

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.

Dr. Peebles seems to be as active as ever, travelling and talking his way round the world. In a lecture before the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, some extracts from which we give on p. 363, he spoke fully on reincarnation, and presented a view which was once put forth by one of our London Alliance speakers, who called it 'Reattachment,' not Reincarnation. It is a view which might form a very useful bridge for Theosophists, by which they might get back to something comprehensible. Here is Dr. Peebles' setting forth of the probable truth, slightly condensed:—

Is there no germ of truth in this Asiatic-born theory of reincarnation? Certainly there is. There was a germ of truth in Calvinism. There was also a germ of truth in Mormonism, for Joseph Smith was a clairvoyant medium. His visions were beautiful. Mormon polygamy was a later development, something as reincarnation was an after-thought or tag-attachment to genuine Theosophy. Let us then get to the foundation of this germ-cult called reincarnation. According to Reichenbach, according to the late N-ray discovery and the testimony of clairvoyance, there is an invisible aura encircling every human being. This pertains more to the interior soul-body than the physical. A spirit disrobed of materiality may descend from a more ethereal sphere and temporarily incarnate, and dwell within an individual's aural atmosphere, impressing and inspiring this person. Herein lies much of the philosophy of the trance and impressional sensitiveness. An illustrious spirit intelligence, seer, sage or philosopher, may appoint messengers to approach earth's atmosphere and continue his work of love and goodwill, or this dweller in the ethereal realms of blessedness may descend earthward, and in the sacred impregnating moment may project a thought-ray of light or transfuse, through vibration, a partied portion of his soul substance into the fetus as a fulcrum—a basis-leverage—of himself. Through this ethereal substance he may energise, magnetise, and so measurably mould the fetus, the child, the youth, as to become a fitting vehicle, by and through which he may work. This accounts for the born genius. This is the riddle unriddled, the golden key, the psychic exposition that rationally and philosophically explains whatever there is true and really valuable in the much exploited re-incarnation or rebirth theory without resorting to puerility, speculation, or dreamy Eastern fable—fable born and cradled in the imaginations and superstitions of Oriental childhood and thralldom.

Mr. George Barlow's 'Contemporary Review' article on 'Optimism or Pessimism'* is much more sensational than its title indicates. It is, in fact, an intensely realistic and lurid presentation of the Spiritualist's theory as to the spirit world in relation to the world of sense. The writer

drives home with almost furious persistence the supposition that the spirits of the so-called dead are still here and still very much alive. His hell is horribly real and dangerously near, but it is an overshadowing hell with an overshining heaven.

Especially noticeable is Mr. Barlow's description of the fate of the millions of spirits who have departed, and who are departing, whose sexual longings have not been satisfied: 'those tortured human bodies,' he calls them, 'which are daily quitting this life with the immense desire for love, the passionate yearning to clasp to the heart some other recipient human being, wholly mocked by Fate, unsolaced and unsatisfied.'

But he goes beyond his bounds when he says that 'Spiritualists believe that those who pass from earth with the love-craving distorted, perverted, agonised by excessive grief, starved or dissatisfied, remain "earth-bound," and still operate through the bodies and nervous systems of the living, struggling still to obtain through our human frames the joys and sensations of which they were unduly deprived upon earth, of which it may be they now realise that they will for ever be deprived.' That is doubtless true in part: but Spiritualists do not believe that this is the fate of all those who pass thus from earth. There are teachers and healers on the other side, and other interests. And besides, much of what is here described is purely physical; and it is reasonable to suppose that to this extent the storm depicted by this writer will be lessened.

Mr. Barlow, from the Spiritualist's point of view, grossly exaggerates when he says:—

We have the whole past of the human race encumbering us and pressing upon us; pressing upon us, not with any mere inert weight of historic precedent, but with the active force of numberless distinct, conscious, passionate personalities, all dying of hunger and thirst, so to speak, and all strenuously endeavouring to appease that hunger, to assuage that thirst, by taking possession of and using the still warm-blooded, still available frames and nervous systems of the living!

Surely this is sheer theatrical melodrama. It makes no allowance for the tremendous transformation and the equally tremendous interests of that other life.

The 'Harbinger of Light' prints a lecture by Cavalier James Smith on 'The Fear of Death.' In it he tells of several experiences of his own, based on communications from notable personages who now, from the other side, look back upon their life here. Very instructive is his report of a rather long statement by the late Baroness Burdett Coutts. He says:—

To die is as natural as to be born, and is merely the shifting of a slide in the magic lantern of our personal history. It is the laying aside of a worn-out garment, and the being clothed upon with a new and imperishable robe. As you may remember, the body of the late Baroness Burdett Coutts lay in state for some days at her late residence, and was visited, during that time, by thirty thousand people; and it may interest you to hear how this foolish spectacle was regarded by that venerable lady herself. Speaking to me on January 12th last, she said:—

*See also p. 367.

'What a deal of fuss people make over an empty garment! How strange that thousands of persons should go to look at a worn-out dress! But it had served me well. That ancient frock had lasted for more than ninety years, and had very few holes in it, considering the wear and tear it had undergone. But, ah! if the spectators could only have perceived the mockery of it all, and could have known that the Baroness was watching them, greatly amused that men and women should pay such homage to the mortal frock she used to wear!'

And presently she went on to speak of the retrospect of her earthly career, as revealed to her spiritual vision after she had passed over, and of her feelings of mingled gratitude, humility and regret which had been awakened in her mind by this luminous review of the past.

Her 'humility and regret,' it is said, were caused by the reflection that all she gave she gave out of superfluity. It involved not the slightest sacrifice. Much more to be praised are those 'who are to be met with in humble life, and their philanthropy is that which is symbolised by "the widow's mite," and by "the cup of cold water." Moreover, their benevolence is of the highest kind, because they give what they can so ill spare, as in the case of the poor woman who shares her last loaf with someone poorer than herself; whereas I gave out of my abundance, and it cost me no real sacrifice to do so; inasmuch as no matter how great my expenditure may have been for charitable purposes, more than enough remained for the satisfaction of all my own needs; so that when you view my benefactions in this light, my name stands very low down on the list of philanthropists, and my talent, in this respect, is small indeed, as compared with that of numbers of persons whose names will remain forever unknown to the material world, but who will be recognised and honoured as members of a genuine nobility in the world of spirits.'

A late number of 'The Open Court' contained two important papers on 'The Fourth Gospel' by Dr. P. S. Moxon and the Editor. The first discussed the well-known sharp contrast between the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel with regard to the person of Jesus. In the Synoptics, Jesus is a helper and teacher of men: in the Fourth Gospel, he is the calm but intense polemical representative of God, whose unbroken spiritual abode is in Heaven even while he is upon the earth. No one can deny the immense difference, and the difference is fundamental. But the Editor of 'The Open Court' does not deny it. He only says:—

If the Fourth Gospel is interpreted as history it must be considered a failure, but if we see in it a hymn in praise of the Logos and the incarnation of divinity in man, it is one of the noblest expressions of religious thought.

It is true that the passages in the Gospel are still read in the old way and in the old prayerful style in many churches, but for that reason we must not be blind to the fact that thinking Christians and especially the thinkers among the clergy have become more and more awakened to the significance of the Scriptures. The Bible is perhaps the most remarkable book, being a collection of literary products from the earliest dawn of the history of religion down to comparatively modern times. It is not the word of God in the traditional sense, nor does it anywhere make this claim. It is a collection of documents which are milestones in the way of progress. Its several scriptures incorporate antiquated views, folk-lore traditions, and legends, and should be regarded as exponents of the religious spirit of the age in which they were written. As such they are genuine, and if they did not incorporate the errors of their times they could not be genuine. Dogmatic Christianity has for a long time held sway in the churches, but a reformation is now dawning which is due to the influence of the scientific spirit, and the result of it is felt almost more in the ranks of conservative thinkers than among the liberals—a fact which is mostly overlooked in the camp of the radicals and so-called free-thinkers.

Sri Ramakrishna's teachings, as reported in 'Prabuddha Bharata,' often contain gems of quaint thought or beauty. Here is one:—

Know the One and you will know all. Ciphers placed after the number one become hundreds, thousands. But nothing remains if you wipe out the number one. The many have value only because of the one. First the one, and then

the many. First God, and then *Jiva* and *Jagat* (the living beings and the universe).

But what most attracts us in these scraps of teaching is their homely humour. Here is a specimen, but by no means one of the homeliest:—

In the game of hide-and-seek, if the player once succeeds in touching 'granny,' he is no longer liable to be made a 'thief.' He is free to go wherever he wishes without being harassed. Similarly, in this world's playground there is no fear for him who has once touched the feet of the Almighty. He lives as a *Jivanmukta*.

It is quite worth remembering that humour plays a considerable part in the teaching of India's later sages. But Buddha was by no means without it.

Mark Twain has done much to instruct, amuse, and teach us with his wisdom, his humour, and his pathos: and, in his 'Life,' that astonishing outpouring of all three, he tells us some things that are to be believed. One of these is a passage in the life of his daughter Susy. Quite suddenly she began to behave as a first-class liar, 'not furtively, but frankly, openly, and on a scale quite disproportioned to her size.' Reformatory efforts were all in vain, and then something occurred which brought first comfort and then relief. This was 'the chance discovery in Darwin of a passage which said that when a child exhibits a sudden and unaccountable disposition to forsake the truth and restrict itself to lying, the explanation must be sought away back in the past; that an ancestor of the child had had the same disease, at the same tender age; that it was irremovable by persuasion or punishment, and that it had ceased as suddenly and mysteriously as it had come, when it had run its appointed course. I think Mr. Darwin said that nothing was necessary but to leave the matter alone, and let the malady have its way and perish by the statute of limitations.

'We had confidence in Darwin, and after that day Susy was relieved of our reformatory persecutions. She went on lying without let or hindrance during several months, or a year; then the lying suddenly ceased, and she became as conscientiously and exactly truthful as she had been before the attack, and she remained so to the end of her life.'

The following story (taken from 'The World and the New Dispensation') has a spiritual moral which we need not specify. In fact, it has several morals, all easily discoverable in our 'Light':—

A rich Moslem gave a feast to his co-religionists. Many went, and among others one poorer than the rest, and so more shabbily dressed. And he was turned away from the rich man's door.

He went home, borrowed a neighbour's silk sherwani and came back wearing it over his own. Being readily admitted this time, he went in and took his seat on the 'furrush' with other guests.

Rich viands were served to him in a plate. But instead of eating them he kept stuffing them into his coat pockets. Others wondered, and the host himself craved to know why.

His curiosity was readily satisfied—though at the cost of his vanity. 'I came in my poor coat,' said the guest, 'and I was turned away. Then I came in this borrowed one, and I was admitted. So I thought the feast was for the coat, not for the wearer.'

ILLNESS OF MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS.

As the readers of 'LIGHT' know, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, President of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Editor of 'LIGHT,' has been unwell for some months past. It is with deep regret that we have to state that his illness has taken a turn for the worse and his condition now causes the greatest anxiety to his family.

DR. PEEBLES ON REINCARNATION.

During his recent stay in Melbourne, Australia, Dr. J. M. Peebles was requested to speak upon reincarnation, and in his Address, which appeared in the June issue of the 'Harbinger of Light,' he protested against reincarnation being confounded with pre-existence. He said:—

'Reincarnation, or rebirths back into fleshly bodies, pertains to poesy, imagination, and the speculative childhood of the dust-buried past; and yet it is important to note that it is not taught in the inspired Vedas, the Zend Avesta, or the Jewish Scriptures. It was a hypothesis invented about Gautama Buddha's time, and is popular to-day among the most ignorant and superstitious of the races peopling Nepaul, Burma, Thibet, Korea, India, eighty-five per cent. of whom can neither read nor write.'

Having expressed his belief that 'spirit is ever incarnating into and moulding matter' (but surely, if spirit is immanent it cannot incarnate 'into matter'!), he emphatically repudiated the reincarnation theory, which, he said:—

'is not based upon one well-established fact of science or nature. Blossoms do not return back to buds, the butterfly to the chrysalis, nor do birds seek their old wind-tattered nests, and try to re-enter the egg shells from which they had hatched. Reincarnation is opposed to evolution. Reincarnation—that is, revolving back from spirit life into the imprisonment of the flesh, is exactly the reverse of evolution. It is retrogression with lapses of consciousness.'

Dr. Peebles then related how he had been told that 16,000 years ago he was an adept, summering on the Ganges; next he was said to have been an Egyptian priest; then he was Habakkuk, and returned to earth as Herodotus, and again as Origen, still later he came as Peter the Hermit; but, said he:—

'Admitting all this to be true, what is the benefit of it? I have not the least memory of any of these experiences, and upon the whole I seem to have been "evolving" downwards, as now I am only plain, hard-working J. M. Peebles. True, it is said that we must pass through all these varied experiences on earth to "round out our best manhood," but was God so niggardly, so narrowly inconsequential in His purposes, that there can be no experiences except those gained on this little planet that we now inhabit? It is not necessary for human beings to pass through all earthly experiences. It is not necessary for a man to lie drunk in the gutter to know how to enjoy temperance and purity of life.'

Reincarnation is supposed to be a method of progress—but who ever heard of Mary Snooks or Charles Peace being reincarnated! Those people who tell us that they recollect former earth experiences generally declare that they were some well-known historical personages; but if the John Smith of to-day was formerly Benjamin Franklin we fail to see where the evolution comes in. But that is by the way. Dr. Peebles told how he called one day upon a lady in California, who believed that her son was Socrates reincarnated. The son had been guilty of some offence and, said Dr. Peebles: 'The mother laid him across her knee and vigorously warned the posterior portion of his organisation. I wondered what the old philosopher Socrates thought of it—wondered to what extent he admired American civilisation.'

'A Hindu scholar in Calcutta told me,' said the lecturer:—

'that millions of Hindu spirits were perching in trees, and hovering in the atmosphere around and about India, somewhat as flies hover round and infest offal for further feasting experiences. The illustrious Hindu Chunder Mozoomdar declares that "The educated free-thinking Hindus coming into relation with Western science and psychology quickly reject reincarnation as a fading relic of the past."'

But some Western people are adopting what the enlightened Hindus are discarding, as though it were a new and complete revelation of the meaning and mystery of life! Spiritualists have an idea that spirits have better employment than perching in trees awaiting a chance to be reborn and live again an earthly life!

Continuing his interesting discourse, Dr. Peebles said:—

'The expectant mother among the Brahmins fears that she may give birth to a pariah soul-child. No mother, how-

ever devoted and loving can, in that case really tell who her child really is, or rather who it really *was* in a previous reincarnation. Sitting in a lady's drawing-room at San Diego, California, the good woman pointed me to the painting of her daughter, suspended from the wall, saying, "That dear daughter was once my mother in a long ago reincarnation." "Do you ever hear from her now?" I inquired. "No! I think from all that I can learn she has reincarnated into a boy-child now for further experiences!" What occult pill can the credulous not swallow? The eloquent Mrs. Besant, when lecturing in New York several years ago, told the audience, without any qualifications, that Madame Blavatsky had then already reincarnated into a Hindu youth. The listeners, knowing Madame Blavatsky's size and tendencies, to say nothing of the gender, thought it would prove a marked misfit. I was told in India that the boy had died and that she was now reincarnated into a Hindu girl to further perfect her work.

'It must be remembered that the fathers in the movement—Judge Edmonds, Professor Hare, Epes Sargent, A. E. Newton, J. S. Loveland, Andrew Jackson Davis, the great seer, and others, knew nothing of these rebirths, and I may say also that reincarnation forms no part of legitimate Theosophy. Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, while advocating Theosophy in America and writing "Isis Unveiled," knew nothing of reincarnation, but reaching India this rebirth theory was added—added to Theosophy as a sort of a tag-attachment. It is often said that all Theosophists believe in reincarnation. This is *positively untrue*. Shishir Kumar Ghose, the Hindu editor of the "Hindu Spiritual Magazine" and a Theosophist, is strenuously opposed to the theory of rebirths, and considers it morally degrading.'

Dealing with the asserted necessity of reincarnation to justify life's inequalities and the lack of opportunities of the poor and miserable, Dr. Peebles trenchantly says:—

'Yes! there are inequalities in every direction, thank God! The inequalities of Nature with hills and valleys, the inequalities of climate with its alternating heat and cooling breezes, inequalities in animals and all animal existence as well as in human life, face us everywhere. Is God then unjust? Are such inequalities evidences of injustice? Rather they are telling, clinging evidences of divine justice and wisdom; because directly opposed to, and the reverse of, dulllest monotony. A universe of "equality"—a universe of monotony, of ceaseless, changeless monotony, could only be compared to the chill of death, or to a very mental hell of horrors. Those whose crowns shone the brightest in the celestial heavens were those, said the apocalyptic John, who had

"Come up through tribulations deep."

'It is the frictioned steel that shines, the rough stormy ocean that makes the skilful mariner. Personally I was born in poverty, and this poverty, this "inequality" with my wealthy academic school mates, only inspired energy and intensified mental activity. Blessed be the "inequalities," these temporal inequalities constituting varieties in life. They are charming proofs of God's justice, wisdom and love, for this moral universe, be it remembered, knows no absolute and eternal evil. Candidly, reincarnation, re-embodiment, or "rebirths," using the Hindu word, is not based upon one solid demonstrated fact, nor one noble aspiration of an inspired soul. It cannot be proven either by logic or by inductive reasoning. It sets at defiance the great law of evolution. It chains and degrades the spirit by rotatingly bringing it back into the paralysing meshes of matter. It stupefies or annihilates memory during long periods of time. It retaliatively punishes the conscious souls in this life for wrongs done or sins committed in previous reincarnations of which they are neither conscious nor have the least recollection. If this is not injustice, then words have no meaning.'

'THE OPEN ROAD,' the successor of 'The Crank,' edited and published by Mr. C. W. Daniel, 11, Cursitor-street, E.C., price 3d. monthly, is all that its title implies: free, joyous, bright, and breezy. The first number gives us 'A Modern Reading of St. Francis of Assisi,' who might be called the Saint of the Open Road; Mary Everest Boole continues her parables about the algebra of life; Leo Tolstoy, in a letter to M. Sabatier, drives home, by references to current events, the sharp contrast between religion and the Church as an organised institution; Walt Whitman is appreciatively sketched; and there is 'A Practical Note on Miracles,' in which it is shown that the standard dictionaries recognise miracle, not as a violation of law, but as a deviation from the *known* laws of nature. In another sense, however, the writer agrees with Walt Whitman in finding miracle everywhere; for the order of Nature is itself miraculous.

MAN'S WORTH TO GOD.

'Tis not what man *does* which exalts him, but what man would do'; so sings Robert Browning in 'Saul.' Yet, in judging our fellows we take into account, in the main, only the successfully completed work; we know little or nothing of things nobly, but unavailingly, *attempted*. The splendid faithfulness of apparent failure; the high object aimed at in disdain of a low one that might easily have been attained; a man's reach which does so often exceed his grasp; the long fight for holiness against fearful odds and the cruel wounds of the frequent fall; the struggles after lofty ideals never quite realised; those hidden powers for good which life seldom allows us to bring into full play—all these rarely come under our notice. Here the best of us are blind and ignorant. But God understands and values us all at our true worth:—

'All the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's
amount;
Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
All I could never be,
All men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God.'

Yes, worth to God! *Success* does not weigh with Him, but only earnest, continual effort. And this is the very greatest encouragement we can have in our life work. We must not be disheartened, or distress ourselves, because that which is brought to pass falls so far short of our intentions; because our best endeavours are so often baffled; because something in us, or in our surroundings, so constantly frustrates our purest purposes. Incompleteness is written large across the page of every true life—the truer the life the more unfinished it is.

In the natural world, as well as in the spiritual world, we see everlasting movement; there is no provision in the universe for stagnation. All life-conditions are laid down on these lines; obstacles are deliberately set up to be surmounted. Nature, in all her varied manifestations, eloquently witnesses to this. It is precisely the same in the affairs of the spirit. If God permitted men and women to realise perfectly all that was in them, to attain their highest ideals, to reach the furthest goal of their mighty longings, to work out into fullest expression every dim, passionate purpose for good, there would ensue stagnation and consequent deterioration; and deterioration is the beginning of death. The hindrances placed in our path are meant to sting and spur us into greater, intenser effort. The cries of hidden moral potentialities clamouring for exercise, development, and a clear course are part of the process of our evolution; the oppositions arising out of circumstance or heritage are the providential means whereby large accessions of spiritual strength flow into us from God; they 'stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,' and are continually bracing the moral being. True ennoblement comes from struggle and warfare and never quite triumphant effort. Thus, 'life's little ironies,' as we call them, should not result in godless pessimism, but arouse us to renewed and hopeful efforts to attain the highest. The exalted purposes of the spirit, which never ripen into full fruit on earth—the *much* in us that (comparatively speaking) comes to so *little*—are surely prophetic of that larger richer, freer life hereafter when we shall be always 'going on and still to be,' in ever advancing and extending holiness and usefulness—widening out, deepening to eternity? Even our very best, attained here, is little more than failure, when we realise within what may be, can be, shall be! As Browning asks:—

'What is our failure here but a triumph's evidence
For the fulness of the days?'

And we may reverently affirm with his 'Paracelsus': 'Truly there *needs* another life to come,' that our unsatisfied longings and unexpressed desires may bloom and blossom other-

where. And so we reach the tremendous conviction that 'All we have willed, or hoped, or dreamed of good *shall exist*,' beyond, behind, in one of those many mansions which the Father's love has prepared for all His children. There we shall go on from strength to strength, ever unfolding more and more of our spiritual possibilities, ever getting nearer and nearer to the loving God!

'Therefore, to whom turn I but to Thee, the ineffable Name?
Builder and Maker, Thou, of houses not made with
hands!
What, have fear of change from Thee who art ever the
same?
Doubt that Thy power can *fill* the heart that Thy power
expands?
There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall live
as before;
The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound.
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good
more;
On the *earth* the *broken arcs*; in the *heaven* a *perfect
Round!*'

G. E. BIDDLE.

EVIDENTIAL—AND OTHERWISE.

The July number of the 'Journal of the American S.P.R.' contains a further series of 'incidents' reported by Professor Hyslop, including one which may serve as a caution against accepting evidence tendered by so-called mediums in confirmation of their own phenomena. Professor Hyslop was visited by a man and his wife who went through a pseudo-hypnotic performance; the wife, in supposed trance, gave some irrelevant 'communications,' and at the close cried out: 'Wake me up quick, Arthur is dead!' The man afterwards wrote saying that a child who lived at their house had fallen and become unconscious; the nurse had told the maid to telephone for the doctor, saying, 'Arthur is dead.' On calling at the house Professor Hyslop had reason to be suspicious, and his efforts to find 'Arthur' and his parents were unavailing.

We published last year ('LIGHT,' 1906, p. 485) an account of 'a dream-sermon preached in reality.' Professor Hyslop gives another instance, in which a Methodist clergyman dreamed that he made a powerful appeal to his congregation, and asked any 'unsaved' person to come forward and take his hand. A man whom he recognised did so at once. The following Sunday he preached the sermon of his dream, as nearly as he could remember it, and when he gave the closing invitation the man indicated in the dream came forward and took the hand held out to him. He was a man of standing in the neighbourhood, but considered to be entirely indifferent to religious matters.

Another case is vouched for by Professor Hyslop's uncle, who was not known to be interested in psychical research. He visited a medium forty miles from his home, who had no idea who he was; she told him he had returned from a long journey, from the East, from a foreign land, and that he would start towards California within four or five days. She predicted the decease of two elderly ladies, one very shortly, the other within two years, and said that two other ladies would soon travel in different directions (specified). One of these ladies, the medium said, had two children. Professor Hyslop states that his uncle had recently returned from Palestine; that, contrary to all expectation, he received a telegram two days later which caused him to take a journey of one hundred and fifty miles in the direction of California; one of the elderly ladies died ten days, the other eighteen months after the interview. The younger ladies were correctly described, and they took the journeys announced by the medium, some of the circumstances described being unforeseen by them at the time.

A final incident is that of the apparition of a young man who gave his name and desired to thank the nurse who had attended him before he passed away. The facts of the case were unknown to the sensitive who clairvoyantly perceived the man, and had passed from the memory of the nurse until she received this reminder.

'MAN IS A SPIRIT.'

Mr. B. F. Underwood, at one time a leading Agnostic writer in America, recently contributed a valuable article to 'The Progressive Thinker' entitled 'Man is a Spirit,' in which he says :—

'At an early period in the history of reflective thought, philosophers pronounced the sensible world merely an appearance, solid-seeming as it looks and feels. They saw that to persons differently endowed in the matter of senses, or with additional senses, it would be no longer the world which it seems to be to us, constituted as we are at present, but quite different. Power is an all-inclusive word in the universe, covering both mind and matter; and all force or power is in the last analysis spiritual. Light is strictly a spiritual fact of consciousness, for the vibrating ether is not luminous. Light, sound, odour, taste, exist nowhere except in ourselves; for, in the sublime phrase of Lewes, "Nature, in her insistent solitude, is eternal darkness and eternal silence."

'Matter is the pliant garment of spirit, which is constantly woven "in the roaring loom of Time." Not that we are all-in-all, because there is a power, not ourselves, constantly inter-acting with our inner self, and thus producing the phenomenal world which environs us. Mill says our feelings and thoughts are the only things which we directly know to be real. Matter is a mere assumption to account for our sensations. Instead of the world containing us, it is being constantly created by us in connection with the eternal animating power, for which, or whom, there is no name. Thus modern thought, so far from being materialistic, as the theological reactionists affirm, is idealising matter.

'As the mountains, the cloud-bearing Alps and Andes, are in geological perspective attenuated into undulating vapour and fire-mist, so the scientific and philosophic thought of this century idealises matter into a vibratory force or power.

'Death, which Mill defines to be a mere cessation of the stimulus of the sensible world, makes us spirits, pure and simple, or clothes us doubtless with a more subtle, pervasive, and beautiful corporeality. The migration to "the land of souls," as Byron calls it, is evidently not much of a journey. It is simply a change of corporeal costume. In the light, then, of current physiology and psychology, the human body is literally a breathing house, not made with hands, as Coleridge calls it, exactly adapted to the temporal and temporary use of the spirit or "inner man," who peers through its eyes as windows, makes the hands the executive organs of his will, the tongue the exponent of his thoughts, and ears and nostrils the avenues of distinct classes of sensations, pleasurable or otherwise.

'The brain is as supreme among the organs of spirit in position as it is in function, it being the capital or crown of the corporeal shaft, and the chosen seat, with its intricate nerve-labyrinths, of the mind, which is enthroned in it as a citadel. The lungs give buoyancy, animation, and locomotiveness. The great Swedenborgian psycho-physiologist, Wilkinson, likens them to a balloon tethered in the chest. He says: "The breathing lungs are the barometer that indicate the peace or the power of the storm of the soul; the heart is the animal man himself; hearing is a new-born palace of the air, whose shakes are music and whose winds are speech. And the eye, round like the world and rolling on its axis, communes afresh with the whole possessions of light, and sees all, from the sun to the landscape, in the gloss of that glory which is the image of the truth." Man the real man, whether in the flesh or out of it, is a spiritual being and as such belongs to the realm of which material phenomena are but manifestations.

'Mental capacity is not correlated with brain weight, and it is not true that the more grey matter in the brain one has, the more thought capacity he possesses. Evidently the mind uses the brain as an instrument, and the conformation and quality of the brain have much to do with the quality of the thought which finds expression through this organ. But the latest and most thorough investigations of physiology, as well as of psychology, negative the materialistic conception that brain produces thought and that mind is a product of brain activity.

'In the grey matter of the brain is the seat of the thinking capacity; but the brain produces thought no more than the violin produces music. An intelligent force back of the violin produces the music, and an intelligent force back of the brain produces the thought manifested through the brain, the instrument of the mind.'

ARE CHRISTIANS SPIRITUALISTS?

The process of permeation goes on apace, and Spiritualism is rapidly becoming the recognised belief of religious and spiritually-minded people. Another instance of the trend in this direction was supplied recently by the rector of Trinity Church, Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., who, in the church organ entitled 'Trinity Chimes,' made some outspoken statements in reference to Spiritualism, and in reply to the charge of being a Spiritualist, he declared that he 'had nothing to conceal,' and was 'quite willing to express his views'; indeed, he boldly claimed that 'no man *could* be a Christian and not be a Spiritualist.' He said regarding himself :—

'If to believe that it is possible for some spirits to reveal themselves, and communicate with certain persons still in the flesh, be Spiritualism, yes, he is a Spiritualist. If by the term is meant a believer that spirits of the departed progress in the ordinary sequence of life after leaving the body, yes, he is. He does not believe in any wild flight through space, either up or down, to some far away planet, immediately after death.

'He does not believe in any sudden transformation of character after death. He does not believe that the soul is asleep somewhere until a call to a physical resurrection. He believes in the immediate resurrection of the spiritual body after death.

'Why does he believe this? Because the Bible has many references to the spiritual experience of persons who saw visions of living spirits. Among such persons were Jesus, Peter, James, John, Stephen, Paul, and others.

'Because scientific investigation in modern times of many phenomena, under the most exacting test conditions, by some of the most renowned scientists, has disclosed the fact that communication with the spirit world is occasionally possible and does occur.

'The spirit appearances of Bible times are thus verified as credible.

'No man can be a Christian and not be a Spiritualist.

'Because men like Sir William Crookes, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Professor James of Harvard, Professor Newbold of the University of Pennsylvania, and a host of the world's greatest scientists and scholars are absolutely convinced of the genuineness of the facts, and since their opinions are widely accepted for their scientific value on other subjects, they are worthy of respect on this.

'And lastly, because the rector himself has given the matter careful study and investigation for a number of years, having approached it with scepticism and violent prejudice, until at last he was forced to admit the facts, since there was no other possible explanation of the phenomenon. Much as is the worth of the testimony of the distinguished men referred to, he refused to believe until he himself had direct evidence so convincing that he would have to deny the evidence of his senses and reason and believe himself a fool, or accept demonstrated truth.

'This may all seem very strange to those who know nothing about it. But ignorance should not be so inmodest as to laugh to scorn that of which it knows nothing.

'If any condemnation is to come from this confession by the rector, he is perfectly willing it should. Ere long the whole world will know of the great truth of immortality by demonstration becoming more and more complete.

'The foregoing must not be taken as approving of the host of frauds and fakers who traffic upon the credulity of people. The investigation of the subject should be left to experts, as is the case with any problem of science.'

This concluding statement is lamentably weak, for unless the rector regards himself as an 'expert,' he acted contrary to his own opinion. He was not content with the testimony of experts, why then should he expect that reasonable people will refrain from investigating for themselves—as he did?

ON DEATH.

BY KEATS.

Can death be sleep, when life is but a dream,
And scenes of bliss pass as a phantom by?
The transient pleasures as a vision seem,
And yet we think the greatest pain's to die.

How strange it is that man on earth should roam,
And lead a life of woe, but not forsake
His rugged path; nor dare he view alone
His future doom, which is but to awake.

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THE HERESY OF JOB.

The Book of Job may not specially interest the Church (the Church is rather afraid of it) but it still fascinates the World. Wonder, admiration, speculation, criticism, still continue to show how keenly this spiritually subtle book appeals to the human heart and mind. Nor is this to be wondered at, inasmuch as it is profoundly concerned with the abiding problem of life—the mystery of misfortune and the place of calamity in the economy of a just and pitiful God. Does God know? Does He care? Is He competent, or wise, or good? What is Man to Him?—a thing to be played with, or an object of solicitude to be saved?

The startling introduction of Satan, too, at the beginning, and as one among the sons of God, has its fascination. What is the meaning of that immensely strange familiarity between Satan and God, and of that cunning and apparently cruel test which hands Job over to the merciless moods of Satan? The Church is helpless before it all: and the World wants to know; especially it wants to know how misery upon misery, directly inflicted, can be harmonised with the notion of a just, observant, and powerful God; and what right Man has to question Him.

The latest attempt to answer these questions comes to us as a book of great charm by Francis Coutts. It is entitled, 'The Heresy of Job,' and is published by John Lane. It contains a justification of the book by way of Preface, a scholarly but simple and well-written Introduction, setting forth the argument, copious extracts from the Book of Job (a revised version) to support it, a series of Notes, and Blake's Illustrations, twenty-two full-plate reproductions, beautifully done. The entire production, in fact, is charmingly presented.

The argument is novel and ingenious. Job is described as a heretic in this sense—that he refuses to adopt the conventional creed or to say only what it is religiously proper to say. His three friends are tiresomely conventional, and talk entirely from the orthodox sentiment that it is wrong to question God or to justify one's self before Him. They hold that of course God does what He wills, and what He wills is right because He wills it. They keep on affirming, also, that all calamity is the punishment of sin; and they rub this in until Job cries, 'Miserable

comforters are ye all!' And then, firmly justifying himself, he passes on to his 'heresy,' as one who would call God to account for His cruel scrutiny. 'If,' he says in effect, 'if God holds me guilty, it is because He compares me with Himself, and shakes me to find fault in me, and calls that sin which I cannot discern as sin.' Mr. Coutts puts it in this way:—

Like a true logician, he accepts his friends' contention, only to show the untenable results to which it leads. You say, he tells them, that suffering is the punishment for sin, that all men are sinful, and therefore all must suffer. It is true. How can man be just before God, *if God be pleased to contend with him?* By such action God makes innocence impossible: all labour in the path of virtue is useless: nothing can keep or make a man clean if God chooses to plunge him into the ditch of comparison with Himself. 'Is it possible,' he cries, appealing to God Himself, 'that thou really hast treated me in this way? scrutinising me so minutely that the detection of sin was rendered certain, and at the same time keeping the record of my transgressions secret? Is it thy way to oppress and despise the work of thine hands? . . . The poor little ephemeral appearance that we call Man—of what importance can his thoughts, or words, or deeds be to thee? Take, then, thine eyes off him! Let him do his day's work, and be at peace.'

Job virtually challenges God to justify Himself, and, with passionate complaint, pathetic appeal, and bitter satire, faces and hammers away at the hard platitudes of his 'miserable comforters.' The passages chosen to illustrate this are iii. 3-26; vi. 2-21 (wrongly printed vii.); ix. 2-x. 22; xii. 2-xiv. 22; xvi. 2-xvii. 16; xix. 2-27; xxi. 2-15; xxiii. 2-xxiv. 17; xxvi. 2-4; xxvii. 2-6; and xxix. 2-xxxi. 40.

The presence and the action of Satan in this intense drama are of the greatest interest, so utterly opposed are they to the ordinary Christian creed. He is not at all like the conventional Devil. He is not an inmate of Hell; he strolls into a reception in Heaven with the sons of God, and, in answer to the question where he had been, he jauntily says, 'Going to and fro on the earth, and walking up and down in it.' He apparently holds the office of Inspector or Examiner of the inhabitants of the earth, says Mr. Coutts. He is sceptical, hard, satirical, but he seems to be a part of the divine government. 'He has a difficult and thankless task to perform; no less than to inspect and try men, and to report on the value of their profession of religion.' He often appears in the Bible, as such. He tested David (1 Chron. xxi.; comp. 2 Samuel xxiv. 1), and he appeared in the Court of Heaven as advocate against Joshua (Zech. iii. 1-2). He tested Christ, in the wilderness, and is described (in the manner of the Book of Job, though in a fiercer form and mood) by St. Peter (1 v. 8) as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour: this exhibiting a worsening of his character, and a good half way to the mediæval conception of him as no longer a lounging son of God and cynical tester of man but a horned beast with 'cloven feet, barbed tail, horns, and brimstone breath.' How imaginary the whole thing has been and is!

Blake, says the writer of this book, held Satan in high estimation; why it is difficult to say: possibly because he conceived him as a heroic character, Milton fashion, and partly, also, because he was daringly picturesque. Thus Blake said of Milton, 'The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God, and at liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true Poet, and of the Devil's party without knowing it.' This is one of Blake's puzzling yet luminous extravagances. It was really a hit at certain current notions of God and Angels which worried him. Perhaps a concluding remark by Mr. Coutts may help to throw light upon it: 'Satan has not yet

finished his career, but, taking one thing with another, may we not venture to assert that the Assayer of Souls is the teacher of at least one great truth—that it is useless for men to profess religion in order to avoid sin; they must avoid sin in order to profess religion?

IS IT 'A REAL FIGHT'?

In the July number of the 'Contemporary Review' there is an article by George Barlow on 'Optimism and Pessimism,' in which the view taken of sin will appear to many as out of line with the view taken by disciples of what is called the 'New Theology.' Not that the fundamental principles underlying them are altogether antagonistic. We do not think they necessarily contradict, but rather that they supplement one another.

The 'New Theology' emphasises the fact that sin is the result of ignorance, that it belongs to a low stage of development, and that it is a part of the process by which self-conscious moral beings are produced. There is nothing in this which is contradicted in Mr. Barlow's paper. It is indisputable, however, that the general effect of this view of sin, if presented alone, is to weaken the sense of moral recoil, to make hatred of evil pass into philosophic tolerance; and it is open to question whether great moral victories over social wrongs would ever be won by men and women imbued exclusively with this teaching: it seems to need considerable supplementing.

The aspect in which Mr. Barlow sees sin is undoubtedly appalling, but it is stimulating too. He does not doubt that Browning, Maurice, Kingsley, and the great preachers of optimism of the past generation were in the main right; indeed, he shares their hope for the world; but he thinks that this optimism has a little left out of count certain dark and terrible facts, and that to ignore these, or to slight them, is perilous. Mr. Barlow believes that Spiritualism has brought this darker side prominently before the world, and he takes the rather unusual view that Spiritualism has increased pessimism. He says:—

'The principal effect of the immense developments in recent years of spiritualistic and occult belief has been a distinct darkening of the horizon of thought, a definite increase of the pessimistic tendency. What we may call the pressure of the invisible, the sense of the action upon our own world of an unseen world, by no means wholly friendly to us, and in some respects inveterately hostile, has been more and more deeply felt.'

We are not prepared to entirely endorse this view, for it seems to overlook the fact that this 'pressure of the invisible' has had a tendency to lift thousands out of the dark pessimism of a materialistic philosophy. We do not think it fair to represent Spiritualism on the whole as darkening the horizon, but, at the same time, it is true that Spiritualism and kindred movements have brought us face to face with appalling possibilities. They have extinguished the vain illusion that death can metamorphise character, that sin's consequences can be got rid of by a death-bed repentance. They have shown us that the laws which govern spirit are as inexorable as the laws which govern matter, and more far-reaching; and it is true that they prompt terrible and painful questionings respecting the condition of numberless beings in the unseen world. Mr. Barlow pertinently asks: 'What becomes of those craving and suffering human spirits, those tortured human bodies, which are daily quitting this life with the immense desire for love . . . unsolved and unsatisfied?' He answers the question by saying that 'if conscious life be prolonged beyond the grave, such human spirits must be somewhere,' and says that Spiritualists believe that they

remain 'earth-bound,' and operate upon human frames, seeking thus to obtain the satisfaction denied to them before death, and suggests that it is, therefore, 'easy to account, on this ground alone, for many of the crimes and errors of the human race!' This is why Mr. Barlow considers that Spiritualism has a saddening effect. He thinks, and surely, if this view is correct, he is right, that it brings us face to face with a tremendous struggle. Sin, in the light of Spiritualism, is something more than a 'mistake.' That word is wholly inadequate to express all that is involved in this great contest, a contest in which individual wills are the factors, in which every single combatant counts for more than one because the influence of each is so extended.

There is something about this view which is calculated to incite every soul who loves righteousness and hates iniquity to buckle on his armour. Although we may not be able, by philosophic reasoning, to reconcile the theory that man has a will which can choose, with the determinism which we think we recognise in the order of the universe, still, of the fact that man has such a will we seem to have direct intuitive apprehension; just as we have direct apprehension of the fact that we exist. There are some truths which may be beyond the grasp of reason, but which it is perilous to ignore, and this subject of the existence and capability of the human will is one of these.

If Mr. Barlow's view is correct, and there is as tremendous a moral battle being waged in the unseen as in the seen, then it is of immense importance that each man should recognise his responsibility for his own share in it, and should not soothe his conscience and enervate his will by merely telling himself, when he has succumbed to evil, that he has made a mistake.

Professor William James takes a somewhat similar view, as we may see from the following:—

'For my own part I do not know what the sweat and blood and tragedy of this life mean, if they mean anything short of this. If this life be not a real fight, in which something is eternally gained for the Universe by success, it is no better than a game of private theatricals from which one may withdraw at will. But it *feels* like a real fight—as if there were something really wild in the Universe which we, with all our idealities and faithfulnesses, are needed to redeem; and first of all to redeem our own hearts from atheisms and fears.'

We may compare this with the paragraph at the close of Mr. Barlow's paper, in which he says:—

'All we can say is that a definite battle between humanity and some hostile, invisible power is going on, and has always been going on, a battle more deadly and protracted than the last century's optimists were able to imagine; that we, our efforts, our sins, and our victories, are an integral portion of that eternal struggle; that we can dimly conceive of the possibility of an actual physical transformation, through sacrifice, of a world in agony into a world of joy.'

If, overwhelmed by our own ignorance and the mystery of being, we are tempted to grow listless, we may rouse ourselves by remembering that one fact at least confronts us, viz., that *good is here and that evil is here*, and that we must of necessity side with one or the other; in the presence of this fact we cannot afford to let our wills be paralysed by philosophic theories concerning sin, or concerning free-will and determinism. Evil is here to be fought, and we are here to fight it.

Let us, however, be practical: let us come to details. If we are here to fight evil whenever and wherever we encounter it, how comes it that the Congo Free State is, to use the words of Sir Charles Dilke, the scene of a 'complete enslavement of the whole population'; the direct cause of this cruelty and tyranny being a European king who calls himself a Christian? How this iniquity came to

pass may be read in Mr. E. D. Morel's book 'Red Rubber,' (Is. net) which seems at last to be awakening the British public to a sense of its responsibility in relation to this great wrong. Everyone should at least acquaint himself with the main facts of the case, that this deep blot upon European civilisation and honour may be purged in the only possible way by the mandate of a healthy and enlightened public opinion. 'Deeds are done in the Congo Basin which brand with indelible infamy the white race in the eyes of the black, deeds which, in Lord Fitzmaurice's words, "make civilisation ashamed of its name."' "

To tolerate this state of things when we could stop it, is a 'mistake,' truly! but it is something more; it is to betray a trust. England has the heritage of freedom; this carries with it a tremendous obligation.

H. A. D.

ANOTHER PREDICTION VERIFIED.

Having seen 'A Precise Prediction Verified' in 'LIGHT' of July 20th, I think the following prediction, which was equally verified, may be of interest to your readers.

In January, 1904, I was much worried over the affairs of a relative whose immediate return to India had become necessary, but who showed no signs of making a start. One evening I was thinking about this, when one of my guides told me to look up and watch. I saw a picture form in the air of a steamship, with a man, whom I recognised as the relative in question, standing on the deck gazing ahead through a glass.

The ship had painted on its side pictures of St. Paul's and the Bank of England, which symbols I did not understand at the time, but found later that they were intended as picture symbols of the name of the line, 'City of London,' to which it belonged. This steamer anchored, as I watched it, just outside a port, evidently in the Mediterranean, and when, later in the evening, I described the place to my father, he at once recognised it as Malta.

Then my guide wrote up over the picture, 'February 27th, 28th, 29th, March 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th,' and stopped, saying, 'On March 4th he will be for about two hours *here*' (not naming the place, but pointing to the picture he had caused to appear). 'The ship will not go into port,' he continued, 'but something will be sent on shore, causing a delay of about two hours, when the voyage will be continued.' Then the vision faded away.

A month later, at the beginning of February, my relative wrote that he had decided to return to India as soon as he could make arrangements; to which I replied that I was aware of his intentions, and that he would go by a steamer which touched at Malta, but that I did not know to which line it belonged.

After some days he again wrote to say that he had taken his passage in a 'City of London' boat, the name of which I forget, and that it would go *direct* from Liverpool to Port Said. I again wrote to him, saying he *would be off Malta for about two hours on March 4th*, which, quite naturally, he did not believe in the least. I then wrote to the agents to ask where the steamer would call, and they replied, 'at Port Said and Bombay only.' This was on or about February 24th, 1904, but in spite of everything I was quite certain that to Malta that steamer would go. On February 27th or 28th a postcard reached me saying that my relative had just gone on board and that they were *not* going to Malta, and that clairvoyance was utter nonsense; but by a later post on the same day another postcard arrived, to say that just before the pilot boat was leaving, orders from London had been wired to the captain to call at Malta, to land passengers or cargo—the writer did not know which!

I watched the papers carefully, and found from the shipping news that on March 4th—the very day predicted by my guides quite two months before even the agents themselves knew she had to call there—the steamer in which I was interested had anchored off Malta and left again the same day, and I after-

wards learnt that she was there for exactly the predicted length of time.

This was not an important matter in one sense, but it saved me from a great deal of worry, and was, I think, one of the best tests my guides have ever given, as it seems so very difficult for those out of the body to fix a date more than approximately, and this was accurate in every detail.

ARJUNA.

LATENT MEMORIES AND AUTO-SUGGESTION.

In considering theories of the manner of production of psychic phenomena it is as well to remember that, as Professor Morselli rightly hints, no one explanation may cover all the facts; indeed, even apparently similar phenomena may have different origins. This caution seems needed before describing the experiences of Miss Frank Miller, contributed by her to the 'Journal of the American S.P.R.' with an introduction by Professor Flournoy, of Geneva, who published Miss Miller's observations in his review, 'Archives de Psychologie,' and who describes her as 'given to introspection and of alert intelligence, with an impressionability and vivacity of emotional reaction which would easily border on excess were they not checked by strong will and self-mastery'; in fact, he says, she would have made an excellent medium.

The leading trait of Miss Miller's experiences seems to be a capacity for 'instantaneous auto-suggestion'; thus, the mere sight of a conical towel on her head evoked the remembrance of Egyptian statues and plunged her into a kind of hallucination, almost amounting to a change of personality, and characterised by a vivid recollection of all that she had ever known or read with regard to the character assumed, so that it seemed to her for the moment that she was 'on a pedestal, a real Egyptian statue, with all its details.' When someone showed her a fine photograph of a steamer in mid-ocean, she instantly felt the pulsation of the engines, the roll of the waves, the lugging of the ship, just as though she were on it. If anyone in her presence praises what she dislikes, or expresses disgust at something of which she is fond, she takes on the suggested impression, and actually feels the sensations of the other person for a few seconds. At a theatre, when a man is represented as being killed, she feels a pain in her own heart, just where the man is supposed to receive the blow. But Miss Miller can transfer impressions to others as well as receive them; she says:—

'An artist of a certain celebrity wished to illustrate some of my publications. Now in this matter I have my own ideas and am difficult to please. Well, I succeeded in making him portray landscapes, such as those on Lake Léman, where he had never been, and he also claimed that I could make him draw things that he had never seen, and give him the feeling of an ambient (or atmosphere) that he had never felt; briefly, that I used him as he used his pencil, that is to say, as a simple instrument.'

The most outwardly striking phenomena, however, are some 'dream poems' produced by Miss Miller, for the most part composed during disturbed nights during travel or under some emotional strain which prevented complete sleep. In one case, she says, 'I found myself as near asleep as it is possible to be without losing consciousness.' At such times curious poems came into her mind and were written down with as little delay as possible. Afterwards, on analysing these productions, she found that they were combinations of historical and dramatic material existing in her mind as latent memories, and that the same is the case with all the Egyptian, Aztec, and other visions. But, we might ask, what intelligence called those memories forth from their hiding-places at that particular moment? Was it merely a freak of 'sub-conscious memory,' or was it an impression from without, some disembodied consciousness helping to arrange the fragments?

SPIRITUAL HEALING.—Mr. A. Rex, the spiritual healer, is taking a short holiday; but upon his return will resume his work at the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, of which notice will be given in due course. All communications should be sent to the secretary.

EVIDENCE OF SPIRIT RETURN.

Miss E. Katharine Bates' new book, 'Seen and Unseen,' to which we alluded on p. 344 of 'LIGHT,' should be carefully studied by those who are inclined to ask what *evidence* Spiritualists can adduce to prove that the manifestations which they witness are really due to the action of spirit people who once lived on this earth. This evidence, as quoted in books and letters to the psychic Press, may be divided into that which is vague and unconvincing (as when a supposed spirit merely accepts a suggestion from a sitter); that which is spontaneous and sufficient to convince all who regard it from a common-sense point of view; and the special evidence which is gradually being accumulated by careful researchers, in which all element of doubt seems to be eliminated, except for what we might call professional sceptics, who devote most of their ingenuity to finding still more incredible 'explanations'—which explain nothing.

At one of the first sêances attended by the author in America, at which the spirit faces seen, though 'exactly human' in appearance, had the aspect of being 'hastily put together and assumed for a time,' a form appeared which was announced as that of a friend who had passed away in Germany about five years previously. Miss Bates asked for the name, which was correctly given, and the apparition made a correct remark about having had beautiful hands; on being asked for a message for her sister, the form gave the sister's name correctly, with an appropriate message of a private nature. At another sêance, with a different medium, this friend came again and gave her name as before; she brought with her an odour of violets, a flower of which Miss Bates then remembered she had been very fond. It will be noticed that in these cases it was the spirit who compelled recognition, by bringing the remembrance of past circumstances to Miss Bates' mind.

The repetition of the same facts by different clairvoyants is noted, and although such a statement as that Miss Bates' mother, who died during her infancy, was now her guardian spirit, might be merely mind-reading, this theory will not account for such a case as the following:—

'While consulting these clairvoyants, in widely different parts of America, two very near relatives of mine were almost invariably described, and the names—one male and one female—were generally given. The mediums invariably went on to say that the female spirit was further on in development than the male spirit. Now there were circumstances which made this statement, viewed from the world's standpoint, not only absolutely mistaken, but almost ludicrously so. The woman's nature had been a far more faulty one—more impetuous, less balanced, and so forth. The male spirit described had been a man of very exceptional character and spirituality.'

This constantly recurring 'mistake,' when all other points in the descriptions were correct, could scarcely be due to telepathy or mind-reading; and the explanation is interesting. Just before leaving Denver, Miss Bates was sought out by a private medium, who 'felt bound to come,' and who gave her a good description of the persons in question, but made the usual 'mistake' about their relative positions. On being frankly told of this, and asked if she could account for the 'persistent and obvious misconception,' the lady (no longer in trance) 'looked up with a very intent expression as though listening to some explanation,' and then said, as though repeating a message:—

'It has nothing exactly to do with our earthly idea of "goodness." Spiritual life can only come to those prepared for it within the limits of their capacity. The male spirit you mention was a clergyman of the Church of England. He was a very holy man, but he was in some way creed-bound. He was a man of strong creed; he clung to his creed here, and cannot quite free himself from it even now, although he has advanced in spiritual perception. Now his wife had a very sympathetic, *approaching* nature. She can therefore receive spiritual light more fully and freely. That is why she has risen to a higher plane. This is not a question of character so much as of *spiritual capacity*, and in this she is the more

highly gifted of the two. She is able to help her husband, and in time he will join her, and they will progress together.'

Miss Bates remarks: 'One would hardly have expected a young woman in the midst of the Rocky Mountains to know the exact meaning of the term, "Clergyman of the Church of England," for the word is almost unknown in America, where they speak invariably of a "minister."' So that the message is at once explanatory, doctrinal, and evidential.

Some of the instances of (probably veridical) messages given by Miss Bates relate to matters either long past or which, for other reasons, could not be fully verified; and in some cases it seems as though more might have been done to obtain more direct confirmation, even at the risk of seeming to be officious. Others, again, were actually verified through, apparently, 'chance' meetings at a later date. A young man showed Miss Bates some photographs of his deceased mother, and she afterwards transmitted to him a message which she felt that the spirit mother was trying to impress on her. Some years later she learned that this message had made a very great difference in his life.

Another brief, but good, instance of a deceased person being able to make her influence definitely felt is that of a lady who had been a valued friend and helper of Mr. Stead's, and who had thrown herself out of a window in a fit of delirium. Mr. Stead submitted portions of this lady's hair to twelve well-known clairvoyants, including some who claim to possess special training in the Theosophical school, not shared by those whom they consider to be mere readers of the astral; but he could not get from them a sign previously agreed upon between Mr. Stead and the deceased lady. Meeting Miss Rowan Vincent, a highly-gifted, non-professional clairvoyante (since deceased), Miss Bates felt induced to ask whether she ever got messages by writing. Though Miss Vincent had never done so, she was eager to try, and a message came from the deceased lady to 'William' (Mr. Stead), saying how her death had occurred, and finishing up with the sign which had hopelessly puzzled all the other mediums.

While confining our attention in this article to a few of the best evidences of spirit identity in Miss Bates' book, we may add that each 'shift of the kaleidoscope,' to use the author's own phrase, reveals some new, interesting and attractively told picture from a rich store of well-attested experiences.

THE PASSING WAVE OF MATERIALISM.

Mr. Yono Simada, in the 'Swastika,' discusses the cause of the wave of materialism which is sweeping over Japan, after, as we hope, receding in the European countries. It came to Japan by way of America, but Mr. Simada thinks that it is not entirely of foreign origin, but is a necessary reaction from 'the subjective control of religionism' and a part of the awakening to modern international life. Speaking principally of Japan, but also as 'a citizen of the universe,' Mr. Simada says:—

'I predict that out of the present tendency to materialism there will arise a higher type of civilisation than any country on earth has yet presented, because it will express that desirable combination of physical perfection, mental activity, and spiritual aspiration which the higher civilisation must typify.

'Too much "spirituality" breeds weaklings, superstition, fear and depression. Too much materialism of mind makes life difficult, hard, metallic, diseaseful. Too much intellectual brilliancy fosters selfishness and egotism. The individual or the nation that shall unite these qualities in harmonious proportion will give us the perfect example of the highest civilisation. What nation will do this? Will it be America or Japan, or both?'

By 'spirituality' (in quotation-marks) Mr. Simada means an unbalanced spirituality without the corresponding physical and mental developments. But where we have these developments called forth and guided by true spirituality we have the sovereign blend which must characterise the true humanity of the future, which we hope and believe is even now evolving in our midst.

JOTTINGS.

Sensational stories are being published in reference to the discovery of a curious glass vessel, which is said to be 'of beautiful workmanship and supposed great antiquity,' in a well near Glastonbury Abbey. The facts seem to be few and simple, as far as we can ascertain them. The discovery was made by the sister of Mrs. Wellesley Tudor Pole, of Bristol, and two other ladies, as the result of a suggestion made to them by Mr. Tudor Pole, that they should go and search in a place of which he had had a vision.

It is said that Dr. Goodchild, of Bath, purchased a curious glass vessel in 1885 while he was at Bordighera, on the Italian Riviera. Some time later he had a psychic experience, and in a vision he was told that the cup, which was said to be the Holy Grail, must be taken to the 'women's quarter' at Glastonbury. In 1897 Dr. Goodchild, it is said, acting on the 'instructions of clairaudient voices,' deposited the cup in the shallow well or spring, where it was recently discovered as stated above. As to the vessel being the 'cup of "our Lord,"' used at the Last Supper, there is considerable divergence of opinion, and we need not enter into that question here. In reply to our letter of inquiry Mr. Pole states that the 'reports appearing in the newspapers are far from accurate as to detail, and I cannot endorse them in any way. Broadly speaking, the "Daily Express" account was fairly accurate. An official account of the whole series of strange happenings will appear when present researches are complete.'

A correspondent writes: 'Believing that the best way to get the people of this country converted from materialism to Spiritualism is to place in their reach such books as 'Hafed, Prince of Persia,' 'Chambers' 'Our Life after Death,' 'Through the Mists,' and similar eye-opening and startling books; also your admirable weekly, 'LIGHT,' I would suggest that readers of 'LIGHT' should try to get them into the public libraries, and in this way much good may be accomplished.'

The 'Light of Truth,' of Chicago, has taken a new name, that of the 'Journal of Man,' and appears fortnightly instead of weekly, but its contents are much the same as formerly. It is to be 'devoted to education and brotherhood,' and we wish it increased success. Moral education is undoubtedly the great need of the time, and brotherhood can never be realised until love takes the place of law, for, as Mr. Hopps says in his 'Coming Day' for August: 'Love fulfils Law: that is to say, Love alone covers the whole ground and makes Law unnecessary; so that where Love is supreme we may say "Law's occupation's gone." Love stops wrong at its source instead of restraining it in full flow. It leaves no bitterness behind. It hands down no feud. It adds grace to strict justice, and sweetness to submission, and joy to duty.'

In announcing that 'The Light of Truth' would cease publication, the editor, Mr. Willard J. Hull, said: 'There is no longer any need of dilating on the fact that the souls of men, women and children can communicate with mortals—that is, in connection with the aims and objects now in view. Science and philosophy everywhere recognise nowadays the indestructibility of life. Indeed, many scientific investigators have outstripped the Spiritualists in their discoveries and researches in cosmic properties. The problem confronting the spiritual scientists is the application of these proofs of the persistence and insistence of life to the advancement and happiness of humanity.'

The Rev. B. F. Austin, in 'Reason,' states that: 'The Bible teaches, in both Old and New Testaments, the possibility of spirit intercourse with mortals, and the fact that in all ages men have seen and conversed with the spirits of departed men and women. Through the whole period of its formation—for centuries, at least—we have line upon line, precept upon precept, illustrating this wireless telegraph between earth and heaven. Are these Bible accounts of the reappearance of the so-called dead genuine histories, reliable facts, or are they the creation of the human imagination? A number of New Testament passages describe, with commendation, this communion as practised by New Testament saints, and even by Jesus himself, and it is an abuse of the Bible to seek to destroy the blessed doctrine of the true communion of the saints by wresting from their context, and misinterpreting their meaning the isolated passages in the Old Testament which do not apply to legitimate spiritual communion.' This extract may be of interest to our Australian

correspondent (p. 359), who is perplexed because she has been told that Spiritualism is Satanic. The efforts of the Jewish priesthood to monopolise spirit intercourse do not apply to us now.

Spiritualists are able to view death calmly and rationally, and the following lines written by Arzelia C. Clay on the 'passing' of her niece, Annie Phoebe Clay, well illustrate the comforting assurance which a knowledge of spirit return gives:—

'We need not say of her that she is dead;
Ah! No, she is alive, and doing well.
The crumbling dust has found a narrow bed,
The butterfly has merely left the shell.'

There seems to have been a 'stirring of dry bones' in the West of England lately; following on Mr. John Lobb's recent addresses at Plymouth and Exeter, which were briefly reported in the local press, correspondence has appeared in the 'Western Daily Mercury,' of Plymouth, in which Mr. Lobb challenges ministers of religion to 'awake to their high calling' and testify to spirit return as a fact well attested in the Old and New Testaments and exemplified in the case of Jesus. Mr. Elvin Frankish, hon. secretary of the Exeter Spiritualist Church, sets forth the objects of that body, viz., to expound spiritual laws and to help man to mould his higher nature, using clairvoyance to comfort those in distress.

Mr. Hereward Carrington, writing in the 'Journal of the American S.P.R.' on 'Omar Khayyam and Psychical Research,' puts forward the following analogy with regard to the idea of time: 'Let us suppose ourselves on the hind platform of the rear car of a train. As the train moves, new scenes come into view and others vanish. But in this case the landscape newly perceived is not actually *created*; it does not come into being at the moment we perceive it; it has always existed, and the reason why it has not existed *for us* before, is that we have not been in a position to perceive it until that moment; and when the landscape recedes in the distance it is not annihilated, but remains unaltered; but *for us* it has vanished—for the reason that we are no longer in a position to perceive it. Thus it is that events may, perhaps, exist, in some real or "noumenal" world, which are only perceived by us, as phenomena, at certain definite stages, or times, for their perception.' The inference is that all future events may be actually existent at present, but we do not perceive them until we arrive at the appropriate stage of our journey, the measure of which is not miles, but what we call time.

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.

Love, Self-Love, and Selfishness.

SIR,—May I protest, on both moral and philological grounds, against certain statements in Mr. Clayton's letter headed 'Selfishness and Progress.' Surely selfishness means more than self-love, and implies an excessive degree of self-love, and a preference of one's own interests to those of others, which is the very worst of all human qualities, if, at least, as both Pagan and Christian moralists have taught, love is 'the fulfilling of the law,' whereas self-love often is at once innocent, a duty, and most praiseworthy. Much of the motive power which Mr. Clayton ascribes to 'selfishness' is, I admit, possessed by 'self-love,' though altruism possesses, it will be found in the long run, a power even greater still.

Permit me to examine Mr. Clayton's economic illustration of his theory, namely, the assumption that X. and Y. have each accumulated £100, and while X. shuts his up in a box, Y. employs his in exploiting two fellow-men, and in that way increasing his wealth.

I will assume that X. and Y. alike have acquired their capital justly, i.e., as a return for personal service of some sort rendered by them. In such a case each can plead, as against his fellows, an absolute right to consume his money in the way he likes; and X. in hoarding his, at any rate, injures and oppresses no one.

As to Y., he might, without doing any injustice, employ his savings by purchasing goods with them wholesale, and retailing these to his neighbours at a profit, this profit being his just recompense for the work of distribution which he has done. But Mr. Clayton's theory supposes (apparently) that

Y. wants to increase his property at a greater rate, and this he can best do by using his capital as an employer of work-people. In that capacity he may or may not devote some personal labour to superintendence, and if he does, then the gross profits of the business will have been produced by his own labour and that of his employes jointly.

Actuated as he is by selfishness he will, of course, keep for himself the largest share, leaving to them the smallest share that he can arrange for. In case he has not given any personal superintendence, and the whole of the profit is the fruit of other people's labour, these other people will have been mulcted by him of so much of the total fruit of their labours as their employer has intercepted.

Savings, in truth, have no moral claim for interest, unless their owner gives a *quid* of future service for the *quo* of future interest. If Y., instead of exploiting two other men, had simply lent them his £100 (taking, of course, as a prudent man, security for its safe return), these men would have earned as much wages as they did on Mr. Clayton's assumption, besides enjoying themselves that share of the proceeds which he intercepted, while he would have suffered no injustice and would have injured no man.

With the writer referred to on an earlier page of the same issue of 'LIGHT' in which Mr. Clayton's letter appeared, let us pray: 'Deliver us from selfishness'!—Yours, &c.,

E. D. GIRDLESTONE.

Sutton Coldfield.

SIR,—Mr. Clayton, in 'LIGHT' for July 27th, p. 359, is apparently in love with selfishness, else he would never affirm that it has done more for society and the working man than humanitarianism or love, an affirmation, I make bold to say, which we have been taught, and rightly, too, to look on with abhorrence as being the root evil which affects the world.

Mr. Clayton assumes that the world's business is carried on by selfishness, or, in other words, by an exchange of goods by which only one party to the bargain reaps any advantage, which is an utter impossibility, for it is the spirit of enterprise, or an exchange which is mutually advantageous, which is the chief factor in the problem.

This being so, it does not advance the argument to point out that, owing to errors of judgment, business is carried on with successful or unsuccessful results; the question still remains, is selfishness beneficial to society or the working man—or, in other words, 'What doth it profit a man if he gain the world and lose his own soul?' (*Life*).

That the Ego, or self-consciousness, enters into every transaction of our daily life no one denies; but it does not follow that the transactions are indistinguishable or cannot be classified as good or bad, selfish or unselfish, as the actuating motive becomes apparent. An employer's enterprise may be, and is, a blessing to working men, but never his selfishness.

Pope says of selfishness: 'I would cut off my own head if it had nothing better in it than wit, and tear out my own heart if it had no better disposition than to love only myself.' It were far better to point out the unselfish elements in the virtues to which working men are called upon to aspire, than to speak of such habits of mind as forethought in association with insurance and benefit societies as only different ways of spelling selfishness.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN MOULD.

'The Problem of a Dream Episode.'

SIR,—In my suggestion with regard to 'A Dream Episode,' related by Mr. Thurstan in 'LIGHT' of June 29th, I did not (as that gentleman appears to infer on p. 352 that I did) mean to imply the intentional control of an incarnate mind by a discarnate one, but simply an experience which may be summed up in Mr. Thurstan's own words as 'a taking on of the feelings and thought form of another being.'

I know from experience that between two spirits in close relationship with each other, although one of them be still incarnate, there may be an unconscious revelation of the mind of one to the other. There is one discarnate being to whom, when present, my every thought is known, and of whose cogitations, even, I am aware.

I ask questions and receive replies from this spirit, and I thought that Mr. Thurstan might be able to communicate with some spirit friend in the same way.

I have had no assurance concerning any 'common world-store' of knowledge, but I think that a mind desiring enlightenment upon a subject may attract to it other minds interested in that subject, and thus obtain it.

We should not, I think, put implicit trust in a spirit's conclusions, even in regard to spirit life and possibilities; but it is reasonable to suppose that the discarnate have more knowledge concerning their side of life than we have.—Yours, &c.,

EMILY PAGE.

'Reincarnation an Unproved Theory.'

SIR,—I cannot but think that a suitable reply to some of the points of 'Agnostic's' letter upon this subject will have occurred to many readers.

In the satisfactory conditions of his own life, which we are led to infer, and consequent desire that his memories of the same may ever remain 'green,' he is to be sincerely congratulated, but would it require much stretch of the imagination to guess what might be the feelings of the condemned criminal doomed to pass out of life at the hands of the hangman? Is *he* so anxious to retain all the memories of his present life, about to be ended in so terrible a manner? The question surely need not be enlarged upon; but without limiting ourselves to so extreme an illustration, are there not those in life at the present moment, and probably vast numbers, to whom it would be an infinite comfort could they only be assured that not only their own but also, so far as concerned themselves, the memories of all connected with them, could be blotted out of the book of life? Most assuredly we should find that such suffer from no anxieties lest their memories should fail. I, for one, have no manner of doubt that the trials and troubles, errors, and perhaps crimes, will have stamped their lessons upon the evolving and growing soul never to be effaced.

There is abundant evidence within the experience of Spiritualists that numbers in the beyond very quickly lose consciousness of the immediate past which has tended to make them what they are in their new conditions. Happily, their possibilities are still in front of them, and not for ever ended in the forgotten past. Neither is it logical to infer that such lapse of memory, unfortunate or otherwise, must necessarily entail the loss of individual self-consciousness.

Is it not almost time we realised that, in the laws ruling the cosmos, we may reasonably believe there is no such thing as punishment *per se*? What we term punishments or rewards are but the natural and inevitable outcome and results of past action; and if we now find ourselves in conditions unfavourable or happily the reverse, let us endeavour to take comfort, infinite comfort, in the fact that thus gradually, but surely, is the manifestation of the 'divinity within' made possible.—Yours, &c.,

J. F. DARLEY.

SIR,—My critic, 'Agnostic,' who appears to have humorously misinterpreted the qualified term 'naked Egos,' asks whether anyone knows that such Egos exist before birth? By way of answer I refer him to the literature of those ancient and modern sages and seers who were and are familiar with the facts.

'Agnostic' admits the survival of egoity after the death of the body, but cannot admit of its pre-existence to birth. As he has put forward no theory to account for the genesis, or appearance, of the Ego at birth, in contradistinction to that of reincarnation, I presume he has not yet formulated one. The proof of reincarnation can be obtained by those who are sufficiently advanced to realise it for themselves, and rests in the evidence of experiences seen and felt by the consciousness when centred in the spiritual self. The lower personality cannot sense it with its eyes of flesh, nor can the animal reasoning comprehend it unaided; for the sensuous sphere being mutable and turbulent can only receive the broken reflections of the true pictures of past lives stored in the auric sphere, on the plane where the higher self functions.

The course for those to take who seek the proof lies in the direction of spiritual development, and 'Agnostic' is utterly wrong in his statement that it is unproved and unprovable, for although it may remain so to him, it does not follow that all others are similarly situated.

'Agnostic's' 'difficulty' appears to arise from his identification of personality with individuality, and the inference as to the injustice of 'suffering the bad Karma of some other fellow,' &c., is altogether a mixed up and wrong conclusion. The nature of the personality, confined almost entirely to a sensuous existence, ranges from the limitations of material existence to those of the higher astral planes, but the individuality can pass into the higher regions beyond. The consciousness of the individuality becomes active in the personality when incarnate, but at death and after it gradually withdraws from the personality, which latter ultimately ceases to be, or rather is left as a shade to the forces of its own sphere. The individuality, having reaped and stored its essentials, passes onward into higher realms of ecstasy for a period, limited by the law of its being and growth, after which it reincarnates by the ordinary process; building with the development of its body a new personality, for which, and for its actions, it becomes responsible; and in so doing gathers experience, obtains growth of mind, intellect, will, &c., as the fruit of its harvest.

Under these general conditions (there are others too abstruse to enter upon) the Ego dominates its incarnations, and through the gateways of pleasure and pain expands in consciousness and power. The three-fold law of Karma limits its lives in accordance with the causes and effects of good and bad actions; permitting no permanent injustice, and rewarding all merit.

The reason why we do not remember our past incarnations is that their records are stored in the higher auric substances of the self which the ordinary normal waking consciousness cannot reach.—Yours, &c.,

F. J. JOHNSON.

Bovingdon, Herts.

'A Painful Surprise.'

SIR,—In reply to the letter signed 'F. M. S. S.' in 'LIGHT' of July 20th, I would suggest that the false statements made to its writer concerning her son's health may have been given to her in all good faith by a spirit believing itself to be in communication with the medical spirit friend of her husband and the spirit of her brother, both having, probably, accompanied the husband and son upon their journey. It would, I think, have been possible for a spirit's inquiries to have proceeded in a wrong direction, and to have been answered in reference to another sick person, by a spirit having such person in charge. The incident, it seems to me, presents a case of misdirected spirit telepathy.—Yours, &c.,

E. P.

A Protest against Anonymity.

SIR,—It seems to me a pity and a mistake that all your correspondents do not affix their names and addresses to their contributions, especially in the case of describing phenomena, as 'Lux' did in 'LIGHT' of July 20th.

Personally, the question is of no importance, but I think to sceptics it would be, and that the truth of the statements would be much more convincing if all articles were fully signed.—Yours, &c.,

H. H. SUTCLIFFE.

Oak Hill, Burnley.

[There are, unfortunately, many reasons: social, family, and business alike, which render it impossible—at least, in their own estimation—for many of our correspondents to have their names and addresses published. In most cases we are at liberty to give these particulars privately to *bona-fide* inquirers.—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

A Strange Phenomenon.

SIR,—When driving along a country lane in Ireland last summer, we pulled up to examine a spot on the roadside where, amongst the grass, there was a bare hollow which represented the size and shape of the back of a man's head. My informant said that it had been there all his lifetime, and that it had been filled up on some occasions by the road-men, but always reappeared.

The schoolmaster of the locality, who is a man of veracity, informed me, on inquiry, that it had always been there since he remembered, and that, about sixty years ago, one Sunday morning, his father was the first person to discover a man lying on the road, who had been stabbed late on the Saturday night. There were three rings of blood on the middle of the road, as if he had reeled before falling. There is a margin of grass, about two feet wide, between the fence and the road; the hollow, which is well defined and bare, is about in the centre of the grass, and the mystery is why it has existed so long.

This spot is near the village of Milisle, Co. Down, and the murder was supposed to be the result of a quarrel after leaving a public-house some distance away; but no one could be brought to justice.

I wonder if any reader of 'LIGHT' can explain the mystery?—Yours, &c.,

HUGH CRILLY.

85, Briggate, Leeds.

GARDEN PARTY AT STOCKTON RECTORY.—On Thursday afternoon, July 25th, Archdeacon Colley had a large gathering of Spiritualists from Leamington, Warwick, Leicester, London, and elsewhere, and an enjoyable day was brought to a close with a special spiritualist service and sermon in the parish church, the beautiful Knight Templar edifice of some seven hundred years ago being dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels. One of the hymns sung was the Archdeacon's adaptation of 'Hymns Ancient and Modern,' No. 538.

SOCIETY WORK.

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

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. Monteith ably answered written questions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Murphy, clairvoyant descriptions. Wednesday, August 7th, at 8 p.m., Miss Violet Burton.—W. T.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. D. J. Davis delivered a thoughtful address on 'Spiritualism in Every-day Life,' and Mrs. Webb gave clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday next Mr. J. Adams will give an address.—H. B.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Imison spoke on 'The Freedom that Spiritualism Gives,' and Mrs. Imison gave clairvoyant descriptions and comforting messages to a crowded audience. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. G. Winbow.—J. P.

OXFORD CIRCUS.—22, PRINCE'S-STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Frederic Fletcher, after briefly alluding to his subject of the previous Sunday, answered various questions from the audience in a satisfactory manner. The hall will be closed on Sunday next. Sunday, August 11th, Mr. E. W. Wallis on 'Spiritualism, the Need of the Age.'

ACTON.—PEMBRIDGE HOUSE, HORN-LANE, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Macdonald Moore's helpful and interesting address on 'Spiritual Healing' was much enjoyed. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., clairvoyant descriptions by Mr. Peters. August 5th, tea at 5.30 p.m., social gathering at 7.30 p.m., Mr. Peters, psychometrist; tickets 1s. each, inclusive.—S. H.

BALHAM.—19, RAMSDEN-ROAD (OPPOSITE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY).—On Sunday morning last Mr. Weiss opened a discussion on 'Faithism.' In the evening Mr. G. Morley spoke of the Faithist Bible, and gave clairvoyant descriptions. Services are held on Sundays at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., and on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m. Questions invited.—W. E.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Mr. H. F. Leaf's impressive address on 'The Ethics of Christianity compared with the Ethics of Spiritualism,' and his earnest appeal for universal recognition of spirit presence and communion, were enthusiastically received. Mr. Geo. F. Tilby presided. Sunday next, Mr. T. Brooks.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last Mr. John Lobb spoke to good audiences of his experiences with the so-called dead, and Mrs. Fairclough Smith gave clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn. August 5th, at 8 p.m., public circle. Wednesdays, at 3 p.m., clairvoyant descriptions.

PECKHAM.—CHEFSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Roberts delivered a splendid address on 'Spiritualism: What it is,' and Mr. Roberts gave convincing clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. Waters presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. Banyard, address. August 11th, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. A. Webb, address and clairvoyant descriptions.—C. J. W.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last, to a crowded audience, Mr. A. V. Peters gave twenty recognised clairvoyant descriptions, many of which afforded good evidences of spirit identity to the recipients. Miss C. B. Loughton's delightful solo and a violin *obligato* by Mr. F. Moss were much appreciated. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided. Sunday next, Mr. J. Macdonald Moore, address. Members' séances suspended until September 5th.

CHISWICK.—110, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last, after a discussion on 'Let there be Light,' healing power was exercised. In the evening Mr. W. H. Simpson's address on 'Was Paul a Gnostic?' was instructively discussed. On Monday last Mrs. Clowes gave successful psychometric and clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. J. H. Pateman, on 'Capital Punishment: Should it be Abolished?'—H. S.

NORWICH.—On Monday last there was a good attendance, and various mediums spoke.—H. M. D.

SOUTHAMPTON.—WAVERLEY HALL, ST. MARY'S-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Sturgess spoke on 'The Illustrious Convert' in his usual convincing manner.—S. A. D.

PORTSMOUTH.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. Sydney Old spoke on 'Body, Soul, and Spirit,' and 'The Psychology of the Bible.' On July 24th, at 1a, Waterloo-street, Mr. Witts read a paper on 'Mediumship.' Mrs. Wilson gave well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions.—C. E. L.