

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATSOEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—Paul.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

An exceedingly ingenious and eminently readable book is Isabelle M. Pagan's 'From Pioneer to Poet, or the Twelve great Gates: An expansion of the Signs of the Zodiac analysed.' (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society). The Twelve great Gates are, of course, the signs of the Zodiac, each one of which is analysed and interpreted by this writer in a way that is at once charming and rich in thought. Aries is the sign of the Warrior or Pioneer: Taurus, of the Builder or Producer: Gemini, of the Artist or Inventor: Cancer, of the Prophet or Teacher: Leo, of the King or President: Virgo, of the Craftsman or Critic: Libra, of the Statesman or Manager: Scorpio, of the Governor or Inspector: Sagittarius, of the Sage or Councillor: Capricorn, of the Priest or Ambassador: Aquarius, of the Truthseeker or Scientist: Pisces, of the Poet or Interpreter.

The reader ought not to be frightened away by the astrological or possibly arbitrary look of the whole thing, for, altogether apart from astrology, the clever and well-informed author of it has produced a book of beautifully fresh thoughts and exceedingly keen and critical character-sketches, all written with notable vivacity.

'A Suggestion,' on page 306, presents one of the briefest and yet most impressive hints concerning the vital connection between the earth and her astronomical kindred we have ever seen.

A certain bright preacher, discoursing of the pregnant little saying in The Book of Ecclesiastes, 'God has set the world in man's heart,' said:—

If on a clear night you stand beside a quiet pool, you will see a sky full of stars set in the bosom of the water. Dip up a cup of the water and look into it, as into a mirror, and you will see the same starry world set in the cup. Or take a drop of water on the point of your knife, and you will see in that tiny orb a miniature sky with moon and stars aglow. Even so God has set the world, with its beauty, form, and colour, in the heart of man, and made it 'a chamber of imagery.'

Not only the world of form and colour, but the unseen world, with its starry truths, is set in the soul of man. Other creatures seem not to go beyond matter of fact. We alone are the dreamers, the hoppers, the seers of visions, the followers of ideals. We alone are pilgrims of that viewless realm where thought and faith have their home, and whence come all happy miracles, all inward renewals, all glimpses of things to be. The power by which we are thus made citizens of two worlds, using the scenery of one to make real the truths of the other, is one of the noblest gifts to man, though too often regarded as a mere butterfly faculty.

Simple as that appears, it reaches the high-water-mark of the inflow of spiritual truth. Not by magic, nor by reasoning, but by natural apprehension, the truths and realities of spirit-life are known to the prepared soul: and

then the boasted 'evidence of the senses' is not more clear than—nay, is not as clear as—the evidence of the spiritual vision.

But the mirror is often blurred and dim—may even be fractured and partly lost; and, being spiritual and, as it were, fluent, may be 'mixed with baser matter.' The main business of life should be—to keep the mirror pure.

'The Afterdeath,' 'Set in order by Henry Brandon' (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society), is frankly described, in a publisher's notice, as a 'psychological romance'; but a 'Foreword' sets forth, in the most explicit way, Henry Brandon's intimate friendship with Lady Paulicia B——, her character, her decease, and the finding of a manuscript at her banker's with strict instructions for its publication; the manuscript being solemnly described as the result of passive writing; and all this is so gravely and tenderly done that we greatly shrink from regarding it as a part of the 'romance,' and yet it evidently is.

In the circumstances we set no particular store by the book, although we freely admit it is a thoughtful bit of work.

The publisher's notice intimates that the book is 'the work of a clergyman who has already won his spurs in other fields of literary adventure'—a statement which does not help us to value it. We want sober facts, not psychological romances.

'The Altar in the Wilderness: An Attempt to Interpret Man's Seven Spiritual Ages,' by Ethelbert Johnson (London: W. Rider and Son) is a small wisdom-book concerning the development of the spiritual self, in its enfranchisement from its earth-clingings, its animal selfishness, and its mammon worship. 'Within the spiritual centre of the world is a sanctuary of which the Invisible Church is the custodian,' says this writer. 'Within its Holy of Holies is the mighty heart of the world,' and every willing soul helps to perfect and reveal it. From this Temple will emerge another humanity. 'If with hate and selfishness and unbrotherliness in the world, man has accomplished so much, who can dream of the heights he may attain when these hindrances are no more?' And if we are told that the faith which beholds a perfected humanity living in a perfect world is chimerical, what then? What better answer can we make than that of Whitman:—

Is it a dream?

Nay, but the lack of it a dream,

And, failing it, life's lore and wealth a dream,

And all the world a dream.

That cute observer and gentle thinker, E. P. Powell, writing in 'South America,' tells us of an awful tract that had been handed to him—simply a shocking outpouring of pious blasphemy turning upon God and His Hell.

Pondering it, he quietly turns to God's morning skies and trees and fields, and says:—

I have been out this morning talking with God under the orange trees, where a lot of negroes were picking the fruit and boxing it for shipment. So far as I could hear, God was talking

common-sense and business; and the darkies were doing pretty much of the same thing. I looked up into the blue morning sky through the pines and I heard not a word of this damnation business. And it is getting more and more so. As I get older I find a God of love and duty and obligation. I find a few crass interpreters of Nature who cannot see anything that is good or sweet, and a lot of self-assertive interpreters of Jesus, who turn him into a vulgar lord of cruelty and tyranny. I do not feel under the slightest obligation to believe these interpreters.

'Interpreters!' Mr. Powell fires up at his own word. He cries:—

I am ashamed of a man who spends his life, a life in the bright sunshine and glorious starlight of this world, blackguarding the Infinite Father, whether in the pulpit or out of it. It ought to be instilled, like mother's milk, in every child's life that he is born into the homeland of one who is infinitely good and infinitely kind; that hell is that deep accursedness that cannot see the good or believe the noble, but preaches damnation and brutality as the chief business of him who inspired the Golden Rule, and the Sermon on the Mount, and the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Curious, isn't it, that this sort of blind-as-bats creatures undertake to decide on the great problems of life, and to assign Emerson and Parker and that sort to eternal misery, while their little selves become the pets of God?

Thank you, brother Powell!

Concerning April, this by Charles H. Towne is pleasant, though it ends on a minor key:—

So many Aprils went away  
Before I learned one little part  
Of all the joy each fragile day  
Hid in its heart.

So many Summers hastened by  
Before I caught their secret spell,  
And read in bloom and leaf and sky  
Life's miracle.

Would that Youth's eye could see the grace  
And wonder of the drifting years.  
Grown old, their loveliness we trace  
Through blinding tears.

#### A NEW THEORY OF TIME.

The theory, considered in 'LIGHT' of April 1st (p. 145), that time-consciousness exists in flashes of consciousness, separated by unconscious and long intervals of time, is interesting but, I fear, by no means new. An illustration that I published many years ago may make the theory comprehensible to all. Suppose that you are reading the word *b-e-a-t*, beat. So far as you are conscious you read the letters successively in time. But suppose that between the times of your reading *e* and *a* a million years have passed, during which you have been unconscious? Even in that case you would appear to yourself to read *a* immediately after *e*, because, for you, time does not exist so long as you are unconscious.

But the theory—as was shown—is far more interesting when applied to space, and leads to a very strange conclusion.

We exist in three dimensional space—that is, space of height, width, and breadth. And as our universe is no more than a universe of relations, we don't know anything about real (noumenal) size, we only know *relations* between different sizes.

Now, suppose our universe was suddenly halved or doubled in size. Should we know this? We should not. For, whatever my real (noumenal) size is, if my *relation in size* to other things remains the same, my *relative* size to other things remains the same, and I have only *human experience* of the relations of size—no human experience at all of real size.

Therefore, if all our universe is constantly vibrating backwards and forwards from enormous size to infinitesimal size, I cannot know it. And as, if this vibration is taking place, it is taking place *outside* my knowledge, I cannot deny that the universe *may* be so vibrating!

I have not the remotest idea what 'absolute' time or 'absolute' space means. It is because time and space are purely phenomenal that we can in fancy play such strange tricks with them—can even, *by the same course of reasoning*, prove that time and space do exist and do not exist!

F. C. CONSTABLE.

## LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

ON WEDNESDAY NEXT, APRIL 19TH, at 3 p.m.,

### A SOCIAL GATHERING

will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Tea will be served during the afternoon, and at 4 p.m. Mr. Alfred Vout Peters will give clairvoyant descriptions. Admission to this meeting *free to Members and Associates*. Visitors 2s. each.

Meetings will also be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on Thursday evening, April 27th—the Rev. Arthur Chambers: 'Spiritualism and the Light it Casts on Christian Truth'; May 11th—Mr. E. E. Fournier d'Albe, B.Sc. (Lond.): 'Essential Conditions of Life in this and other Worlds'; and on May 25th—Mrs. Mary Seaton, of Washington, U.S.A.: 'Spiritualism and Theosophy: their Similarities and Dissimilarities—from an Onlooker's View-point.'

#### MEETINGS AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday, April 25th, Miss S. McCreadie will give clairvoyant descriptions, at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

DRAWINGS OF THE PSYCHIC AURA AND DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASE.—On Wednesday next, April 19th, and succeeding Wednesdays, from 12 noon to 5 p.m., Mr. Percy R. Street will give personal delineations by means of the colours of the psychic aura of sitters, and will diagnose disease under spirit control. Fee 5s. to a guinea. Appointments desirable. See advertisement supplement.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE CLASS.—On Thursday next, April 20th, at 5 p.m., at the Psychic Class, for Members and Associates only, an Address will be given by Mrs. Effie Bathe on 'Colour and Form produced by Thought Vibrations,' illustrated with original drawings. Discussion.

FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Friday afternoons, from 3 to 4, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism, for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday next, April 21st, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions relating to life here and on 'the other side,' mediumship, and the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism generally. Admission 1s.; Members and Associates *free*. MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing *one* friend to this meeting without payment. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of *general interest* to submit to the control. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

#### SPECIAL NOTICE.

On Wednesday, May 3rd, at 11 a.m., Vice-Admiral W. Osborne Moore will be pleased to meet inquirers at the Rooms of the Alliance and to answer their questions respecting the 'precipitated' picture which is on view there.

TRANSITION.—We have just heard that the Lady Helena Newenham passed to spirit-life on March 8th last. A devoted Spiritualist, she was connected with the movement for very many years, and never ceased to take great interest in 'LIGHT.' We extend our sympathy to her family.

THE paper on 'Creative Thought,' by Professor W. F. Barrett, F.R.S., which attracted so much attention on its appearance in 'The Quest' last year, is, in response to numerous requests, being reprinted in pamphlet form, and will be published by Mr. Watkins in the next few days, who will also publish shortly a third and revised edition of Dr. Wynn Westcott's translation from the Hebrew of 'The Sepher Yetzirah.'

JACOB BOHME.—Mr. J. M. Watkins will publish on April 18th a new volume (the third) of Mr. C. J. Barker's proposed reprint of the complete works of Jacob Böhme. The forthcoming volume will contain 'The Forty Questions of the Soul' and 'The Clavis,' Englished by John Sparrow, with emendations by Mrs. D. S. Hehner. The price will be 10s. 6d. *net*, and the volume will be uniform with those which have already appeared, *viz.*, 'The Threefold Life of Man,' with an introduction by the Rev. G. W. Allen, and 'The Three Principles of the Divine Essence,' with an introduction by Dr. Paul Deussen.

## REMARKABLE PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES.

BY ALFRED VOUT PETERS.

It seems to me that I have always been in touch with the psychic realm—indeed, I can recall the fact of dreaming before I knew the meaning of the word, and as some of my experiences have been rather remarkable they may be worth putting on record.

When I was a little child our house was situated by a canal, for my forbears had for generations worked on the River Thames. In my dream I thought I was walking by the canal and stooped to pick up a little piece of slate, when a relative ran towards me crying, 'Go home and tell your mother to prepare, for the 'tide water' is coming up.' This was a term used in our little town to indicate that the river would overflow its bank and flood the houses. Some days later, between one and two in the afternoon, I was walking by the side of the canal and picked up a piece of slate, when the relative referred to came running towards me and repeated the words I had heard in my dream. I was too astonished to move, and stood stock still. 'What are you standing there for? Go home!' he exclaimed. I replied, 'I have dreamed all this before.' 'Oh,' he said, 'you are mad with your dreams, go home!' which I did. The water did flood the house, as he said it would.

My second dream also had to do with the canal. I thought I stood by the gates that opened the wharf to the road. From there I watched the funeral of an uncle of mine, but I could not get nearer, nor was I following in the procession. All my other relatives were there—my brothers, cousins, &c.—but I was held back, and the fact that I should be watching the funeral from that point struck me as being curious in my dream. Not long after this my uncle was taken ill and died. At the same time I also had a serious illness—so serious, indeed, that I nearly passed into the spirit world myself. A day or two before my uncle's funeral I got up from my sick-bed, very weak and scarcely able to walk. But a curious thing had happened. During my illness I had grown so much that my clothes no longer fitted me. I could not, therefore, go out into the streets; but being naturally anxious to witness the funeral, I went to the gates of the wharf, whence I could see without being seen. Even had my clothes fitted me, I was far too weak to have attended the ceremony, so all came about as I had dreamed.

I have often visited places in my dreams that I have seen afterwards. I remember one remarkable dream which took place when I was in deep trouble. I found myself at early morning on a beautiful mountain; the sun shone with full force and splendour, the sky over my head was blue, in the distance was the sea, and at my feet was maidenhair-fern growing wild. I remember how happy I felt, and how I thought in my dream how good it was to be out of dark, dirty London, away from my trouble and anxiety. Then I heard, or sensed—as one senses things in a dream—the word 'Remember!' I awoke, and a feeling of great bitterness came over me as I contrasted my dream with the reality of my material life. But the sweetness of the vision remained with me for a long time. Meanwhile, I travelled much, and saw many lands, but never a land where maidenhair-fern grows wild. Later came my visit to South Africa. One Sunday during my stay, the Misses Early proposed that we should take a walk in the park given by Cecil Rhodes to Cape Town. The day was bright and sunny, and our walk led along a part of the beautiful Table Mountain. The ladies were my guides, and presently I was in a place where maidenhair-fern grew wild. It was at our feet, whole bunches of it. Around me was the panorama of my dream. I stood again on a mountain, whose slopes towered heavenward behind me and on either hand; above me was the sky; before me, in the distance, the sea. Those who know Cape Town will agree with me that the view from this point is unique in its beauty.

For years before I visited Russia I was always dreaming of the country, and one dream remained with me for a long time. I thought I was in a certain house, hearing a language spoken that I did not understand, and that an old woman came to me dressed in a costume that I had never seen. I had quite forgotten this experience; but one day, when I was

in St. Petersburg, I had to wait at the house of a friend of mine and was idly looking out of the window. It was snowing hard and my thoughts were wandering everywhere, when suddenly I saw the house of my dream. It was opposite me; I had never seen it before, nor did I look for it. As to the old woman of my dream, I have seen her costume hundreds of times in Russia.

One curious experience I can hardly call a dream. A medical friend of mine held a position as doctor to the Deep Sea Mission. He had to accompany the fishing fleet, and sometimes for many weeks his friends got no news of him. One Sunday I was visiting some mutual friends, and during the afternoon dropped to sleep for a few minutes. I found myself suddenly transported into a ship's cabin, where my friend sat reading. He looked up, and said: 'What are you doing here?' I replied: 'I am at Mrs. D.'s, and am asleep, but I have seen you.' He bade me good-bye, and I awoke. I related this to my hostess' sister, and told her how real everything was. Some little while after my friend returned, and we were talking about various things, when he said: 'By the way, what were you doing on such and such a Sunday?' 'Why?' I asked. 'Well,' he said, 'I was reading in my cabin, and not thinking about you, when I suddenly saw you standing before me. It rather frightened me for the moment; but I asked you what you were doing, and you said you were at Mrs. D.'s asleep.' I then told him my side of the story, and afterwards Miss T. confirmed this. These two friends are still alive, and if this should come under their eyes, I hope they will confirm my statement. I may add that my doctor friend was at times very clairvoyant, and many wonderful experiences have we had together.

We cannot always understand our dream life, as the two following examples will show. When I lived in the West of London I took my meals at my sister's house, which was very near. There were two ways of going to and from my sister's. The shorter—which, however, I seldom took—led through a busy thoroughfare, past shops. One night I had a most vivid dream. A man whom I did not know at all in my waking life came and spoke to me, and was in my dream the whole night. In fact, he came very often to me in the dream state. The sequel was singular. One very busy day, I found, after dining at my sister's, that I should have to hurry back quickly or my public séance that evening would be delayed, so I chose the shop way to go home. As I was hurrying past a provision shop, my thoughts concentrated on my séance, out stepped the man of my dream. I stopped suddenly, and he looked at me in blank astonishment. For a few seconds we stood looking at each other. I found out afterwards that he was the manager, and I now regret I did not speak to him. But this was the curious point: I never dreamed of him again.

Perhaps all my personal friends know I wear a gold bracelet on my left arm, which, by the way, is my wife's gift to me. This fashion is common on the Continent. When I was in Berlin a curious set of dreams started. I use the word 'set,' for I find dreams run in sets or sections. I dreamed nearly every night that I was conversing in German with a man who, like myself, wore a bracelet. I used to tell my dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Seifert, at whose house I was staying, of my dream, and none of us could understand it. One night Mrs. Seifert and I went to meet Mr. Seifert at a café where there were many Spiritualists gathered. Several of these I knew, but some were strangers to me. Suddenly I saw a man looking very intently at me. I said to Mrs. Seifert, 'My dream bracelet man.' Afterwards I was introduced to him, and discovered that he was really wearing on his arm a gold bracelet. He told me he had seen me, but could not remember where. Then I showed him my bracelet, and told him my dream. 'That is curious,' he said, but there our conversation ended, as my acquaintance with German was at that time very limited.

These two curious experiences are to me puzzles. I can understand a friend, either living or dead, entering into my dream-life; I can understand a person whom I do not know influencing my dream-life and coming into my earth-life afterwards, but why two utter strangers, who had absolutely no influence on me, should come into my dream-state, I cannot understand, for I have never seen these men since.

Now for my final experience. I had a friend in London some years ago who had worked much with me, and had often sat at our table. Money with him was scarce, but through misunderstanding we ceased to see much of each other, nor did I hear anything about him. One day a friend called upon me, and said: 'So-and-So has been visiting at such and such a house and, much to my surprise, he has been scandalising you.' 'Well,' I said, 'you know it's untrue, and, as I do not know the people, I do not mind.' The incident passed out of my recollection until one night I dreamed that my false friend was standing in my room telling me that he was sorry that he had been such a fool as to scandalise me, and that he had found out that his so-called friends were false. But what struck me was his altered appearance; he looked ill and very thin, and I told him, in my dream, that he had not had enough to eat. He confessed it was true, that all his luck had forsaken him, and that since he had been away from me everything had gone against him. One winter's day, some time after this, the man himself called. It was snowing hard, and I must confess I was shocked at the sight of his sickly and haggard features; he looked utterly crushed and broken down. As it was lunch time I asked him to stay and eat with me. Then I told him that I knew of his foolishness, and he at once confessed that he had been stupid and asked my forgiveness. But here was the curious point: the events were inverted; in the dream the confession came first and my telling him that he was thin came last.

I have only penned these experiences with the hope that they will help others to study more the so-called dream life. Some have said that what we call our real life is only a dream. Is this so? If it be, then when shall we awake to reality?

#### HOW CHILDREN 'PASS.'

The following experience came to my personal knowledge at the time mentioned:—

About thirty years ago in a village in Mid-Cornwall in the spring time, in a humble cottage home, two women were watching by the cradle of a dying baby. With what unspeakable agony those two looked at the little form in the cot—lying so silent, its very breath almost imperceptible—only those know who have gone through the great sorrow of seeing a beloved one for ever pass from the earthly home and companionship.

At this child's birth the medical man had pronounced its doom; it was a strong, healthy baby, but the young mother's state of health at the time of its birth precluded all hope of its ever growing up. The mother and grandparents knew this well. Although mortally injured, the infant looked a beautiful, strong baby, was cheerful, and grew well to all appearance; but a sudden collapse occurred before it was a year old, and the doctor's warning came true.

As its sweet spirit was passing, it kept opening and closing its lovely eyes, as the heavenly 'Zincali loosed the hampering strings,' and now and then it would smile, while the poor mother held its tiny hand in hers, kneeling by the cot. At last came a deep, deep sigh, and the 'little bird used its wings and took flight.' The grandfather was at work; but about five minutes after the baby had drawn its last breath he came rushing up the village street, and soon stood in the door of his cottage. 'The boy is gone—dead!' he gasped, his face white with agitation. His wife's and daughter's tears were his only answer. 'He passed me as I was digging—the dear of him' (a Cornish expression), 'and took hold of my beard as he used to when here, and laughed; his face was like an angel's, his white robes trailing the ground.' Now, this vision of the child by the grandfather was the more remarkable because the man was a total unbeliever in the appearance of spirits; and the taking hold of his long white beard, and laughing while doing so—in a little mischievous way—was a habit the child often indulged in while in the body.

M. WOODMAN.

Freemantle Croft, Four Marks, Hants.

THE Sunday question, and Church attendance, are being discussed pretty freely just now. The Rev. Dr. Campbell Morgan, speaking at Bradford, made a very shrewd contribution to the discussion when he said: 'It is waste of time to tell a man he must not play golf on Sunday. My business is to give him some passion that will make Sunday golf impossible.'

## IMAGINATION AND CLAIRVOYANCE.

BY HORACE LEAF.

Imagination is the faculty by which we are able to construct new combinations from material already existing in the memory. It differs specifically from memory in that memory relates definitely to something which has actually happened in the experience of the individual, either as an objective or subjective event, whilst an imagined incident relates directly to nothing which has occurred, whether subjective or objective, but may be more or less than either, sublime or ridiculous, possible or impossible, from a practical point of view. Except, perhaps, in rare instances, which are extremely conjectural and difficult to prove—being related more to the spiritual than to the mundane—the foundations of all imaginations are actual experiences, whether consciously perceived or not. The material world is the prototype of the ideal world constructed by the imagination. The 'castle in the air' may differ widely from any known castle, but an examination of it will prove that it is an agglomeration of familiar parts—perhaps Eastern and Western architecture mixed, whilst the general idea is that of the ordinary type.

That imagination is dependent on experience and memory is amply demonstrated by the child, whose imaginative faculty develops gradually from a state of inactivity to increasing activity as its experience grows. The stages through which the development passes are from faint retrospective imagination, which is really rudimentary memory, to constructive or real imagination.

Retrospective imagination shows itself soon after birth by slight anticipation of something following on a familiar condition, as, for instance, when held in a particular nursing position which always precedes the feast. It differs from what may be called pure memory by requiring a strong objective stimulus to set it in action; pure memory being set in action by the will.

The higher imagination, like the lower, must abide by this law. The productions of Shakespeare's great imagination all bear the brand of actual experience: Hamlet, Brutus, Juliet, Shylock, are but idealised embodiments of human characteristics and are almost invariably founded upon history or pre-existing fable. Even the highest conceptions of the imagination, relating to Deity, find foothold in the same fact, for it is only possible to conceive God as possessing, in an exalted degree, human attributes. Love, compassion, intelligence, good, are factors of daily experience. Where the experience of these qualities is poor, the imagining of them is correspondingly poor. So that both philosophical and metaphysical considerations depend upon material supplied by the memory; and the poet, the orator, and the author must draw from that source. To convey even their most sublime messages to other minds, they must embody them in familiar forms, as, for example, the following lines by Cowper:

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.

The various types of imagination may be conveniently placed under three headings, viz., passive, active, and involuntary.

Imagination is passive when it is receiving material from without, as when listening to a narrative or reading a story; it is active when, under the control of the will, it selects from the memory what it wishes to build with. This form is, for the purpose of general utility, the most important.

Involuntary imagination is the opposite of the active form, proceeding without control of the will. It appears to be due to an automatic action of the brain cells, which—familiarised by experience and encouraged by predispositions of the mind to certain kinds of thought—act, when the will is dormant, on their own account, selecting and building, with great freedom, imaginations high or low, according to the inclination of the mind. It is noticeable, however, that this form of imagination tends usually to act on the lower planes, even in the case of persons whose preferences are for the higher types of thought.

This may be due to previous predisposition becoming firmly established, or, what is very probable, to the inherent tendency

of the brain cells, which are necessarily much lower in development than the human Ego, though capable of being controlled by it. So real is this independent action of the brain, that it may in time altogether exceed the power of the will to control it, and the person then becomes its victim to be led whithersoever it wishes, even to criminality and lunacy—a fact proved by the unfortunates' own confession that they prefer to act otherwise.

Involuntary imagination may be either retrospective, as in the case of a murderer who imagines he sees his crime repeated again and again, or constructive, as when a lunatic declares he sees things which are clearly creations of his own mind.

It is, perhaps, impossible for anyone to be always free from the dominance of this form of imagination, for even a momentary lapse from definite thought is an opportunity seized by it to express itself. During such periods normal persons become absorbed in its creations, and only in moments of lucidity can they assert control. Some forms of insanity appear to be due to the inability of persons, at such moments, to exercise the will; whilst, to some, such moments never come, the imagination being completely possessed.

There is evidence from the universal nature and broad similarity of the visions seen, for instance, in cases of delirium tremens, which points to the probability of their actuality.

The creations of the normal imagination differ considerably from actual experiences. They are not as definite as though seen or heard, or in any way cognised by the physical senses; they are rather appreciated, and their subjective nature will often only permit of their being clear when the eyes are closed; indeed, for them to attain a truly vivid state, it is essential that counteracting influences should be entirely withdrawn, as in the case of sleep.

It is here that true clairvoyance, so often asserted by the critic to be due to imagination, differs widely from it. There are various forms of clairvoyance, some of which resemble imagination very closely, but which nevertheless possess marked points of difference. By true clairvoyance is meant that type in which the vision is seen as clearly with open as with closed eyes, and, unlike involuntary imagination, when the mind is under full control of the will and the attention purposely fixed on some other consideration.

The surrounding objects may be clearly visible, the vision being recognised as an addition to them.

A sure test of the objectivity of the vision is obtained when, by closing the eyes, it disappears from view along with all else. This test can often be frequently repeated with the same vision, which in such cases is not necessarily instantaneous. This fact shows that the object is refracting light rays, the exact nature of which it is difficult to explain as, although the clairvoyant clearly sees it, other persons present cannot.

In the event of a vision being seen with closed eyes, its vividness alone may often distinguish it from creations of the imagination. There is a 'life' about it such as normal imagination appears unable to produce. If it be a spirit, its solidity and clearness may appear more marked than those of an actual person, while the variety of 'conditions,' such as beautiful coloured lights, often taking definite and symbolical forms, may accord with nothing that the clairvoyant has ever seen or imagined before.

If clairvoyant visions are illusions due to involuntary action of the imagination, it is reasonable to expect that they will conform to pre-existing and favoured notions. If they are entirely outside the province of personal opinion, especially on matters of great importance, it seems as if the explanation is to be found elsewhere. The following account is a case in point. A gentleman who has been for many years a High Churchman and a member of the choir of a large church in London, and holding dogmatic orthodox opinions on death and after, recently lost his wife, to whom he was very devoted. He thought he had said farewell to her in hope only of meeting again on 'the last great day.' A few nights after the funeral he retired to bed, but was very restless and could not sleep. After a while his attention was attracted to a light cloud floating near him and over the bed. Suddenly it quite unexpectedly burst, revealing, to his surprise, the face of his wife, looking extremely happy and lifelike and smiling at him through it.

On another occasion, shortly after this event, he was awakened from his sleep to see a similar vision, only this time his wife was enveloped in a blue cloud. On a subsequent occasion she spoke to him, he asserts, as distinctly as ever she did in his life.

Had his imagination been playing him false, it is reasonable to expect that it would have done so in accordance with his beliefs, which were that his wife, if not waiting in a state of suspended consciousness for the judgment day, was an angel with wings. But he believed that it was quite impossible for any deceased person to come into contact with earth again, so that such an illusion is rendered still less probable.

It is interesting to note that although this gentleman was ignorant of the nature of clairvoyance and spiritualistic phenomena, his visions were of a type quite familiar to clairvoyants perhaps all over the world.

Unanimity of evidence is one of the best means by which to arrive at correct conclusions. It is one of the chief means to right judgment to listen to accounts from various sources, and after making due allowance for personal shortcomings, such as bias and lack of observation, to draw conclusions from the general agreement of the testimonies.

One, or even a few persons, may err, but each additional witness, if agreeing, adds to the probability of the case, until finally its reality cannot reasonably be doubted. Than clairvoyance there are few things, the testimony to which agrees over so wide an area, more strongly opposed by persons who are biased by preconceived ideas.

In the following incident, not only were the medium and the recipient of the test quite unknown to each other, but the mind of the recipient was so positively occupied by a preconceived idea that it was impossible at the time to convince him that any value attached to the test. The medium described as present the spirit of a lady, who gave a Christian name, and claimed a certain relationship to the recipient. The latter, upon being assured that the spirit was that of a deceased person, peremptorily declined the test, declaring that whilst he had a relative of the name and description given, he knew she was living and in good health.

The following morning a letter arrived, stating that the relative in question had unexpectedly passed away on the previous evening, shortly before the test was given. Comment upon this case is unnecessary. There appear to be absolutely no grounds for believing that the medium's mind contained material for his imagination to delude him with a vision so accurately meeting the peculiar circumstances of a particular relative of the recipient.

Second sight is quite outside the province of imagination, and must be otherwise accounted for. No amount of explanation can convince the true clairvoyant that the visions seen are not realities related to things distinct from the normal human consciousness. It is a source of grief and even exasperation to hear so-called authorities, lacking personal experience, positively declare that it is mere delusion. Too little is known of mind to permit anyone, even the most qualified alienist, to pass definite opinion on perhaps its most elementary phases.

The modern psychologist, who, after 2,300 years, is 'puzzled' at the 'divine guidance' and inspiration of Socrates must pause before asserting what is the cause of modern clairvoyance. Clairvoyants usually find no difficulty in accounting for Socrates' daemon, and they may yet inform mental scientists on a subject about which they are compelled to confess that at bottom they know very little.

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A THOUGHTFUL correspondent, referring to speakers at Spiritualist meetings, shrewdly observes: 'Spiritualists, generally speaking, are notorious seekers after "new" platform workers. The blaze of the comet pleases them far more than the serene and steady light of the star.'

'LEST WE FORGET.'—Notable Anniversaries: April 18th, R. W. Spittlehouse (Wombwell), *trs.* 1909; 21st, N. Smith (Birmingham), *trs.* 1910; 22nd, Mrs. W. P. Adshead, *trs.* 1892; Mrs. Corner (Florence Cook), *trs.* 1904; Wm. Greenwood, *trs.* 1905; 24th, H. T. Humphreys, *trs.* 1894; J. C. F. Zöllner, *trs.* 1882; Major C. E. Morse, *trs.* 1909; 25th, Mrs. Keeves-Record, *trs.* 1906; 29th, Joseph Wallace, *trs.* 1910.



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### THE SUPREMACY OF SOUL.

The inmost significance of Easter is not so much to be found in the details, or even in the fact, of the resurrection of Jesus, as in the witness borne by the human spirit to its own mastership—the persistence of Life, the supremacy of soul. That is the inspiring Lesson for the Day.

The body is the dusky slave, where it is not the usurping tyrant, of the soul. It is in very deed the 'muddy vesture of decay,' however precious and beautiful it is, and it is to freedom from it we have to look for the liberation of the real self, the captive soul.

In that wise and noble book, 'The Wisdom of Solomon,' we find a verdict which very early emerged from man's pondering over the mystery of life. 'The corruptible body presseth down the soul,' said the old Jewish thinker, 'and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the thinking mind'—one of the profoundest discoveries ever made: indeed the supreme discovery, that the soul is master, and yet captive. 'Bring my soul out of prison,' said one of the Hebrew psalmists, 'that I may praise Thy name.'

We think the body is the revealer. That is a delusion. The body is really an obstructor, though an immensely useful one, and it is one of the fine results of evolution to make man aware of this. But the merely animal man is not aware of it. He does not know and it is difficult to make him know that the body is not supreme, although, when his body has been misused he is dimly aware that something has happened to himself, and that the earthly tabernacle is weighing down the thinking soul—only he does not call it 'soul.'

This doctrine of the supremacy of soul is good science as well as good religion. Science is revealing to us that our present condition is not the result of a catastrophe, but of an orderly progressive process,—that, in fact, we have not been the victims of a Fall but the happy subjects of an Ascent. First the animal, then the spiritual. That was inevitable. The spiritual had to pass through the elementary school of the gross senses. It was the only way.

The old legend acutely says that man was made out of dust, but that God breathed into him the breath of life. Hence the struggle for the victory of the breath of life over the dust. That struggle had to take the form of a process of refinement, of sublimation, and the painful present condition of that struggle is caused by the oscillation of the conscious being between the animal and the spiritual self. First one side, then the other, gets the mastery, and, as the spiritual wins, there is produced the consciousness of sin, nay, there emerges sin itself, for there is no sin at the morally unconscious lower stages. The misery begins when conscience begins, for then there is produced the moral and spiritual clashing which Paul so pathetically lamented, even to the tragic outburst, 'O

wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this cadaver?'

At best, the body is the schoolmaster or the school house, and, like the law, it is the schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ: that is, through the body to evolve the soul, and through the animal senses to awake the spiritual desires. This soul-self is the son of the king who is being educated: and, though the limitations are necessary and the lessons hard, not one of them could be spared. But the crash comes when the body is master too long, when the lower rules and no longer instructs, or, worst of all, 'when the body actually asserts that it has no soul'—that it is not only supreme, but all. But the 'crash' that then comes is the opposite of that which troubled Paul, for that was the result of a conflict between the higher and the lower, and there was vast hope in it: but this is the crash of sheer ruin, and may be 'without hope and without God in the world.'

One is sometimes haunted by just a suspicion that this is, in a way, what is happening even to some psychical researchers who anxiously get behind any phrase in order to avoid outright confession of the reality of a personal soul. They over-eagerly talk of 'the subliminal self,' or 'the sub-conscious self,' or even 'the unconscious self'—anything to shield themselves from the apparently hated inference, that the spirit-world and spirit-people are real. At present, even many believers in both halt at the phrase, 'The body has a soul,' whereas the phrase we ought to insist upon is that the soul has a body—a vast difference!

This, then, is the Spiritualist's gospel for the day—the supremacy of Life, the supremacy of Soul; the persistence of Life, the persistence of Soul: and, in the light of this, the Spiritualist must read the story of the resurrection of Jesus, and study the hope of his own: the inevitable inference being that there is really no death, but only liberation; the only resurrection being the uprising of the spirit-self from the discarded 'vesture of decay.'

Hence the utter gross foolishness of the old superstition concerning a future resurrection of the body: and yet only a very few years ago that superstition was almost universal. It is fast disappearing, but, even in our own day, one of the freest spirits in the Free Church of Scotland, Dr. Marcus Dods, revealed the strange inability to grasp the idea of independent and personal spirit-life, and actually put forth the notion of a resurrection of the physical body as the only conception of resurrection; so much so that, if the body of Jesus did not rise, then Nature killed him and kept him killed—and God was practically as dead as he. But here is the passage—make of it what we will:—

The question which separated men into the two great classes of Christians and sceptics was this—Did Christ rise from the dead? If he did, then there was a spiritual power mightier than the strongest physical forces in Nature. If he rose again, then there was a power which could control, and was controlling Nature's laws to subserve spiritual purposes. By his resurrection they were put in possession at once of immortality and of God. But if his resurrection was a delusion, if his body rotted away in the grim silence of death, then it would appear that material laws were supreme, that Nature was God, and that beyond the limits so imposed they had simply no outlook at all.

Nature is here described as something separate from God, and the suggestion is that we can reach God only by getting beyond natural law, and, if we could not do that, we had no God. It is a terrifically perilous theory, especially when even the survival of Jesus is made to turn upon the resurrection of his physical body.

But what strange ignorance of spirit-life is indicated by all this! Why do not these theologians, who profess

such special belief in the Bible, open and read it? Did not Jesus say, 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto Him'? Did he not say to the penitent malefactor, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise'? Did not Paul explicitly teach the profound truth of the dual man as to his bodies? Did he not exult in the thought that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord?

Resurrection out of the body, then, and not resurrection of the body is the central thought. All is orderly, natural, progressive, in this supreme transaction. Our present senses are limited to the little sphere which now bounds our being; but the liberation of the spirit-senses will at once put us in communication with the spirit-world, the world of first causes and ultimate results. It will make an end of this lower stage, at which the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the thinking mind. For the first time, the man will then come into complete possession of himself, and take control.

### TRANSITION OF THE REV. JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

An eloquent appreciation of the Rev. John Page Hopps, written by his old friend, Mr. James Robertson, accompanied by a fine portrait supplement, appeared in 'LIGHT' of February 18th last. Although we knew at that time that Mr. Hopps was failing, we did not realise how brief an interval would separate the appearance of that article and the transition of its subject to spirit-life, to rejoin his old comrade and friend, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, the late Editor of 'LIGHT.' Mr. Hopps's call to 'promotion' came on the 6th inst., after an illness of only a few days. The recent severe weather affected him, and for a week or more he was voiceless, but he fully anticipated that he would be able to preach at Finchley on Sunday, the 9th inst. However, it was not to be, for although he seemed to be much better on Tuesday and Wednesday of last week, he was taken worse in the night and suddenly passed peacefully away, from heart failure, on Thursday afternoon.

Mr. Hopps was born in London on November 6th, 1834, and was therefore in his seventy-seventh year. His has been a long, a strenuous and an honourable career. He was ever active as preacher, teacher, writer, reformer, and worked ardently in every good cause—for righteousness, peace and liberty. He was a man of the loftiest ideals, and was unflinchingly faithful to truth and right. Only a few days before he passed away some of us had the privilege of listening to him and of feeling our hearts stirred within us as he testified to the joy with which he hailed the prospect of an agreement between the United States and England to settle all disputes by arbitration. We shall not readily forget his eloquent and hopeful words. As a constant and valued contributor to 'LIGHT,' and as a member of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mr. Hopps for many years has been a faithful worker for Spiritualism in London. As Mr. Robertson well said: 'The Spiritualists who have heard his voice or read his thoughts have recognised him as one of their standard-bearers, whose buoyant, cheerful spirit has helped them on their way. Among those brave souls who have laboured loyally and well for the spiritual reformation, there are few indeed who have done better than the inspired teacher, John Page Hopps.'

We cannot do better, just now, than let Mr. Hopps himself speak to us in the words that he recently employed in a memorial address on 'Death, the Refinement of Life,' which he delivered recently at the funeral of a lady friend, Miss Ellis, and which appeared in his 'Coming Day' for April. We take the following extracts:—

What has happened is not death. What has happened is one more stage, and that a supreme one, in the far-reaching intent of evolution. It is a kind of transfiguration; and to mourn because of it would be like mourning for the moisture of the common earth when transformed into the beautiful and harvest-creating clouds.

Self-possession in an unending ascent is the working out of a heavenly law. It is so here, though we fail to grasp it. At this very moment we are living in the midst of the flow of a great inevitable order; and, in Nature, the inevitable is the steadfast, the faithful, and therefore the beneficent and the beautiful, because it is in harmony with the merciful continuities of law; and, even when the law works passing misery and seeming destruction, it is beautiful, for it is a consequence of the faithful keeping of the gates; and one of those gates is the gate we call 'death.' But the approach to that is a culmination, not a catastrophe.

We have long been blind to the blessed order, the beautiful necessity, and we have too long been afraid of the great all-enfolding mother which some call 'Nature,' and others 'God.' Is it not an entirely reasonable thought that these beautiful minds and loving spirits which Nature is producing are intimations of something superior and of some destiny superior to the merely animal world? Surely these refined presences that bless us here and light up these dim ways are impressive and winning arguments in favour of the existence of a world where such spiritual lovelinesses are freed from the gross physical limitations, and are, not the exception, but the rule. The men who know tell us that these refined and beautiful bodies are the late developments of grades of structure that were terribly ugly and uncouth; and so with speech and conduct, and occupation and music, and art and the sense of justice, and the love of the beautiful—all the slow but overmastering results of evolution and the survival of the fittest. So I resent the faithless inference that this is a wasted life, a soul destroyed, a spirit annihilated just when, at such cost, it had reached its consummate flower. No; that shocking waste is not true. It is promotion, not death. It is passing into a finer grade of being, not a cessation of it: it is a passing of the refined into the refined: it is promoted life into 'the life that is life indeed.' So she is not dead: she is emancipated; she is within the finer range of being: and yet she may be here.

We have been calling belief in these things 'faith,' but I think the time is coming when 'faith' will be felt to be an inappropriate word; when the higher life will be one of those mighty mastering scientific inferences which are taking possession of us. All the master-powers with which science deals are only inferences; and God and the soul are as much the inferences of a sane and illuminated mind; and the laboratory and the church are in the same case, as dealing with tremendous inferences which land us at borderlands where sense falters and tests fail, and yet where the supreme realities are, convincing us of their necessity but convicting us of utter inability to follow them into such subtle and stupendous paths; but, on that very account, making these master-inferences the greatest certainties of all.

So we utter no moan to-day. We have no dull regret. Our only regret is that earth has no music ethereal enough to express our wonder, trust and joy.

In response to our request the Venerable Archdeacon Wilberforce, who knew Mr. Hopps well, writes:—

He was (is) a noble, courageous soul, and has turned many to righteousness. There will be much for him to do on the other side.

Mr. James Robertson also writes:—

We had no more intensely earnest a soul in our ranks, and whatever gain it may be to him to be translated, to us it is a great loss. Only a few months since he wrote me about the great joy he had in his work, and said that when the beckoning finger was seen he would laugh and go. I am certain he met the change with a cheerful spirit, he had such abounding confidence in the Absolute Goodness. What a rounded soul he had, spiritual development had reached the high-water mark in him. How glad I am that I was privileged to write about his career before he went.

The following kindly tribute to the life-work of our friend appeared in last Saturday's 'Daily News,' accompanied by a portrait:—

By the death, at the age of seventy-six, of the Rev. John Page Hopps, there has passed away a very forceful and very distinctive personality.

Mr. Hopps, who was of London birth, began as a Baptist minister in 1855, but he moved rapidly from Nonconformist orthodoxy. At the end of the fifties he was a colleague of the then famous George Dawson, of Birmingham, and later had charge of Unitarian churches in several large cities. He left Leicester, where he had been a pioneer of the working men's Sunday afternoon meetings, for Croydon, and during his closing years ministered to Little Portland-street Chapel, formerly renowned as Dr. Martineau's London church.

In 1892 Mr. Hopps sought to give a wider range to Unitarian Christianity by founding 'Our Father's Church.' To the last he used his pen, and was an untiring propagandist. He wrote many books, published innumerable sermons, and from 1891 issued a little monthly, 'The Coming Day,' which bore the sign-manual of his eager spirit on every page.

Mr. Page Hopps was an effective platform speaker, giving courageous advocacy to many an unpopular cause. His popular exposition of the Unitarian creed has been sold by the hundred thousand in many languages. From middle life onwards he was a convinced and enthusiastic Spiritualist, and went as far in affirmation of the actuality of the spirit world as any of his contemporaries. Mr. Page Hopps was well known to readers of the 'Daily News' as a frequent contributor, and his letters, always lively and pointed, not seldom carried a sharp sting. But his style in controversy, invariably provocative, did no kind of justice to the fine, honest, and tender soul of the man who, in his home at Shepperton-on-Thames, met every guest or applicant with never-failing cordiality and helpfulness.

## OUR SPIRIT FRIENDS: EVIDENCE OF THEIR IDENTITY.

AN ADDRESS BY MR. ERNEST W. BEARD.

On Thursday evening, March 30th, at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Mr. Ernest W. Beard delivered an Address on 'Our Spirit Friends and the Evidence of their Identity' to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mr. H. Withall, the vice-president, occupying the chair.

MR. WITHALL said: Those of us who are Spiritualists through our own investigations are perfectly aware of the difficulties we had in obtaining thoroughly reliable evidence of the presence of spirit friends. We are told generally that if there is anything wrong it is due to the conditions. Probably so, but when we have not the knowledge of what the conditions should be it makes it extremely difficult for us to continue our investigations. If we were able to obtain the same phenomena on many occasions—as we do when experimenting in other directions—there would be no difficulty; but it is very seldom we can get phenomena repeated. The conditions on this earth plane, though apparently the same, are evidently not the same, and this may also apply to the conditions on the other side. We shall do well to remember that we are dealing with living persons, not with unconscious forces. Mr. Beard, I understand, was for many years more or less of an agnostic regarding belief in a future life, but coming into contact with one of our mediums he received remarkable evidence which wrought a complete change in his mental attitude. He introduced his brothers to the same medium, who was equally successful with them, with the result that we now have a large family of really enthusiastic workers for the cause, all of them, more or less, mediumistic. It will be interesting if Mr. Beard tells us whether the members of his family who have developed clairvoyance are able to get evidence of identity as freely now as they did before they became convinced of the real presence of their spirit relatives and friends, as, in many instances, it seems as if at first great efforts are made by those on the other side to prove their identity and satisfy their inquiring friends—but when that has been accomplished they appear to be unable to communicate as freely or as fully as before.

MR. BEARD said: I am not here as a teacher to-night. I am here simply to tell you a few cases of spirit control which to my mind prove without the shadow of a doubt the identity of the controlling intelligences. By the courtesy of your vice-president and the members of your council I am given this opportunity of telling you how I began to investigate Spiritualism and convinced myself of the truth of spirit return, but I shall confine myself to those cases in which I think the evidence is indisputable.

The first séance at which I was present meant very much to me, for it supplied the opportunity for the fulfilment of a promise made by my mother twenty-three years previously. A few days before she passed out of the physical body she promised her boys that if God permitted her to come back and

give a message she would do so. All through the years that had intervened that promise remained apparently unfulfilled. We therefore continued to be complete sceptics as to the possibility of spirit return, being in total ignorance of the method of obtaining evidence. One day, however, I met a Spiritualist of the right sort. 'Unless you develop your own spiritual gifts,' he said, 'you may wait till the crack of doom for the evidence you want. You must seek if you would find.' I inquired how I should get in touch with a medium, and one Sunday afternoon I was taken to see Mrs. Fairclough Smith. I went fully expecting I should detect fraud of some kind. Mrs. Smith kindly said she would give me a sitting, and, her husband having left the room, she became entranced. After answering reasonably and logically some questions which I put, her control went on to describe spirit people. The second spirit described was my mother. The guide not only gave me a minute description of her features, but also described certain articles of jewellery which she wore. Suddenly the medium fell back in her chair, and in a moment my mother herself was talking to me through her lips. There could be no mistake—it was the same voice, the same manner of speech as of old.

'Where have you been all these years?' she said. 'Did I not promise that if God permitted me to come back I would do so?' All those years, she told me, she had watched over us, and had tried to impress Spiritualists to speak to us, and at her instigation a younger brother of mine had been impelled to attend a Spiritualist séance. When she passed over she had only one grandchild, but she was able to tell me the present number of her grandchildren, and I found that the number she gave was correct. She also mentioned several incidents of a private nature, and promised that, if my brothers and I were not satisfied, she would endeavour to control some other medium. 'In any case,' she added, 'I wish you to go to a materialising medium.' Since then she has shown me her face at four or five materialisation séances. My father has done the same. A clerk of mine has shown his face, and asked me to bring his wife. I did so on another occasion, when he again manifested, and she at once recognised him. Here I would like to tell you of one test my mother gave. A sister of mine went to Cairo. We got no letter from her as to her safe arrival or otherwise. Her husband came to me one day in a state of great anxiety. He had learned that the boat had touched at Cairo all right, and he felt that something must have happened, or he would have heard before this. I went to Mrs. Fairclough Smith, and mother said through her: 'M. is all right. She has had an illness on board the boat, and was not allowed to land, but was taken from that boat and landed at Naples at six o'clock on Saturday last. She has written five letters, but owing to a strike on the Italian railways they have not been forwarded; you will get them all in a day or two.' Within three days the letters came through, telling us exactly what had happened.

The evidence of identity given me by my father was just as striking as that given by my mother. I may mention that, in reconstructing our business premises, we resolved to do away with the old furniture. The things had been piled up on the van for removal, when I caught sight of my father's chair, and at once decided that it should not be sold but that I would have it re-covered and use it in the office. This was done. Later, father came to me through Mrs. Ridley and said, 'I am so glad, my boy, that you have kept the old man's chair!'

I will now describe an evening séance at my own house in Gloucester-gardens. For perhaps three months I had been having many discussions with a Nonconformist minister, in which, as usual, each party thought he had the best of the argument. At the end of that time he came to my house one night in great trouble. He said that if I could only get to know through a medium how his father passed out he would believe in Spiritualism. He was also troubled about something else, and wondered whether I could help him. I consented to do so, and wrote a letter to Mrs. Fairclough Smith at his dictation, saying that I had a friend with me who was distressed in mind, and anxious to have a sitting; could she come in a cab by return? This was despatched at 10.15. Mrs. Smith and her husband very kindly came. A sitting was at once held. Mrs. Smith, under control, proceeded to describe the business place of



my friend's father—the warehouse, the store-room, &c. She went on: 'The office in which I am sitting seems to go right up to the roof.' 'That's right, that's right!' exclaimed the clergyman. She then gave details as to the arrangement of the furniture, mentioned the peculiar chair in which his father used to sit, and that by the side of that chair was a nail in the wall on which he hung a black bag containing the wages he paid his employés. She added, 'That bag also contained the evidence of the money your father had loaned to the partnership account.' She then told the clergyman that the partner came one afternoon to see his father and, in the conversation that ensued, made an untrue statement, which his father resented so warmly that he fell down in a fit, and died.

The clergyman so far confirmed this as to tell me that when he was telegraphed for his father's body had been found in the room precisely as stated by the medium's control, that the furniture was arranged as described, and that his father used to carry a black bag. The control then went on to affirm that the visitor at the office, after assuring himself that his partner was dead, went to the bag and destroyed the only evidence there was of the loan.

'We knew,' said my friend, 'that there was money due to my father, but did not know what had become of the evidence.'

The father himself then spoke through the medium and confirmed the statement as to the destruction of the document. 'Never mind, my boy,' he said, 'I have forgiven that man long ago, but when he opens his eyes in the spirit world he will know what he is and will not be able to hide himself.'

The clergyman had told me that one great trouble of his life was that he had no children, but after his father's visit the next control was a little child. I saw the medium's fingers take my friend's long hair, wind it into tufts, and push them into his ears, while her voice, in a child's accents, said, 'Doty! Doty!' The man began to weep. I asked whether he knew the spirit. 'Yes,' he said, 'that was my little boy. He used to sit on my knee, play with my hair just like that, and call me "Doty!"'

He left my house about two o'clock in the morning. For three months after that he avoided me! (Laughter.)

Let me relate next some evidence I was able to give through my own mediumship. I have a brother who is a clairvoyant, but I do not regard myself as one. Still, at times when my guides touch me in a certain way, I know I am going to see something, though generally they tell me beforehand that I am going to see.

I met a man, one of our London traders, on the top of a coach during a trip in the Isle of Wight, and before the day was over we had had a long chat on Spiritualism and had exchanged cards. A fortnight later I received a very nice letter from him saying that he and his wife would be pleased if I would visit them and bring Mrs. Beard with me. We hesitated a little in accepting the invitation as they were entire strangers to us. However we went, and found that we were two of the guests at a dinner party. After the dinner we had a game of bridge and listened to some excellent music, and then returned to the dining-room for further refreshment. The conditions, it will be seen, were hardly conducive to clairvoyance, but when the spirit people mean to show you something they will do it in spite of bad conditions. While talking I saw a spirit form building behind my host. I described the person I saw as having a peculiar collar, and said he was wearing a large watchchain, to which a gold coffin or sarcophagus was attached. My host said, 'The description is splendid. That man was my wife's father, but he never wore that chain and sarcophagus.' The spirit then showed me a photograph of himself, and I insisted that he must have worn them, as he was calling my attention to them. The gentleman thereupon appealed to his wife, who confirmed her husband's statement. I asked for portraits of her father, but she stated that they had all been destroyed, except one that was on the piano. There was no sign in this portrait of the ornaments I had mentioned. 'No,' I said, 'you have a three-quarter length photograph of him somewhere.' Then the daughter of the house was appealed to. 'Father,' she said, 'I believe that portrait is in a box on the top of the wardrobe in your bedroom.' The spirit said to me, 'Have the box brought.' This was done. I picked

out the photograph—there was the chain and the sarcophagus! That test, as I pointed out to my friends, was given that it might not be said that I had been reading their thoughts, for only the spirit himself could have told me of a fact of which they themselves were unaware.

(To be continued.)

## PHILOSOPHY OF THE MAHABHARATA.\*

By MRS. ALICIA SIMPSON, M.R.A.S.

(Author of *Bhakti Marga*.)

(Continued from page 160.)

Thinkers of all ages have discoursed upon the beauty of Truth, and it is interesting to note the similarity of metaphor employed by them, even when they differ as to what the essence of Truth really is. Thus Lucretius, of the Epicurean school, a sect whose standard of happiness was far removed from the asceticism of the ancient Hindus, likewise describes the calm joy of the philosopher who has reached the keen, clear, upper regions where Truth has her dwelling-place. Here is Bacon's rendering of the verses: 'It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle and to see a battle, and the adventures below; but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of Truth and to see the errors and wanderings, and mists and tempests in the vale below.'

Much debate has centred round the vexed question as to how far it is permissible to deviate from the truth. The Mahabharata sages were not so rigid as to maintain that there was no occasion when it might be departed from in speech. There were five kinds of prevarication which they allowed to be sinless, *i.e.*, a purely jesting falsehood, one uttered to get rid of the troublesome questions of a pestering woman, one spoken to bring about a desirable marriage, one told for the sake of one's preceptor, and one necessary to save one's own life. Over this controversy utilitarians and intuitive philosophers have quarrelled for centuries. In the above few cases the ancient Hindus held the utilitarian view. But when we consider how limited those occasions of allowable falsehood are in comparison to the vast realms over which, in the opinion of those early philosophers, Truth must hold sway, there would seem no reason to retract or modify the assertion that the Hindus prized veracity above all other virtues. It was their unquestioning faith that 'he only succeeds in attaining happiness who abstains from injury to others, who is truthful in speech, forgiving and honest towards every living creature.'

Life's purpose has seemed to vary at different periods of the world's history. Upon the ancient Hindu beliefs was founded Buddhism. Then came classic Greece, who worshipped Beauty, and in it found her ideal; hers was a bright and joyous outlook upon life, with but few obstinate questionings or imaginings, for to her sufficed the creed that

Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Next came Christianity, resembling Buddhism in its sterner theories of abstinence and self-abnegation, and its tender doctrine of charity towards all mankind, a creed approaching in spirit so close to the ancient Brahman religious philosophy. Upon the asceticism of the Christian followed in Europe the period of the Renaissance, when the old joyous, pagan delight in loveliness sprang up again, and the passionate Greek enthusiasm for Beauty—Beauty in Nature, Beauty in Art, Beauty in Woman—brought back a wider freedom and the old *joie de vivre* of the early classic world. So the ages have followed one another with their action and reaction in swift succession, till we come to the present century, which would appear to find its ideal of Truth in material prosperity. In these times of commercial striving, when 'get rich quick' is the general motto, it seems a far cry back to the stern ideal of ancient India, with its creed of self-mastery, renunciation, its scorn of life, its worship of mind above matter. *Quot homines, tot sententiae.*

### INTERESTING DEVELOPMENTS IN FRANCE.

The January issue of 'Annales Psychiques' reports a conference of the Société Universelles d'Etudes Psychiques and a banquet which followed on January 15th, the object of which was partly to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of 'Annales Psychiques,' which is now the organ of this society, and to inaugurate the opening of a new conference room.

Among those present were Professor C. Richet, Professor Camille Flammarion, Dr. Xavier Dariex, Dr. J. Maxwell, Abbé Naudet (Professor of L'Ecole d'Etudes Sociales), Dr. Paul Joire, the founder of the society, besides many medical men, artists, army men, &c. In his speech at the banquet Dr. Joire remarked that the assembly offered a spectacle such as, perhaps, had never yet been presented in connection with psychical research, and indicated what the future might bring forth if the society remained constant to its purely scientific aim. He added that in a few years M. de Vesme, the able Editor of the 'Annales,' had transformed the society.

Professor Richet expressed his satisfaction at the immense progress which psychical research had made in intellectual circles in France, and asked: 'Who would have said thirty years ago that men of science, magistrates, officers, priests, would be thus assembled together, united by their common interest in psychical research, without causing any surprise or shock to anyone?' He added: 'Let us urge you to exercise scientific caution, which may save you from falling into many errors, and which will win the respect of opponents. Without this, a movement, however enthusiastically carried forward, will rather arouse prejudice than promote progress.'

We note from the remarks made in a review, in the February issue of the 'Annales,' of a recent book by Professor Flournoy, that he expresses himself as no longer able to withstand the testimony to the genuineness of physical phenomena borne by so many savants. The learned Professor had for long remained unconvinced even by the report of Sir W. Crookes's experiences.

### SPIRITUAL HEALING.

In his recent Address to the London Spiritualist Alliance, on 'Healing,' already reported in 'LIGHT,' Mr. Percy R. Street gave some interesting particulars of cases that had been successfully treated at the Reading Healing Guild which he had conducted for the past four years. These cases were taken, almost at random, from the book in which all the cases dealt with are recorded. Mr. Street said:—

I shall give the names in some cases, though not in all, but any of you who are interested are welcome to both names and addresses if you care to ask for them.

Case of Miss G.: Psychic obsession and general nervous derangement. Patient had been treated as insane and confined in an asylum. The rest was beneficial, and she was discharged as cured. Attacks became worse, and she came to Reading from a distant town, informing us that spirit friends had told her she would get well if she came.

Treatment given: Suggestion and diet. Result: Patient is now perfectly well and at business in a Northern city.

Mrs. Perkins: Chronic rheumatism, nodosity of the joints, with acute pain.

Treatment given: Diet and magnetism. Result: After the first treatment pain was gone, and has not since returned, while the diet restored health to the digestive organs.

Mr. Weatherall: Affection of the eyes; had hospital treatment for some time; sight in one eye almost gone. Operation for cataract was advised.

Treatment given: Magnetic. Result: Patient entirely recovered and sight as good as ever.

Mrs. C.: Neuritis; case of long standing. Swelling and pains in the right foot made walking impossible; nerves generally so bad that a complete collapse was feared. Ordinary methods of treatment had failed.

Treatment given: Magnetic and diet. Result: Patient able to walk miles; nerves steady and quiet.

A compositor was treated for defective eyesight. He was quite unable to follow his occupation. Magnetic treatment was given, with the result that in three weeks he was back again at work after eighteen months' enforced idleness.

Mrs. Norton: Dropsy in the legs.

Treatment given: Magnetic and diet. Result: Trouble passed away. Two slight returns in two years. These were also treated, with the same result.

I have endeavoured to show in these few personal cases the benefit to be derived from the practice of healing. The power to alleviate pain by the pressure or passage of the hand is inherent in the majority of people. I should consider that sixty per cent. possess it in some degree or the other.

Invaluable advice and aid are obtainable from the beyond, and in my own case my success in the practice has been due to this associateship. That impostors and opportunists exist does not constitute any argument against its efficacy or invalidate its proofs.

The methods of treatment vary according to the operator. Many persons desire some demonstration beyond the mere use of the hand, and their scruples have to be overcome. With some the use of oil inspires confidence, and allows the magnetism of the operator to do its work. In the cases I have treated, I find, on referring to my notes, that magnetised water has been beneficial, and the spiritual healer cannot afford to despise even mechanical aids to faith and cure.

### THE ORDEAL BY FIRE.

Having referred to 'the ancient ordeal by fire,' the writer of 'Table Talk' in the 'Daily News,' printed in that paper on the 3rd inst. an interesting letter from a correspondent who quotes from a paper by Sir William Crookes, F.R.S., included in Part XV. of the 'Proceedings' of the S.P.R., in which Sir William says:—

He (the medium) went to the candle . . . and passed his fingers backwards and forwards through the flames several times so slowly that they must have been severely burnt under ordinary circumstances. . . . Mr. Home again went to the fire, and after stirring the hot coal about with his hand, took out a red-hot piece, nearly as big as an orange, and, putting it on his right hand, covered it over with his left hand so as to almost completely enclose it, and then blew into the small furnace thus extemporised until the lump of charcoal was nearly white-hot, and then drew my attention to the lambent flame which was flickering over the coal and licking round his fingers.

To get this published to the world in this way is a gain, but it is still better to have it accompanied by the following comment by the 'Table Talk' writer:—

This medium was Daniel Dunglas Home, and there can be no reasonable doubt that he was by some supernatural means enabled to do this which Sir William Crookes and others describe. One cannot say that some analogous influence may not have been at work in those impressive religious ceremonies, the 'ordeals' of the ages of faith, so that a man might carry a lump of glowing iron nine paces, and have his hands whole and sound at the end of three days—such was the common test of innocence of an imputed crime.

In a subsequent issue of the 'Daily News' the following paragraph appeared:—

One of our readers sends us a letter expressing his disappointment in us for having 'given any countenance to the pretensions of Home the medium,' of whom our friend takes the same view that Browning took. This is not a place to argue about the genuineness of the 'phenomena' in Home's case. We merely quoted Sir William Crookes's statement as to Home having held glowing coals in his hand without injury. That, we may add, was also witnessed by, among others, the late Lord Balcarras and the present Lord Dunraven, who made a careful independent investigation of Home's powers. Also, it is a good example of the unhappy habit of leaping at conclusions that our correspondent speaks as if Home had made a living by his 'trickery.' He never took money in connection with his sances.

We could not ask for anything fairer or more just than the above. It is quite refreshing.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Mr. W. A. White, writing in the 'Progressive Thinker,' says: 'Service is the coin in which humanity's debts are paid. Our debt is tremendous. The liberties we enjoy, the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the houses in which we live, are not of our own getting. We owe for all of them. In our civilisation countless thousands serve every man every day. And, as man rises above the average of his fellows, the thousands become tens of thousands, and his debt to humanity grows heavier. What we must realise before eternal justice will be established upon this earth, is that no man can pay his debt, and also that the only happiness he can have is in trying to pay it. And we must realise that folly's crown is on the head of him who tries to pay his debt to humanity by mere money.'

In the 'Weekly Tale-Teller,' No. 100, the Editor awards a prize to M. L. Harding, 94, Leucha-road, Walthamstow, for the following interesting dream experience. Mr. Harding says: 'My father was in America, my mother in London. My mother woke one morning, and said she had had such a strange dream: she had seen my father being taken along the street in an ambulance, with a hospital nurse by his side. About a fortnight later we had a letter to say my father was dead. He had been taken from the railway station in an ambulance to the hospital, where he had died the next day. You see the time the letter would take to reach us would bring my mother's dream and the happening to about the same time.'

Mr. Conrad T. New, of Hylside, Gretton, Winchcomer, R.S.O., Gloucester, receives a prize for the following experience, which appears in No. 101. Mr. New says: 'On August 14th, 1886, I was at home on holiday. I remember the date, since it happens to be my birthday. In the morning I was doing what a great many holiday-makers do—namely, taking an extra time in bed. My mother, coming in to rouse me, asked if I intended to spend my birthday in bed. She says I ignored her question and said: "I have had such an awful dream. I dreamed that C.'s wife was dead, and that he had married Miss ——. I hope he will never marry her." This was said before I was fully awake, and the last sentence is very strange, because I had no antipathy to Miss —— whatever; in fact, she had only been in the neighbourhood a short time, and I hardly knew her. My mother then told me that my friend's wife, Mrs. C., was dead; she had in fact died an hour or two before. The strangest part is to follow. The dream, like most dreams, was more or less forgotten, but three years after my friend did really marry Miss ——.'

A contributor to the 'Progressive Thinker' has been gathering up some extracts from the speeches of that eloquent agnostic, Col. Robert Ingersoll, and has published them 'in justice to a brave, generous and manly man.' Among these extracts we find the following: 'There are several good things about Spiritualists. First, they are not bigoted. Second, they do not believe in salvation by faith. Third, they do not expect to be happy in another world because Christ was good in this. Fourth, they do not preach the consolation of hell. Fifth, they do not believe in God as an infinite monster. Sixth, the Spiritualists believe in intelligent hospitality. In these respects they differ from our orthodox brethren, and in these respects they are far superior to the saints. They ask all to investigate, and then make up their minds from the evidence. Hundreds of thousands of well-educated, intelligent people are satisfied with the evidence, and firmly believe in the existence of spirits. For all that I know they may be right.'

At Clifton, Bristol, a splendidly situated guest house will be opened on April 24th as a centre for those who are interested in forward movements for the furtherance of true brotherhood. Visitors will be welcomed, irrespective of race, and week-end socials, addresses and discussions will prove an attractive feature. It is situated in the healthiest part of Clifton, at 17, Royal York-crescent, is only a few minutes' walk from the famous Avon Gorge, the Suspension Bridge and Leigh Woods, and is open to visitors by the day or week, on moderate terms. As far as his time will permit, Mr. W. Tudor Pole will freely place his services at the disposal of guests for private consultations on the problems of life.

A friend in the United States, when sending his subscription for 'LIGHT,' encloses a cutting which gives a good specimen of mordant American humour. It is to the effect that 'an editor had died, and was, of course, directed to ascend to the Abode of the Just. Before doing so, he said, with journalistic curiosity: "Is it permitted for one to have a look at—the other place?" "Certainly," was the gracious reply. When the "other place" was reached, he found so much to

interest him that he was soon lost to view. His angelic escort at last discovered him seated before a furnace, fanning himself and gazing at the people in the fire. On the door of the furnace was a plate, saying, "Delinquent Subscribers." "Come," said the angel, "we must be going." "You go on," the editor answered, "I'm not coming. This is heaven enough for me." Our correspondent says: "I trust I shall not have to undergo the sufferings of some other "Delinquent Subscribers," and that you would not wish to see me thus." We certainly would not wish to see any poor soul tortured by fire, even for a minute, and there is an easy way by which all subscribers can escape such a fate.

As the spiritual reformer is interested in all the affairs of men and in every condition of human existence that tends to make or mar the well-being of the spirit, both here and hereafter, the following startling facts, mentioned by Mr. G. B. Wilson, in an article in the 'Daily News,' demand serious consideration. 'In 1909 no fewer than 5,200 men and women died in England and Wales from alcoholism and cirrhosis, and the last ten years have cost us the lives of over 64,000 persons from these causes, of whom over 28,000 were women. These figures, indeed, far from adequately represent the drink-caused mortality of this country. They do not, for example, include the heavy annual mortality from diseases of various organs of the body which are peculiarly susceptible to the toxic effects of alcohol. Nor do they include the large number of accidental deaths which would not have taken place if the deceased had been perfectly sober. They pass by the 1,400 deaths of infants under one year old who were suffocated by their mothers in bed—a mortality almost entirely due to the deadening of the senses caused by alcoholic indulgence; and they do not include the very heavy infant mortality which is due to drink-caused poverty and parental neglect. Nor can we ignore the social misery which lies behind the 340,000 cases of public drunkenness which in 1909 were dealt with by the police, and the 94,000 cases of assault. There were in England and Wales in that year 3,554 suicides and 2,356 attempts to commit suicide, of which a very large proportion were due to alcoholic excess. . . . The loss to the community is not to be measured merely or principally in terms of money; but in terms of human happiness and life.'

## 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.*

## Was it Thought-Reading?

SIR,—Some time ago a friend of mine, at a thought-reading séance, asked Madame X., who was an entire stranger, to give him some information regarding a brother who is in the navy. She told him that his brother was then on the sea in a vessel which was in the Mediterranean, and near Catania, in Italy. She added, among other statements, that he was suffering from an illness, and, finally, she said that his name was R. Underwood. The name was correct, and the other facts my friend verified later. Was this a case of telepathy, clairvoyance, or a spirit communication?—Yours, &c., P. J.

## Some Interesting Dreams.

SIR,—One night I dreamed that I saw my brother dash by on horseback along a road, and then, just after he had passed, come to a sudden stop, horse and man pitching forward to the ground. Next morning a letter was received from a member of my brother's household, stating that he had been injured through an accident sustained while out riding.

A relative of mine, whom I will call Miss A., related to me the following dreams she had had many years ago while staying with her aunt at Caerleon, Monmouthshire. Miss A. dreamt that she saw a box of hers, which eventually turned into a coffin. On the coffin she saw her full Christian and surname, which names were also borne by her aunt. She also saw dates written on the coffin, but could not remember them. The coffin was in a room that Miss A. recognised, on a ground-floor. At the time, Miss A.'s aunt was in good health, but in a very short time after the dream she died suddenly, and the coffin was kept in the room on the ground-floor that Miss A. saw in her dream. About a week before her aunt's death Miss A. was upstairs one day, when she heard her aunt, who was below, call her by name distinctly. She accordingly went downstairs to inquire what was wanted, only to be met by her aunt's positive assertion that she had not called to her.

Another dream of Miss A.'s in the same house was that she saw from a certain bridge over the Usk, her sister on a raft going to Bristol. Miss A. received a message afterwards, informing her that her sister had had to go to Bristol, because of

the illness of some of the family there. That was in the days of the steam packet, before the Severn Tunnel was opened.

The house Miss A. was staying in was a very old, weird sort of place, and in the floor of a cellar was an old tombstone.—Yours, &c.,

Shaldon.

K.

#### Strange Vision Experiences.

SIR,—When I was visiting a friend in the north some years ago, we used to amuse ourselves with a crystal and a planchette, but now, during a longer visit, our deeper interest in these things leads us to experiment regularly and frequently, and the results astonish us. While I place my hand on her shoulder or arm, my friend holds the crystal and sees pictures of people, places, and things, that when described are frequently recognised by persons present. She also sees, speaks to and hears friends, in whom we are both much interested, but who live far away. If this is really true sight and hearing, how much more pleasure there is in it than communication by letters, for speaking always seems so much better than writing.—Yours, &c.,

HENRI.

SIR,—Being in the garden early one morning feeding the fowls, I saw an old lady stooping to pick a flower. She was dressed in a black frock, an old-fashioned cross-over shawl, and a lace bonnet. Not in the least alarmed, merely wondering how this lady came to be there at that time of day, I was about to speak, when she faded away. So very lifelike and homely was the apparition, that it made a great impression upon me. Again, one night, being quite alone, my husband being engaged away from home, I felt impelled to look through the house at midnight, having retired about ten o'clock. Opening the bedroom door, I saw distinctly a man in overcoat and bowler hat going downstairs in front of me. He was most lifelike and natural; but on reaching the bend of the stairs, he completely vanished. I have also seen a beautifully-shaped hand resting for fully ten seconds on the counterpane of my bed, giving me ample time to note its exquisite beauty of form. These experiences, without doubt, were voluntary demonstrations of the presence of loved ones, to assure us of their affection. After four years' investigation, steadily going forward step by step under most trying circumstances, surrounded by orthodoxy and prejudice, I would advise inquirers to fearlessly advance, and what to many at present may seem inexplicable, will in good time reveal its natural beauties.—Yours, &c.,

MARIE NICHOLSON.

Chiswick.

SIR,—Until the occurrence of the following somewhat remarkable incident I always ridiculed the idea of the existence of ghosts. In 1875 my wife and I, with our little ones, slept in a large front room, our grandmother sleeping on the same floor. We used to look in upon the old lady to see that she was comfortable for the night, and having done this, locked our own room door before retiring. One night, after we had been asleep some time, I awoke. Owing to the light of a street-lamp every object in the room was discernible. Near the fireplace, where a table stood, there was a slight shadow caused by the wall between the two windows. By the side of the table was a chair, and sitting on this chair I saw, to all appearance, our old grandmother, dressed as usual and with her cap on, nodding and rocking herself as she was in the habit of doing when sitting alone. After gazing at her for some time I awoke my wife and said, 'Granny is in the room.' She turned round and spoke to the figure, saying, 'What is it, granny? What do you want?' Receiving no answer, my wife suggested that I should strike a light. The matches were on the mantel close by the chair on which the form was sitting, but before I could get them the form was gone. I struck a light, but it revealed no presence in the room besides ourselves. In the morning we found the door locked as usual. The old lady lived for some time, and we could never understand what the nocturnal visit portended.—Yours, &c.,

E. ROBERT BRADBERRY.

182, Mortlake-road, Ilford.

#### Grief in the Animal Creation.

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of March 25th Mr. J. Fraser Hewes deals with 'the problem of pain,' and when he says that animals die from grief I can confirm his statement from my own experience.

In my childhood's days we lived in India, and our loved companion and devoted playmate was a little, black, curly spaniel called Jet. When our father decided that our mother should take us home to England, it was arranged that Jet must remain behind. After we left, the poor little doggie could not under-

stand why she was alone. At first she spent her time in alternately running all over the house, seeking for us and barking to attract our attention, and rushing wildly round the garden and up and down the paths. In a few days, however, she seemed to realise that her quest was useless, and then she walked sadly about, refusing to eat, and seeking out some dark place, where she would lie in a state of semi-torpor.

My father, who saw and understood her sorrow, did what he could to comfort her, for he was very sad himself and missed the merry voices and the patter of little feet. In after years he often told us the story of Jet's mourning and death. One day the bearer came to my father and said: 'Sahib, will you come and see Jet, for I fear she is dead.' Our toys used to be kept in large baskets in the verandah outside our nurseries, and after we left for England my father would not allow the servants to remove them. With many misgivings he followed the servant, and there, lying as close as she could get to the toys, was faithful Jet, stretched out stiff and cold—she could not live without the love of her little friends. In face of facts such as these let no one say animals feel less acutely than human beings. I have known many other instances of death from grief in the animal creation.—Yours, &c.,

E. I. MASSY.

#### Spiritualists' National Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to express my thanks to the friends who have forwarded donations to the fund during the month of March, viz.: Col. F. R. Begbie, £1 1s.; Mrs. Ingham, 1s.; A member of the Market Hall Society, Exeter, 1s. 8d.; York Spiritual Church, St. Savioursgate, York, £1; Mrs. M. Simpson, £1; Mr. W. Haywood, £1 1s.; result of séance given by Mrs. Twelvtree, per Mrs. H. Laney, 11s. 6d. Total, £4 16s. 2d.

An extract from a letter received from one of our old workers will show how the fund is appreciated by the recipients: 'I take this opportunity of adding my thanks and gratitude for the beneficence of the Almighty Spirit and the benevolent promoters and subscribers of the Fund of Benevolence. I am in my eighty-fifth year (nearly blind), with an aged wife, and have been a happy worker in our holy cause for upwards of forty-six years, and beg to express my gratitude to all concerned for the timely relief afforded to us in our need and its alleviation of many troubles,' &c.

All donations thankfully received and acknowledged by—  
Yours, &c., A. E. BUTTON,  
9, High-street, Doncaster. Hon. Sec.

#### 'Sudden Death.'

SIR,—Some remarks of yours on p. 121, March 18th, call forth the following: A few days ago I read that the late Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, after praying all his life in church to be 'delivered from sudden death' (in the Anglican Church Litany), nevertheless met with such a 'calamity,' his neck being dislocated by a fall from his horse. Now, I well recollect, as a child, when this occurred, my being told that a 'sudden death' was what he of all things had for many years desired.

It may not be equally well known, however—what I am stating is, I believe, a perfectly 'open secret'—that at the moment of this occurrence, or shortly after, the members of the well-known county family whom he was on his way to visit, all, or several of them, saw the smiling face of the bishop looking in at them through the window, so that they thought that he had just arrived in the flesh. The facts may not be all exactly as I have stated, so I shall be glad if any correspondent who knows them better will correct me.

There are many arguments to support the view you express. To give only one: Suppose a person who, despite all arguments, philosophic, spiritistic, or religious, cannot help having real misgivings as to 'a future existence'—such as the late Colonel Ingersoll (and of these, I imagine, there are not a few)—who has to leave one or more who are as dear to him as, or dearer than, life itself. Imagine this person slowly dying with this haunting doubt that Aristotle may have been right and that 'death is the end.' Would not a sudden death to such a person be the most desirable of all?

I conceive that the Bishop of London would not be much of a believer in 'death-bed repentances,' and I often think that the 'dying thief on the cross' must have been a man who was in his own way 'a decent sort'—that is, that with other heredity and environments he would have been, perhaps, far better a man than many 'just persons.' With such a view as this, surely the wish for a death with all sorts of 'viatica' and other preparations is a wholly needless one, and one should be *always* 'ready for the call.'—Yours, &c.,

GUY HEATON,

Bournemouth,