed to the medium herself and on the paper enclosed in two envelopes, the seals of which were found to be intact, was deemed satisfactory. The letter was brought a distance of at least two miles into a room with the door locked. I have received much evidence of 'direct writing' through the medium (who is not only opposed to taking fees for her services, but offers the hospitality of her home), and I shall be pleased to show anyone interested the evidence referred to. The sitters were Mrs. L. Henchman, Mrs. A. Watson, Mrs. J. Clegg, Mr. A. Perryman, Mr. W. Brown, and Mr. A. Clegg; and the medium was Mrs. A. V. Perryman.—Yours, &c., A. CLEGG.

26, Hopefield-avenue, Queen's Park, N.W.
May 7th, 1907.

[We do not question the good faith of our correspondent and the other friends referred to, but it would have been more satisfactory if the letter had been prepared in the presence of witnesses, and left in the room at Gospel Oak, the door being locked and the key taken away, so that there would have been some positive testimony to the fact that the letter was left behind, and that only the questions were written inside before it was closed and sealed. As it is there is no direct evidence on this, the all-important point in the case.—Ed. 'LIGHT'.]

What Future for Life below the Human?

SIR,—I have been driven from the standpoint of materialism and compelled to accept the spiritual position by the proofs I have had of the continuity of life. But I still have difficulties and shall be thankful to any reader of 'LIGHT' who can assist me. The problem which puzzles me is this: Grant-

ing the continuity of human life, what is the future state of life other than human? Below mankind there are innumerable forms of life, from our sad-eyed Simian friend down to those distressing little forms that we call germs, which plague us as influenza or cholera. As they all live and have organised bodies, I am desirous to know what becomes of that life when it no longer functions through a body. Does it then exist in the spirit world? Is the spirit world inhabited by, say, spirit earwigs, butterflies, &c.? If so, do they always remain in that stage of existence?

These questions are probably old friends to many of your readers, but I have never yet heard them dealt with, and they form a real stumbling block to me. I trust that anyone who favours me with a reply will be as clear and definite as possible.—Yours, &c., JOHN JACKSON.

SOCIETY WORK.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Wesley Adams gave a very interesting address on 'Influence.' On Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., open-air service at Colehill-lane, Fulham.—J. T.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Miss MacCreadie gave fifteen excellent clairvoyant descriptions, with loving and helpful messages. Mr. F. Spriggs ably presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis, trance address, subject, 'Why Not?'—A. J. W.

ACTON.—PEMBRIDGE HOUSE, HORN-LANE, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Snowdon Hall's paper on 'The Power of Thought' aroused much interest. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Geo. Sunday, June 2nd, Mr. Ronald Brailey, address and clairvoyant descriptions.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Miss A. V. Earle's address on the 'Lord's Prayer' was much enjoyed, and a good after-meeting was held. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. Underwood, trance address. No public circle on the 23rd.—J. P.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey gave an address on 'Angels' and successful clairvoyant descriptions and black-board drawings of spirit faces. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Roberts, address, and Mr. Roberts, clairvoyant descriptions.

OXFORD CIRCUS.—22, PRINCE'S-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Fairclough Smith, in an excellent address, satisfactorily answered the question, 'Is it wrong to communicate with the so-called dead?' Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Beard, address; Mrs. Fairclough Smith, clairvoyant descriptions.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Miss E. Beckett and Mr. J. Cante gave interesting accounts of psychic experiences, and Mr. H. Boddington spoke on 'The Phenomena of Mediumship.' On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum. Speaker at 7 p.m., Mr. Frank Pierce, of Portsmouth. The Thursday circle is discontinued for the present.—H. Y.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last Mr. E. W. Wallis's addresses were of an exceptionally high order, and were greatly appreciated. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn. Wednesdays, at 3 p.m., clairvoyance. Fridays, at 8 p.m., healing. Saturdays, at 8 p.m., prayer meeting.—A. C.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Gordon's interesting address on 'Spiritual Love' was followed by appropriate remarks from Mrs. Gordon. Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn presided, and Mrs. Pateman beautifully rendered a solo. On Sunday next Mr. T. H. Pateman will speak on 'Consummation.'—W. H. S.

BALHAM.—19, RAMSDEN-ROAD (OPPOSITE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY).—Sunday morning last Mr. Everth opened a discussion. In the evening Mr. G. Morley spoke upon 'Unity: The Keynote of Faithism,' and gave excellent clairvoyant descriptions. On Sundays, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., and on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m., public services are held for Faithist teachings and clairvoyant descriptions.—W. E.

CHISWICK.—110, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last, at the circle, 'Let there be Light,' was discussed. In the evening Mr. S. Keyworth's address on 'Science's Difficulties with Spiritualism' was much enjoyed. On Monday last Mrs. A. Webb gave successful clairvoyant descriptions and helpful messages. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. A. J. McLellan, trance address.—H. S.

READING.—CROSS-STREET HALL.—On Sunday last Mrs. Effie Bathé addressed a full and appreciative audience on 'Mediumship,' and satisfactorily answered questions.

LUTON.—18, BRIDGE-STREET.—On Sunday evening last Mr. A. Punter gave a helpful address and good clairvoyant descriptions.