

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.

At Mountclair (U.S.), a series of five religious services were lately held in a Congregational Church under the leadership of its pastor. It was a kind of devout Bach Festival, and included the St. Matthew Passion Music, the Motet 'Jesu, Priceless Treasure,' Luther's mighty Hymn, and several other works of this truly religious composer. An American Review takes note of it in a report which contains the following suggestive passage:—

No service of the usual kind could have lifted a great congregation, or appealed so powerfully to their religious emotions and spiritual nature, as did Bach's choral music; and it was significant that the descendants of the Puritans should have brought back again in this victorious and impressive way a resource for religious expression and for common worship which has been largely lost from the churches of the Puritan order for many decades, and largely lost from the Protestant world. The Reformation effected great and beneficent results, but, as in the case of all fundamental reforms, it sacrificed valuable activities and instruments. In nothing did it lose more than in suppressing certain forms of music from its worship, thus denying itself the fullest expression of religious aspiration. Whatever form the churches of the future will take as regards theological statement, liturgy or organisation, it is safe to predict that when the great Church Catholic is born, of which the earlier Church Catholic was a prediction, music will hold a central place in its services, and will become again the vernacular of its most intimate and uplifting experiences.

We have a strong feeling that there is in this a clear call to us as Spiritualists. Music may almost be regarded as nearer to the spirit-world than words. It is a world of emotion, of soul-thrill, of love expression: and surely there is nothing like noble and thrilling music to reach 'the fountains of the great deep' within. Will the time come when we shall have a company of musicians of our own, to delight and uplift us at our meetings, and to inspire us at that united (say) annual gathering in London of which we have sometimes heard but which yet waits to be achieved?

'The Herald of the Golden Age,' the elegant pleader for all things gracious and gentle, can, on occasions, be as ferocious as Mohammed and as cutting as Christ, in its assaults upon ferocity and its attacks upon the wielders of the knife. Thus it quotes, with evident relish, the following by Professor J. H. Moore:—

There are lessons that may be learned from the uncorrupted children of Nature—lessons in simplicity of life, straightforwardness, humility, art, economy, brotherly love, and cheerfulness—more beautiful, perhaps, and more true than may sometimes be learned from the stilted and Machiavellian ways of men.

Would you learn forgiveness? Go to the dog. The dog can stand more abuse and forgive greater accumulations of wrong than any other animal, not even excepting a wife.

Would you learn chastity? Go to the boudoir of the bower-bird, or to the subterranean hollow where the wild wolf rears her litter.

The horse, who suffers and serves and starves in silence, who endures daily wrongs of scanty and irregular meals, excessive burdens and mangled flanks, who forgets cruelty and ingratitude, and does good to them that spitefully use him, and submits to crime without resistance, misunderstanding without a murmur, and insult without resentment, is a better exemplar of the Sermon on the Mount than many church-goers, in spite of the creeds and interdictions of men.

And the animal who goes to church on Sundays, wearing the twitching skins and plundered plumage of others, and wails long prayers and mumbles meaningless rituals, and gives unearned guineas to the missionary, and on week-days cheats and impoverishes its neighbours, glorifies war and tramples under foot the most sacred principles of morality in its treatment of its non-human kindred, is a cold hard-hearted *brute* in spite of the fact that it is cunning and vainglorious, and towers about on its hinders.

We do not know the meaning of 'twitching skins,' but do not profess to be up in the latest fashions. Besides, the entire picture, though painfully true on the whole, has about it a manifest note of extravagance.

We are often puzzled by the modern expounders of 'The Incarnation' who insist that, as an Incarnation in Christ, it has put the whole of Mankind in a new relation to God. We never understand what they actually mean. But a late writer in 'The New International Review' (an 'Ex-Agnostic') sets forth a view which is at least understandable:—

The Incarnation is not that God once became man, but that God became matter, voluntarily dissolving (and degrading as we should conceive it) His more intimate essence into coarsest elements, in order that He might, by working out His own escape, call a universe of Gods into being—Gods fashioned out of clay and endowed in myriad torturing furnaces with the sublime strength and sympathy and wisdom of Godhead. Why spirit sought to manifest itself in matter is a mystery which we may not fathom, but that is what is taking place throughout the process of evolution. Could it be accomplished save through the most poignant suffering? Imagine the genius of a Shakespeare imprisoned and trying to express itself through the brain of an Australian aborigine, and you may gain a faint conception of the agony which spirit must endure when limited by matter. The heroism of such agony voluntarily endured for some beneficent end would be the sublimest act of a God which our minds could conceive.

We call that 'understandable' because, if it had all happened so, it really does explain how such an Incarnation, when known, puts us in a new relation to God: not new as a matter of fact, but new to knowledge and imagination: and, however we conceive of God, the process of such an Incarnation is, in a way, understandable. Whether it all happened so is quite another matter; but it is an ingenious hypothesis.

Tolstoy on Shakespeare (Everett and Co., Essex-street, London), is an awakener, though few Englishmen, when awakened, will do anything but laugh—or swear, over the

attempted destruction of their idol: for Tolstoy thinks that Shakespeare is immensely over-rated and grossly immoral. His plays are, to him, unspiritual, repulsive and tedious, and he selects one of the most highly praised ('King Lear') for dissection and condemnation.

He thinks we are hypnotised by hearsay and fashion, and that there is but little free-reading and free-judging of Shakespeare's writings. We work ourselves up into the belief that he is a great master, because everybody says so, and, having succeeded in doing that, our æsthetic and ethical feelings become distorted: and 'having assimilated the immoral view of life which penetrates' these plays, we lose 'the capacity of distinguishing good from evil.' He says:—

This is why I think that the sooner people free themselves from the false glorification of Shakespeare, the better it will be.

Firstly, having freed themselves from this deceit, men will come to understand that the drama which has no religious element as its foundation is not only not an important and good thing, as it is now supposed to be, but the most trivial and despicable of things. Having understood this, they will have to search for and work out a new form of modern drama, a drama which will serve as the development and confirmation of the highest stage of religious consciousness in men.

Secondly, having freed themselves from this hypnotic state, men will understand that the trivial and immoral works of Shakespeare and his imitators, aiming merely at the recreation and amusement of the spectators, cannot possibly represent the teaching of life, and that, while there is no true religious drama, the teaching of life should be sought for in other sources.

This may be regarded as narrow and even puritanical. Perhaps it is, but it is one view of a great subject which ought to be expressed.

Dr. Cobb's quaint little Church Paper is a kind of Organ of 'The League of the Kingdom' which lately asked from its members suggestions concerning Church Reform. These suggestions included:—

- (1) The need for emphasising the supremacy of life over form;
- (2) The need for excising the obsolete;
- (3) The need for greater freedom of selection;
- (4) The need for the maintenance of the highest spiritual ideal, and the rejection of everything which is inconsistent with it.

Dr. Cobb gives us the following summary of replies:—

Under the first head come the following:

- (a) The simplification of the music used;
- (b) The substitution of natural speech for intoning;
- (c) The provision of opportunities for quiet thought or prayer.

Under the second come the following:

- (a) The omission of many of the Psalms and of many O.T. Lections;
- (b) The omission of the Athanasian Creed or of all Creeds;
- (c) The revision of the Lectionary.

Under the third come the following:

- (a) Permission to shorten or omit unsuitable Psalms;
- (b) Permission to use Lections from books other than the Bible;
- (c) Permission to replace the Ten Commandments by the Royal Law of Love or by the Beatitudes;
- (d) More variety in the types of service;
- (e) Freedom to replace a Creed by a Hymn of Praise.

Under the fourth come the following:

The omission of all phrases which emphasise God's 'wrath' or man's depravity, or otherwise inculcate fear; of all phrases which imply a judgment on other communions, or assume any right to 'punish,' whether in Church or State; of all that belongs to the O.T. rather than to the N.T., to ecclesiasticism rather than to religion, or to the past as opposed to the future.

To a free Spiritualist, there is something both astonishing and comical in having to ask Parliament or Convocation

for 'permission' to omit or cleanse some of the Psalms (Psalm lxxviii., for instance), to read from books other than the Bible, to use a hymn instead of a creed. Why does not Dr. Cobb do all that, and chance it?

'A Commonwealth man' frequently contributes to Dr. Cobb's Paper a letter to his 'Fellow Citizens.' Here is the first half of his latest: exaggerated perhaps but with a good sprinkling of wholesome salt in it:—

I really do not know why you take in a daily paper. You get no good out of it and you waste a lot of valuable time. What? You must know what is going on. Really? Why should you? And how much wiser are you when you have read how Tom Jones kicked his wife, how Captain Fitz-battle-axe eloped with his Colonel's, how Bill Sykes burgled the Duke of Clapham's shooting-box, how this man was poisoned, that man was robbed and somebody else was given ten years?

The fact is that with the rush of modern life our minds are getting as empty as melons. We see all sights from pole to pole and nod and gaze and bustle by, and as Nature abhors a vacuum and especially in a mind, we proceed to empty into ours what comes handiest and gives least trouble.

Right here comes in the insidious cleverness of the new journalism. It cares nothing for the truth of a thing or the righteousness of a cause, but only for the sale of the paper. So the Daily Rag sums you up very neatly, and knowing that you won't read anything that costs you more than the nimble half-penny, it gives you the ha'porth you deserve. And so it and you go wearily together down the hill that leads to the pit.

A SENSATIONAL DISCOVERY. BY CLAIRVOYANCE.

Professor William James relates, in the 'Proceedings of the American S.P.R.,' an account of the discovery of the body of a drowned person under circumstances which render it a remarkable instance of clairvoyant power. The case was fully investigated at the time, and the depositions of the witnesses were taken.

On October 31st, 1898, a young woman named Huse left her home at 6 a.m. and went on to a long wooden bridge at Enfield, N.H., after which she was not seen again. On the night of November 2nd Mrs. Titus, of Lebanon, a village about four and a-half miles from Enfield, had a dream or vision in which she saw the girl step out on to a jutting beam, slip, and fall backwards, sliding in underneath the timberwork of the bridge. She said that the girl's body would be found lying head in, and with only one of her 'rubbers' (goloshes) projecting from the timberwork.

Mrs. Titus went the next day to the bridge, where she pointed out the spot where the body would be found. A diver, who had been at work during the two previous days, said that he had searched there. Mrs. Titus said, 'Yes, you searched *there*, and *there*' (indicating certain spots), 'but you did not search *there*, and if you go down you will find only the rubber of her shoe projecting from the timberwork.' The diver went down; presently the girl's bonnet rose to the surface, and shortly afterwards the diver came up bringing the body. He then said: 'I did not look in this place yesterday, as the brush and *débris* were so thick that I could not see; in fact, all I could feel of the body was the rubber projecting from the timberwork.' Full corroboration of the occurrence is given by the witnesses, including the diver. It is further stated by Mr. Titus that on the day previous to the accident his wife had said to him: 'Something awful is going to happen; I cannot tell you now what it is, but can later on'; and that on the 31st, about 6.40 a.m., she said: 'That has happened.'

The most striking fact in this incident is that the position of the body was located by Mrs. Titus 'to an inch,' as the diver remarked. The place was too dark for it to be seen, because the crib-work of the bridge cuts off the light, and the body had got jammed in a vertical position in a hole in the crib-work, with nothing but the projecting shoe to indicate where it was. The diver stated that when he made the discovery he was more 'afraid of the woman on the bridge' (Mrs. Titus) than of the body in the water, because he could not imagine how she should come from miles away and pick out the precise spot at which he was to search. Mrs. Titus was at home when the accident happened and had not been near the bridge for several years.

A NEW PHASE OF MATERIALISM.

Readers of 'LIGHT' will have become somewhat familiar with the writings of Mr. David Christie Murray ('Merlin') in the 'Referee,' as we have quoted his articles from time to time, and generally with approval. We regret to learn that he passed to spirit life on the 1st inst. in his sixtieth year. Owing to failing health he had not been writing for the 'Referee' of late, but his last effort was a thoughtful article for that paper on multiple personality, entitled 'Theories of the Soul,' which appeared on Sunday last. After drawing attention to the widespread and eager interest which is taken in all problems connected with the future life he said: 'There never was a time when Faith was absent from the world, and it is by Faith, and by Faith alone, that we can so much as conceive ourselves to approach a solution of the eternal problem.' Apparently, he little dreamed that for him it would so soon cease to be a problem and become an experience.

With rare insight he clearly appreciated the fundamental materialism of the new school of psycho-pathologists who adopt, and learnedly discourse upon, the theory of multiple personality. Against this school of thinkers, he says, 'all the forms of thought which are not wholly material will have, sooner or later, to make common cause,' because they aim to prove that—

'what has hitherto been known as the human personality is the result of a concourse of atoms which variously affect each other, and that by a change in their structural relations a subject may arrive not merely at a mental aberration which may or may not be continuous, or at a state of dementia which may shatter the whole intellectual apparatus, but at an actual change of individuality, during which the body may harbour two or three or more absolutely different spiritual identities. It is not worth while to dismiss this idea as a mere grotesquerie, for it comes to us with a formidable array of scientific names behind it, and if it should ever prove to be established, it will open up to us such a vision of blank materialism as the world has not hitherto beheld.'

Having pointed out that injury to the brain, or shock to the nervous system, may result in a loss of conscious identity, 'Merlin' said:—

'One would think it difficult for anybody but a man of science obsessed by a theory to arrive at a conclusion that a disruption of the nervous ganglia can lead to the institution of a new personality in the body of the person who suffers from it.

'The arguments by which the idea is supported are curiously and even absurdly feeble. Your man of science is often the last man in the world to be entrusted with an idea, because he so often starts from a preconception which he has engaged at all hazards to maintain.'

Spiritualists have constantly affirmed continued conscious human existence after bodily death, and that it is an individual, intelligent, personal life, bearing relation to, and the sequel of, the present state of conscious expression, and 'Merlin' shrewdly observed that:—

'If it were once established that the human personality is an impermanent thing even in this life, and that it is liable to be ousted by a derangement of the physical functions, the hope of its continuance in another life would be gravely weakened. The ancient belief in demoniac possession, which even yet survives in many lands, leaves the victim still in charge of his earthly tenement, even whilst he is compelled to share it with other intelligences. But according to the latest preaching of the psycho-pathologist, a concussion of the brain or a derangement of the nervous centres can give the original tenant notice to quit, and can install another actual person in his place, either *en permanence* or for limited and recurrent periods of time. The conclusion appears to overleap itself. We say of a madman in our common speech that he is deranged, and the word seems to cover the whole ground—de-ranged—out of arrangement. Such a one will develop characteristics which are wholly foreign to his normal state, but there is no justification for the theory that his spiritual identity has disappeared. The mind is susceptible to the conditions of the body. A touch of dyspepsia, gout, or toothache will sometimes transform a man of ordinarily sunny temper into a snarling beast. He does not behave in his common manner, but he is not the less the same man. And since causes comparatively trivial can change the whole

current of character for the time, it is not at all to be wondered at that a breakdown in his delicate and complex sensory apparatus should exert a stronger effect in the same direction. There is no discoverer of mares' nests to match your man of science when he gives his mind that way.'

There is a good deal of truth in that last remark—but we should have hesitated before putting it quite so strongly.

MOTHER EARTH.

Professor L. H. Bailey, of Cornell University, in an American magazine article quoted by 'Eltka' (Corry, Pa., U.S.A.), discusses the charm that resides in 'the touch of the soil.' He says:—

'However many the years may be, we long again for the coming of spring and the touch with the soil. Rarely is there a person in whom this feeling does not well up with the return of the exuberance of spring. It is always a deep personal feeling, and takes a special form with each person. I often wonder what is the special charm of the various modes—digging, hoeing, raking, planting flowers—but I only know that the charm is real and that the satisfaction is complete. The sifted sand-piles that we supply to our children are but an apology for real soil; for the real soil is a part of the earth, it abounds in fibre and moisture and odour, and things grow stout in it.'

The Professor enlarges on the hint contained in this last sentence, but though he alludes to fertility as conditioned by germ life in the soil, he just misses a reference to that feeling of magnetic vitality experienced by everyone who is fond of a garden. The soil and the plants that grow in it give and take; the plant derives its life from the water, salts and humus contained in the soil, and the remains of the plant return to the soil and add the potencies of life for succeeding generations of their species.

Not only so, but there is a corresponding exchange of vital influence between man and Nature. Man derives something of an indefinable vital element from the soil, as well as from the plants and animals among which he works; and he adds some influence of his own, when he exerts that influence to foster Nature's humbler products, instead of, as is too frequently the case, to uproot and destroy. It has been said, and there is no reason for doubting it, that plants carefully and lovingly tended with personal sympathy and attention will thrive even amid uncongenial surroundings.

There is a very old idea that contact with the earth imparts renewed health and strength. We have the story of the hero whose strength was renewed as often as, in combat, his knee touched the ground. That the earth is the common mother of us all, in a material sense, is exemplified by the old Roman story of the youths who consulted the oracle as to which of them should rule. The oracle replied: 'He who shall first kiss his mother.' On leaving the temple one of them fell, as though stumbling accidentally—and kissed the earth!

In later times the race has renewed its vitality as often as it has come into fresh and close contact with the soil. The exuberant vitality of the younger portions of our Empire in new countries over seas, the movement for garden cities, garden suburbs, and 'to colonise England,' are all examples of the truth of the instinct for returning to a closer touch with Mother Nature as a condition of health, physical, moral, and spiritual.

'A little sun, a little rain,
A soft wind blowing from the west,
And woods and fields are young again,
And warmth within the mountain's breast.

'So simple is the earth we tread,
So quick with love and life her fame;
Ten thousand years have dawned and fled,
And still her magic is the same.'

RETURN OF MISS MORSE.—We are pleased to learn from Mr. J. J. Morse that Miss Morse started for England by the R.M.S. 'Carisbrook Castle' on July 31st, and is due to arrive at Southampton on Saturday, the 17th inst. Miss Morse's many friends will be pleased to welcome her home again after her successful tour in South Africa.

'MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT.'

In a thoughtful and interesting paper on 'Magic and Witchcraft,' in the 'Coming Day,' Mr. Eldred Hallas defines magic as 'an attempt by man to influence spiritual beings for his benefit.' There is much in this paper which is explanatory and suggestive, and the following extracts will doubtless be of interest to our readers :—

'To charm evil away by incantations, or by sacrifices, or by any other method ; to secure good fortune by burning candles before the Virgin or on the altar, or by giving of your goods to the Church ; to cast lots or foretell by whatever means ; to elicit information by the movements of a kitchen table ; to stand with the Hebrew priest before the Shekinah, within the holy of holies, and read the answer to your questionings on the Urim and Thummim of his breast-plate as the sacred light plays upon it ; or, as another version has it, to take, at random, out of the high priest's pocket, one or two stones, respectively called the Urim and Thummim, one denoting yes and the other no ; to sit before the Oui-ja ; to consult the entranced medium, or the ancient Delphian oracle ; to offer prayer, or hold séances, is to connect yourselves with the earliest magic, and to confess, passively or actively, that your ultimate appeal is to spirits, gods, or God.'

This is too strong. Many of us, who hold séances and consult mediums, are of opinion that the ultimate court of appeal is our own enlightened judgment. We accept the help of spirits, but refuse to regard their advice as authoritative, final, or above reason. Mr. Hallas continues :—

'Those who look upon Christ as a vicarious atonement are but expressing in a new form the old magicians' idea of charming away, buying off, or the law of similars. Man was doomed to eternal death ; so by this old law of similars—Christ's death averted the doom. . . Exorcism has its origin in magic, not only as applied to the expelling of demons of disease from a suffering body, but also the expelling of any haunting spirit from any building or locality. Romish priests still practise the latter form of exorcism.'

'Formerly baptism was regarded as a means of exorcising evil spirits. At the present time in the Greek, Roman, and German Evangelical Churches, a formula of exorcism is repeated at the ceremony of baptism. The idea was formerly universal throughout Christendom that the unbaptized infant was in the power of the devil, to whose dominion it would be consigned. The idea, in some measure, prevails to-day. As the babe was "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," it was the child of the devil until the magical rite of baptism had destroyed his power.'

Referring to the fact that amulets were worn to keep evil spirits at a safe distance, Mr. Hallas says :—

'Nose-rings were once worn as a protection against the evil eye, and ear-rings to warn off baleful spirits. In our own times ear-rings are worn as a cure for sore eyes, and finger-rings as a cure for rheumatism. These are interesting survivals of ancient magic. Bells were formerly worn on the garments of priests to frighten away the evil spirits by their ringing. For the same reason, bells, cymbals, and other metal articles were used, in many parts of the world, to frighten evil spirits away from graves, or from the souls of the recently departed. The passing bell of the modern church, and the peal that denotes the time of meeting, are survivals of these ancient customs.'

'When a military officer is having the last sad rites performed for him, his charger marches in the funeral procession to its master's grave. Formerly it would have been slain on the grave, so that spirit-horse could take spirit-rider to the hunting-grounds or battle-fields above. Over the grave of "Tommy Atkins" shots are fired as a mark of military honour. Formerly the noise would have been made to frighten away baleful spirits.'

In his summing-up Mr. Hallas points out that the race has marched upwards :—

'From incantations to prayer ; from fear of spirits to the worship of God ; from mystic infusions to medicine ; from sun-worship and astrology to astronomy ; from idol-making to statuary ; from the sketching of portraits, for magical and ulterior motives, to modern art ; from hypnotism, inducing rhythmic movement and sound, to the modern dance and the modern song ; from the sacrifice of possessions to the sacrifice of inclinations (which is infinitely harder) ; from the existence of universal fear and distrust to the dawn of a period of

universal helpfulness and love, has Man pushed his long and hopeful way.

'It is true, so delightfully and optimistically true, that

"Through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the
suns."

HUMAN MADNESS AND ITS CURE.

The point of view largely determines what we see, and as a rule we prefer the optimistic standpoint, but we are sorely tried sometimes and are inclined to think there is too much warrant for the opinion of an American writer who recently said :—

'If the newspapers correctly mirror the world's events, this is a mad world. To the spectator the arena of human life resembles the playground of a madhouse, and human activities appear the antics of lunatics. Christian nations vying with each other in launching greater and swifter battle-ships, staggering beneath the crushing weight of militarism. Even reformers and churchmen are touched with the mania. Socialists parading with red flags, crying violence and revolution ; temperance papers sizzling with denunciations ; and the opposing schools of theology fighting with a venom and bitterness worthy of the third century ! Strife, commotion, fear, hatred ! The whole world rings with conflict ; the sky is dark with the clouds of wrath.'

The remedy proposed by the writer may seem to many a counsel of perfection, and yet it is right in spirit, and should appeal strongly to Spiritualists. He says :—

'O, that the world could hear the command, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord !" O, that a cool hand might be placed upon the throbbing temples of humanity, and a divine voice would speak the word of power that should drive the phantoms of fear and distrust from the mind ! Children of men, cease your strife. Put down your weapons, even though they carry the symbol of the cross. Disband your mighty militant organisations, even though they follow the white flag of reform. Peace ! Peace ! This heat and fever avails you nothing. Seek Love, and the strifes that vex men's souls shall cease. Seek Love, and the worries that fret men's minds shall vanish. Seek Love, and the yokes that chafe men's shoulders shall be lifted. Love shall right every wrong. Love shall heal every disease. Love, and love only, shall bring the better day.'

MRS. PLACE-VEARY IN SOUTH AFRICA.

A correspondent kindly sends us a cutting from 'The Eastern Province Herald,' of Port Elizabeth, Cape of Good Hope, of June 22nd last, which shows that Mrs. Place-Veary is doing good work in South Africa. A writer for that paper attended the first meeting held at Port Elizabeth by Mrs. Place-Veary and, being disappointed, she wrote somewhat critically regarding it in the issue for June 15th, but in the next number she wrote :—

'I have had the privilege of meeting Mrs. Place-Veary, and if I could I would recall every sentence of my last week's letter, because I see that my ignorance of the true nature of the spiritualistic mission and of the marvellous clairvoyant gifts of the medium should have prevented me from venturing to criticise, where I should have tried to learn. I was simply announced as "a lady to see Mrs. Place-Veary" by a gentleman whose name I did not even know. Five minutes before I had no more intention of calling upon her than of visiting Timbuctoo, and I had no idea I should experience anything unusual. The medium asked me to give her something I had used and worn that she might get in touch with me. I passed her a ring, and I was startled to hear an episode in my life described most accurately. When I asked for an absolute proof of the identity of the spirit with whom she was in communication, it was given me in a distinguishing mark, of which she could not possibly have known. I received a message which comforted me more than I can say, and I am more than grateful to Mrs. Place-Veary for acting as the transmitter of words which I knew and recognised as coming only from the spirit she described. For the inestimable comfort I received through the mediumship of Mrs. Place-Veary, I can never be grateful enough, for I gained peace in place of unrest, and conviction in place of uncertainty. In no way does the fact of the presence of our dead interfere with our religion, in fact it is surely a part of it. Our faith in a future life is more firmly rooted than ever, our desire to strive after the best and highest receives fresh impetus.'

TRAVELLING WITHOUT THE BODY.

If the following account be true, which is quoted by 'L'Echo du Merveilleux' from the 'Almanach des Missions,' and purports to be given by a missionary in Africa, probably in the Congo district, we have here a 'test case' of the possibility of travelling when 'out of the body.' The 'Reverend Father,' as the narrator is styled, says that he was on friendly terms with a native chief, named Ugema, who was also a powerful fetish-man, or magician. Ugema told the missionary that 'the Master, he who can do all, had summoned all his followers to meet him during the following night' on a plateau four days' journey distant, and as the Father expressed disbelief that Ugema could be present, the Chief invited him to his hut to see his preparations for the journey. When the Father arrived, the Chief cautioned him not to speak a word during the ceremonial; but he accepted a commission which the astute Father gave him as a test—to stop at a place distant three days' journey, and leave a message asking the rubber-factor to bring some cartridges which the Father had left there some time before.

The ceremonies consisted in rhythmic movements around a fire on which aromatic herbs had been thrown, accompanied by a chant calling upon spirits of the woods, waters, &c., and of the dead. Presently the Chief stretched himself on a couch and lay in a cataleptic trance, apparently lifeless. At eight o'clock in the morning he roused himself and said he had been with many others to the meeting place on the plateau, and had also delivered the message to the factor. Sure enough, three days later, the factor came, bringing the cartridges, and in answer to inquiries as to whether he had seen Ugema, said that the Chief had knocked at his door and spoken to him from without. Ugema himself said, in answer to a remark of the Father's: '*I was not on the bed; my body was there, but what is my body? My self was not there; I was on the plateau with the others.*'

PERSIAN MYSTICISM.

Mr. John Murray, of Albemarle-street, has just published, in the 'Wisdom of the East' Series (price 2s. *net*), an account of 'The Persian Mystics,' by Mr. F. Hadland Davis, with special reference to the poetry of Jalal-ud-Din Rumi (1207-1273). Mysticism is characteristic of the most profound tendency of all religions, and 'plain living and high thinking' was the special mark of the Mahometan sect of the Sufis, founded at the end of the eighth century; their name, as 'wool-wearers,' is derived from the plain garment of white wool which they adopted as a protest against worldly ostentation.

Like the Neo-Platonists, they believed in the Supreme Good as the immanent Source of all things, but with a more personal tendency, as the Divine Love. Mr. Davis says:—

'Sufism is essentially a religion of Love without a creed or dogma. No merciless hells leap up in the Sufi's beliefs. He has no *one way* theory for the life beyond. "The ways of God are as the number of the souls of men." By ecstacy the soul could behold the Divine Mysteries. The visible world was a reflection of the Divine, an ever-changing scene full of the spirit of God. Man was a part of God, because he was a fragment of the Whole; or, better still, he was a divine emanation.'

Jalal appears to have been a 'child prodigy' of a type not unfamiliar in Spiritualist literature. He had visions, and is said to have performed miracles; he attached much importance to music and dancing, which he introduced even at funerals, saying: 'When the human spirit, after years of imprisonment in the cage and dungeon of its body, is at length set free, and wings its flight to the Source whence it came, is not this an occasion for rejoicing, thanks, and dancing?' It is not surprising, therefore, that his poetry, from which numerous selections are given in Mr. Davis' book, is permeated with the idea of all-pervading and ineffable Love, and with references to 'the Beloved' after the manner of the Song of Solomon.

Yet the idea of the indwelling of the Divine Presence is equally strongly presented:—

'I gazed into my own heart;
There I saw Him; He was nowhere else.'

On the title page of this book Mr. Davis is stated to be the author of another exposition of Persian mystical thought: 'In the Valley of the Stars there is a Tower of Silence,' by 'Smara Khamara' (to be obtained from Mr. J. Wooderson, 23, Oxford-street, W., price 3s. 6d. *net*). This little book, which has a coloured frontispiece and coloured rose designs in the text, contains a metrical play or 'tragedy,' being 'an attempt to portray, after the Oriental manner, the possible reason for the founding of the great far-reaching doctrine known as Sufism.' This book also contains an introduction on the Sufi religion and philosophy, in which we are told that the Sufi, though a mystic, is not a man devoid of human interests:—

'He merely passes from the human to the Superhuman, from the earthly love to the Love Divine. He is warned by a certain poet not to ignore earthly responsibilities; that in order to find God it is necessary to find the beginning of Love, and Love begins on earth and ends in Heaven. The average Sufi was a poet. All that was Beautiful was God to him; he tried to be nearer the Beautiful every day, and thus his soul swept on from flower to flower, higher and higher, until he was absorbed in the Divine, knowing the fulness and the completeness of that Supreme Love.'

As a warning against the crude presentation of abstruse mysteries to those incapable of accepting them, we are told that 'a Persian Sufi taught that every man is God. For this belief he was tortured and put to death by the infuriated mob. Thus it was found necessary still further to veil their teaching.' These books are written by one who is in sympathy with Eastern thought, who penetrates its often subtle meaning, and who desires that his love for it should awaken a similar affection in others. Those who wish to study this rose-garden literature of Persia will find in these poems an excellent introduction and key to its symbolism.

OLD-TIME HAUNTINGS.

An odd story of strange happenings at Bladdfa has been published in the 'Hereford Times.' It is to the effect that in 1666, or about that year, in a house occupied by one Walter Meyrick, certain phenomena occurred which were vouched for by 'persons of quality and integrity, and sworn to before a Justice of the Peace.' The authenticated document states, among other things, that:—

'Besides strange kinds of tunable whistlings in the rooms, where none were seen to whistle, there were stones flung down of great weight out of a loft, the doors bolted and barred on the inside against those returning from church, nobody being within. And at prayers at home, when some of the women through fear held one another by the arms, some invisible power would pluck asunder the arms, whether they would or no. By such an invisible force one, as he was sitting at supper, was struck flat to the ground, and a smart box on the ear given to another and a trencher struck out of the maid's hand that waited, no visible thing being near that did it. A purse lost with two gold rings and six and fourpence in it; the party complaining thereof, the purse dropped down from the top of a room which had no room over it and fourpence only in it. That men were struck down with stones and yet had no great hurt shows plainly they were not flung, but carried. But there was one beaten with staves black and blue, but none to be seen that thus belaboured him though in the day.'

THERE is much truth in the cheery sentiments expressed by Horatio Dresser in the following extract. He says: 'The optimist is more reasonable than the pessimist or the indifferentist, because, if the world-order is the best possible order, he is nearer the truth; and, even if it were the worst, he would still be better off and happier by acting as though it were the best order. For everything depends on our attitude toward life, and the wise man is he who takes things for the most they may be worth. If our world be the only possible world, it could not be better than it is. If it can be better, there must be a Power that can make it so, and that Power must some time find opportunity to perfect the world. Consequently, the attitude of hope has at least a rational basis, whereas pessimism lacks even that.'

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PITY THE POOR—RICH!

At a great meeting of the Congress of Religion, held in Minneapolis lately, the Rev. Marion D. Shutter preached a remarkable and distinctly original sermon on the Evangelisation of the Upper Classes. We have long been used to Missions for the Lower Classes; and the supposition seems to have always been that it was the duty of the rich to send the Gospel to the poor. But, for some time, in America, certain satirists have suggested a return of the compliment, as though we here in London might propose a mission from Shoreditch to Mayfair, or from Wapping to Park Lane. Now, however, the proposal appears to have passed beyond the region of satire into the realm of grave reality, and the evangelisation of the Upper Classes has entered the field of practical Religion.

By 'the Upper Classes,' Mr. Shutter means more than merely the titled and the rich. He says:—

When I speak of the Upper Classes, therefore, I mean those who are more favoured and prospered than the rest of mankind; those who enjoy privileges from which the great majority are shut out; those who have wealth or culture or social position; those who are at the head of the world's great commercial or industrial enterprises, and who, in this capacity, are wielding over thousands of dependent lives more power than the mightiest monarch of to-day wields over his subjects. The sceptre of the king dissolves into a shadow; the captain of industry looms a new fact upon the horizon!

He believes that these controlling Classes need evangelising quite as much as the Classes that are under them. Sin is sin, he says, whether it flash in jewels or riot in rags: and, if we are to make excuses or blame one Class more than another, let us make excuses for the ignorant and the struggling.

He believes, moreover, that the Upper Classes actually stand as much in need of reforming influences as the so-called 'Lower.' They seem to care as little for the Sabbath and the Church. Aristocrats, in their drawing-rooms or in their Cecil and other hotels, are as indifferent to Religion as are working men in their clubs. We have long been asking, 'Why do not working men attend Church?' But even the bench of Bishops is agitated over the question, 'Why does "Society" neglect "the means of grace"?'

Mr. Shutter does not pose as an accuser or as an alarmist; he does better: he simply sets forth special solid reasons why the Upper Classes need Religion, and we propose to follow him in this inquiry, not by way of re-

proof, but with a serious desire to benefit the neglectful, and perhaps to help in preventing a grave catastrophe—a catastrophe which many calm observers, from only social and business points of view, regard as possible.

This preacher's first suggestion takes us behind all shallow questions of Class to the deep fact that we are all human, and that we all need the influences of Religion in presence of the common facts of life. We all have the same experiences, and we all are liable to commit the same sins. Somehow or other, says the preacher, neither riches nor wisdom nor power has ever been able to ward off sorrow, and to satisfy the longings of the human heart. 'Many a one walks desolate and broken to-day amid surroundings of luxury and splendour. If one could remove the splendid trappings, what tragedies would meet his eye!' And 'pallid death, with equal pace, knocks at the cottage and the palace door': and the richest and greatest as well as the poorest and smallest need the consolation of the angel at the grave—and what is true of sorrow is true of sin. We all share the common frailties of human nature, and the Upper Classes have special and potent temptations of their own. Says the preacher:—

Nothing is more certain than that knowledge alone or culture or wealth or power can never make men and women good. All these things have existed in the past and exist to-day, in connection with a conscience utterly calloused or debauched. Take society clear through, from bottom to top, and you will not find it any better morally at the top than it is at the bottom. The same sins exist there that exist among the lower classes: sins of avarice, lust and greed; sins of dishonesty and sins that disregard and sunder domestic ties. You will find them all rife where education is supposed to have done its work and where wealth is supposed to remove temptation.

This is so true to-day that it does need special emphasis in view of the revelations of the law courts and of financial circles respecting the crimes of the Upper Classes all the world over.

The two other reasons given by Mr. Shutter for the need of the evangelisation of the Upper Classes are not absolutely obvious, but they have substance in them. They are these:—That the Upper Classes specially need the influence of Religion because they set the standards and create the ideals of a community; and because national deterioration and decay have always begun at the top, and not at the bottom.

As to the first of these, it is not quite as clear as it was that the Upper Classes set the standards and create the ideals of a community. That is, for instance, very doubtful in London. It is true that Harriet of the Old Kent Road mimics, in time, the feathers of Mayfair, and that crowds still throng the streets to see a prince or princess go by, but it does not go much further. Jem Smith does not get drunk in Shadwell because Lord Piccadilly is carried home from his club in Pall Mall, and it is doubtful whether Jem 'has a bit on' because the King is at home on the racecourse. Still, there is truth in what Mr. Shutter says, that the folly at the top will be repeated in coarser form at the bottom, and that the sins of the heights will be duplicated with more brutal accessories in the depths. Any way, the Upper Classes have huge responsibilities, and practical Religion must be, for them and for the masses whom they influence, a matter of enormous importance.

The final reason is, indeed, a serious one, and is all the more serious because, as Mr. Shutter thinks, and as we also think, we see already the sinister symptoms of deterioration and decay. Mr. Shutter points out three of these:—The same tendency to

luxury which rotted the moral and physical fibre out of older civilisations; the tendency to lawlessness in high places; and the consolidation of financial and industrial power, more and more, in the hands of a few. For the word 'luxury' we would substitute the phrase luxurious imbecility, and Mr. Shutter gives instances of this. The lawlessness of the powerful classes is more conspicuous just now in America than here, in the financial and commercial world, but the ugly symptom of lawless grabbing by the hands of rich men is discernible everywhere. Still, we are not sure that this will act now, as of old, for the deterioration of the whole. On the contrary; the lawlessness and tyranny of wealth and of syndicates of wealth will inevitably teach nations, as a whole, to socialise their national possessions and possibilities, and to make the most and the best of their national housekeeping at the will of all and for the good of all. That will come: and if the Upper Classes cannot be evangelised by Religion, they will be curbed and used by a national conscience and a national will.

THE INSPIRATION OF CARLYLE.

BY JAMES ROBERTSON.

It is well-nigh three centuries since Sir Thomas Browne, a keen and sceptical, yet withal deeply religious, man, published in his 'Religio Medici' these striking words: 'I do think that many mysteries ascribed to our own inventions have been the courteous revelation of spirits; for these noble essences in heaven bear a friendly regard to their fellow creatures on earth.' Evidently he was not the slave of sectarianism, and desired to set down only what appeared to him to be the truth. His was a suggestion which was out of the track of the thought of his time, but we have no evidence to show that it was the fruit of personal knowledge. After a long interval Modern Spiritualism came, with its phenomena of trances and inspiration, making quite clear that what the worthy knight had believed was more than speculation, that it was a natural fact. It is singular that this word 'inspiration,' so freely used, should have been treated so long in such a vague and general way, hardly anyone seeking to ascertain what it really conveys to men's minds. We readily say that the Bible was 'inspired by God,' but we also talk about the 'inspiration' of Shakespeare, Shelley or Burns without saying what we mean by the word. The inspiration of the Bible we look at through the old Hebrew spectacles, but the inspiration of poets and seers must be viewed without such impediments. We turn to our dictionaries for the meaning of the word Inspiration, and we read:—

'Inspired, actuated or directed by divine influence; influenced by elevated feelings; prompted by superior, but not openly declared knowledge or authority; actually authoritative. Inspiration, the divine influence by which the sacred writers of the Bible were instructed.'

We are not made much wiser by all this string of words, for, after all, they leave inspiration simply as a poetic figure. If we are told that it means the 'breathing in' of sentiments and ideas, we are entitled to ask, From whence do they come, and who are the senders? If inspiration be part of the law of life, then all mankind must be the participants, not Hebrew saints alone, and the great ones of earth. We must all be capable of receiving this inspiration according to our faculties of reception.

The light has been shining in the darkness these fifty years without being comprehended, and Spiritualists have become familiar with the process by which inspiration flows in, through the revealments of what are called 'abnormal' phenomena, which, however, should only direct us to the comprehension of that law which must be at work invisibly. We cannot deal with inspiration as if it were the sun's rays poured upon us. It must be more direct and special for us to understand its workings. There may be various modes of

inspiration as there are varied forms of mediumship, but in spiritual phenomena we recognise the personal worker behind. We speak about 'controlling intelligences,' and have received innumerable bits of evidence that those who were once earth dwellers can, and do, take control of the physical organism of sensitives, make use of their brains and nervous system, and become, for the time being, the directing soul of their bodies. We also see instances where the control is not so firm or so close as this, when the medium is conscious of what is occurring and simply speaks out the thoughts that are sounded in his ears, or impressed upon his receptive and responsive inner consciousness. Some of these sensitives, or instruments, are not wholly able to contribute the qualities which enable the inspirer to have free course for his thoughts; hence we find that few of the abnormal presentations of truth rank as high as what is called the normal utterance in the case of an Emerson, a Tennyson, or a Carlyle. This abnormal inspiration, however, helps us to see that spirits work all the time with mortals, and that they may be as much in evidence in the normal as in the abnormal. The man of genius is a mystery to himself. There is behind his utterance some power which fuses with his own powers. Rousseau, Tennyson, Longfellow, and many others have acknowledged this impelling force behind, and Spiritualism gives the key by pointing out that spirits worked *en rapport* with these men, quickening their usual faculties and augmenting their power, or, as we say, inspiring them. The normal medium makes use of the influence that spirits bring to bear on the mind. There is one of Thomas Lake Harris' lyrics in which Rousseau speaks through his lips, describing a visit he had paid to Tennyson, which has all the appearance of sober fact:—

'He almost felt my hand
Upon his brow, and sensed my spirit breath.
Wordsworth was with me, that calm, subtle mind;
We sowed within that gentle poet's brain
Sweet thoughts, as fragrant as the new-mown hay.'

We recognise the personal directing influence in those writings which Stainton Moses gave to the world under the title of 'Spirit Teachings'—he could not claim them as his own; but there were other seasons when he could not have defined clearly what belonged to himself and what were the thoughts of others. Tennyson or Emerson did not need to pass into a trance to become mediums for higher powers, as do J. J. Morse or E. W. Wallis; but there is a sort of trance necessary, a kind of abstraction, or loss of consciousness of ordinary surroundings, before spirit people can become thoroughly *en rapport* with us. The higher spirits bring their force to bear most perfectly when we are least self-conscious, and the majority of thinkers and writers have realised a propelling power other than themselves at some moments. Many of them have been automatic, as Stainton Moses was, when holding the pen, though they do not reveal these inner feelings and experiences to the public gaze.

There are very few persons to-day who do not place Thomas Carlyle in the ranks of inspired men; and I do not think it is difficult to get at the personality of one of his inspirers. Not that I think his brain was taken possession of, and his nerve system worked independently of his will, but that an outside mind worked with his in a union which was perfectly natural. There is an almost entire change of style between those early essays written in Edinburgh, and the later writings ('Sartor Resartus,' &c.) which were penned while he lived in the solitude of Craigenputtock. In his diary for 1829 we find him writing:—

'Glimpses into the spiritual world I have sometimes had (about the true nature of religion), the possibility after all of supernatural (really natural) influences. Would they could but stay with me and ripen into a perfect view.'

It is not difficult, I think, for anyone to recognise that much that Carlyle wrote amidst the moors was a blending of his thought with that of another, one who found in him a pure heart, a sincere man, a worker absorbed in his work, without much thought of self, and that this co-worker with him was the spirit of Jean Paul Richter. Carlyle never wrote

to please, or to make money merely, but only through impulse. In very many of his characteristics he was much akin to Richter, whom, however, he did not look upon as a master, as he did upon Goethe. Carlyle, from his earliest days of authorship, was deeply engrossed in the literature of Germany, and while a dweller in Edinburgh he penned several essays regarding Goethe, Herder, Richter, and others, none of which breathe the nervous, burning spirit which characterises 'Sartor Resartus.' The style is essentially different in all particulars. The one class of writing is calm, solid, and terse, while the other partakes of Richter's manner. I know that it has been said that Carlyle's study of Richter affected his style of writing, but why Richter any more than Wieland, Herder, or Novalis? There was much more than being dominated by Richter's style, there was the continuity of Richter's thought. I know how easily, by getting absorbed in a writer, one is apt to catch his mannerisms unconsciously, or, being dominated by his mode of thinking, to give his colouring to much that is said. Dean Stanley pretty well expressed this when, on his return from America, he said that he had heard various preachers, whose names he could not remember, but that did not matter, because, whoever they were, 'the sermon was always by Emerson'! Carlyle's inspiration went beyond this. It was a person other than the one who wrote the criticism of Richter's writings in 1827 who gave expression to the sentiments in 'Sartor Resartus.'

In the article, speaking of Richter, he says:—

'He deals with an astonishing liberality in parenthesis, dashes, and subsidiary clauses; invents hundreds of new words, alters old ones, or by hyphen chains and pairs and packs them together in most jarring combinations. Figures without limit, indeed the whole is one tissue of metaphors and similes, and allusions to all the provinces of earth, sea, and air; interlaced with epigrammatic breaks, vehement bursts, or sardonic turns, interjections, quips, and even oaths! Everything is embaled in some fantastic wrappage, some mad narrative accounting for its appearance. There are rays of the keenest truth, nay, steady pillars of scientific light rising through this chaos.'

Very much of this criticism might apply to Carlyle's own 'Sartor Resartus,' and really has been applied by many who have never caught the spirit of this true book.

It would only be reasonable that the enfranchised Richter, looking at Carlyle and knowing what he had done to publish the great thoughts of his nation, would be in close sympathy with such a man, and readily come within his atmosphere and express sentiments in harmony with both. There are passages in 'Sartor Resartus' the purport of which Carlyle could scarcely have comprehended in full; at least, they were out of harmony with his other writings where there is not so much evidence of clear inspiration. Spiritualists have echoed the sentiments therein that:—

'The wise man stands encompassed and spiritually embraced by a cloud of witnesses and brothers, and there is a living literal Communion of Saints, wide as the world itself and the "History of the World."'

And again:—

'Is the White Tomb of our loved One, who died from our arms, but a pale, spectral illusion? The real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, is even now and for ever.'

There is such depth, such insight and wisdom in almost every page of the volume, that though we may read it scores of times, new light ever appears. He was, of course, altogether unaware, although he wrote of the 'cloud of witnesses,' that they were close to him, and that he was the exponent of thought other than his own. It is one voice in 'Sartor Resartus,' and another voice at other times. He might have exclaimed at some moments, as truly as did Ezekiel and Jeremia of old, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,' for he was the mouthpiece of those who saw with larger, clearer eyes than the earth-dweller. Had spiritual phenomena claimed him as they must claim the new generation of thinkers, he would not have penned those almost last words of his:—

'Eternity, which cannot be far off, is my one strong city. I look into it fixedly now and then. All terrors about it seem to me superfluous. *All knowledge about it, any the least glimmer of certain knowledge, impossible to living mortal!*'

Let us rejoice that knowledge in part has come to so many in these days, that we know for certain that we are cheered and helped continually, that the days of open vision have come to earth, and let us seek to so condition ourselves that we may hear more clearly than ever the voices of those patient workers who have come out of their golden day to help forward our better day of righteousness and service to the Highest.

FOLLOWING A BLIND TRAIL.

The American Society for Psychical Research has issued the second part of its 'Proceedings,' consisting of 300 pages, of which the first sixteen alone contain matter which, from our point of view, justifies the labour spent on the discussion of the various points involved. We deal on p. 374 with the remarkable case of clairvoyance therein narrated. The remainder of this publication is taken up by a record of psychic experiences of a kind that is fairly familiar to our readers mainly a mixture of raps and automatic writing; a very long and elaborate discussion of 'The McCaffrey Case'; and Mr. Hereward Carrington's investigation into 'A case of the alleged movement of physical objects without contact.' This last is a highly diverting yet lamentable instance of how an amateur researcher's credulity was deliberately imposed upon by all the practical jokers of the town, so that wherever he went he was greeted with a fusillade of articles deliberately thrown so as to fall apparently from nowhere; and even when the deception was unmasked the victim still clung to his belief that the town was full of powerful physical mediums.

The 'McCaffrey Case,' which is dealt with at great length by Professor Hyslop, and occupies nearly half of the issue, is at once fascinating, on account of the problems it raises, disappointing in its results, and puzzling, from the fact that the main phenomenon appears to be at once genuine in its occurrence, and non-veridical in its signification. In 1887, Michael McCaffrey, a young Irish-Canadian, living in New York State, dreamed several times that a British soldier of the period of the Revolution appeared to him and said that valuable papers were buried near a certain tree-stump; he was to dig for them on a certain night. Two men, whom McCaffrey invited to be present, forgot the appointment, so he dug by himself, and found a paper between two flat stones. On a later night he dreamed that the soldier told him he must go deeper; he dug again and found another paper enclosed in a bottle. The papers purported to be receipts for money deposited at interest in the Bank of England in 1775; but they were evidently not on official paper, and at best only copies of originals. Careful inquiries were made at the Bank, and no trace could be found of any such deposit; moreover, it was stated that the Bank of England had never paid interest on deposits. The soldier (in the dream) said that he had given the money to King George III., who had placed it in the Bank for him, and gave him the two certificates of deposit. Moreover, the King appeared beside the soldier in the dream, and confirmed the statement! On being questioned, McCaffrey denied that he had ever known that England had been governed by George III. Under hypnosis, McCaffrey was fairly communicative as to his earlier life, but absolutely denied all previous knowledge of the existence of the papers.

The remarkable part of the matter is that the reality of McCaffrey's dream seems to be established by the evidence, as far as it can be obtained; though the papers were found they appear to be worthless, and a number of investigations with regard to possible clues to their origin and previous ownership led to no result whatever. The question then arises, why should a man receive during sleep a dream-impression causing him to dig for papers which were actually found, but were of no value?

'BRETHREN,' OR 'FALLEN ANGELS,' WHICH?

Mr. John Lobb, answering an anonymous 'Anti-Spiritualist' in the 'Western Daily Mercury' for July 27th, says:—

'Your correspondent admits that the so-called dead come back, but he says they are "fallen angels." Here are his words: "I, for one, do not wish to state that there are not manifestations of spirits of our departed brethren"; and then he designates these "departed brethren" "fallen angels." Later on in his letter he calls their manifestation "devilry," and yet he gives these "fallen angels" a fraternal recognition—"our departed brethren." His avowed position is too absurd and funny for words. Balaam's travelling companion would not have so committed himself. Pity it is that he should re-echo the stupid cry of the old Pharisees: "It is all the work of the devil."'

Mr. Lobb asks whether all who have come from the unseen world and conversed with mortals, including the 'three men' who appeared to Abraham and did eat with him, the one who wrestled with Jacob, the two men who grasped the hand of Lot, Moses and Elias, who came back from the spirit world and 'talked with Jesus,' the 'two men in shining garments' who appeared at the sepulchre, the 'saints who came out of their graves' and 'went into the Holy City and appeared to their friends' were all 'devils.' He reminds us that John Wesley, Dr. Adam Clarke, the great Wesleyan commentator, and millions of our fellow mortals in all ages and in all climes, have believed in the return of the so-called dead. That the dead lived, and could return, was the great faith article of the early Church, for the whole of Christ's teaching, His return from the portals of death, and His reappearances during forty days dispersed the shadows over-hanging the grave.

We think that the above instances of spirit return and influence, taken from 'plain unvarnished Bible statements,' may be of use to our correspondent, 'C. E. S.,' whose letter appeared on p. 359 of 'LIGHT.'

In answer to 'C. E. S.,' who asks in 'LIGHT' of July 27th whether Spiritualism is Satanic, I would say 'yes' and 'no,' for it can be either—just what one's life may determine. That is to say, the phenomena inseparable from Spiritualism may be of the angels of God or of spirits of darkness, who are in opposition to Him.

For the chapter and verse for the Satanic contention, one could not do better than refer 'C. E. S.' to 'Earth's Earliest Ages,' by the Rev. G. H. Pember, M.A. After having embraced Spiritualism as a Divine truth, a well-meaning but sadly prejudiced and bigoted orthodox believer placed in my hands Mr. Pember's work, with the result that I renounced Spiritualism for a time, and thanked God for the deliverance; but the divine light of angel ministration would not allow that spiritual blindness to continue, and I have since satisfied myself that God *does* permit the return of those dear ones who on earth lived true Christian lives, a truth never to be doubted by me again.

A perusal of Mr. Pember's work would show Spiritualists how their blessed philosophy can be misconstrued, how Biblical phenomena can be misunderstood when interpreted from the point of view that everything therein stated must be taken for granted; that the infallibility of the Bible is not to be questioned in any way, and that the Supreme Intelligence has ceased to manifest now as He did in the days when the Christ lived on earth and went about doing good in the Father's name—that very Christ through whom the greatest of all manifestations of spiritualistic phenomena came to mankind, and who thus Himself laid the foundation of all spiritual truth and understanding.

W. S. MORTON.

'Conway,' Southend-on-Sea.

HAMPSTEAD.—Miss S. desires to know if there are any Spiritualists in Hampstead who hold meetings, or circles, which she would be at liberty to join. Replies may be sent, care of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

MR. A. V. PETERS AT MILAN.

During the journey in Italy from which Mr. A. V. Peters has recently returned, he held a series of sittings at the offices of the 'Corriere della Sera,' at Milan, where a commodious séance room has been fitted up for experiments with mediums, probably the only one in the world forming part of the offices of an important daily newspaper. From the accounts published in the 'Corriere' we gather that while Mr. Peters' readings of the characters of distinguished men did not always accord with the sitters' previous impressions of them, there were cases in which the results were far too striking to be due to guesswork or chance. Thus he described the country from which a Babylonian tablet came, with its inhabitants, and similarly he described a Grecian landscape with a man bending over a trench, the object given to him being a bunch of dried leaves and grass from Mycenæ, where Schliemann had been excavating.

But the most impressive feat of all was the following. A letter was given to Mr. Peters with the remark: 'Consider this well, and bear in mind that it is very important.' Mr. Peters' face became red, he seemed to suffer, and said feverishly: 'It is an active man, who has travelled much; he is energetic, resolute, and risks all to gain everything; he is capable of great things and of great ideals. For these ideals he would give all—himself, and his family. He seems to be a soldier; not a common soldier, but a chief, a leader of soldiers.' Then Mr. Peters went into a trance, took a pencil and wrote with violent haste, thumping his hand on the table and sending the sheets flying. He filled two pages with writing, of which only the following words could be made out: 'Tell them we know all that is being done by the people for the celebration. . . My name begins with . . .' (two initials, the first evidently a G., the second more like a J.).

The letter psychometrised by Mr. Peters was written by Giuseppe Garibaldi, and the date of the experiment was about six weeks before the national celebration of the centenary of his birth. The first G. written by Mr. Peters bears a striking resemblance to those in the actual signature to the letter; the other initial might be really intended for a J., if we suppose that the spirit of Garibaldi, writing through the hand of a foreigner, wished to give his initials as G., J. (Garibaldi, Joseph). In any case, the whole details and message given are typical of the great Italian patriot, and can refer to no other person; while, except for the warning that it was something very important, no outward clue to the writer of the letter was given to the normal senses of the medium.

A NEW SPANISH MEDIUM.

'Luce e Ombra' contains an account of a new medium recently discovered at Barcelona, named Mlle. Caruen Dominguez. In addition to the movements of the table and other objects, the marks of fingers and of a foot were found to have been made on smoked paper; the foot was different from that of the medium, whose hands were held so that she could not have taken off her shoes and stockings unobserved; moreover, the light was always sufficient to permit of her movements being watched.

At the fourth sitting, the medium's guide, 'Eleonora,' who was understood to have made these impressions, appeared and spoke repeatedly, and at one time remained in animated conversation with the sitters for almost an hour, displaying great vivacity and intelligence. This materialised form brought a chair out of the cabinet and sat down on it, gave her hand to be shaken by the sitters, and allowed them to touch her hair; she had darker hair than the medium, and was not so tall. Some flowers were presented to her by the sitters, who asked for a souvenir in return; 'Eleonora' took a sheet of paper and wrote on it a few words of salutation, with her name. One of the sitters asked whether her body had the same consistency as her hands; she beat her chest with one hand, and exclaimed: 'Do you think I am a marionette stuffed with straw?' The sound was like that of blows given to an ordinary human body. 'Eleonora's' voice is not unlike that of the medium, but has a pure Madrid accent, while the medium speaks like an Aragonese.

JOTTINGS.

Spiritualist societies are in a sense seed sowers. Many persons become members, remain for a time and then disappear. This fact is sometimes deplored by the officers of local societies, who naturally desire to build up strong organisations, but the fact remains that those persons, having once rejoiced in the light which Spiritualism gives, carry the knowledge with them and they cannot fail, sooner or later, to 'let their light shine' wherever they go, and thus the truth gets spread abroad.

An illustration of this fact has just been brought to our notice. Mr. Welch, one of the founders and a vice-president of the Dundee Spiritualists' Progressive Society, has recently been instrumental in forming a new spiritualistic society in Mexico, where he went to reside some months ago. He fortunately met with a number of persons who were interested in psychical matters, but no meetings were being held. A gentleman has kindly provided the new society with a meeting place and has fully equipped it for all branches of the society's work. It is to be opened as soon as possible and much good work is expected to be done. Mr. Welch's friends in Dundee are naturally very pleased, and much interested in his successful efforts on behalf of Spiritualism in the land of his adoption.

Mr. A. B. French, one of the bright American inspirational speakers who has of late dropped out of the ranks, dealing with the question: 'What shall be the World's Religion in the Future?' very truly and forcibly said: 'It has not been given me to cast the world's religious and philosophical horoscope. I know full well that the future carries in her veiled bosom secrets I may not divine, revolutions and evolutions I may not see; but this much I do know, that, until the constitution of the human mind is changed, the religion of the future will find God, immortality, and duty a sacred trinity at whose shrine it will bow.'

These three words represent the fundamental problems of spiritual life, and are the essential elements of religious faith and practice. Until a man can obtain some sort of conviction regarding them he is like a rudderless ship—drifting on the sea of doubt, uncertainty and speculation. Spiritualism has supplied a foothold for faith in the unseen to millions, and is able to give assurances in regard to the future life and personal responsibility to all who earnestly and patiently study it; while at the same time it sanctions the great inference that behind, within, and through all there is an over-ruling and guiding Intelligence—the Supreme Spirit. Thus Spiritualism will be, at least, an essential factor in the world's religious life in the future—as it has always been in the past.

A further account of sittings with Eusapia Paladino, at Naples (referred to on p. 317 of 'LIGHT'), has been published in the 'Rivista d'Italia' and in the 'Corriere della Sera,' of Milan. The phenomena were observed under such conditions as to make sure that 'fraud was neither observed nor attempted.' The medium at one time pressed three fingers on the table, and immediately three finger-prints were found to have been made on a block of prepared clay. The electric light was several times turned off and on by an unseen hand, the switch being out of the medium's reach. Flowers from a bouquet were distributed among the sitters, several of whom were touched by a large hand; the arm seemed at times to issue from the medium's shoulder as though it was a supplementary member produced, as the scientific men assume, by her will; but that is a debatable question.

These physical results are doubtless interesting, and have their use, but, since so many scientific men are now assured that they are genuine psychic phenomena, it seems to us that it is quite time that they followed up the inquiry to its logical issue, and, without assuming that 'the medium produces' these results, that they should address themselves to the task of ascertaining who the Intelligence 'at the other end of the line' really is. Thirty years ago Sir William Crookes realised that it was frequently, and demonstrably, 'other than that of the medium and sitters,' but many modern researchers have not got as far as that even now. If Eusapia cannot offer conditions for studying this branch of the subject, surely other mediums can.

'The Organist and Choirmaster' printed recently what it called a 'true ghost story.' A house at St. Osyth, in East Anglia, which had formerly been an important religious house for Augustinian Canons, was sold in 1863 by the Rivers family. The purchaser sent batches of poor children, some-

times boys and sometimes girls, to stay there in the summer months, and they were cared for by the 'sisters' of the church. One day one of the sisters asked the boys if they were enjoying themselves, and received the following answer: 'Yes, sister, we like it very much; but *who are the old gentlemen who walk through the room in long black cloaks, and look pleasant at us, and do not speak?*' The sisters were amazed to have the same question put to them by the girls, and by yet another batch of boys; they could find no sign of collusion whatever. In confirmation of this story, it may be remembered that the late Sir Frederick Ouseley once took an old 'abbey' as a temporary choir-school. Here, too, the boys were very happy, but they asked, '*who were the ladies who sang so beautifully in the night, and chanted the psalms in Latin to Gregorian Tones?*'

The Cape Town 'South African News' of July 15th last gave a good report of an address on 'Clairvoyance' delivered by Miss Morse in the Oddfellows' Hall to a crowded audience. Much interest in the subject of Spiritualism had been aroused and a large number of people had to be turned away from the doors. Miss Morse's address was explanatory and admirably suited to the occasion. At the close she gave a number of illustrations of clairvoyance and a good many of the recipients stated that they recognised the spirits described to them by Miss Morse.

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.

A Protest.

SIR,—I have read with considerable surprise the leading article in 'LIGHT' for July 20th, 'Rather Tiresome,' containing a number of uncomplimentary remarks about Mrs. Finch and myself. I utterly fail to grasp how I have managed to give offence by simply stating my opinion concerning a certain psychic experiment. Is the mere fact of having different views sufficient reason for exposing a lady to public sneers? It is, of course, no difficult matter to cover a person with ridicule by giving distorted quotations. But is such a mode of warfare correct?

The Editor of 'LIGHT' puts in my mouth statements which I have never made. When have I said that I, personally, was the 'possessor (!) of a spark of God and a partaker of the divine attributes'? I have never been guilty of such unutterable folly. In what way can it be 'flattering to one's personality' to enjoy a privilege shared by countless millions of fellow creatures? Are we not all who live and breathe sparks from the central Fount of life? Is the intense yearning towards that Centre in any way reprehensible or comical?

For years the great aim of my life has been to abolish the duality between my higher and lower consciousness. My soul is the humble and obedient servant of my spirit. I struggle to become worthy to be the co-operator of my immortal Master. Therefore, I decline to be a tool in the hands of an 'unseen genius,' whose will may be unregenerated, and consequently antagonistic to the Divine will. Is this attitude of extreme reverence towards God and cordial good-will towards all men arrogant or ridiculous?

'We are all on pilgrimage.' Why fling cheap jokes at those who try to fulfil their destiny?—that is, to ascend the ladder leading from earth to heaven. The aim of the wanderer is not self-glorification, but self-annihilation. It is only when our own personality has melted down to nothing that we can enter into communion with the Great Whole, and enjoy the ineffable grace of the Unio Mystica.

These facts have for thousands of years been known to Christian mystics. I regret to hear that they should not be 'clear to the comprehension' of British Spiritualists.—Yours, &c.,

PRINCESS KARADJA.

[We print the above letter at the special request of the writer, not because we agree with its tone or its conclusions. In the leading article complained of we dealt with the published statements of the two ladies concerned, for whom, personally, we have the greatest esteem and good-will, from the standpoint that those statements, being public property, were open to criticism; and we characterised the attitude of those who, while exercising the powers of mediumship, decline to admit spirit agency as 'rather tiresome.' Princess Karadjia, we regret to see, regards our comments upon her own statements as a personal affront and complains of being

exposed to 'public sneers.' She asks: 'Why fling cheap jokes at those who try to fulfil their destiny?' and says that she cannot understand how she has 'managed to give offence.' Our article was not an attack, nor were we offended. We made no 'uncomplimentary remarks' about either of the ladies mentioned. We commented, as we believe, in a fair and unprejudiced fashion upon what we had read, and can but regret that our critic has chosen to interpret our remarks otherwise than in the spirit in which they were made.

The following are the passages of which complaint is made. We said:—

'The princess declares that she knows "most distinctly" that the drawing was not produced by a spirit through her. "My work," she says, "is produced through my own *super-consciousness*, or Divine Ego," or "a spark of God," and "as such partakes of the divine attributes." That, however flattering it may be to one's personality, is not very clear to our comprehension; and how it can be "distinctly" known puzzles us. It seems at least quite as likely that some unseen genius used the lady's hand as a medium for this high-class and subtle bit of work.

'That view of the matter may be a little humiliating to the possessor of "a spark of God" and to a partaker of "the divine attributes," but it is the simplest explanation.'

When writing in 'Broad Views,' after saying that she would not discuss the question as to whether 'spirits of the dead "control" or take possession of the medium and work through his organism,' Princess Karadja said (and these are the words upon which our criticism was based):—

'I simply wish to state most distinctly that such is *not* the case with me. My work is produced through my own *super-consciousness*, or Divine Ego.

'Super-consciousness is really a better name than sub-consciousness, as its powers are so infinitely superior to those of the normal consciousness. The Divine Ego is a spark of God, and as such partakes of the divine attributes. It can freely plunge into the ocean of Absolute Wisdom. Fragments of the knowledge thus obtained may be carried back to earth through the intimate union of the Divine Ego and the normal consciousness. The *daimon* which overshadowed Socrates was his own higher self.'

Our readers are now in a position to judge whether we were justified in the inference which we drew, and whether or not we have given 'distorted quotations.'—ED. 'LIGHT.')

Indirect Influences in Psychometry.

SIR,—The following incident may be of interest to the readers of 'LIGHT':—

Early in July I received a letter from a lady in Scotland asking me for a psychometric reading of a letter which she enclosed. The letter was in a foreign language; I do not even know the nationality. After a few general details, I described a young man struggling in the water and the place where it happened. I stated that I could not get clearly from the conditions whether the scene foretold an accident, or whether it was symbolic of the material condition of the writer of the letter. On July 11th I received the following letter:—

'DEAR MADAM,—When I first read your psychometric reading I was much puzzled, as the description of a young man struggling in the water did not seem to agree with the condition of my friend's surroundings, which, although bad enough to cause *depression*, are not as desperate as you described. But five days later a terrible accident happened near here which seems to explain it. A young man whom I knew very well, but who had no sort of connection with the writer of the letter I sent you, was drowned in a river by falling off a slippery rock. The scenery was just such as you described, so I think that it was *prophetic*, and that you got at it through me. Do you think, judging from your past experience, that this is probable?—Yours truly, H. R.'

My opinion is that the vision was prophetic, and that I got it from the lady's own letter, as she herself is psychic; but, as I was psychometrising her friend's letter—not her own—I did not get clear transmission; hence my inability to place it correctly as either an accident or a symbol. This, I think, illustrates the necessity that care should be taken when forwarding articles for psychometry, if correct readings are desired, so that they shall be carefully protected, and be sent,

when possible, direct from the individual for whom the reading is required. Letters from absent friends should be forwarded before they have passed through a number of hands.—Yours, &c.,

MARIE AGNEW JACKSON.

7, Powerscroft-road,
Lower Clapton, N.E.

'Reincarnation an Unproved Theory.'

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of August 3rd Mr. F. J. Johnson chides me for not advancing an alternative theory to account for the genesis of the Ego—but why should I? The burden of proof rests with him; I am not in the theory-construction business, I am seeking evidence. To refer me to 'literature' for 'proofs' is simply ridiculous, and Mr. Johnson's assertions about individuality, personality and reincarnation are, to me, merely 'words, words, words'—for he 'puzzles by his explanation and darkens by his elucidation.' Mr. Darley appears to think that all unpleasant memories will be 'blotted out'; Mr. Johnson, however, says that we do not remember former incarnations, because the 'records are stored on the higher auric substances of the self,' beyond the reach of the 'normal waking consciousness'! but they might as well be non-existent, 'blotted out,' as beyond reach. Mr. Darley infers that my life has been so pleasant that I am anxious to retain my memories. I have had as strenuous a struggle, and one as full of suffering and sorrow, of effort and progress, as the average worker, but that is not the question—*anxiety* to retain, or lose, one's memories does not affect the fact that we *do* remember and that we *cannot* forget if we would; or, as a Yorkshireman once said: 'I cannot forget for thinking on'! The very feeling that we would fain forget, and blot out, certain memories, *keeps* them green and fresh, and not until we profit by the reactive influence of painful recollections, and rise to higher moral and spiritual states, shall we cease to suffer as they fade out of our active consciousness.

As I understand it, consciousness is a unit, and all its contents are available, although not always actively present; thus I can search my mind and 'call up,' or 'call to mind,' what I have temporarily 'forgotten'—it is not lost or obliterated; it is only submerged. But I search my 'inner,' 'deeper,' 'higher' consciousness in vain for intimations that I formerly lived on earth. If I ever functioned on this plane before, I know nothing about it now, and therefore, to all intents and purposes, I am here for the first time. It is useless to juggle with words and tell me that when I was on this plane before I built up another 'personality,' which was not *me* but *mine*, because I must have consciously and intelligently expressed myself through that personal form; *it* did not think, live, or learn, *I* did; *it* did not know, desire, sin, or spiritually grow, *I* did; but I am now animating and using my present 'mask' (or body) *without knowledge* of having used or acted through any former personal form; consequently, as the circle of my consciousness is my kingdom, what I do not know, feel, understand, and enjoy does not exist for me. What developments *may* occur I do not know; I anticipate with hope and joy many progressive unfoldments and attainments, but those developments will link on with, and be the outcome of, my past experiences, and I shall be aware of that fact.

The testimony of spirit people, so far as I can learn, is always to the effect that over there, sooner or later, memory is even more acutely active and conscience more sensitive than here, and that our life-records—which psychometry proves are indelible—pass in review before the mind's eye, and, at the bar of judgment in the court of conscience, we see ourselves as we are, and learn to recognise the true nature of our motives and loves, our ambitions and actions. We are told that each one 'goes to his own place,' the place he is *fit* for—not as punishment or reward, but as the inevitable result of the working of the law of consequences—those consequences which, when painful, whip and sting us into effort to consciously conform to the moral law, and when pleasant, win us to joyous response to the Infinite Love which doeth all things well—both here and hereafter.

Spiritual results and spiritual values—spiritual strength, insight, attainment, and expression—are not to be measured by material conditions and seemingly favourable environments. The flowers of virtue, honesty, loving-kindness, and tender helpfulness blossom in all soils; while impurity, dishonesty, selfishness, and hard-heartedness rear their ugly heads, like rank weeds, in all conditions of life. Vice, folly, and misery are not confined to the poor, nor are goodness, wisdom, love, and happiness the prerogatives of the socially well-to-do. There are compensations for struggle and sorrow, and there are temptations for success and pleasure. This is where reincarnationists, when they talk of inequalities and

justice, are grossly materialistic—just as they are when they urge the necessity for return to this world; as though there were no possibility of gaining experience in the sequential life after death and *continuing there* the evolutionary growth of character and spiritual unfoldment begun here. I believe that there are opportunities and compensations all the way along; that there are many paths for individual development and but one goal; that spirits are awakened and trained into self-comprehension and self-possession, and acquire the power of self-revelation and expression, in an infinite variety of ways, both here and hereafter; that what one misses another gets, but in the long run the results will be the same; that progress ensues from action, *re-action* and *inter-action*; that we are not all alike, but we are all on the march to the same heights—held in the way by the one Law, animated by the one Life, and learning to express the one Love, and thus we shall all ultimately realise the changeless law of beauty in diversity: of harmony in variety: of individuality in unity. But, in the absence of anything that I can regard as evidence, I am of the opinion that the theory of reincarnation is an unproved speculation, and, therefore, on this subject I am still, —Yours, &c.,

AN AGNOSTIC.

'A Strange Phenomenon.'

SIR,—The letter of your correspondent, Mr. Crilly, in 'LIGHT' of the 3rd inst., tends to confirm a theory that an undiscovered crime exercises a certain influence over the scene of its commission—the 'Field of the Forty Footsteps' is a well-authenticated example. A duel between two brothers took place there in the reign of Charles the First, and the marks remained until the British Museum was built over the place. I am personally aware of a somewhat similar fact. It was, I think, about the year 1863 that an old gentleman and his housekeeper were murdered in a house at Chelsea, which overlooked the garden of a square, which garden was enclosed by iron railings with a hedge inside. After the murder was discovered the part of the hedge opposite the house withered away and was at last cut away and replanted. As Mr. Crilly says the murderer was never discovered, may it not be that the injured spirit has power to keep the spot where he fell always bare in remembrance of his unavenged death?—Yours, &c.,

H. SPEAR.

Symbolical Dreams Fulfilled.

SIR,—A young Russian lady lives with her husband in one of the large English towns. They have a spaniel called 'Fido.' This dog impressed me as exceptionally loving and I would say human, if the dog was not much more affectionate, forgiving and loyal than the average human creature of our modern days. It had a little trick of its own. I once saw Fido's mistress extend her hand to the fireplace too near to the fire. The dog immediately jumped to her and with his paw tried to pull her hand away. I was much touched, and put myself in the same dangerous position, sticking my arm as much as I could into the fireplace. In a moment the dog was at my side, trying to prevent my arm from being burned and I felt all his body clinging to me, and his paw was tenderly protective. I have just received a letter from Fido's mistress, who is on a visit to Russia. I may add that the lady is no Spiritualist, neither is her sister. This is what she writes:—

'Two weeks ago I saw in my dream that Fido was being led away to some river and was to be hanged. I began to cry and shout so violently that I lost all strength to run and stop the execution. So I ordered a servant to run after these dark men and take Fido from them. She ran, but I, waiting for her return, suffered so much that I woke up. The same morning my sister told me that she also saw Fido in her dreams. He appeared to her on the sill of a third floor window, and intended to jump out. She waved her hand to him, and in every way endeavoured to stop him.

'In a letter from my husband, which I have just received, he tells me that while Fido was running about alone, some bad and wicked man poisoned him. But when Fido, mad with pain, rolled on the grass, two boys lifted him and carried him home. Fortunately, my husband was at home, and he brought, immediately, a veterinary surgeon, who gave Fido an antidote. Fido now begins to mend, but is very weak, and must be handled with great care. Our dreams coincided with the day of his poisoning. Poor Fido! I am so sorry for him! He is so loving, and takes everybody for a friend, gives his paw to everyone, whether it is wanted or not, and this is the result!'

—Yours, &c.,

A. P.

A Problem for Reincarnationists.

SIR,—I am afraid that in limiting a man's *spiritual* progress to this very unimportant little orange which we call our earth, the Theosophists have hopelessly tied *spirit* to *matter*. Let us make a not unreasonable proposition. We will assume that Socrates, Pliny, and Peter the Hermit are, in three weeks, going to reincarnate into the sons (expected) of Mrs. Jones-de-Vere, of Streatham, Mrs. Snooks, of Tooting, and Mrs. Basil-de-Smyth, of East Dulwich. Now suppose that before these interesting events could take place, before Mrs. Snooks could offer Mellin's Food to the great Pliny, a comet were to hit our little earth and demolish it, what would poor Pliny do? as, according to his Karma, he simply must reincarnate, so that he may progress (?) in the form of Mrs. Jones's half-idiot son; but he would then have no earth on which to be reincarnated, and no Mrs. Jones to be his mother! Does someone say, 'Oh another planet'? Ah, yes! but then I have never argued for or against *that* theory. What I object to is limiting God to *this* little speck of clay, making it necessary to our spiritual progress that we should return again and again to this sand grain on the shores of infinity.—Yours, &c.,

VINCENT N. TURVEY.

Mr. Rex's Healing.

SIR,—Perhaps your readers would like to know how successful Mr. Rex's treatment has been in my case.

I had been suffering from some internal derangement for a year or more (for which an operation was deemed desirable), and not having much faith in doctors, I determined to try Mr. Rex, the spiritual healer, at the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance. I am pleased to say that through his magnetic power, with the aid of his delightful Red Indian control, I am now quite well and really feel stronger than I have done for a long time.—Yours, &c.,

F. DE G. EDWARDS.

Kensington, W.

National Union Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to acknowledge the receipt of the following donations to the above fund during July, and to express my sincere thanks to all those friends who have so generously contributed thereto. I hope that donations will continue to come in, as we have several very pitiful and deserving cases: Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin, 2s.; sale of purses, 1s. 6d.; Mrs. K. Taylor-Robinson, 1s. 6d.; Mrs. Summersgill-Walker, 5s.; Mrs. J. Butterworth, 10s. 6d.; Mrs. S., 1s.; circle, 2s.; by sale of pamphlets (Mrs. M. T. Chapman), £1 6s. 3d.; Blackpool Conference collection, 16s. 6d.; Mr. B. Dyson, 2s. 6d.; 'Emma,' £1 10s.; sale of 'Astrological Guides' (per Mr. S. J. Elliott), 9s. 4d.; total, £5 8s. 1d.—Yours, &c.,

A. E. BUTTON, Sec.

9, High-street, Doncaster.

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.

ACTON.—PEMBRIDGE HOUSE, HORN-LANE, W.—On Sunday last Mr. A. V. Peters gave successful demonstrations of his clairvoyant gifts. Saturday, August 17th, at 3 p.m., grand garden fête. Endless round of attractions. Clairvoyants, palmists, astrologers, concerts at intervals; tickets 1s., children 6d.—S. H.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHEAD HALL.—On Sunday last Mrs. S. Forrest's addresses on 'Heaven, and How to Attain It' and 'Out in the Silence,' impromptu poems, and clairvoyant descriptions were much appreciated; also on Monday. Sunday next, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.—E. B.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. J. Macdonald Moore delivered an able and interesting address on 'The Power of Prayer.' Mrs. Baker ably rendered a violin solo. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. John Lobb will deliver an address.—A. J. W.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. A. Boddington and Mr. Frost dealt ably with questions on 'The Philosophy of Spiritualism,' and Mr. Frost gave clairvoyant descriptions. Solos by the band were much appreciated. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Boddington. Thursday, at 8.15 p.m., Mrs. Boddington, clairvoyance and psychometry at 17, Ashmere-grove, Acre-lane, Brixton. Tickets 1s.—H. Y.