

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The late Rev. James Cranbrook's pamphlet on 'The Religious Education of Children' (London: Watts and Co.) is severely critical and tends to the dryness and hardness of extreme rationalism, but it has its uses, as a counter irritant.

Religion and Theology are very properly separated. 'Religion,' we are told, is the feeling which arises when a divine object is presented to the mind; theology is the explanation the intellect gives of that object, its nature, character and relations, the analysis of the feeling itself, and the exposition of the forms of expression or worship to which the feeling gives rise. So that it is quite clear that religion must precede theology in the order of time; *i.e.*, the thing analysed and explained must come before the analysis and explanation. And it is further clear that religion and theology may exist quite independently of each other.

This is undoubtedly true, and it is also true that what is usually called 'Religious Education' has next to nothing to do with Religion. It is, as Mr. Cranbrook says, 'an egregious piece of blundering' and is simply education in Theology—the letter without the spirit.

But Mr. Cranbrook is for peeling and scraping off the last atoms of Theology. He would not mention 'God' to the child because the word or idea would convey to it no real truth. 'What idea can a child have of God,' he asks, 'which is not utterly false?' Not a bit more false surely than any idea that Mr. Cranbrook could ever have formed. 'False' is hardly the word; 'inadequate' would be better.

His criticism of Dr. Watts' Catechism for children is severe and really narrow, but his onslaught upon the Scotch Catechism for the young is well deserved. Speaking of it, he says:—

When one thinks of the utter falsehood of the theology of the Catechism, the gross and wicked representations it contains of the character and government of God, and the pernicious effect this, so far as it is understood and heartily believed, must have upon the whole character, one is forced to conclude that the so-called 'religious' education of the masses of children in Scotland is altogether irreligious, and one continued misnomer and mistake.

Mr. Cranbrook falls back upon Nature and Life; but, alas! Nature has horrors as appalling as anything in The Shorter Catechism, and Life—well, Life is Nature's Life, and is as inscrutable and as dense a mystery as God. We are told to keep the child from imaging a fetish, and to help him on his road while he tries to solve the mystery of Nature, 'until, at last, he comes to rest on the only

thought which remains for this and the coming age—a God who is the all-in-all, ever immanent in all that is; the one absolute force; unknown in himself and unknowable, but recognised and felt in the forces and order of universal Nature.'

But, barring the emphasis of 'unknowable,' which is illogical and always only half true, why not begin where Mr. Cranbrook advises us to end?

'Prabuddha Bharata' glorifies 'Mother-worship' as an emotional Western would glorify the worship of the Heavenly Father. 'She is the whole, the Primal Force, the Infinite Power, the Adi Sakti. To become at one with that Power is to reach *Samadhi*.' But this is a rapture and a victory for the few only.

To few indeed has it been given to know 'the joy of the witness.' To fewer still, the last and highest rapture of the union, once for all, with the Mother. Those who would reach this must worship Death. Drinking the cup of suffering to the dregs, again and again they will hold it out, empty, for more. To the strong, no going back. To the resolute, no disillusionment. The disillusionments of which we read in poetry are not signs of strength. They are sudden reactions of self-consciousness and egoism, at unexpected movements. The hero, with his irresistible energy, and his unflinching gaiety, does not know whether that which meets him is pleasant or sad. He goes through it, and demands more.

This thought, 'Prabuddha Bharata' introduces with another that has many applications:—

We do not naturally love that whose strength is too great for us. One who had been left alone for a few minutes in a cavern beside Niagara, told of a passion of hatred that overwhelmed her as she looked. It was the active form of physical fear. We should feel the same hatred, perhaps, for the midnight universe that looks now to us so brilliantly beautiful, were we free to move along the paths of the stars, and come face to face with foreign suns. Our emotions are, for the most part, the result of an immediate and subconscious measurement of ourselves and our relations to that by which we are confronted.

This explains why only the few can bear 'the joy of the witness,' and puts a new meaning into the startling phrase, 'Our God is a consuming fire.'

'Israfel,' by E. M. Holden (A. C. Fifield, London), is a new poem by one whose work, in 'The Songs of Christine' and 'Songs at Dawn,' prepared us for golden showers of poetic splendour: and what we expected we get:—more 'golden' than ever and more 'showers.' In fact, there is an *embarras de richesses* which almost blinds us, making it difficult to trace the unity or continuity of the poetic story, —if story it can be called.

It has, in an intense sense, all the marks of a spiritual origin, overflowing the writer's normal mind, and producing a kind of rapture that has got out of control. But, anyhow, there the splendour is, whether we can follow its outlines and significance or not. The poem seems to suggest reincarnation of a kind; but, in a more subdued and matter-of-fact form, it might mean only a spirit's attachment to a mortal as an instrument. But such rap-

tures are not to be read as happenings, but for their own sake as transcendental thoughts and glowing imaginations.

It is impossible, with any justice or value, to quote, but we can safely say that the lover of such poetry as is here would find a feast. The little book is in paper cover and costs only one shilling.

'The Independent Labour Party' has judged wisely in publishing a cheap reprint (3d.) of Mr. Sparrow's Poem 'The New Crusade,' of which and of its author Mr. Keir Hardie says:—

The author is a gentleman of birth and position who has been drawn into the Socialist movement by the Catholic altruism of his nature. He occupied a good position in the Unionist Party with a fair prospect of entering Parliament under its auspices at next General Election. But having convinced himself that Socialism offers the only way of escape from the torments of commercialism, he cut himself adrift from his former political ties and became a member of the Independent Labour Party, and it is under the auspices of the publication department of that organisation that this edition of his soul-stirring poem is now issued.

We hold no brief either for Socialism or for 'The Independent Labour Party,' and there is much in this poem we think strained, but we are free to recognise a good thing when we see it, and to say so.

'The New Crusade' is in seventeen (shall we call them?) Cantos, the first fifteen of them a questioning of God, why He made man, and an arraignment of Man, the strong, the clever, the masterful, who has exploited and ground down to slush, the weak, the dull, and the servile. The sixteenth suddenly soars into sunshine and joy. Away and away, in spirit, from the grinding and the crushing.

There is a land from out the deeps of Time
Holden of Love, the fair domain of Thought,
Sealed unto virtue, dedicate to God ;
Within her forests man may muse in prayer,
Upon her hills in meditation stand,
In her ripe valleys, where Rest sleeps in corn,
Leave labour and the things of earth awhile :
It is the kingdom of a man's own soul.

Into that kingdom may a man retire, and the 'pale pensioners that wait on ghostly boards' may 'let the sunshine steal' into their hearts, and 'make ready for the feast of God.'

He doth not look to raiment or to hands
If they be white with ease, or rough with toil,
But bids you on the strength of manhood come
And drink deep of the crystal cup of joy.
If ye be rich He will not shut you out,
If ye be poor He bids you welcome still ;
So ye be brethren, ye are all the sons
Of Him that is the Father of the world.

The last Canto is on 'The Son of Man'; and the longing for him is passionate and pathetic, for:—

We do not hear the Shepherd's gentle voice,
We do not sell and give unto the poor,
Nor do we take our cross and follow thee.
The path we tread is not of sacrifice,
The goal we march to doth not lead to heaven.

The conclusion contains one of the mightiest and most touching of all the prayers to Christ we have ever known:—

God has no children, if the peacemakers
Be all that call Him Father, for brown earth
Is but a marching-ground of rival camps
Red with the blood of battles, rich in death.
Lover of children, bid Thy children come
And gather in their shyness to Thy side ;
Teach us to love, fulfil our hearts with Thee ;
Thou art the light, and we in darkness move,
Thin shadows on the frontispiece of Time.
Let Thy white steps make plain our path for us,
Lift us above the weariness of self,
Teach us that in this tutelage of earth

It is not gold or place that counts for good,
But the grey eyes of sacrifice and love.
Dear dreaming toiler of those other days !
Thy dreams are now the hope of half the world.
Thy pitying love has spread throughout all lands,
Men still hang breathless on Thy visioned words,
And many lives are dedicate to Thee ;
Thy kingdom come ! Lord, bid Thy dreams descend
And stand in shining raiment by our doors,
So may we found a Brotherhood so fair
All men will hasten gladly to its gate.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS (From many Shrines.)

Our Father, because Thy loving kindness is better than life, our lips shall praise Thee. We rejoice in the sweetness of communion with Thee. When Thou saidst unto us, 'Seek ye My face,' our hearts have said unto Thee, 'Thy face, Lord, will we seek.' We are thankful that, notwithstanding the hardness and the turmoil of life, there is a peace which passeth understanding, there is a rest, there is a satisfaction, in communion with God. We thank Thee for all the blessing that life has to show. We thank Thee for its beauty—for the joy of human love, for the joy of achievement for the common good, for the success of which we have no cause to be ashamed, for some of the failures too. We thank Thee for what we have been taught in the sunshine, as well as for what we have learned in the darkness. We thank Thee for those who have beaten down the powers of evil and won the well-fought day ; we thank Thee for those who, for the moment defeated, cried unto Thee out of the depths, and cried not in vain. Comfort those that mourn ; raise up those that are fallen ; give new confidence to those who have ceased to have any in themselves and humanity ; bring into the fellowship of love once more those who are bitter in heart because of what life has given them to do and bear. Let us all feel how near we are to the source of all good, and may none feel that the door has been closed in their faces or that God has ceased to care. Amen.

DEAF, DUMB, AND BLIND.

The question has sometimes been raised as to the means of comprehension of external conditions by those who are deprived of the use of some of the ordinary senses. A party of French deaf mutes has lately been in England, and they were shown round London by English experts in connection with the Royal Association in Aid of the Deaf and Dumb, whose headquarters are at 419, Oxford-street, W. It is usually found that deaf mutes are less intelligent than the blind, and probably this is because the first awakening of a child's intelligence depends very much on verbal teaching. In the present case it appears that not the least interested and enthusiastic of the visitors was a gentleman who, besides being deaf and dumb, is also blind ; but his wife contrived to give him some ideas of the beauties of the places visited, and he seems to have had a keen appreciation of the 'magnificence' of the Houses of Parliament.

In a farewell message to the English friends who had so well entertained them, the French deaf-mutes made use of a phrase which deserves to be noted : 'May you have around you always that which is healthful, beautiful, and joyful ; may you realise more and more fully that to the Christian there is no death ; and when you pass into the life unseen may many rise up and call you blessed.' These last words have a decidedly Spiritualistic ring to them.

HERBERT SPENCER'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.—Messrs. Williams and Norgate have published an edition of Herbert Spencer's autobiography at the reduced price of 12s. 6d. *net* for the two volumes bound in cloth. It is precisely the same as the original edition at 28s. *net*, and will be welcomed by all interested in philosophy, for 'the volumes are an almost inexhaustible treasury of interest and instructive thought.'

MR. MYERS' COMMUNICATIONS.

Some interesting details are given by 'Sigma,' on p. 367 of 'LIGHT,' in addition to those mentioned on p. 329, as to the communications received by Mrs. Holland from the late Frederic Myers. There are other phrases quoted in Miss Johnson's report which, I think, throw light upon the mental condition of a spirit in the other world, and go far to answer the oft-recurring question as to whether, by desiring to hear from our spirit friends, we are retarding their advancement and helping to keep them 'earth-bound.' On January 6th, 1904, Myers wrote through Mrs. Holland's hand ('Proceedings of the S. P. R.,' Part LV., pp. 213 and 231):—

I have thought of a simile which may help you to realise the bound-to-earth condition which persists with me. It is a matter very largely of voluntary choice. I am, as it were, actuated by the missionary spirit; and the great longing to speak to the souls in prison—still in the prison of the flesh—leads me to 'absent me from felicity awhile.'

On November 21st, 1905, after Myers had expressed a hope for future developments, and said, 'I need all the help that can be given me,' the 'Gurney control' took a pencil and, referring to Myers, wrote (*ibid.*, p. 205):—

He needs such congenial conditions or else he fails altogether. He really belongs in spiritual development to a higher level—a higher plane, and if he were there you would not be able to receive the faintest impression from him. 'Earth-bound' isn't quite the word I want, but I do not know how else to convey to you the condition of those of us who are able to send messages. Understand, it's not bound *by* earth, it's bound to earth by love, memory, powerful interests. F.'s [Frederic Myers'] mind is prepared for the higher planes; it is strong feeling—great attachments—that keep him on this level.

It seems pitiable that so intense a manifestation of feeling as is shown by the above passages and those quoted on pp. 329 and 367 of 'LIGHT' should be met by preconceptions on the part of the automatic writer and by cold critical analysis on the part of psychical researchers, while little or no attention is paid to the recommendations contained in the messages themselves. No wonder that, under these circumstances, we fail to receive, as 'Sigma' says, a 'manifestation of literary, ethical, and religious excellence'! Here is Gurney's simple formula for obtaining better results, written, like the message quoted above, through Mrs. Holland (November 25th, 1905; 'Proceedings,' p. 206): 'Write down all that comes into a blank mind.' Really, this seems to be all that is needed! Why not do it?

Another recommendation, which is frequently insisted upon, is that which results in 'cross-communications'; namely, that two or more sensitives should voluntarily work in concert, as—

Friends, comrades, fellow workers; . . . one does so little alone (p. 231). I fear you will never be really responsive trying alone. You need the connecting bond (p. 231). . . While you are alone it is useless, I fear, to try to convey my newly won, dearly bought knowledge through your mind (p. 234).

Some of the recommendations as to conjoint working, partly given in Greek to Mrs. Verrall, are made the subject of an alarming display of scholarship which leads us quite away from the obvious meaning. On pp. 382 and 383 of Miss Johnson's Report occur the following passages:—

Do you jointly write; another is to read. (Mrs. Forbes) has the other words. Piece together: add hers to yours. . . Weave together perpetually things which hang together, even if they seem dragged in. . . *Monazein* is of advantage: I have already said that, and not *duazein*. Put one to one one. . . To work together is better, and in this case the Separatists are not best.'

Here *monazein*, literally 'to make one,' evidently means to unite in effort, or, as is also written, 'to work together,' while *duazein* means to make two, or to separate, or work apart. 'The Separatists' are evidently those who would recommend or practise separate working, and by all these phrases the communicator means to indicate that conjoint working is more desirable than disunited attempts. Yet Mrs. Verrall refers 'separatists' to those who divided the Homeric

poems (!) or to 'certain Pythagoreans' (!!). This is surely learning run mad. She fares little better with other quite intelligible recommendations (pp. 380 and 381):—

Twofold is the toil, but whole. (Guess.) In mysteries I weave riddles for you and others for whom it is right. . . Why then do you (guess)? It is better that you receive whatever the thought casts. . . (P. 381): You are not to guess, and you will probably not understand what you write.

The word guess, where placed in parentheses, represents a falsely formed Greek word which can scarcely have any other meaning; but it is noticeable that there are passages which recommend and others which discourage guessing. The meaning seems to be that while the writing is proceeding the automatist should abstain from guessing either at the next word or as to the purport of the sentence; but that when the message is complete the enigmatic or hidden meaning should be divined by those for whom it is intended. For instance, a misunderstood passage quoted on p. 386 of Miss Johnson's Report means something like this:—

The meaning escapes you and is lost for want of comparison (with other phrases). Some of the teaching to the learners is left out, and this part of the instruction is transferred to certain others. If not all (is understood), why not some (at least)? (Try) this: . . .

Interesting in another way are Myers' teachings with regard to spirit forms or apparitions (pp. 215, 218):—

I want to make it thoroughly clear to you all that the *eidolon* [phantom] is not the spirit, only the simulacrum [semblance]. If M. were to see me sitting at my table, or if any one of you became conscious of my semblance standing near my chair, that would not be *me*. My spirit would be there, invisible but perceptive, but the appearance would be merely to call your attention to identify me. It fades and grows less easily recognisable as the years pass, and my remembrance of my earthly appearance grows weaker. . . Remember once again that the phantasm, the so-called ghost, is a counterfeit presentment projected by the spirit. . . The appearance of the simulacrum does not necessarily imply that the spirit is consciously present. It may project the phantasm from a great distance. More usually, however, it is present.

As to the genuineness of these messages, it is noted that though the ideas might have been in Mrs. Holland's mind from reading Myers' 'Human Personality,' yet the words *eidolon* and *simulacrum*, which are not so used in the book, are introduced into the script in a 'scholarly and correct classical' manner. On the whole, every investigator who does not wish to see possible results marred by heavy-handed methods must echo the wish with which 'Sigma' closes his letter to 'LIGHT.'

SAMPL.

IS IT WORTH WHILE?

Spiritual reformers sometimes feel inclined to ask themselves, 'Is it worth while to give one's time and ability and heart's blood for a reform movement?' and dealing with this attitude of mind in 'Fellowship,' Mr. R. E. Blight says:—

When you consider how little at best an individual can accomplish, how tremendous the forces allied against him, how short the time of active work, how slow the world is to commend, how quick to fling the sneer, the withering epithet; how sweet the comforts of home, how attractive the allurements of self interest, it is not worth while, from the standpoint of the individual. But slowly we are coming to understand that the individual has no 'rights' in the world, except 'duty.' Duty not only to himself but to the world, not only to his circle of loved ones, but to his fellow men; that he is here, not to cater to his selfish pleasures, but to make a definite contribution to the evolutionary purpose. Not for him to weigh calls and consequences, not for him to temporise over questions of expediency, not for him to save himself, but it is for him to work unstintingly and with earnest heart for the solving of the world's problems. And for the world's sake his sacrifice is worth while. All hail the noble reformers who toil and strive for righteous ends! Misunderstood, maligned, and often crushed, they work on with steadfast minds and willing hands, holding within themselves the assurance that though they see not of the fruits of their sowing their labour is not for nought; they know they are co workers with God in the creation of an ideal universe and that is worth while.

THE INTERMEDIATE WORLD.

BY LILIAN WHITING.

II.

Regarding the phenomena occurring in the séance-room of Pierre L. E. O. Keeler, of Washington, D.C. (U.S.A.), the story of my own personal observation and experience of them is as follows:—

For some time—perhaps a few years, even—I had been hearing more or less of Mr. Keeler, when (somewhere, I think, about 1898 or 1899) Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton, the well-known poet and litterateur, of Boston, invited me to accompany her to a private slate-writing séance with Mr. Keeler. The séance was given in a room lighted by the morning sunshine, Mr. Keeler being on one side of the small table and Mrs. Moulton and myself on the other. The usual precautionary methods were observed, Mrs. Moulton even taking her own slates. The questions were written and rolled into minute balls; Mr. Keeler put his hand over them, but with no conceivable possibility of reading them, and replies were written on the slates while they were lying on the table in full view, our own hands, with Mr. Keeler's, resting on them. One message to Mrs. Moulton was from Wilkie Collins, whom she had known for many years during her annual sojourns in London. I recall distinctly that among her billets she had not addressed Wilkie Collins, and his message was unexpected. But it was, she said, very characteristic. It alluded to the art of writing fiction, to some conversations they had had before his death, and spoke of his still being engaged in writing stories in the new life. This is as rationally conceivable as that the child who writes verses should develop in mature life into a great poet, as Longfellow did, for example, who wrote verse from the time he was seven years of age. The evolutionary progress from the conditions here to those of the life in the ethereal is undoubtedly as unbroken as is individual development from childhood to youth and from youth to maturity.

The messages from relatives and near friends received that morning, both by Mrs. Moulton and myself, were curiously lacking in any significance. They seemed of a general rather than a personal nature, yet there was in each a trace, I may say, of individuality. I remember one that came—or purported to come—from a friend of mine, a lady whose writing, while on earth, was characterised by rather unusual turns of expression, and whose message ran: 'Lilian, I don't know how I ever got here or how I shall get away, but there is no more any such thing as death than there is dry water.'

But the occurrence in that séance that has always haunted me since is that, chancing to glance over my shoulder at the mantel mirror, I saw reflected in it the figure of a man with his hat on his head. Turning round instantly, supposing that someone had entered the room, I could see no one there; the door was locked, and no one could have entered. As I described this figure to Mrs. Moulton she seemed deeply interested, but suggested no name, only questioned me closely as to details; and afterwards, when I went home with her, she handed me a box of photographs, saying, 'See if the man you saw in the mirror is among these.' I soon discovered the identical figure, with a hat on his head in the photograph as in the mirror reflection which I had seen, and it was the photograph of Wilkie Collins.

I need only add that I never saw Mr. Collins, his death having occurred, I think, in 1889, before my first visit abroad, which was in 1896.

I described this séance to Dr. Hodgson, who reproached me for going, and said, 'Mr. Keeler is a fraud, and I have exposed him; I know just how he does his tricks.' In repeating these words I do not, of course intend any lack of courtesy to Mr. Keeler, or breach of faith to Dr. Hodgson. The remark was not made confidentially, but as a statement of what he believed, and regarding all these phenomena the matter seems to me as impersonal as are statements made on the witness stand. I know that Dr. Hodgson was perfectly sincere, but I think he was mistaken, and that very probably

he now knows that he was mistaken in that matter. The effect of his words, however, was to make me resolve to go to Mr. Keeler again, alone, and at an absolutely private séance watch him closely. I did so, and the messages that came convinced me that, wherever they came from, it was certainly not from Mr. Keeler himself. This was my preliminary experience with Mr. Keeler.

In the winter of 1904-5, I was in Washington and domiciled in the same hotel with Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Simmons, of Rome, who were passing the season there. Mr. Simmons, who had previously had sittings with Mr. Keeler, was greatly interested in studying the phenomena, and we all went together to a number of public evening séances, which Mr. Keeler held in his own house. It was in this series that the extraordinary things occurred which, since reading Dr. Le Bon's theories of the dissociation of matter, suggest themselves to me as occurrences of that 'intermediate' world. These séances were of two kinds, for materialisation and for messages. From twenty to twenty-five persons were present each time. A little recess between one end of the mantel and the side of the room was utilised as a cabinet, a simple curtain only falling over it, and inside was a small table with a tambourine or guitar, or both. The company assembled were at liberty to examine this little alcove to their hearts' content; but the keenest scrutiny could detect no mechanism. For the messages, Mr. Keeler, with two other persons (chosen from the company), sat in front of the curtain. Soon the tambourine would be shaken, raps were heard, and general conversation in the alcove. A hand and arm—to the elbow—would be thrust through the cretonne curtain, the hand motioning for a pencil and writing pad. These being supplied, the hand wrote message after message, with lightning-like rapidity, tearing off leaf after leaf and throwing them on the floor. The light in the room was dim, but sufficient to reveal this process. Almost every person in the room received messages. They were picked up, and the signature of each read by one of the company, who carried them to the dim light in one corner, and by the signature each person would identify the one belonging to him. For these messages no questions had been asked by anyone; no billets written, as in the private slate-writing séances. One lady present was an entire stranger to everyone present (she had given no name, simply came and paid her dollar for a seat), but it turned out that she was from California, had been in Washington only a few days, and had never before seen Mr. Keeler; she had recently lost her only daughter, and a message from this daughter was written to her, signed with her daughter's name, by the hand thrust through the curtain. This is typical of the experience of many on a series of evenings. Mr. Simmons had a sister called 'Addie,' who had died some years before. A message signed by her name came to him. But more than this. There were evenings when many hands came through the curtain, hands of men, of women, and differing from each other precisely as the hands of a dozen persons anywhere would differ. Some of these were in sleeves, and one—the delicate hand of a girl—was in a sleeve of red silk with lace, and the sleeve was identified by the mother as belonging to a gown the girl had worn.

There were voices, too; one purporting to be that of a sailor who had been drowned, who would talk for ten minutes at a time. He was rough and disagreeable, but still the phenomenon was the same as if he had been the reverse.

At the materialisation séances the forms came out, went around the room, and one, purporting to be General Grant, came to Mr. Simmons and spoke to him. The figure corresponded with the stature of General Grant, and Mr. Simmons—as a youth just entering on his art—had passed two weeks in camp with General Grant at the beginning of the Civil War, availing himself of any minutes the General could spare in order to model his bust. Later, he sculptured a great statue of General Grant, which is now in the Statuary Hall in the Capitol, at Washington, and a lasting friendship grew up between the sculptor and the great General. What more natural than that the latter should come to Mr. Simmons? To fully describe all these phenomena, ranging over a series of evenings, would require undue space, and, besides, the nature

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CONCERNING THE LOSS OF THE SOUL.

What is a soul? It has now become the fashion to speak of body, soul and spirit as separate entities, and there may be something to say for this, but the distinction is somewhat speculative. If, however, we accept it, the soul, broadly speaking, may be regarded as the ultimate body of the spirit, when the merely physical body passes away: but this is purely hypothetical, and nothing important depends upon it. For all practical purposes, 'soul' and 'spirit' are synonymous, and 'body and soul' suffice to denote the complete man, though perhaps a better phrase would be 'body and self,' a phrase which comes nearest to the significance of Christ's great saying, 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?'—a saying which could not refer to the spirit's ultimate body, but to the spirit itself, the very self, the life that lies beyond the body's life.

For our purpose, then, we accept the word 'soul' in the common and homely use of it, to indicate the totality of that spirit-personality which persists after what we commonly call 'death': and the important thing to hold by is the fact that it is this spirit personality which is now as much the vital and active reality as ever it will be. It feels, interprets and understands. It is the recipient and translator of the telegraphic physical vibrations. The eyes, the fingers, the ears, know nothing: they are only the equivalents of the telegraphic needles, with a closer and living connection with the operator who appropriates and understands their signals, and uses them for replies; and it is this operator who is really winning or losing, rising or falling, improving or deteriorating, though it is true that he uplifts or drags down the mechanism with him; and it is this operator who will persist when his present instrument is laid down.

Every religion makes the condition and fate of this soul its chief concern: the religion of Jesus especially. It was he who asked that tremendous question we have already referred to: 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul; or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?' It is a simple matter of calculation, and may be reduced to a mere question of profit and loss: and the gravity of it is increased when

we bear in mind that the word here translated 'soul' is elsewhere and properly translated 'life': so that it is a man's life which is really at stake—his real life, the life that lurks behind the body, which is at once its manifestation and its tool.

This does not necessarily touch the question of the life's continuance after the death of the body, for a man who has lost his soul may find himself possessed of it on the re-awaking; and a man who has made a bad bargain with this world and sacrificed his true life may still live through it, and persist beyond the veil. That may be so, but no one can be absolutely sure that the loss of the soul or of the life does not mean more than this: no one can be absolutely sure that it does not mean the possibility of such a dwindling and decay of spiritual vitality as to involve the extinction of the sufficiently degraded soul. We shrink from that meaning, and we more than shrink from it; we decline to accept it, but, at the same time, we admit that absolute certainty is not attainable, and that a life which had a beginning may have an end.

Of one thing, however, we may be said to be certain,—that the old hell-horror of the dark ages cannot be a reality; and our certainty as to that is based upon the sanity of the universe and the justice and goodness of its God. The mediæval Hell might have its root in Atheism, but in a just God never; and so much was this felt by modern Christians that a few years ago a school of gracious thinkers arose who, trying to cleave to the letter of the Bible and yet escape from the ancient horror, invented what came to be called 'Conditional Immortality,' that is to say, immortality depending in some mysterious way upon conscious and believing union with Christ. It was a failure. Of course it was, in a scientific age, just as the old wicked belief in Hell was in a civilised age; and, gradually, almost everyone has arrived at the inevitable conclusion that there is nothing supernatural or arbitrary in relation to a future life, but that if man is to live on beyond the death of the body, the reason for that must be a natural one, and must depend upon some cause which already inheres in man.

The truth is that the process of saving or losing the soul is commenced and continued here. Tennyson, in one masterly line, told a good deal of it when he said of one, that 'though he trip and fall,'

He shall not blind his soul with clay.

And it is he who will not blind his soul with clay that is truly saving it, while the loss of it inevitably comes with base surrenders to the animalisms of the earth: and there are two ways by which the saving of the soul may come,—either by living in what Pope calls 'the soul's calm sunshine,' and there winning and enjoying 'virtue's prize' which the world can neither give nor take away; or in the way which Dryden described when he told of

A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pygmy-body to decay.

A brave simile! and yet some will say, 'But that is a distressing thing,—that the fiery soul should wear out the puny body.' Not at all: but it is a right splendid thing, and is what Christ meant when he said, 'He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.' Very nobly did Browning say:—

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh has soul to suit?
To man propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

So then we must face it—sink or swim. Salvation mainly depends upon ourselves. It is useless, as a rather

foolish hymn says, to 'leave it all to Jesus,' for even Jesus can act only in harmony with the iron but heavenly saying, 'Work out your own salvation, for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work of His good pleasure.' There we have both man's effort and God's help; man's responsibility and God's will—a wondrous combination—and yet it is as though what old John Fletcher said was all the truth:—

Man is his own star; and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man
Commands all light, all influence, all fate.
Nothing to him falls early or too late.
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.

MADAME D'ESPÉRANCE'S PARTIAL DEMATERIALIZATION.

AN EXAMINATION OF MR. CARRINGTON'S ALLEGED 'EXPLANATION.'

In Part LV. of the 'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,' on p. 397, in a review of Hereward Carrington's book on 'The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism,' Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo says:—

Of a well-known case to which the Hon. Alexander Aksakof (unfortunately, I think) attached his name, Mr. Carrington very satisfactorily disposes. It is the famous incident of the 'dematerialisation' of Mrs. d'Espérance's legs at Helsingfors in 1893. Mr. Carrington conclusively shows that this 'phenomenon' admits of an absurdly easy explanation, and thus leaves it literally without 'a leg to stand upon.'

This amazing declaration of satisfaction is based upon Mr. Carrington's suggestion that Madame d'Espérance was a professional medium, that she commenced her career under the supervision of Mrs. Mellon, and that she performed a feat such as only a slender and experienced professional contortionist could successfully accomplish. To make the matter clear it is necessary to state what it was that occurred at the séance at Helsingfors, and we will quote from Mr. Carrington's summary of the incident:—

After some minor manifestations the medium stated * that the lower part of her body had dematerialised, and that, whereas her head and the upper portion of her trunk were visible and tangible, her lower limbs and the lower portion of her body had dematerialised and could no longer be seen or felt. . . . From the reports, there can be no reasonable doubt that the upper portion of the medium's body was really in front of the chair-back, nor can there be any doubt that the lower portion of her body was absent, and the legs not simply drawn back, *e.g.*, against the sides of the chair.

In his alleged 'absurdly easy explanation' of this phenomenon Mr. Carrington speaks of Madame d'Espérance as a 'professional medium,' which is untrue, and suggests that she deliberately and cleverly tricked the sitters: a suggestion which all those who have had the pleasure of that lady's acquaintance, not to speak of friendship, will resent and indignantly repudiate. However, here is his suggestion of how the trick was accomplished. He says:—

The back of the chair was partly open and of sufficient size to allow the medium to thrust her legs through as far as the hips, when the dress had been drawn up and spread over the seat of the chair. The medium would, therefore, be in a kneeling position behind the chair, with the upper part of her body in front of the chair-back, and, of course, visible to the investigators who made the examination. No one thought of looking behind the chair (this is stated in the evidence), nor did anyone, apparently, suspect the manner in which the medium was producing the 'dematerialisation.'

Mr. Carrington first published his alleged 'examination' of the evidence in this case in the 'Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research,' Vol. I., Part I., and on page 162 he details the method by which he 'firmly believes that anyone with a supple body, and having proper control of his muscles,' can perform the alleged trick. He says:—

Here is the operation. Grasp one side of the chair with each hand and support the weight of the body on these two hands and on one foot (say the left). If now the arms are straightened, and a slight 'hoisting' movement be given to the shoulders and the body, which is slightly bent forward at the same time, it will be found that the right leg can be doubled up under the body and pushed through the opening in the back of the chair without any difficulty; the trunk being sufficiently elevated to allow of its free passage beneath. Here, then, is the medium astride of the chair, one leg in front and one in the rear, and her hands resting on either side of the cushioned seat. The latter part of the operation is as simple as the first. Lean heavily on the *left* hand and *right* leg, when it will be found possible to curl the left leg round and quickly thrust it through the aperture in the rear of the chair, joining the right limb, and *voilà tout!* the impossible is accomplished.

This 'comparatively easy' performance (which is impossible to all except very slim and agile persons) is supposed to have been successfully carried out by a lady who was wearing 'a tight-fitting princess robe,' a gown which 'is very difficult to put on,' and one which the witnesses who examined it state 'differed in no way from what it should be.' Further, the aperture at the back of the chair was barely $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep! Mr. Carrington suggests that the legs could be thrust through '*as far as the hips*,' but in his illustrative drawing he shows that the body would require to pass through as far as, or above, the waist, at least at the back! Professor Hyslop, in the 'Journal of the American S. P. R.' of December, 1907, says:—

As to the possibility of doing what Mr. Carrington described I have seen him do it within *one minute*, both getting in and getting out of the aperture in that time with very little apparent movements of the upper part of the body. The aperture was $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep at the sides of the back and $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the centre of the back, averaging about six inches. The back of the chair was perfectly straight, while that of the chair represented by Professor Seiling was bent slightly backwards, I should imagine about ten degrees, a much more favourable condition than in the chair Mr. Carrington used.

But all this proves very little. To carry out his duplication of the trick performance which he attributes to the medium, Mr. Carrington would require to wear a tight-fitting princess robe; to draw this robe up at the back on to the seat of the chair; to screw his legs under it and thrust them and the lower portion of his body through the narrow aperture ($11\frac{1}{2}$ by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches), without rising; to remain in this strained position, without tilting the chair backwards, for at least five minutes; to withdraw his person from its awkward fix, resume his seat and let down the dress into its proper position; and to do all this—*without being detected*—in the presence of several near-by keenly observant witnesses—especially attentive during the latter part of the proceedings. To make his attempt at duplication complete, it would be necessary that measurements should be taken of the dimensions of the lower portion of his body, also corresponding measurements of the person of the medium, because, as is well known, there is, as a rule, greater breadth of body below the waist in women than in men, and what may be possible where a slender, 'supple,' athletic man is concerned may be 'physically impossible' to a woman; and on this point Professor Seiling says that 'Madame d'Espérance, at that time, was by no means slender or thin; she could never have forced her body through an opening of $11\frac{1}{2}$ by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches.' Yet, on the strength of Mr. Carrington's airy and confident but unsupported assertions, Count Solovovo considers that the whole evidence of the reputable witnesses who bear testimony to this remarkable phenomenon is 'satisfactorily' disposed of and that Mr. Carrington 'conclusively shows that the phenomenon admits of an absurdly easy explanation.' But why should the corroborative testimony of those who witnessed the occurrence be calmly set aside—and the unsupported assertions of one who was not present be believed?

This is the kind of treatment that Spiritualists complain of. It is not 'research,' in the true meaning of the word; it is not even worthy of the name of criticism—it is only an exhibition of the absurd lengths to which prejudice and bias

* This is incorrect.

will carry men. Difficulties are ignored, fraud and mal-observation are assumed, chance expressions, which seem to favour preconceived ideas, are clutched at, while other statements which do not fit in with the fraud idea are disregarded or sneered at, and thus, by 'tortuous evasions,' and unproved assertions and suppositions, an 'absurdly easy explanation' seems to be built up which is supposed to leave the 'phenomenon' not 'a leg to stand upon'—a conclusion which, although it lacks corroboration, appears to give infinite satisfaction to both Count Solovovo and Mr. Carrington.

When Mr. Carrington's 'examination' first appeared, Madame d'Espérance consulted Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, who advised her to ignore it owing to its manifest absurdity. However, Professor Hyslop invited both Madame d'Espérance and Professor Seiling, in whose home the reported phenomenon of dematerialisation occurred, to express themselves with reference to Mr. Carrington's assumed explanation, and Madame d'Espérance replied that she had asked the advice of various friends as to the steps she should take with respect to the calumnious article by Mr. Carrington referring to her, and that their replies were unanimous—'the article is not worth your consideration'; she therefore declined 'to touch the matter' beyond mentioning that the supposed facts, on which he builds his 'fabric of surmises,' had no foundation in truth, adding that 'I am not, nor ever have been, a professional medium, that I did not commence my mediumship under the direct (or indirect) supervision of Mrs. Mellon, and that the indecent, acrobatic performances which he describes and illustrates are in my case a physical impossibility.'

The following extracts from Professor Seiling's letter to Professor Hyslop give the essential points involved in this matter. He says:—

The hypothesis of fraud on the part of Madame d'Espérance is, in my opinion, entirely out of the question. Since her visit to Helsingfors in 1893, I have had opportunities of becoming more closely acquainted with her and know her to be a highly honourable, refined, cultured, and religiously minded person, who looks upon mediumship in the light of a serious mission. This cannot fail to impress itself on every reader of the book, 'Shadow Land,' in which Madame d'Espérance relates at length the whole story of her mediumship.

Madame d'Espérance is not a professional medium; she has never given a séance for payment. When one remembers that she, in the middle of a Scandinavian winter, undertook the troublesome journey from Gothenberg, in Sweden, to Helsingfors, in Finland, in order to comply with the urgent and pressing entreaties addressed to her, it is too absurd to believe that she, in addition to the inconvenience and self-sacrifice, would risk her good name and reputation by playing such an extraordinary and daring trick as that of apparently dematerialising her lower body and limbs.

Putting all this on one side, however, an uninformed person, ignorant of the medium's personality, might possibly consider that some points in M. Aksakof's report of the séance favoured Mr. Carrington's attempted explanation, if, for instance, his theory which he illustrates on p. 161 had been in any way possible, but there is in my mind no question of the possibility. The medium was by no means slender or thin. She could never have forced her body through an opening $11\frac{1}{2}$ by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Even if it had been possible the upper part of the body and bust could not have assumed a natural position, nor would the dress have fallen as far down on the front of the chair, nor hang naturally, as was the case. See my sketch, p. 146. The principal point, however, is that, if it had been in any way possible for the medium to have brought herself into such a position, she could by no possibility have got her limbs back into a sitting position without being noticed.

One must remember that many pairs of eyes were closely watching her with most strained attention, waiting to see how the phenomenon would end. No movement, gesture, or sound could escape notice.

Professor Seiling adds:—

One very important circumstance, upon which M. Aksakof does not lay sufficient weight, is that the dematerialisation phenomenon, in conjunction with the examination of the medium's person, and probable interference with her astral body, had very serious consequences for her health. It was with very great difficulty that after the séance Madame d'Espérance was able to leave my house. She became weaker

from day to day, pale and apathetic, suffered from an abnormal inclination to sleep, and was in consequence obliged to resign her post in the mercantile firm of Mr. Mathews Fidler.

This phenomenon of partial dematerialisation would be supremely startling if it stood alone, but, prior to the séance at Helsingfors, weighing experiments with Miss Wood at Newcastle and with Mr. George Spriggs had evidenced the fact that the weight of the mediums decreased as that of the 'form' increased, and since its occurrence the investigators who carried out a series of remarkable séances at Algiers, as reported in 'The Annals of Psychical Science,' attest the fact—which is disclosed by a photograph—that on one occasion the sleeve of the medium appeared as though completely empty, and Mrs. Finch, as reported in the 'Revue Scientifique et Morale du Spiritisme' recently, said:—

By the side of the medium (Marthe), there appeared a phantom arm, well-formed and raised in the air. I cut open the corresponding sleeve of the medium and found that it was empty. But at my touch Mlle. Marthe uttered a loud cry, and immediately her sleeve was again occupied by her arm. The spirit told us that we ought never to touch mediums during a materialisation.

Dealing with 'the concordance of this phenomenon with the general theory of materialisation,' M. Aksakof points out that it is in the line of the development of the principle, as it should be if genuine. There is also the fact mentioned above by Professor Seiling, which fits in entirely with the genuineness of the manifestation. Ordinarily Madame d'Espérance was not greatly affected after the séances for materialisation, but on this occasion, 'when not a doubt had been cast upon the manifestation by anyone, she was found to be in a state of complete exhaustion.' General Toppelius, at whose house she stayed, says that she 'was in a state of weakness and nervous depression such as I have never seen equalled. Her face and figure both manifested complete exhaustion, and the suffering visible in her features excited the most profound compassion.' Further, he says that she was so weak the next day that, as she had to continue her journey, his daughter 'collected and packed her dresses and all her other belongings, and profited by the opportunity thus afforded to examine them very carefully. But she found absolutely nothing suspicious—not a sign of a veil, masks, or gutta-percha hands, as some had been pleased to suspect.' On this point M. Aksakof says:—

Writing, as I do, a whole year after the event, I cannot ignore the unfortunate results of that séance upon her health in general and upon her mediumistic powers in particular. So serious were the consequences, that she lost every trace of her mediumship, except simple writing. . . . The shock to her nerves was so great that Madame d'Espérance could not, all that time, take up the business affairs that she had laid aside to go to Helsingfors; the slightest mental labour exceeded her powers. . . . Knowing the tortures which she endured, I did not see how I could suffer them to pass in silence, and I saw in them the most convincing proof that the dematerialisation was something other than a pleasantry.

(To be continued.)

THE FACT—for fact it is—that departed parents and friends are among us, and endeavour to help us as they did in life, seems to me exactly what we ought to expect. Now that I have gone through a training of Spiritualism and close thought on the subject for the last fourteen years, so far from it appearing to me to be unreasonable, I can see that it could not possibly be otherwise.—CROMWELL F. VARLEY, in 'The Rise and Progress of Spiritualism in England,' by Benjamin Coleman (page 54).

SAVONAROLA manifested remarkable faculties, among them that of prophecy, or, as it may be termed, the psychometry of future events, by which he was able to foresee and presage what was about to happen; a power strange and incredible to ordinary minds; but obtained by developing spiritual powers, latent and inherent in every human soul, and awaiting only the opportunity for their manifestation and display. By this extraordinary faculty he saved Florence from plunder and despoilment. Yet he claimed no reward, sought for no honours, nor distinctions, but recognising he had only done his duty, was content to remain simply an humble friar.—DR. W. WILLIAMS, in 'The Word.'

TRANSITION OF ALEXANDER DUGUID.

Another of the old apostles of Spiritualism has closed his earthly career; Mr. Alexander Duguid, the youngest and last of a remarkable family, passed away at Edinburgh, after a long illness, on Saturday evening last, the 1st inst. Though not so prominent a spiritual worker as his brother David, he possessed valuable psychical gifts and laboured earnestly to utilise them for the blessing and cheer of all.

The three brothers, Robert, David, and Alexander, were drawn into the movement at different times. Robert, the eldest, derided the reports which he heard of David's mediumship, but when he was at last induced to visit the circle which was held at the home of Mr. Hay Nisbet, he yielded to the weight of evidence and became himself an instrument of power. He was the first medium I sat with, and many of the spirit friends I got to know through his mediumship are with me to this hour, companions and true helpers in the battle of life. I have told some of his story in the volume soon to be issued under the title of 'Spiritualism: the Open Door to the Unseen Universe.' Every phase of phenomena was manifested through him. Mrs. Mellon-Gleave, herself a wonderful materialising medium, has said to me that Robert Duguid was the most marvellous medium for materialisations she had ever seen. Alexander, who was a pious and sincere Christian, when he heard of Robert's falling into the same groove as David, travelled from Kirkcaldy to Glasgow to work their conversion. He was induced to witness the phenomena which took place in his brother's presence, and returned home with new fire in his heart. He had to admit that the 'dead' were not resting in their graves, but communicating with earth dwellers. The spirit friends who used his brother's voice soon began to use his own, and it was most difficult to recognise any difference in the individualities of the spirits who spoke through the one brother in Glasgow and the other in Kirkcaldy. Many times subjects which I had begun to discuss with the spirits in Glasgow were again entered upon by the same spirits in Kirkcaldy. Alexander, who had, perhaps, more culture than his brothers, developed into an admirable trance speaker, and I am as certain as I am of anything that I have conversed with Joseph Priestley, Harriet Martineau, John Stuart Mill, and other notable personages through his mediumship. Mr. William Oxley, of Manchester, used to visit him monthly, and took down the story of an ancient Druid, who gave some graphic word-pictures of prehistoric times, which were printed in 'Human Nature,' published by James Burns. Alexander's clairvoyant gifts were of a remarkable kind, and numbers of people have been startled at the accuracy with which he detailed the circumstances of their lives and described their spirit friends. He used to visit groups of Spiritualists in all parts of the country and was ever a welcome guest; his quiet, inoffensive personality drew everyone to him.

For many years we carried on a spiritual correspondence, and his guidance and help were richly prized. A real missionary spirit possessed him: all the time he was spirit-guided and had confidence to the full in those who stood beside him. He did not care for platform work, nor was his true mission there. He was invaluable in bringing conviction of spirit realities in the quiet home circle. If the many evidences of the continuity of life which he gave out were gathered together they would fill volumes. Publicity, or money, he did not grasp at; he was contented to be a helper and consoler to those who needed his services. His was one of those rich lives which the world of spirit will recognise at its true worth, a brave, sincere soul seeking to serve the Highest. I have known him for over thirty years, and ever prized his genuine sincerity and worth, as did all who knew him. He has left no books, but his memory will be precious to many as evidencing that the race of saintly men has not died out on this earth. At his brother David's funeral last year he was present and spoke out some wise and soothing thoughts. I had little idea then that he, too, would so soon enter on the new stage of his pilgrimage, and that I should be called upon to conduct the funeral service over his mortal form, as I did on Tuesday last at the Murchiston Cemetery, Edinburgh.

JAMES ROBERTSON.

WHY CALL IT DYING?

Slowly but surely the world is growing away from the old-fashioned idea that death or the dissolution of the body means cessation of consciousness. Miss Bates hits this popular fallacy on the head in the title of her latest book: 'Do the Dead Depart'? Of course not—if they depart they are alive. The answer to the time-honoured question: 'If a man die shall he live again?' from the Spiritualist standpoint is 'No! because he does not die. He does not live *again*, he continues his career, through death and afterwards.'

This spiritual point of view is taken, and happily emphasised, by A. G. Hales, the well-known writer, in the following consolatory and cheering little poem entitled: 'Why Call it Dying?':—

The acorn falls and sinks into the earth,
The husk may rot, and mix with kindred clay,
But now behold the miracle of birth:
An oak tree growing where the acorn lay.
The husk has filled its own allotted part—
It falls asunder when its work is done—
This is not dying, oh my best beloved, 'tis life begun.

The new oak springs triumphant from the ground
Full of fresh life, free from all rot and stain;
With every little twig and fibre sound
It starts life's mission o'er again.
So we must fall, as acorns from the bough,
Not dead, but sleeping for a little space,
Then, leaving human husks behind, meet loved ones face to face.

The bridge that links eternity with time
Is but a long-drawn, quivering human breath;
But oh beloved, folly worse than crime
Affrights our minds with death.
Why talk of dying? 'tis the newer birth,
The great beginning, not the bitter end;
Death is no stern-browed jailer, but an angel friend.

As children dread the hour when darkness falls,
Peering with wonder-laden eyes into the night,
When every old familiar sound appals
And sets them yearning for the vanished light,
So we grown children stand and gaze at death,
Probing the mystery with affrighted eyes,
Forgetful of the hidden higher life, where nothing dies.

Be of good cheer, the clouds will roll away,
Your spirit friends are nearer than before;
They stand and smile on you to-day,
God's honoured guests who wait you at the door:
They move beside you in the busy street,
They gaze upon you at the ingle side,
They have but left you for a little while; why say they died?

MR. J. J. VANGO desires to inform his friends and clients that he will be out of town until the 24th inst., but all letters will be forwarded to him.

TRANSITION.—Passed to spirit life at Windsor Castle, on Saturday, July 25th, Mrs. Watson, wife of Major Watson, a Knight of Windsor. The funeral service was held in St. George's Chapel, the Dean of Windsor officiating. Mrs. Watson, formerly Mrs. M. C. Price, was an avowed Spiritualist, and for many years a subscriber to 'LIGHT.' She was a personal friend of the late Miss Rowan Vincent, to whom she rendered many valuable services during her prolonged illness.

THE following passage from a letter by Dr. James Ashburner, written fifty-five years ago, is not inappropriate at the present time in view of Mr. Hereward Carrington's suggestions with reference to Madame d'Espérance's partial dematerialisation (see p. 379). Dr. Ashburner says: 'There are some people who think themselves uncommonly clever and astute when they suspect their neighbours of fraud and delinquency. It may be wisdom to be not too confiding, to be not too soft and credulous, but depend upon it the statistics of the existence of roguery and knavery in society, and the relative proportions they bear to honesty, will not bear out the proposition that it is wiser to suspect every man to be a knave until you have proved him to be honest. The world may be bad enough in morals, but unless there were a good deal more of good than of evil in the human heart—I should say in the human brain—society would not hold together as it does.'

HIGHER THOUGHT AND THE COMING RELIGION.

Whatever may be the source of the new impulse or 'the higher thought' movement which is colouring our morals, our manners, and our religious life, it surely behoves those who realise the truth to be up and doing, and to respond generously to any illuminative influence that may affect them, remembering always the gross materiality of their surroundings, and how little chance they give the spirit to shine through the shell.

Many of us are so well satisfied with the beaten path of prejudice that we hesitate to let new thoughts take shape within us, but the wondrous light upon the far-off hills is the light of truth, of the spiritual life, which will penetrate into our inmost being and most assuredly shatter the idols of materialism.

Dogmatic Christianity is losing its hold, and everywhere men and women are leaving the 'fold' where they have been enclosed by priest or parent: its rank materialism appals them, and its inadequacy offends them. Truths intelligible only by spiritual interpretation, lose all beauty by rough handling, and become ridiculous to the enlightened thinker. The ignorance and sacerdotalism of the Middle Ages are passing away, and we are realising that we are born with an inherent desire to get at the truth of things, to see inside and beyond, so that we may understand; that if we 'knock' there is nothing hid which shall not be revealed; thus we are acquiring knowledge in all realms. Light is breaking in on us, and we are realising that there are unseen but potent forces and powers awaiting our use.

What gigantic strides science has made in these latter days—what mighty powers it has handled; and yet these land us only at the threshold of unknown spiritual possibilities. But we can and shall pierce behind the clouds and learn to solve life's mysteries in the power and by right of the Divinity within.

One line of thought for everyone, and at all times, never has and never will suffice. Environments alter, ideas change, and although 'intuition,' like some vestal flame, burns steadily on, it can only enlighten the soul, inasmuch, and so far, as the soul is advanced and desires enlightenment.

The ideas regarding God entertained by the Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks, and Christians have varied according to their development or non-development, intellectually and spiritually, but the anthropomorphic conception of the Divine being is rapidly becoming impossible to thinking men and women, who are realising that God is spirit, and they who worship must worship in spirit and in truth and find the God within.

All the great truths of the Christian religion have mystical and occult significance, and until we look beneath the letter of the law, and grasp the hidden meaning, the kingdom of Heaven is closed to us, for of a truth 'the kingdom of Heaven is within,' and therefore it is that we are always reaching out after the ideal life and truth.

That society is what it is to-day, and that faith seems to be dying, if not already dead, is greatly, if not wholly, the fault of the priests. To preach fashionable sermons on popular subjects; to appeal 'to the gallery,' for notoriety; to advise a pandering to the lesser nature rather than to raise the ideal, is not to do the Master's work, as He intended it should be done.

Will not the people listen to sublime ideals, or has the Church lost them? The need for fresh life, fresh interpretations of truth, fresh faith in the unseen, is apparent on every hand, and the wave of 'new thought' and spiritual influence which is invading the world indicates a better, a truer, a more spiritual religion. As for us, as individuals, let us turn our minds inwards, let us look into our souls, for the Divine light is there. Truth is there because God is there; reason is there because God is reason. Let us grasp the reality of our spiritual nature and powers, the meaning of our heart yearnings and uprisings—let us awake and cleanse the temple of our souls, that the vestal

flame, the pure spirit of truth burning within us, shall enlighten us and we can work to hasten the day when science will know truly; religion will be spiritual; society will be enlightened; and purity, justice and love shall have perfect way.

M. K. S.

A SPIRIT PROVES HIS IDENTITY.

A good many years ago a Scotch soldier, who was on furlough, called unexpectedly on a family in the North of England, whose acquaintance he had made through an accidental meeting, and stayed a few days with them. In the home there was a little daughter, about six years of age. Years went by; the father of the family died; the little girl grew up to womanhood; and the soldier was almost forgotten. She had been married a few years, and being sadly bereaved by the loss of her only two children, turned to Spiritualism, hoping to find tangible consolation. This she did, unknown to her husband and to her mother, who is a widow, and lived with them at this time. The outcome was that she developed mediumship of a rare order.

By-and-bye, she induced her mother and husband to attend a public séance, without informing them of her own mediumship. They were placed in different parts of the circle, and during the séance the lady in question was suddenly controlled and spoke in a broad Scotch accent, on hearing which her mother jumped up and exclaimed: 'If that isn't J. A., I never heard him,' and looked round the room expecting to see J. A. (the Scotch soldier), but instead she saw her daughter under his control and heard her speaking in a broad Scotch dialect, which she could not speak normally.

When they arrived home after the séance, her husband complained of her foolishness, but her mother took a different course, and said audibly, 'Now, J. A.' (mentioning the soldier's name), 'if you are dead and can control and talk through my daughter, I would like you to tell us how and where you died.'

At once the daughter was controlled by the soldier, who told the story of his death. After giving the name and number of his regiment, he said they were sent to China, at the time of the Boxer rising, and on a certain day, of which he gave the date, in a certain engagement, naming the place, he was shot.

For corroboration of his statements he said they could write to the War Office. This they subsequently did, and with a few others I have handled and read the communication from the War Office, which corroborates the story of the soldier, who thus conveyed the news of his own death and all the particulars of the occurrence, through the mediumship of the lady whom he had seen when she was a child of six. On asking the medium if she remembered the soldier, she told me that only a dim recollection floated before her mind of his having been at her home.

Some of us have spent many interesting hours in conversation with the soldier through the medium, and he was always very obliging in giving physical phenomena when desired to do so for evidential purposes, by moving a large table, without contact, in a good light, &c.

I am not at liberty to give names and addresses for publication, but have sent them to the Editor of 'LIGHT,' and will ask permission to give them privately to inquirers, if requested.

T. P.

MEDITATION and contemplation are good in their way, and are helpful to those who feel the need of quiet reflection for spiritual purposes—to gain poise, serenity and inspiration, but we can hardly concur with the expression of the writer who said: 'Good is it also for us who would get in tune with the Infinite to glide away from the séance room and the lecture hall, and in "the mystical, moist night air" look "up in perfect silence at the stars."' To go star-gazing in the 'moist night air' is the way to invite rheumatism and pave the way to getting in tune with the Infinite out of the body. The time and place hardly seem suitable for sensible and spiritual recreation: but perhaps we are too prosaic.

JOTTINGS.

In 'The Coming Day' for August, in a valuable article on 'A Scientific Basis of Belief in a Future Life,' the Rev. J. Page Hopps says: 'Does anyone think it a lowering of the great hope of immortality to connect it with an argument based upon the nature and operations of our ordinary senses? In my judgment, the very reverse of this is the case: but, any way, it must be admitted that immortality means continued existence beyond the change called death, and that nothing could better bring home to us the possibility and probability of this than the discovery of the fact that we even now belong to the Unseen, and that behind the earthwork of the flesh there stands the conscious soul.'

Mr. Alfred Vout Peters gave us a good-bye call on Friday, July 31st, just prior to his departure for South Africa, on a mission tour. We wish him good health and every success. He will be absent for at least twelve months. We have received a letter from Mr. J. Gott, President of the Johannesburg Society of Spiritualists, in which he says, 'it seems strange that so few, of the many people who continually arrive at Johannesburg, seem to be Spiritualists; at least, we get but very few calling on us; hence I wish, through "LIGHT," to ask visiting Spiritualists to put themselves in touch with us. The secretary's address is P.O. box 6,209. We shall be glad to hear from mediums, or lecturers, who desire to visit Johannesburg. As there is no South African Union of Spiritualists yet formed, those inclined to work here should communicate with the hon. secretary as above. Personally, I shall be pleased to enter into correspondence with Spiritualists anywhere, with the view of exchanging ideas, experiences, &c.'

A correspondent asks: 'What is the teaching of Spiritualism as to the other life of children? I am not asking this out of curiosity, but out of the agony of a great grief.' The writer then explains that quite recently he lost his boy who was killed, suddenly, before his eyes, as the result of a bicycle accident. Continuing, he says: 'On the night that he was killed, my wife, who was waiting for us, heard a bicycle and footsteps pass our kitchen door just as usual, and as neither of us entered she went to see where we were—but no one was visible: this was just the time when the lad was run over. On two occasions since she has woke up in the night and has seen him; on the last occasion she noticed that his face was radiant with smiles and happiness. Do you think these occurrences real?' We can well understand and deeply sympathise with the longing, which our correspondent feels, for knowledge that his son is still alive and near to his father and mother, and we certainly think that the appearances of the lad seen by his mother were real. Can any reader of 'LIGHT' answer the question regarding the state of children in the other life?

In concluding an appreciative 'character study' of Dr. John Clifford, who this year celebrates his Jubilee as minister of Westbourne Park Baptist Church, the 'Daily News' says: 'There are few lives that one would rather have lived than this—a life so rich in unselfish service that has kept his roots watered and his branches green, so true is it that "what I gave I have." You may dislike his style, you may find the note too strident for your sensitive taste, you may resent the moral maxim and the passionate truism; but do not pride yourself upon living in the atmosphere of an artificial culture in which no man of breeding talks of principles, and in which the ripeness of emotion passes insensibly into the rottenness of moral decadence. For there is a far worse cant than the cant of sincerity, and that is the cant of culture. No nation was ever kept sweet and vital by moral opiates, and it is because he is the most bracing tonic in a time of moral slackness that John Clifford ranks among the chief benefactors of our day.' The world has need of, and room for, strong, outspoken, honest men who are inspired with a 'passion for righteousness.' Sincerity and earnestness are always needed in the progressive and spiritually-minded teacher and reformer.

In 'Israfel,' the musically descriptive poem which is noticed in 'Notes by the Way' (p. 373), the writer sets forth, as a matter-of-fact experience, her indebtedness to inspirers in the unseen. Replying to those who might ask why she has been made 'the willing scribe and mean, of such discourse, to wit, a soul's emprise'; she says:—

I can but answer that these lips of clay
Tho' all unworthy of their light employ,

Predestined were to Inspiration's lay
That blows for ever from the steep of Joy,

Suffice it now if round a lowly bed
The shining Ones have stood at dead of night,
And I have been as one infrequent led
'Mid other scenes, that with the morning light
Grew dim indeed, or unremembered quite,
Till thought-restored as to an inward sight;
As still from hour to hour, and day by day,
They fed the growing song, the lengthening lay
That here unfolds its wings of vision bright.

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.

Religion and Theology.

SIR,—There is a sentence in 'Notes by the Way' (August 1st), concerning an address given by Dr. Fuller, of Washington, which is puzzling to me. You quote some words of his and then continue, 'that is thoroughly good doctrine: not theology, perhaps, but the very best sort of religion.'

Similar remarks have been made in 'LIGHT' previously, and I have often wondered to what you, or the writers, really referred. There seems such a lack of logic. The word theology is used to express 'the Science of God,' just as by the words geology and conchology and biology the three separate sciences are referred to by each word.

A student of conchology is one who studies the nature of shells; therefore a student of theology must be one who studies the nature of God—necessarily a religious man; as a student of conchology must necessarily be an observant man. His observations *may* be erroneous, and the religious man *may* have erroneous conceptions of theology; but it does not follow that the science of conchology is erroneous, neither does it follow that theology is an erroneous science because the 'religious' man misunderstands and has not mastered it.

Your remarks would lead your readers to conclude that you mean to imply that theology is not a science relating to God, but that religion is. There is so much confusion in the relative use of these words, that it might be wiser if the word theology had been left out. It seems to me much as if a class of beginners in the science of geology were to wrangle about the name of a mineral being different in various countries, forgetting about the master-science whose A B C they were studying, and thus create difficulties simply from their own misunderstanding.

There are, without question, many forms and varieties of religion in the world, doubtless each serving its own purpose, but there certainly is but one science or knowledge of God; so I fail to see how 'good doctrine,' or 'the very best sort of religion,' can possibly be placed, as these expressions are by you, as something superior to 'theology'—a word, therefore, used by you as meaning something quite inferior to either doctrine or religion.

You doubtlessly mean differently, somehow, to your expressions, but your 'Notes by the Way' do not usually err in the lack of lucidity, but in this case, in my opinion, they do; and, as they are important—touching as they do sacred subjects of vast importance—it is regrettable that they should be misunderstood.—Yours, &c.,

ISABELLE DE STEIGER.

[See 'Notes by the Way,' p. 373.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

A Dramatic Dream.

SIR,—In Carl du Prel's 'Philosophy of Mysticism' (C. C. Massey's translation, Vol. I., p. 99), the author deals with the dramatic character of dreams, when 'the exciting cause is some external accident suddenly occurring.' An illustration occurred to myself about a year ago.

I was staying in a cottage in a country town, and on retiring at night asked my hostess to call me at 6 a.m., as I wished to catch the first train home. Next morning I awoke, looked at my watch and found it 4.55 a.m., and then fell asleep again. I then dreamed that I got up, went downstairs, saw my host and hostess, and impressed upon them that they must not forget to call me at 6 a.m. The man said: 'That will be all right, we will ring this bell,' and thereupon he touched an electric bell, which then rang very loudly—so loudly that it woke me, rather bewildered, as I was quite certain there were no electric bells in the cottage. I looked

at my watch again, and it was 4.59 a.m., just four minutes since I last looked. Shortly afterwards I heard my hostess in the next room get up and go downstairs, and, I suppose, make the breakfast, for her husband, who shortly after descended, had his breakfast and went out to his work as a porter on the railway. The explanation evidently was that the alarm clock had been set to go off at 5 a.m. In my dream it appeared as an electric bell.

I have not yet been able to find the *rationale* of the occurrence; if my sub-conscious mind had any part in it, it could surely have kept me awake for the four minutes, and then I should have heard the alarm clock without any disguise or bewilderment. It was a curious experience, of which I cannot find any adequate solution, though it appears to be in line with several cases cited by Du Prel.—Yours, &c.,

J. W. M.

Edgar Allan Poe and Thomas Lake Harris.

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' for July 11th you quote a fine poem spoken through Miss Doten by E. A. Poe. The second stanza refers to a poem, or rather to four poems, which the disembodied poet dictated to Thomas Lake Harris. These latter were published in 1858 in 'The Herald of Light,' a magazine long since out of print. It may interest your readers to know that these four poems are quoted in full in 'Respiro's' pamphlet, 'T. L. Harris, the Seer,' which can be obtained from Messrs. C. W. Pearce and Co., 139, West Regent-street, Glasgow, post free for 2s. Since his departure from earth, T. L. Harris has often communicated with his followers on earth; and some of his communications given to a seer (not a medium) are quoted in 'Respiro's' recent pamphlet, 'The Orbs of the Universe.'—Yours, &c.,

E. W. BERRIDGE, M.D.

What is Divine Love?

SIR,—I would draw the attention of your correspondents who have been arguing about love and law, to the excellent paragraph in your 'Notes by the Way,' on p. 362 of 'LIGHT,' in answer to Dr. W. R. Nicoll, for it contains the key to the whole matter. God, manifested as Nature, works through natural law; God, manifested to our souls as Spirit, works in us by spiritual law; and in the latter phase He does not interfere with His own workings in the outward sphere, but only aids us, by loving intuition, which is Wisdom, to understand the seeming inequalities of the natural law. Even our human laws press hardly in individual cases, but they are framed for the safety of the whole nation that is subject to them: and so with Nature. Natural laws work on the whole for the evolution and perfection of the outward manifestation; they are, therefore, beneficent, and they override all personal considerations. Any interference with them for the benefit of one would be unjust to others, and God, by so doing, would be in contradiction with Himself. Through the spiritual law He teaches us that the outward manifestation is only a school to bring us to the lessons of Reality, which is inward, spiritual. In the constancy of natural law, and in the higher consolations of the spiritual law, we may best learn the unvarying purpose of Divine Love, with which is inseparably associated Divine Wisdom, working to an end, unswerving, unalterable, but in the most universal sense, beneficent.—Yours, &c.,

NESCHAMAH.

Psychic Photography.

SIR,—I am desirous of drawing the attention of Spiritualists in the old country to a matter of great moment, which may, if properly managed, add considerable impetus to the spread and establishment of Spiritualism.

There is a notable medium here whose phase of mediumship—psychic photography—has been investigated by many scientific people and publicly attested in many journals. I may refer to 'LIGHT' of January 4th and April 5th, 1902. There was also an article in Mr. Stead's 'Borderland.' I have known the medium in question (Mr. Edward Wyllie, of 618½, West 6th-street, Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.), for about twelve years and can vouch for his honesty and honourable character; and when I was studying the subject of Spiritualism I received more proof of the immanence of the spirit world through him than through any other medium.

He not only obtains photographs of our spirit friends, which are easily recognisable, but little scenes, signs, symbols and sentences come on the plates. I have had signs answering to questions and actions only known to myself, and signals and advice the meaning of which only became apparent long afterwards.

During the San Francisco catastrophe Mr. Wyllie lost everything, all his papers and recommendations, and has had

to begin life afresh; and now, as Spiritualism here is practically dead (Mr. Colville to the contrary notwithstanding; see 'LIGHT' of June 6th), the people being too much engrossed with money-making and selfish pleasures to care anything about such matters, he has lost heart and also feels somewhat disgusted with the spirit world for the treatment meted out to him, and is making a living by ordinary photographic work.

It seems to me a thousand pities that such a fine medium and one who could do such a great work in the world, if given the opportunity, should be allowed to waste his time and life in this manner. Will not the Spiritualists of the old country do something to remedy such a state of affairs?

Mr. Wyllie, who, I may mention, is an Englishman, says he is willing to accept any reasonable offer and will submit himself to the most rigid test conditions. One thing I can fearlessly guarantee, and that is that anyone who employs him will soon be convinced of the truth of his mediumship.

I may close with the assurance that Mr. Wyllie has not suggested this plan; he has never said a word to me on the subject until I introduced it.—Yours, &c.,

A. K. VENNING.

604, South Flower-street,
Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

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.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Boddington gave an address on 'Our Duty as Spiritualists.' Sunday next, Mr. H. Boddington, address; Mrs. Boddington, clairvoyant descriptions.—W. H. B.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Miss Violet Burton gave an uplifting address on 'The Mystery of Time.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Webb; at 3 p.m., Lyceum. Monday, at 7 p.m., and Thursday, at 8.15 p.m., circles.—O. B.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last Mr. H. Boddington gave excellent addresses. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., and 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis, trance addresses. Mondays, at 8 p.m., and Wednesdays, at 3 p.m., clairvoyance, &c.—A. C.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Dudley Wright delivered a scholarly and deeply interesting address on 'The Bondage in Egypt and the Exodus,' explaining the symbolism of the Bible narratives, and showing the universality of Spiritualism.—A. J. W.

ACTON AND EALING.—21, UXBRIDGE-ROAD, EALING, W.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. H. Ball's inspiring address on 'Spiritualism and some Critics' was well received. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Blanche St. Marie on 'Child Martyrs in our Midst'; 16th, Mrs. Boddington, address and clairvoyance.—S. R.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. Spencer and Mr. Abbott related convincing experiences which brought them to Spiritualism. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. R. Boddington. Thursday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. A. Boddington will give clairvoyant descriptions to a limited number. See advt.—W. T.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On July 25th the Lyceum children had their annual outing to Ashted Woods. On Saturday last the smaller children were entertained to tea in the hall, and received toys, sweets, &c. Our sincere thanks are given to our friend, 'A Lover of Children,' for generously defraying the whole cost of the outing and tea. On Sunday last Mr. J. Macdonald Moore gave a splendid address on 'What we are here for?' and answered questions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Hough.—E. F. S.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL.—On Sunday evening last Mr. J. Jackson gave a fine address on 'Spiritualism,' and Miss Merrick beautifully rendered a solo. On July 30th Miss Earle delivered an address. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. Blackburn. Thursday, at 8 p.m., Miss Blanche St. Marie, address. 16th, Miss Violet Burton.—W.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Adams delivered an earnest and interesting address on 'The Witch of Endor,' and related personal experiences. Mrs. Sharman gave psychometric and clairvoyant delineations. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Roberts, of Forest Gate, will give an address, and Mr. Roberts, clairvoyant descriptions.—H. B.

SOUTHSEA.—VICTORIA HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. H. Wright gave an instructive address on 'The Way to God.'—M.