

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

The difficulty of affording 'proof' of spirit presence to others is clearly stated by Dr. A. J. McIvor Tyndall, when he says: 'I could present what I regard as proofs of the continued individual existence of the soul after bodily death *ad libitum*. But just as no one can live another's life, so no one can make his own proofs of this kind of knowledge answer the blindness of another.' He also gives us the following incident, the authenticity of which, he says, was vouched for by the late Dr. Hodgson:—

A lady was walking down the darkened corridor of a hotel toward the elevator. She was unable to distinguish in the dim light the exact location of the shaft, and was startled to find her progress impeded by the figure of a man, with his arms extended across the space reserved for the elevator doorway. As the elevator came up the shaft, and the light in the car was reflected in the corridor, the figure disappeared, and she saw that the gate of the shaft had been left open. Had the figure not stopped her, she would have walked straight into the open gate, and been killed.

Commenting on the above, Dr. Tyndall shrewdly remarks: 'If the woman's sub-conscious mind was at work, why did it precipitate the vision of the man barring her progress, instead of the visual perception of the open shaft?' This is a natural question, and one that cannot be answered on the materialistic hypothesis.

Perhaps the greatest service that phenomenal Spiritualism renders to humanity is to be found in the fact that it substantiates the religious belief that man survives bodily death as an intelligent, moral and progressive being. Religion in the varied forms in which it has found expression in the past has ever been the manifestation of that intuitive consciousness, which is innate in us, of the supreme value of life—of its permanency and its intimate relation to Infinite Life. Because we are spiritual beings this religious instinct is natural and is never wholly absent. The more we learn to trust to reason, the more surely we realise the reasonableness of all that is, the more fully this religious consciousness will find expression, especially when its affirmation of human deathlessness finds confirmation, as it is doing, in the increasing frequency and evidential clearness of spirit manifestations.

'The Progressive Thinker' (as befits its title) is justly incensed against those unprogressive thinkers who pursue the 'mill horse round' of test-seeking. Says our contemporary:—

What kind of mentality is that manifested by a seeker after truth by means of tests who, getting a most convincing one yesterday, must have an equally convincing one to-day, and again to-morrow, or else be inclined to reconsider his belief, and

think that, may be, after all, the whole thing is a fraud. . . . Must this go on for ever?

Heaven forefend! For our own part, however, we believe that even going round in a circle is better than standing still. And, after all, the circle ultimately leads on to the spiral, and we get progression!

Dr. J. M. Peebles contributes a long and inspiring message to the 'Banner of Life' of April 29th last. 'Marching on; or Evening Musings while Crossing the Chasm of Eighty-nine Years and Looking to the Ninetieth Milestone,' is its exuberant title. It is a veritable 'Pilgrim's Song of Hope,' and so extensive in its range as to suggest the commingled inspirations of Walt Whitman, Blake and Meleager. The Greek poet, indeed, is strongly reflected in the apostrophe to the 'spirit dove':—

Your white breast I festooned with rose buds and buttercups, ivy and everlasting; and upon your head I placed a crown of olive leaves. To your tiny feet I festooned the violet, the daisy and the myrtle, and under your snowy wings I folded geranium sprigs and flowering forget-me-nots.

Noah's dove, truly, with its single olive branch, could not brook comparison with such a bird! We quote the passage as an example of the youthful ardour of our 'grand old man,' who, in the course of his pæan, renews his vows of fidelity to Spiritualism, 'the living Logos, the holiest word, except God, in the English language.'

The Rev. C. H. Laws, the retiring President of the Methodist community in New Zealand, made the following momentous statement at the annual Methodist Conference held in Christchurch recently:—

There are front-rank men among us who maintain that we have incontrovertible evidence of the persistence of the soul after death.

We can only echo the old Scottish Dominie and say, 'Prodigious!' But, while it is gratifying to know that, after preaching the reality of a future life for generations, the Methodist Church has begun to collect evidence on the point, the statement whets our curiosity. Who are these 'front rank men,' and how and where did they gain their evidence? We do not forget, by the way, that John Wesley had certain psychic experiences, from which his modern followers have been inclined to avert their gaze.

Lecturing in Australia on 'The State after Death,' the Bishop of Auckland is reported to have said that 'Men after wrestling with the problem and longing for the light of God upon it, still remained baffled.' This seems a distinctly depressing commentary on certain admonitions which should be familiar to the Bishop: 'Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.' Really, the condition of the Church as regards our subject reminds us of the blind folk in Maeterlinck's play who, having lost their way, call out vague and misleading directions to each other. And yet, with all its irony, the situation has its compensations. It is when men are frank enough to admit their ignorance that they are in the best condition to receive knowledge.

The April number of the 'Message of Life' (New Zealand) contains a pregnant little article by 'C. N. R.' entitled, 'Is Spiritualism in Danger?' The writer deals reassuringly with some anxious inquiries as to whether the 'swirling eddies' of the time may not overwhelm Spiritualism, and expresses complete confidence in the future of the movement:—

To my thinking all these disturbing influences are but pointers to a crucial stage of mental and spiritual evolution which is near at hand. Emerson says: 'Our faith comes in moments; our vice is habitual.' Hence when men's minds are quickened their vices show out more glaringly. This is the explanation of the present exceptional unrest in the social, political, commercial, military and religious spheres. It also shows why the present-day crimes are so numerous and so shockingly cruel. Abnormal conditions of human life always precede great onward movements. That such a movement is now approaching I am convinced. This is why I have no fear for the future of Spiritualism.

This is well put, for it takes account of the fact that it is the growth of the moral consciousness of the race that throws present-day evils into such high relief. What have been pithily termed the 'growing pains' of humanity are noticeably acute just now, and the fact is significant of much.

'Thinking for Results' is one of the latest of the many books devoted to the subject of thought as a means of attaining 'health, power and prosperity.' It is from the pen of Mr. Christian D. Larson (L. N. Fowler & Co., London). There is a force, clearness and precision of style about the little work which we find extremely captivating. The following is an admirable statement of the true attitude of non-resistance:—

The strong, positive mind may at times go beyond its own domain, and may sometimes act in realms where it has no legal right, but this can be prevented through the attitude of non-resistance, another most important attitude in the art of constructive thinking.

The attitude of resistance is always destructive, and therefore interferes with the real purpose of right thinking. But it is not necessary to resist anything. That which is inferior will disappear when we produce the superior, and not until then. It is, therefore, a waste of time and energy to try to remove wrong through resistance. The proper course to pursue is to build up the right, and the wrong will disappear of itself.

The work would have been improved by the presence of chapter headings and an index.

It has been urged by certain social reformers that poverty is one of the main causes of drunkenness. The poor, it is argued, drink to drown their consciousness of poverty. Mr. Herbert E. Clarke, in the 'Lyceum Banner' for May, makes an effective rejoinder to this argument:—

If it were a fact that poverty is a powerful factor in producing drunkenness, we ought to find most money passing into the publicans' hands when trade is suffering depression, while the public houses should prove least attractive when employment is good and trade booming. The facts are just the opposite.

In our view—and it is an opinion shared by many who have made a study of the question—the taste for strong drink has a peculiarly psychological significance. Men who could not ordinarily associate harmoniously with each other find that alcohol has a mellowing and socialising effect. It softens differences of temperament, and blends natures sharply divided by degrees of moral and spiritual development. But always—and here is the deep and insidious danger—it subdues the higher to the lower level when the boundary line is once passed. 'How is it that a man of such a refined nature as ——— can consort with those vulgar boozers?' inquired one man of another, both

being friends of the person to whom the inquiry referred. The answer was significant, 'Oh, they are only friendly when they are drinking together.'

But the psychical laws of association will in the end prove too strong to be affected by such artificial solvents.

### 'DUGMAR.'

This is the name of the heroine of an ancient Egyptian story which was written automatically by a pencil held very loosely in the hand of the medium, Mrs. Colson. This lady is Scotch, and declares her complete ignorance of all Egyptian lore; she is also unacquainted with history in general; she has never been able to read much, being very short-sighted, and out of the world of literature altogether. She lives at Mexico, where 'Dugmar' was published by the Mexican Occult Society in 1908. She has lived in Florida and Singapore.

During the past fourteen years the book has been written out seven times, as the narrative was too chaotic and crude for publication at first, but no changes have been allowed, except under the direction of the spirit author, and these have consisted solely of taking out superfluous words and sometimes slightly changing the construction of a sentence.

When I first read the story it struck me that the names given were of a very ancient Egyptian type, namely, those of the Old Kingdom, and some that survived into the Middle Kingdom. The long theophorous names of the New Kingdom are entirely absent; I mean those of the type of Joseph's Egyptian name in the Bible, which is of the seventh century B.C. only. Also the consonants—such as j, x, &c.—found in the English language, which are not found in hieroglyphs, are conspicuously absent in 'Dugmar.' Out of thirty-six names mentioned, about a third can be verified (or their variants), mostly from the stelæ, or tombstones (preserved in museums), of obscure private individuals, whose names are practically unknown to nearly all Egyptologists, and never penetrate into a popular magazine or into a newspaper. Some thousands of these obscure names have been catalogued by the Norwegian Egyptologist, Lieblein.

The ancient Egyptians were careless about the spelling of proper names, and often on the same coffin the owner's name is spelt with variations. The Egyptians also used contractions of names and nicknames.

That Egyptian names caught orally by the untrained ear of a Scotchwoman should be exactly correct is hardly to be expected; for, besides the difficulty of translating the sounds of one language into the writing of another, and of an Eastern into a Western language, there were no inscriptions to copy from, to keep the sounds more accurate; therefore an approximation would be all that could be hoped for.


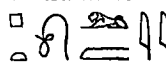
If I were to attempt a story about a Hausa or Esquimaux lady, and were to give thirty-six names in the course of the story, not knowing a word of the Hausa or of the Esquimaux language, the chances would be dead against my getting even one proper name right, as the sounds of the language would be utterly unknown to me.

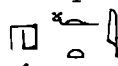
The following are the thirty-six names given in 'Dugmar':—

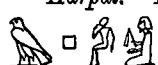

*Men*: \*Dobolon, \*Hophta, Hatontu, Hophrata, \*Harpat, Lovatchi, Lobra, Lovard, Menon, Onon, \*Obon, Oyona, Psammasta, Ramera, Ramon, \*Rama, Ramsa, Rastar, Rolbot, \*Senbol, Sethos, \*Soth, \*Snefru, Sothastru.


*Women*: Dugmar, \*Arda, \*Arasta, Dost, Hasta, Hopheta, Hatusti, Halu, Hophetua, \*Katru, \*Munta, Romba,

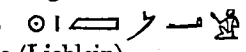
Of the foregoing I have been able to verify, or partially verify, the following names which I have starred in the list:—


*Dobolon*. This very peculiar name is nearly paralleled by a name of the Old Kingdom, , *D-lu-b-h-n*, Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, II, 35, 37 [vowels mostly omitted in hieroglyphs]. That the "h" should be misspelt "l" is not surprising, as the sounds would be very similar. There is no "o" in Egyptian. "O" is generally left out, or translated by "u" or "ua," as the "o" of Ptolemy, . (This is, of course, of very late date, but the practice may have been handed down through the ages.)


*Hophla* (ph = f). This name is found written out , *H-fta*; see Davies, *Deir el-Gebrawi* (from *Index of names and titles of the Old Kingdom*, by M. A. Murray, 1908).

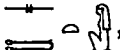

*Harpat*. This name might very well be a contraction of , *Har-p-khr-d* (Horus, the child), a name found on a stele in the Louvre (Lieblein). The Coptic ending of , *Khr-d*, is "Khrot," *Ⲭⲣⲟⲩ*.


*Obon*. , *Ub-n*, is a name on a stele at Cairo Museum (Lieblein). It exactly represents "Obon." It means "shining."

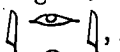
*Ra-ma*.  occurs on an Apis stele in the Louvre (Lieblein).

*Senbol*. The first part of this name, , *S-nb*, is very common on scarabs of officials of the Middle Kingdom. "S-nb" is also a common Old Kingdom name.


, *S-nbbu*, occurs in hieroglyphs.


*Soth*. , *S-th-t*, as a feminine form, with the "t," , is found on a stele of the XIIIth-XIVth dynasty. (Men's and women's names are not unfrequently similar, or even exactly the same.)

*Snefru*. . This pyramid-king's name occurs in "Dugmar," but not as a king's name.

*Arda*. , *Arta*. } There are numerous variants of these names, which are women's names, on stelae.

*Arasta*. , *Aras*.

*Katru*. A XIIth dynasty stele in Cairo Museum has the somewhat similar name, , *K-du*.

*Munta*. In Mariette's *Cat.*, XIIIth-XIVth dynasty, we find a woman's name, , *Men-ta*.

**LIVING IN GOD.**—Babu Suresh Chunder Bose shrewdly remarks: 'The age of the anchorite is gone. We have to look all the duties in connection with our social and family life boldly in the face and see that our spirits grow in strength and purity in the midst of them. We are often apt to forget that the true blessings of life do not lie in the mere possession of abundance of worldly goods, nor in the unceasing selfish pursuit after wealth to the detriment of our highest nature, but in the calm and trustful looking on things and events, coupled with an indomitable effort to gain all that is good, pure, and highest. This is only possible to a soul that consciously lives in God with a due measure of faith, love, and holiness. All the true sons of God, in all ages and countries, lived such a life that has enriched the world.'

## LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

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A Series of Lectures will be delivered by Mr. W. J. Colville at the Rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on the following *Tuesday and Thursday* afternoons, commencing at *three o'clock*. Admission 1s.

### SYLLABUS.

Tuesday, June 6—'Healing Efficacy of Light and Colour.'

Thursday, June 8—'Telepathy and Premonitions.'

Tuesday, June 13—'Seership and Prophecy.'

Thursday, June 15—'Spiritual Unfoldment: Is Intuition Educable?'

The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Mr. W. J. Colville jointly invite MEMBERS of the Alliance to attend these meetings free of charge.

## THE HYPOTHESES OF 'BILOCATION' CONSIDERED.

(Continued from page 231.)

As a second criterion of proof I submit the following—that on most occasions when a subject sees his double he finds himself in a condition of total or partial anæsthesia, and of analgesia, which in this special case would imply the probable existence of a phenomenon corresponding to the exteriorisation of sensibility, and, therefore, the possibilities of the real formation of an odic phantom in which sensibility would be concentrated. It is no longer possible to neglect this possibility after the well-known experiences of Colonel De Rochas, Dr. Luys, Dr. Joire, and de Durville. Dr. Sollier has quoted very precisely the existence of anæsthesia during the extrinsication of phenomena of autoscopy. Here is one of the cases reported by him:—

Case 3. A young woman, twenty-one years of age, was in the habit of taking opium in large doses. During the process of cure she presented, as frequently happens, hysterical phenomena to which formerly she had not been subject. During the night she appeared to fall asleep, but in reality she was in a state of light catalepsy, as was ascertained by moving her limbs. Suddenly she cried out and attempted to repulse somebody. She then stated that she had beside her a person who was exactly like herself, lying down as she was, and that it was necessary that she should move to give this person her place. 'It is a nuisance,' said she, 'to be doubled like that.' It occurred to me, as she was always insensible, to blow lightly on her eyes, telling her energetically to wake up. She jumped up, looked at me, and appeared to see me for the first time. 'Good day; are you there?' she said to me. After this she felt her double much less. Then I insisted that she should close her eyes, telling her forcibly to go to sleep. She stretched her limbs and yawned; she still saw her double, but without arms and limbs, which means that while the trunk and the head were still in a state of anæsthesia, she had begun to recover feeling in her arms and legs, and she could feel when they were pinched. Next morning, after she had had an attack of spasms, I made her wake up—that is to say, recover, as far as possible, her feelings. Sensations appeared now in the limbs and a great part of the trunk; the upper part of the body and the head were still insensible. She saw with difficulty her double, which appeared as a vapour. The next day sensibility was completely recovered, even in the head, and since then the hallucination has never returned.' (Dr. Sollier, in the 'Bulletin de l'Institut Général Psychologique,' 1902, p. 48.)

According to Dr. Sollier, these circumstances show that phenomena of autoscopy are nothing else than objective hallucinations determined by perturbations of the cenesthesia—that is to say, of the whole complex of vague sensations which contribute to our idea of personal existence. On the contrary, they show, in my opinion, only the perfect, the mathematical correspondence between phenomena of autoscopy and disorders of the

cenesthesia; but it does not at all follow that the former are objective hallucinations determined by the latter. To solve the problem Dr. Sollier should have been careful to find out whether the state of anæsthesia of the invalid did not correspond with the phenomenon of the exteriorisation of local sensibility at the moment when the invalid saw her double. In that case the hypothesis would have scarcely been sufficient to fit the facts, since the disorders in the cenesthesia, instead of being the prime cause of the phenomenon of autoscopic hallucination, would have been reduced to symptoms supporting the hypothesis of absence of sensibility in the organism, *i.e.*, would have been favourable witnesses of the existence of some objectivity in autoscopic phenomena.

Case 4. In this case the subject himself sees his own double at a distance and affirms that his sensibility had been transferred to the double. The case is reported to us by Dr. Lemaître and I quote it from M. Delanne, p. 388.

A college student, whom we will call Boru, intelligent, not at all neurotic, neither in himself nor in his family, had at the age of eighteen years, while preparing for examination in French literature, an autoscopia of great precision. It was on the evening of January 22nd, 1901, while he was engaged in working out a parallelism between the characters of the two works of Corneille, 'Polyeucte' and 'Le Cid.' He says: 'Needing to verify a reference, I got up and went into another room to get a volume where I expected to find it. What happened? Quite preoccupied with this detail, I found myself at the door of my bedroom facing the head of my bed, holding the book in one hand and the door-knob with the other. I was in this position when quite suddenly I saw myself at my table writing the sentence which was running in my mind. I do not know how long this lasted, but there was lacking from this vision no single detail—neither the lamp with its green shade, nor the small bookshelf above my head, nor the exercise books, nor the inkstand, &c. Curiously enough, I was perfectly conscious of standing upright by the door, and could feel the cold metal of the knob which I held, whilst at the same time I had the sensation of sitting on a chair and pressing with my fingers on my pen in such a way as to write. I saw Boru sitting. More than that, I saw and read the sentence which he wrote, and he was distant from the door from six to nine feet. Then I went towards my double, and the double disappeared. Boru No. 1 and No. 2 had perhaps coalesced.'

There will be seen later, at the end of the enumeration of this group of cases, the induction by which we can group analogous facts to those just stated, where consciousness remains in the actual body while sensibility seems to have emigrated into the phantom for the moment. I note that cases of this kind are difficult to express by the very simple hypothesis of doubling in the cenesthesia as put forward by Dr. Sollier.

(To be continued).

#### MRS. WRIEDT IN LONDON.

By arrangement with Mr. W. T. Stead, Mrs. Wriedt, of Detroit, U.S.A., whose mediumship has recently been described in our columns by Vice-Admiral Moore, is now in London on a short visit; and last Thursday, in response to an invitation, a representative of 'LIGHT' attended a sitting given by her to a small company of ladies and gentlemen at Julia's circle at Wimbledon. The séance took place in the dark. At one end of the room was a cabinet, in front of which the sitters were arranged in a semi-circle, the medium occupying one of the end chairs. No materialisations took place, the manifestations being confined to voices and the occasional appearance of lights.

The messages, with one exception, came through a trumpet which, prior to the sitting, had been placed on the floor in front of the medium—the exception being in the case of the medium's guide, 'Dr. Sharp,' whose voice was remarkably loud and clear and unmistakably masculine in quality. Among the intelligences who purported to communicate were Cardinal Newman, who uttered a Latin invocation, Dean Swift, and M. Berteaux, the late French Minister for War. In one case some striking evidences of identity were given which quite satisfied the sitter to whom they were addressed, though he was unable to recognise the voice. We are informed that persons desiring to sit with Mrs. Wriedt should apply to Mr. W. T. Stead, Bank-buildings, Kingsway, W.C., through whom all arrangements are being made.

#### 'LIGHT' AND REINCARNATIONISTS.

I honour your paper for printing the letter asking 'LIGHT' not to 'sneer at reincarnation.' As one who firmly believes in seers, prophets, and communion with the departed—who have proved identity in their re-coming, individuality in their teachings, and progress in their own spirit lives—I would point out that all teachings of the spirit are spiritual, and are 'hidden wisdom' expounded. Theosophy postulates this term, but we might as easily be called Bibleists, or New Testamentists, or Christists, since the Bible teaches all who wish to be illumined the whole truths of spirit return and 'miracles' that are now scientific facts. I think Mrs. Besant writes with authority, knowing that in that extraordinary book, 'The Secret Doctrine,' as also in Paracelsus, the discoveries of ether, vibration, sound, and world systems, although somewhat mystically interpreted, are presented with scientific accuracy. I do not think the study of planets, systems, and evolution, in which the Theosophist revels, does much good, except in enlarging the powers of thinking and concentration. We have no evidence, most of us, that the world is round (unless we study it, we just accept it), and it will go on just the same if it is called square! Quite impartially, I think both Theosophists and Spiritualists in the past rather fought for leading by high and mighty ones, but no one can have a 'corner' in 'Masters,' nor a sole privilege in 'great ministering spirits.' When we can all say in unity, 'The Divine Spirit leadeth all men and women alike by adversity into unity,' then personal opinions and controversies die away.

FLORA AMES.

I hope I am not conceited enough to expect to convert any Reincarnationist. But there are probably some who may be somewhat harassed about this question, to whom I offer the following remarks.

Mr. Gerald Balfour remarked some short time since that if he were told that he was to be reincarnated as the Emperor of China, it would mean to him that he (Mr. Balfour) would cease to exist and another individual would come into existence as the Emperor of China. As far as I know, I believe I am right in saying that this appears to be precisely what Gautama Buddha, as an agnostic, if not practically a materialist and atheist, would have meant, *viz.*, that the result of the acts and life of one person (A) would, according to the doctrine of 'Karma,' take effect in the future in the life of some other person (B).

Here, I think, lay the germ of the entire vast structure of various forms of Reincarnationist belief, which afterwards leaked back, as it were, into Hinduism, which was previously wholly innocent of any such doctrine.

Among other developments there appears to have risen, perhaps as a desperate expedient, the idea that after a sufficient number of reincarnations, the Ego (of which Gautama denied the existence) enters into recollection of all its previous reincarnations.

So much for the general statement of Oriental beliefs. In the West arose the idea of a material resurrection (possibly among the Jews about the time of the Maccabees) to take place at some distant period, the original body-particles being rebuilt in some mysterious manner into another physical body. May it not be lawful to consider that both these errors (if either or both are errors) arose from a materialistic failure to comprehend the 'spiritual body'—as mentioned, *e.g.*, by St. Paul—as the expression of the spirit itself? And of the existence of this 'spiritual body' are not many of us convinced that there is actual proof, as strong, for example, as that of the ether which scientists are bound to postulate?

French Spiritists, as a rule, are believers in reincarnation, and their 'spirits' often state that they have just been, or are just about to be, reincarnated, and it is the divergency here—the strong divergency—between French Spiritism on the one hand, and that of the Anglo-Saxon races on the other, which seems to have prevented Dr. Joseph Maxwell, when he wrote 'Metapsychic Phenomena,' from placing any sort of confidence in the 'spirit hypothesis.'

I do not wish to go into this discussion here, but for the benefit of those to whom the reincarnation theory offers no sort of attraction or satisfaction, I offer the above remarks.

The late C. C. Massey appears to have held some sort of limited reincarnation doctrine, as applying to those who are not ripened sufficiently for any high sphere of spirit life. But there are very many, I venture to say, to whom a wearisome round of inevitable future reincarnations would take away all interest in the fact of any future life at all. Moreover, what becomes of any hope of renewing our actual loves and friendships in earth life which is offered us by unadulterated Spiritualism?

To how many, also, would even the period offered in 'Devachan' in Mr. Sinnett's 'Esoteric Buddhism,' afford any real satisfaction? This idea, moreover, looks to me like another

'desperate expedient' derived from some problematical monks from Thibet, and giving us the *fancied* presence in that 'Devachan' of persons who are not there at all! With all apologies to Mr. Sinnett, it seems to me that we are here landed in a maze of wild speculations, and treading on ground that is decidedly treacherous.

I have no quarrel with theosophy *as such*—to some extent we are probably all, in a sense, 'Theosophists'—but I believe I am stating an honest truth in saying that although it is nominally not obligatory, one is a fish out of water in any 'Theosophist Society' if one does not believe more or less fully in reincarnation as a future which none but an infinitesimal fraction of us now here present in the flesh can escape.

To myself the entire conception appears to be rooted in materialism as much, at least, as the old Western belief in the 'resurrection of the flesh.'

'Spiritualism' is, no doubt, as pointed out on p. 229 of 'LIGHT' of May 20th, a very wide word indeed, although, owing to the paucity of the nature of all language, it is necessarily often used in more or less restrictive senses. My plea is that 'Spiritualism,' used in the above wide sense, and Reincarnationism (I object to the use of the word 'theosophy' here) are mutually incompatible. I am fully aware, I believe, of all the stock arguments in favour of reincarnation, as to which it would be impossible to treat even shortly in this letter, which is probably too long already.

I cordially endorse the letter of 'J. W. Mahony' on page 252.

GUY HEATON.

I have been much interested in 'D. R. F.'s' thoughtful letter on 'The Law of Karma.' I have never discussed the question with any student of the subject, but it seems to me there is a good deal about it that appears inconsistent. As 'D. R. F.' aptly remarks, 'What about happiness being a reward for well-doing?' If we suffer for our former misdeeds, surely we ought to be rewarded for our good ones. How do 'Karmists' explain the many instances of people who are born beautiful and wealthy, and have everything that can conduce to happiness, and yet who possess anything but charming characters? Then we see the reverse constantly—beautiful characters allied to deformed, diseased bodies, or the victims of every kind of misfortune. According to the 'Law of Karma,' the worst characters ought to have the worst fates, and *vice-versa*, but it is by no means the case, rather the reverse. It may be a convenient theory for some people to hold; but after all, even then it cannot get you out of the *initial* difficulty. If not in this life, then in some far-back æon of time we must all have had an equal beginning somewhere and somehow, and if so, how was it that some advanced and others did not? By the very 'Law of Karma,' I presume *all* must have had equal chances at first.

E. P.

Being interested in the theosophical doctrine of reincarnation, Mr. Wedgwood's remarks in your issue of May 20th attracted my attention.

Some years ago I took some trouble to gain a general view of theosophy in order to ascertain what it is, and on what evidence it rests. For this purpose I read works by Mr. Sinnett, Mr. Leadbeater, Mrs. Besant, and others, which I found very interesting, and although I have not accepted theosophy as a whole, I feel indebted to it for many new lights on various subjects. For reincarnation I have not yet met with any convincing evidence. The information appears to come from the 'Adepts,' 'Masters,' or 'Mahatmas,' as they are variously called, but so far as we Westerners are concerned, we shall have to know a great deal more about these mysterious personages before we accept anything on their *ipse dixit*. Apart from this, it is stated that many people remember their previous incarnations, and this is the line of investigation which appeals to the Western mind. I have, however, been hitherto unsuccessful in finding any good collection of well-authenticated instances, and if Mr. Wedgwood can indicate where such evidence can be found he would gratify the writer of this letter, and probably many other inquirers, who adhere to the apostolic and also scientific maxim: 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.'

With regard to the particular point which has called forth Mr. Wedgwood's letter, it certainly seems as if the reincarnation doctrine is becoming very plastic in the hands of Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater, and others. In Mr. Sinnett's 'Esoteric Buddhism' I find the following statement (p. 148) on the subject of the intervals between incarnations:—

'Certainly these intervening periods are of very variable lengths, but they can hardly ever contract to anything less than fifteen hundred years . . . and fifteen hundred years, if not an impossibly short, would be a very brief interval between two re-births.'

In the preface to the fifth edition we learn that the great Adept who supplied the information had signified that the book is a sound and trustworthy statement of the scheme of Nature as understood by the Initiates, and that the teaching will never have to be remodelled or apologised for. It may therefore be looked upon as canonical. In saying that the interval between incarnations can hardly ever be less than fifteen hundred years, Mr. Sinnett makes certain exceptions, such as infants, idiots, Adepts, and perhaps young children.

Mr. Leadbeater's account (as quoted on p. 223 of 'LIGHT') is very different—namely, that middle-class folk come back in two hundred to three hundred years, skilled workmen in one hundred or two hundred years, and savages in forty to one hundred years. It is a fair inference that the working classes generally will come in between the savages and the skilled labourers. So, according to this, the vast majority in a civilised country will come back within one hundred to three hundred years. Mr. Wedgwood winds up by referring inquirers to the literature of theosophy; but as I understand that both the writers quoted are leading exponents of theosophy, there is a large difference to explain.

D. M. D.

In an earnest search after truth and a solid basis on which to build the best kind of life I am capable of at this stage of development, also for an answer to some of the bitter problems of life which oppress me, I have lately attended many New Thought and Theosophic lectures. While gratefully acknowledging the splendid truths which I begin dimly to see in the teachings of both, I have wondered, a little wearily sometimes, whether the Theosophist, while reducing life to such an exact science as he appears to do, is not robbing it of some of the bloom of that great and glorious thing, the true love of man and woman for each other, and the crowning wonder of parenthood. As he has inserted it in the always sacred precincts of his own magazine, Mr. Leadbeater, of course, considers the account of his 'vision' good reading for the mothers and future mothers of his movement. Now, as I know that Spiritualism is sometimes adversely, though quite kindly, discussed in public by Theosophists, they are, I am sure, the last people to deny us a similar freedom in 'LIGHT,' and this 'vision' appears to me to come under the head of the appallingly fantastic. For, think of it! Not 'this is our tiny wonderful baby—come straight from God's fairyland—for us,' but 'This is Mr. — who has chosen us for his parents, having karmic ties with us both, which, forsooth, he wishes to work off.'

The life of the ordinary individual on this planet has—owing, no doubt, to a large extent, to our mistakes—so little of glory and wonder, that I would be glad to know how such 'visions,' which may be considered by many, for aught I know, to be inspired, can possibly be held to uplift?

T. H. S.

As my criticism gave rise to your article on page 223, and to the letters that have appeared in 'LIGHT,' permit me to say a few words further on this subject. Reincarnation and its concomitant belief in Karma appear to be a stumbling block to 'D. R. F.' I own I am at a loss to understand his point of view. Surely the first thing we demand from our earthly parents is justice. Love without justice often produces more harm than good. Any spoilt child is a proof of that moral. This leads us to expect from our Heavenly Father justice in its purest form, not caprice or infliction of suffering without a good and sufficient reason. We believers in Karma fully realise the benefit of suffering, but we hold that it must come to all alike, not that a few should drink deep of every sorrow and that many should escape such discipline. We know that each soul, like the 'man of sorrows,' must be perfected *through* suffering as it climbs upward on the ladder. God does not set us here to escape His laws, but to learn them and to conform to them. In this plan there is no favouritism, all must climb, and all in the end attain; but the child who loves and obeys is a quick learner, and climbs fast. 'I who saw Power, see now Love perfect too.'

'Agnostic' sums up our beliefs in the first portion of his letter; but need he take such a dark and pessimistic view as he does at the end? It is always difficult to judge the whole from a part, and let him take comfort from the fact that the lowest kind of savages are dying out, as there are no souls now sufficiently undeveloped to incarnate in that type. Degenerates may increase, but on the other hand the general trend is upward. The tide of evolution may appear to ebb when it is flowing in inch by inch—and slow and sure comes up the Golden Year.'

Southsea.

C. B.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
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### THE UNCEASING SPIRITUAL OUTPOURING.

It is a tradition in the Church that Whit Sunday commemorates the spiritual outpouring on the Day of Pentecost, and that its name Whit, or White, Sunday refers either to the white garments worn by those who came for baptism or to the bright spirit light which was seen to rest on the disciples and which was described as appearing like cloven tongues as of fire. It might equally well refer to the white wealth of bloom, exceptionally abundant and beautiful this year, with which Nature regales us at this delightful season of resurrection of life and promise of plenteous harvest. Be that as it may, those who accept the record respecting the scene at Jerusalem on that memorable day must all agree that it was a vivid manifestation of spirit presence and power, however they may differ on points of interpretation.

On the Day of Pentecost, so the record runs, the spirit world broke in upon the world of sense and sent the apostles forth to proclaim the truth of spirit return, and the high moral and spiritual principles of their Master. Let us consider the circumstances. The disciples 'with one accord in one place' gave favourable conditions for the manifestations. There came the sound 'as of a rushing mighty wind,' then 'there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire,' and 'they were all filled by the Holy [good] Ghost [spirit influence] and began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance.'

This narrative presents the facts in so simple and straightforward a fashion that Spiritualists, who, as the result of their own experiences, can readily understand the incident, cannot but feel that the writer is attesting an actual experience. Rationalists endeavour to explain it away, and ordinary believers regard it as a miracle and let it go at that—since, in their view, miracles are inexplicable, save as divine interpositions—but the story loses its value unless it is humanly interpreted.

It is made abundantly clear, we think, that the disciples were mediums and that they spoke under the inspirational influence of human spirits who succeeded in making themselves understood by their compatriots, for the listeners, who were of many different nationalities, were all amazed, and exclaimed, 'Are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in his own tongue, wherein we were born?' Peter's explanation of the phenomenon was followed by his triumphant declaration that the martyred Jesus had survived bodily death—that he had been 'raised up, whereof we are all witnesses.'

That this gift of tongues was not an exceptional phenomenon is proved by its frequent recurrence among the early Christians. In his illuminating fourteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul is at great pains to explain that speaking in an unknown tongue, although interesting as a phenomenon, is of little value as compared with the inspiration that enables the prophet (or medium) to speak 'unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.' And here assuredly we can all agree with him. Further, he wisely adds: 'Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.' Even then they should be discreetly presented so as not to call forth condemnation; otherwise, as he shrewdly observes: 'If the whole Church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?'

It is evident, therefore, that the early Christians were primitive Spiritualists. That their meetings frequently resembled the unguided 'developing circles' that have sometimes been held in modern times is clearly shown in the apostle's rebuke: 'How is it, then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.' To this end he suggests that an interpreter should be present, 'but if there be no interpreter,' the man who speaks in an unknown tongue should 'keep silence in the church'; 'let him speak to himself, and to God'—a wise and kindly hint.

We shall do well to remember that 'the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal,' and that, as Paul said, 'Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.' Surely this is the true test of the value of all inspiration—not the wonder of it, not the source of it, but its spiritual profitableness.

At the Jerusalem séance the disciples spoke 'as the spirit gave them utterance,' and the listeners, from all the nations round about, heard the good news of 'life and immortality brought to light' proclaimed in their own tongue. This was unquestionably a manifestation of the presence of incarnate human beings, and we know of no earthly or heavenly reason why those of us 'who seek to maintain the fine thought that the presence and power of unseen beings are abiding and vital realities, not only in the church but in the world,' should not make the utmost use of it. We heartily agree with a well-known writer who says:—

He has nothing to glory in who has lost the sense of the nearness and reality of the spirit world and who has ceased to believe in an inspiring God, or who only believes in a God who ceased to inspire eighteen hundred years ago. Believers in God have a right to assume that His Spirit is still an inspiration and a power, and that, in a very vivid sense, tongues of fire come now to prepared and willing souls. In London as in Jerusalem, the witnesses say that these things can be, and we must be emancipated from the narrowing thought that inspiration was a fact only in the past, and that what God once did He could not, or would not, do again.

Let no one call him 'superstitious' who is happily able to take the story as it stands, to classify it with similar records in ancient and modern times, and to hold it as true that (in God's great order) the unseen beings may and do break in upon the seen. . . . We have a great danger to avoid—the danger associated with the natural but misleading thought that the early days of the Christian Church were necessarily its best. That delusion has worked immense mischief, especially in inducing so many of us to hold back our own judgments and consciences in the desire to make the early Christians the sole authority in regard to faith and practice.

That is true. It is time that we all recognised it and acted as if we believed that inspiration is a perennial fact: that God has never left Himself without a witness.

## LIFE IN THIS AND OTHER WORLDS.

By MR. E. E. FOURNIER D'ALBE, B.Sc. (LOND.).

An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday evening, May 11th, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Mr. H. Withall, the vice-president, occupying the chair.

(Continued from page 248.)

Let us see, now, how far our three conditions of food, education, and work will carry us in the wider world of living beings.

I think we shall find it to hold good with absolute generality. All organisms, down to the monera, require food or its equivalent, access to a source of energy. They also require faculties for utilising the energy and directing it into the proper channels. And, lastly, they require facilities for exercising those faculties. But in this last respect a certain reservation must be made. The faculties may remain dormant for very considerable periods. I refer not only to habits of hibernating animals, or to the winter sleep of plants and trees, but more especially to the enormous periods during which seeds can retain their vitality, and hence also their inherited ancestral memory. In those periods the pulse of life slackens down. Time stops, so to speak. The faculties are there, but they are asleep. Nor do they decay for lack of exercise, for warmth and moisture release them from their lethargy, whereupon they come forward in full strength, and perhaps refreshed and invigorated. This we must carefully bear in mind when searching after vital essentials. And furthermore, faculties may, even in the working state, be in abeyance for great lengths of time and yet remain unimpaired, although this does not apply equally to all faculties. Thus, a person may learn to skate on ice, and may be able to skate with perfect skill on returning north after spending half a lifetime in the tropics. On the other hand, he may entirely forget a foreign language he spoke in early childhood. Yet it is certain that he will re-acquire and speak that language with far greater facility and accuracy than he would do had he never spoken it before.

When animals hibernate, or when they pass through a stage of transformation requiring complete rest, they take care to surround themselves with an impervious skin, membrane, or wall, through which the ordinary stimuli and time-pulses cannot reach them. Time, to them, does stand still, almost literally, much more so than it does in our sleep. For we retain a certain link with time-marking events, the result of long-standing habits and biological requirements, and somnambulists possess, as we know, a very remarkable power of timing future actions in accordance with suggestions made to them. Could we enter into the consciousness of a sleeping tree, a hibernating animal, or a seed kept away from moisture, we should probably find that their period of sleep or quiescence appeared to them exceedingly short. A night spent in sound, refreshing sleep never appears to us so long as a wakeful night. Our time scale is lengthened out, and thus our time record is reduced. We reckon in hours instead of minutes, and the number thus obtained is sixty times smaller than before. But our faculty of changing our time-world is limited during normal terrestrial life. Whether we enlarge or reduce our time-rate of existence after death is a question which has to be carefully considered. May I venture to remind you of my remarks on pre-existence made on the last occasion on which I had the privilege of addressing you? I pointed out, I think, that since our earliest terrestrial existence took the form of a microscopic germ, our earliest time-scale may have been smaller in the same proportion, so that there is room, not only for a long pre-existence, but for an infinite series of pre-existences dating back 'asymptotically,' as a geometrician would say, to the moment of our conception.

Thus we arrive at a rational view of the apparent suspension of vital actions. The vital action continues unimpaired and uninterrupted; all that is changed is the time-scale of vital events, which is changed in the same proportion as the expenditure of energy. In a hibernating animal or a stored seed the

'rate of living' is greatly reduced. In the germinating seed, on the other hand, it is immensely accelerated, so much so that, from the biological point of view, a human being passes through the greater portion of his organic life before he is born.

These considerations are of value inasmuch as they liberate us from the shackles of time. When we can crowd a lifetime into a moment, or expand it so as to cover a geological age, the possibilities of existence are enormously enhanced. We who have, all of us, spent a lifetime in the infra-world before we trod the crust of this globe, we are in direct touch with that magic which makes a thousand years as a day. It has sometimes seemed to me as if we might conceivably undergo a further time-transformation at some period after death, and reckon our times in geologic ages or Julian periods, living such a life as the earth itself lives at the present day. Do not some of us, many of us perhaps, believe that the earth has a life and soul of its own, a life whose pulse-beat is a year and whose nerve-impulse a day? Are we not as cells in the body of the earth, highly specialised cells such as those of the cortex of the brain, with perhaps a similarly exalted function?

Such an outlook gives a fine sweep to our panorama of life. But we need not have recourse to it as yet. The outlook is promising enough in any case. For we have yet far to travel before we reach the limits of life. Where are, indeed, those limits? *Energy*—why, the whole world abounds with it, the earth is bursting with it, the air is full of it, and the sun blazes it down upon us at the rate of six million horse-power per square mile of the earth's surface. *Faculties*, inherited memories—have we not the whole vast recesses of the immemorial past to draw upon? *Work*, exercise, society—is there not the whole visible universe before us, wherein every creature can find some work to do, some place where it may leave its mark?

No, there is no limit to life. Even Haeckel asserts that there is no line of demarcation between animate and inanimate nature. It is a matter of degree, of gradual transition, of higher or lower specialisation or organisation. And here we come again upon the great fact which we previously encountered when following quite a different line of thought—that life is the one great reality, a reality of which we have immediate cognition, whereas lifelessness, 'dead matter,' and death itself are the unknowns, and must, in the nature of things, remain for ever beyond our ken.

We cannot assign any limits to life, since it is the only ultimate reality. It has no limits, and therefore no conditions, essential or otherwise. Life in some form is possible in all conditions and under all circumstances. Our inquiry thus becomes meaningless when we consider life in general. It only has a meaning when we consider any given form of life duly specified. We can inquire into the conditions of human life, animal life, plant life, the life of atoms or of planets, or other forms of life hitherto undiscovered and unknown, and to such inquiries we must limit ourselves.

And then our question assumes a somewhat different form. It becomes this: What conditions must be fulfilled in order that the life characteristic of a human being may be continued? Here we meet with another difficulty: What kind of life is 'characteristic' of a human being? Remember that we live, all of us, not only a double life, but a whole multitude of lives. There is our physical life, our domestic life, our public life, our emotional and intellectual life, our dream life, not to speak of that strenuous organic life of our pre-natal days. Which of these many forms of vital activity are to be continued?

The answer is not far to seek. It has been given by thoughtful minds and profound philosophers ever since man began to think of his ultimate fate. This life must be a preparation for the next. There must be a thread of continuity. There must be no gulf fixed between what we are now and what we shall be. If there were an absolute break of continuity we should no longer be ourselves. We should be something else, something new, a new 'creation out of nothing.' And that would be against all natural law. For we have evolved from an infinite chain of continuities. We are, to some definite extent, our parents and our grandparents and our more remote ancestors. We have built on an hereditary foundation. Some have built magnificently on their own account,

others have failed to utilise to an adequate extent the foundations provided by heredity. But though there may be new and unheard-of developments, the thread of continuity is never lacking. A son may succeed where his father failed, but it is, in a very definite sense, the father who succeeds in the person of his son, and paternal pride is one of the most justifiable of human emotions.

When, therefore, we are 'born again' into the kingdom of Heaven we shall be essentially ourselves, essentially what we have grown to be in this our preparatory stage of earth-life. The faculties which we develop here will form the foundation for the faculties we shall exercise on our future scene of action. Some faculties which are rudimentary here will come into full action hereafter. Some others, which, like the gills of the tadpole, are only adapted to the preparatory stage, will become atrophied and finally drop into disuse. But there will be no sudden transition, no abrupt cessation or starting of activities. The life we shall live then we are living now, if only in our dreams. I have no doubt whatever that the caterpillar often dreams of flying. It is, in fact, impossible for a student of Nature to believe otherwise. For the caterpillar inherits the organic memory of a countless series of butterfly ancestors, and it is incredible that this memory should not sometimes emerge into the consciousness of the caterpillar.

Thus we may be sure that the future life will not surprise us by its strangeness. It will, if anything, appear strangely familiar, like what we have dreamt of in our happiest and healthiest moments, those moments when the tide of life was at its fullest, and we felt calmly conscious of a grand and glorious destiny. (Applause.)

And now may I ask you to follow me in one of those excursions into the unknown, which have all the combined fascinations of adventure and of philosophic speculation? You are probably acquainted with the view of the next life which has always appealed to me most strongly, the view which regards it as an organic existence in a realm with which we are now in daily contact, a realm which is, in fact, all about us, a fitting abode for the loving souls of our departed.

If, after walking the solid crust of the globe for three-score years and ten, more or less, we shall inhabit the more mobile and subtle element which surrounds us, in what regards may we expect the conditions of life to be essentially altered?

And firstly, as regards food, or access to a source of energy. Will there be any need for the combined boiler, engine and machinery which we find in the human frame? Remember that we are incapable of directly absorbing the energy of sunlight, whereas plants are capable of absorbing it. Every animal is, as a noted biologist puts it, essentially an alimentary canal with subsidiary organs attached to it. I should, of course, put it the other way about, and say that every animal is essentially a living individual, provided with the necessary machinery for terrestrial nutrition.

A gaseous or aeriform constitution such as creatures of the air would necessarily possess would have many advantages, one of which was pointed out in another connection by no less a person than the late James Clerk Maxwell, the renowned electrician of Cambridge.

Perpetual motion, in the sense of creating energy out of nothing, is proved to be impossible. But a 'demon' (that is Maxwell's word) who could sort the slow molecules of a gas from the rapidly moving ones might derive an almost unlimited amount of energy from the ambient air, by the simple expedient of bringing about whatever difference of temperature he pleased, without expending any appreciable energy himself. I think that ingenious conception of Maxwell's is more than a conundrum of physical science. It is probably the solution of the first vital question of our *post-mortem* existence. It entirely solves the question of driving power, without contradicting any known law of Nature. The energy inherent in the air is, of course, ultimately derived from the sun, but that is simply another instance of that continuity which we are so anxiously endeavouring to preserve.

Next comes the question of faculties, their evolution and education. Do we possess any faculties which will enable us to master the conditions of an aerial existence?

You may have heard of those modern torpedoes which are controlled by wireless waves. They are capable of receiving a message from the land station and acting upon it. They have, so to speak, a sense organ attuned to the voice of the controlling electrician, and a motive system capable of translating his instructions into accomplished facts. This is one instance of a faculty, however coarse and rudimentary, of responding to invisible and intangible stimuli. You may have seen those wonderful vacuum tubes which glow with a steady and gentle light as soon as they are introduced into a rapidly alternating electric field. There again you have a case of a body, in this case a gaseous body, absorbing energy from the ambient medium and responding to vibrations of a certain range of frequency.

Now I believe that a great many supernormal and mediumistic faculties are rudimentary faculties which will find their full development in the after-life. *Telæsthesia*, *telekinesis*, and generally all externalisations of the human soul during earth-life appear to me to be anticipations of the greater flexibility and mobility which will characterise our after-life constitution.

We know that under such supernormal conditions sensation and perception are not confined to the ordinary channels. Sensitiveness seems to become generally diffused throughout the organism. If that is so we have a remarkable parallelism to most plants and all protozoa, in which there is no differentiation of sense organs, but a sensitiveness diffused over the entire surface of the organism. In an aerial type of being the sensitiveness might well be diffused, not merely over the whole surface, but throughout the interior, so that the response would be instantaneous and simultaneous in the whole being.

This, you might say, is a retrogression, a reversion to a very primitive type. But then remember two things. In the first place we have to deal with a medium which was never inhabited by any of our long line of ancestors. For if geological evidence can be relied upon, we have evolved primarily from the ocean, and have only gradually acquired the faculties necessary for dwelling on land. And thus, being once more immersed in a three-dimensional ocean instead of being confined to a two-dimensional surface, it is quite reasonable that we should revert to the original simple type of ocean-born life not only in simplicity of structure, but in the general diffusion of sensibility.

Remember, also, that our earliest pre-natal stages are a recapitulation of our long ancestral evolution. What more reasonable than that our birth into the next world should be another recapitulation of the long-forgotten history of our earliest ancestors, and that the special organs and faculties adapted to an aerial existence should be only gradually evolved out of such rudimentary faculties as we possess at the time of our transition? If, therefore, the soul-body of the recently departed should turn out to be a comparatively embryonic and formless structure, incapable of assuming a tangible shape except by absorbing material temporarily from a terrestrial medium, that is exactly the state of things which we may describe as warranted by the evolution of our race and our own pre-natal development.

(To be continued.)

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## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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J. PARTRIDGE.—Thank you for your 'dream experience,' but we are unable to use it in 'LIGHT.'

'M. T.'—You could not do better than read 'Man's Survival After Death,' by the Rev. C. L. Tweedale. The author deals with the Scriptural aspect of the subject very fully and helpfully.

'J. A. H.'—Judging from past experience, we are able to agree with you that public debates seldom do much good. Spiritualism is a subject for calm and dispassionate investigation.

W. A. BAYST.—We are pleased to learn that there is some likelihood of the Crystal Palace becoming the corporate property of the Empire.

A number of communications on 'Light and Reincarnationists' have reached us, for which we are unable to find space. Correspondents will do well to remember that short letters are much more likely to be printed than long ones.

## SPIRITUALISM: ITS MESSAGE TO HUMANITY.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MR. PERCY R. STREET AT THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MASS MEETING ON THURSDAY, MAY 18TH, AT SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE, FINSBURY, LONDON, E.C.

The Spiritualist, as the visible representative of the spirit world, is the bearer of a message to humanity of such a nature that its value is difficult to estimate. It is an answer to the soul's deepest questionings, a solution of life's greatest problem—death.

From time immemorial men have yearned for immortality. It matters not what race or period we may examine, a life for the dead stands prominently forth as a fundamental principle in religion and philosophy. In this great search, Nature has been questioned and tradition examined with the minutest scrutiny. Sage, seer and philosopher have all contributed their quota. Kings would have gladly laid aside their kingly pomp if, in exchange, they could have received indubitable proof that man lived beyond the tomb, that death was not the cessation of life's activities: yet it must be recorded as a melancholy fact that, in spite of all efforts, men remain, in the majority of cases, as much in the dark as ever concerning the true nature of death. To such disappointed seekers Spiritualism comes with her message, a final answer, to sweep away the hoary accretions of error and to illumine the darkness of ignorance.

Spiritualism is no mere matter of belief, nor is it the formulation of any fresh creed, bristling with man-made ritual and doctrine; but a science and a philosophy supported by evidence that is authenticated by every necessary attestation. And its message may be divided into three parts: evidential, moral and spiritual.

The greatest fallacy extant concerning Spiritualism is that it is composed wholly of phenomena, without any moral or spiritual import. That many outside our ranks believe this is due, in no small measure, to the influence of some so-called Spiritualists, who have utterly failed to grasp the import of the facts, and hence are not likely to steer their life's course from its directions.

The evidential message of Spiritualism is its foundation, and will always be necessary in order to maintain the proper rigidity of the structure. Those who would relegate phenomena into the background of oblivion are wreckers in the guise of friends—(applause)—for without its phenomenal evidence Spiritualism could not stand. Without its facts Spiritualism is merely a philosophical speculation and must take its place in the ranks of such, instead of standing clear and distinct, as is now the case. We do not entertain the slightest doubt regarding the reality of the message. The evidence supporting the claim of a life for the departed and the possibilities of *post-mortem* communion has been received, weighed, and collated by all classes of investigators, extending from workers in the humblest spheres to those who occupy the loftiest pinnacles of distinction in science and letters. It is certain that modern thought in all departments is gradually moving towards us; our facts and philosophy are being keenly scrutinised by those who have hitherto held aloof from us. Therefore, it is more essential than ever that we sustain the honour of our cause by presenting the evidential message, upon which so much depends, with dignity and completeness, leaving no room whatever for the intrusion of that uneasy doubt so often observed. This, I make bold to say, can only be accomplished by the proper and systematic culture of all the planes of our being, extending from the physical to the spiritual. Right living, right thinking, and right-mindedness will ensure sound functioning for those who have been enabled to bring the psychic plane of their being into conscious and continual activity, and will be the means of attracting from the world of spirits those whose spiritual associateship can only bring increased purity and power. The message of the spirit world is complete; it only remains for us to fit ourselves for its reception and expression in order to convince humanity of its truth.

The moral message of Spiritualism is no less important, since it reveals to man the effect of those moral and spiritual laws upon the observance of which his elevation and true happiness depend, thus constituting a complete guide to the conduct

of life. Our experience of spiritual revelation has taught us that the influence it exercises, when rightly interpreted, is of an upward nature. Therefore, if due attention be not paid to the lessons to be gathered from the experiences of those who now associate with us from the beyond, and if our actions one to another be not characterised by that higher morality naturally sequential on such revelations, it is obvious that we have failed to realise their import, and the knowledge we possess of the reality of a future life and spirit communion is robbed of its true value. If the revelations of the spirit world and the experiences we have gained have not made us better men and women, then, as far as we are concerned, the evidential message of Spiritualism is practically useless, for knowledge and experience are without value if there is no improvement in growth. (Applause.)

The message of Spiritualism is absolutely moral, and the life of the true Spiritualist is hall-marked by his strict adherence to the principles of justice and equity. That some exist who outrage all good taste and feeling by their flagrant breaches of morality does not invalidate the message in the slightest degree; it merely shows that, in spite of revelation and experience, these people have either been unable to discern or have failed to express its import. The majority of the messages we are privileged to receive from the world of spirits bear one important teaching—'the necessity of right living and obedience to law.' Nothing could be more significant or striking than the constant reiteration of the statement that each deed brings in its train retribution or reward, and all spirits appear to declare with unmistakable emphasis that we pay the penalty to the utmost farthing for all our collisions with the laws of our being. I cannot conceive of a more powerful deterrent, where there is an inclination or tendency to wrong-doing, than the moral message of Spiritualism.

Although from our communion with the spirit world we are led into the paths of truth and right conduct, Spiritualism has not exhausted its sphere of influence; in its spiritual message it provides a still greater impetus to seek the higher life.

We may realise that the spirit world exists; we may enjoy the delight of soul communion with those we love who have journeyed on; we may spend pleasant hours in the company of those from the spirit side who walk with us on our earthly way, linked by bonds of undying affinity; aye, we may hourly receive fresh revelation concerning the truths of life, and yet, even as all this comes consciously upon us, we realise the meagreness of our understanding. Before us stretch the illimitable possibilities of infinitude, wondrous stores of priceless knowledge that may yet be ours. The spiritual message of Spiritualism can be only apprehended by those who have cultivated by purity and prayer the divine spirit of aspiration. To such, life is one continual revelation of spiritual truth: more and more fully do they realise the harmony of the universe and their relationship to it. Their lives are sweetened and enriched as each day some new aspect of the Cosmos is unfolded to their comprehension, and they recognise their unity with the whole. They are drawn into the contemplation of the divine essence and source of life the great First Cause, and thus they fulfil their destiny and consummate the divine plan of existence—the evolution of a spiritual intelligence, capable not alone of surviving the shock of death, but of divine and celestial contemplation.

This is my interpretation of the message that Spiritualism has for humanity, and as Spiritualists we are directly responsible for its delivery. The spirit world can do but little of itself, and though there waits a throng of shining ones seeking to flood the earth with the tidings of life, it remains for us to fit ourselves to become their co-workers in spirit. All cannot manifest the same powers in a like degree, yet no one need be idle; there is a work for each one of us, according to his ability and to the degree with which he opens himself to the inflow of the spirit power. We often deplore our inability to use our psychic powers. The world oftentimes inhibits our developing these qualities as we would desire; yet there remains the grandest of all the manifestations of the spirit for each to express in order to convince humanity of the truth of our gospel—the ordering and conducting of the life in accordance with the message we have received! Let each of us do this, and the cry of 'There goes a Spirit-

ualist!' will be synonymous with 'There go truth, love, and purity!' Thus humanity shall learn that the message of Spiritualism alone can lead it from darkness to light, from the ignorance of the past into the glorious realisation of unbounded knowledge. (Loud applause.)

#### A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING.

In the preface to one of his books, Babu Shishir Kumar, the noble Indian Spiritualist and reformer who recently 'passed on,' relates that in his early life he, like other Brahmos of the day, prayed and heard or delivered sermons in an artificial way; but one day he was the unintentional witness of an incident which made an indelible impression upon him:—

I heard my eldest brother (Basanta Kumar) singing a song alone in a solitary place. It was his own composition, and was to this effect: 'My Lord, how boundless must be Thy love. I see it when I am awake; I dream it when I am asleep!' I approached him, to find he was bathed in tears. I was amazed, the sight was so fascinating! I falteringly inquired of my brother why he was weeping. His reply was: 'A few years later, when you are a little older, you will understand it all.'

Shishir Kumar, however, *did* understand. The idea shot into his mind that it was not only possible to sing the glory and love of God, but to realise them so vividly as to shed tears of joy over them. Basanta's time on this earth-plane was nearly up: he was soon to be called by his heavenly Father to another sphere of duty. Shishir, on the other hand, was destined to live long to carry out his own mission for the good of humanity. The study of Spiritualism greatly strengthened his faith in the goodness of God, for what more is needed to enable us to believe in that goodness if we know for certain that we shall survive death and meet again those for whom our hearts weep? It was this firm conviction of God's goodness that sustained him when he lost his brother Basanta, who had been almost a part and parcel of his life. Later came the action brought against his paper, the 'Anrita Bazar Patrika,' for criminal defamation—an action which, though a European Deputy Magistrate was the nominal prosecutor, was practically started and conducted by the State, and which resulted in Shishir's financial ruin. Picture the scene on the last day of the trial: The case has dragged its length along for over a week. Shishir Kumar is on heavy bail. He must appear before the judge in an hour's time or forfeit the amount of his security and make himself liable to be prosecuted on a fresh charge of contempt of court. He has not yet taken his bath and breakfast. Just then an inspiration seizes him. With a piece of charcoal he writes the first couplet of a sonnet on the wall before him. He turns, takes a few steps, comes back and writes the next couplet. He walks to and fro several times, finishes a poem of rare beauty; sets it to music, bathes and breakfasts, and attends the court just in time! What is the burden of the song? Freely translated, it stands:—

God, I have at last realised Thee. Thou art my Father and I am Thy son. What ineffable joy this discovery brings to me! No longer do I care for the ills of the world! My only desire now is to end my days in worshipping Thee and singing Thy glory.

Wilt Thou lash me, Father? I am not troubled; for Thy lashing carries no pain, but only sweetness with it. Thy stern eyes frighten me not. Why? Because I am Thy son. Nay, beneath those stern eyes I detect only an ocean of love!

When a mother punishes her child, the child weeps, but nestles into his mother's bosom for consolation. Punish me, Father, as much as Thou canst; but afterwards Thou wilt have to cover me with innumerable kisses!

(Abridged from 'The Hindu Spiritual Magazine'.)

#### SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

On Thursday evening, May 25th, Mrs. Mary Seaton, of Washington, U.S.A., delivered a thoughtful and eloquent address on 'Spiritualism and Theosophy: Their Similarities and Dissimilarities,' to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists. Mr. W. J. Colville made a brief and interesting speech on the same subject. A full report of these addresses will appear in early issues of 'LIGHT.'

#### SPIRITUALIST CONGRESS AT COPENHAGEN.

Mr. A. V. Peters, writing from Copenhagen, reports that the first Congress of Scandinavian Spiritualists has been a great success. He says: On the night of Thursday, May 11th, the delegates—who included representatives from Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark—were the guests of the Copenhagen friends at a very enjoyable informal conversation held at the City Café. Friday morning broke bright and warm—a brilliant day, on which all Nature seemed to rejoice. The Congress having been opened with an invocation and a hearty welcome to the visitors, we listened to a beautiful cantata composed expressly for the occasion by Mr. Aage Nording, the libretto being the work of his gifted mother, Mrs. Anna Nording, who has also translated Mr. Stead's 'Letters from Julia' into Danish. The choir were non-Spiritualists, who kindly gave their services. The president, Mr. Lyngs, editor of the Danish 'Truthseeker,' next explained why the Congress had been called into being. He said that after twenty-five years of hard work and investigation he thought it time that the whole of the Northern countries should be brought together and the links that united them made closer and stronger. He also referred appreciatively to the altered tone of the Danish Press towards Spiritualism. Letters were then read from various societies and the delegates from various countries addressed the meeting, and I gave the message which Mr. Withall asked me to deliver from the London Spiritualist Alliance. Major Busch spoke for Sweden, and Herr Torstensen for Norway. Mrs. Nording represented the Universal Congress of Spiritualists and afterwards, in response to a special request, I gave a few clairvoyant descriptions, Mr. J. S. Jensen very kindly translating for me. It was a gathering of Spiritualists in and out of the flesh, and great power was in our midst. In the afternoon papers were read on 'Why we Suffer,' and 'How to get the Best Conditions for Séances.' Lively discussions followed.

On Saturday, the 13th, a paper was read on 'The Living Electricity in Humanity and Nature,' by Mr. von Huth, who has suffered imprisonment for his work of magnetising. Other papers were read during Saturday and Sunday on 'The Double,' 'Séance Control,' &c. The Swedish medium, Mr. Carl Soderling, gave a lecture under spirit control, the sentiments of which were noble and uplifting. On Sunday the Congress was favoured with a visit from Madame d'Espérance, who received a hearty welcome. During a discussion that followed a paper read by Mr. Lyngs, Madame d'Espérance said that so-called exposures of mediums did much harm. Her friends had taken great care of her, and she thought that all mediums ought to be well looked after. She compared a medium to a glass that should always be kept bright and clean, to enable the divine light to shine through. The Congress closed on Sunday with a speech by Mr. Lyngs, who said that they had experienced a spiritual baptism. Despite the various opinions that had been expressed, the great cause of Spiritualism had been well represented, and it had been shown that the divine light was over all. The Congress closed with a feeling that much good had been done, and that the power of the spirit world had been brought to bear to help Spiritualists to understand each other better. Many friends have been brought together who never met before, and many who have lived isolated lives have felt cheered, uplifted, and encouraged. It is worthy of note that whereas at one time the whole of the Press of Denmark seemed to be against us, the newspapers have devoted considerable space to fair and unbiassed reports of the Congress. In addition, the 'Politiken,' the leading Danish newspaper, publishes an interview which its representative has had with our friend Madame d'Espérance. Imagine the effect that would be produced if, during the May meetings, a paper in the front rank of London journalism interviewed one of our mediums and published her portrait above a column and a half of clear and well-written description, and you will understand the sensation this article has produced in the minds of the Danish people, especially as the 'Politiken' has always opposed anything spiritualistic. The writer pays Madame d'Espérance the compliment of describing her as no fanatic, but a woman who understands the world. She confided to him that this was the first interview she had granted to any newspaper since 1893.

In relating her experiences she stated that all through her childhood she had seen spirits, but at that time she had kept the fact to herself. She had seen them so plainly that she was able to paint them, and her friends recognised the portraits. She went on to describe how she became a medium. The first sitting in which she took part was when she was seventeen years of age. When she heard raps and saw the table move she thought that there was a hypnotist at work, and that it was her duty to expose the fraud. However, she altered her opinion when she found, during the séance, that her hand was moved to write against her will. As she had always up till then looked upon mediums as humbugs and swindlers, the discovery that she herself was a medium came as an unwelcome surprise. She then described the development of her powers as a materialising medium, incidents of which are so vividly narrated in her book 'Shadowland.' All this is set forth by the interviewer without a single sneer or stupid attempt at explanation. This welcome change of attitude is mainly due to the persistent labour of Mr. J. S. Jensen, who has shown to the Danish people that Spiritualism is a reasonable philosophy and that mediums are not fools and frauds.

A. VOUT PETERS.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

*The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views which may elicit discussion.*

#### Mr. Hereward Carrington and the Bangs Sisters.

SIR,—While in no manner interested in the question of the Bangs Sisters' pictures, I resent, as must everyone who has the privilege of knowing Mr. Hereward Carrington, Vice-Admiral Moore's attitude towards him, as manifested in a letter, dated May 13th, 1911, published in 'LIGHT.' To me it seems unworthy of a man of the Admiral's intelligence to impute to one who differs in opinion a lack of good faith. I have for years past watched Mr. Carrington's efforts to distinguish the true from the false, not only in psychic researches, but also in other fields of scientific inquiry, and I have done this with the enviable advantage of a great many discussions with him. Sometimes we differed, sometimes agreed, but I have yet to meet a man here or in America of a more fearless, just, and truth-seeking mind. Before this young man lies a great and useful future, and I would be sorry to think that the attack of Vice-Admiral Moore, who, I am sure, would take as much pride in his friendship as I do, were the two men to meet and become personally acquainted, might have the effect of making one reader of 'LIGHT' lessen his faith in the ability or perfect sincerity of a man of unusually high character and of very probable service of no small importance to science.—Yours, &c.,

MAURICE V. SAMUELS.

American Universities Club of London.

[We have received a long letter from Mr. W. Marriott, who states that the trick known as 'Dr. Wilmar's Spirit Paintings' was invented by him and that no correct solution of it has been forthcoming. Mr. Marriott disputes the accuracy of Admiral Osborne Moore's statement that the conditions under which the Wilmar paintings are produced 'no more resemble the Bangs' conditions than a locomotive boiler does a tea-pot,' and, denying that the picture comes on the wrong canvas, states that 'it can be made to appear on either as we wish.' In conclusion, he says: 'A psychic cause should not be claimed for an occurrence until it has been proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that a human cause was out of the question. This has not been done yet. Communication between those on either side of the great divide is surely far too stupendous a fact to require such puny bolstering. If it is possible, and no one can say that it may not be, let that fact be proved, but let it be done in a way that sane and thinking men can accept, and let it be shorn once for all of everything in the least way doubtful.' The readers of 'LIGHT' are indebted to Admiral Moore for his valuable records of the phenomena witnessed by him, but as discussion respecting the *bona fides* of other investigators cannot be fruitful of good, and may easily do harm, we cannot print further letters on this subject, unless Mr. Carrington, who is entitled to do so, deems it necessary to send us a brief reply.—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

#### Mr. C. Bailey, the Australian Medium, in London.

SIR,—Last week I was one of the sitters at the first séance given by Mr. Charles Bailey since his return to this country. The meeting was very interesting, inasmuch as Mr. Bailey's guides gave some edifying advice, but as a demonstration of that phase of mediumship with which his name is associated, *viz.*, the bringing of objects from a distance and 'the passage of matter through matter,' it was not convincing. There was an entire absence of what we speak of as 'test conditions,' although the guides deliberately asked me to search the medium, which I did. The results, though somewhat startling, were not at all of an evidential value. Under the control of an Indian who spoke broken English, and during a short period of complete darkness, a mass of wet earth of about four inches in diameter—said to have been brought from France—was placed on the table, and on examination immediately afterwards was found to contain four palæolithic flint instruments. One of these was given to me by the guide, and I have had it examined by one of the best authorities in London, who considered it to be a good example of a flint from Dordogne, in France, where these prehistoric flints are found, but they can be procured in London.

How much more satisfactory it would have been if such a result had been obtained by a carefully selected and sympathetic committee, with the medium in a cabinet like that at the office of 'LIGHT.' I hope the London Spiritualist Alliance will invite Mr. Bailey to sit under fair test conditions, especially in their cabinet, and give him opportunities of demonstrating his mediumistic powers, which I understand he has frequently done in Australia.

I am willing to contribute to a fund for this purpose, and I am certain that there are many connected with the movement who would help to secure Mr. Bailey's services.—Yours, &c.,

London.

A. WALLACE, M.D.

May 18th, 1911.

#### 'Think on these Things.'

SIR,—While conversing with a good orthodox woman (who had a daughter dying of decline), I asked, 'Does she suffer much?' 'Oh, yes,' was the reply, 'but the heavier the cross the brighter the crown.' I pondered, 'Is this true?' Surely it is not the suffering that adds to the lustre of the crown, unless the character passed through the crucible comes out refined gold. I know a man who suffers from an incurable disease that necessitates the application of hot fomentations. His wife says that he swears terrifically. Swearing may be a good safety-valve, but it is hardly a heavenly qualification. It is strange that sufferers from their own ignorance and wilfulness glory in self-martyrdom, calling it 'the will of God.' Passing through a churchyard, I saw on a tombstone these words:—

'Rest, why rest?

There's all eternity to rest in,'

and beneath was the grave of an earnest citizen and worker. What a mockery to sit with folded hand 'for all eternity'! Satan is said to do better than that, for he finds 'some mischief still for idle hands to do.' Surely the inconsistencies of human nature need the enlightening touch of spiritual philosophy.—Yours, &c.,

E. P. PRENTICE.

Sutton.

#### Illumination and Understanding.

SIR,—The thought has been with me for a long time that there is a great truth which we cannot try too hard to realise, *viz.*, that in the highest state, the divine in the human will become merged in the Whole Reality—Divine Spirit. As we progress in spirituality even here, we reach out and draw closer and closer to God, the Source. Not the least factor in this progression is the everlasting quest for the perfect, the satisfying, in the human. If we live rightly we truly realise that there is only one unfailing love. Slowly and through much heart and soul hunger, comes this illumination—and with bowed head and reverent spirit we receive the crown of understanding, and rejoice in our at-one-ment with God.—Yours, &c.,

RUTH SCHWARTZ.

#### The 'Peace Resolution' at the May Convention.

SIR,—With reference to the report appearing in 'LIGHT' of May 27th, of the passing of the 'Peace resolution' at the May Convention, will you permit me to say, lest my words on that occasion be misunderstood and taken as implying other than was intended, that my experiences of the horrible nature of an armed conflict are connected with my career as a photographer and not as a soldier. What I witnessed will for ever place me in active opposition to those who advocate war as a favourable method of settling disputes.—Yours, &c.,

PERCY R. STREET,

## Edward Capern, the Poet, and a Coincidence.

SIR,—Whether the following be regarded as a 'coincidence' of the mechanical order, or as something fraught with a deeper significance, the circumstances will doubtless be thought of interest. The facts are these. Some years ago, while editing a Service journal, 'The Post,' I wrote a short sketch of the life and work of a little-known poet, Edward Capern, 'the postman poet,' of Bideford. It was, I think, some little while before his passing on at an advanced age. Not till several years afterwards (when I secured them quite by accident) did I have the opportunity of reading his two volumes of poems, and then, owing to pressure of work, I devoted little attention to them. I think they must have lain in my bookcase some eight or nine years till the day before yesterday, when I at last decided to read them thoroughly. This I did with much appreciation, marking the sweet spiritual beauty which pervades his lyrics. This morning, after reading, I replaced the two volumes in their accustomed place, and then selected another smaller volume of poems written by one, perhaps, even less known to the world than Edward Capern. Beyond a cursory glance through its pages, I had never found time to familiarise myself with the second book. There was no particular reason why I should have chosen that one above all others. The book is a little collection of verses by 'Cland Vincent,' published in 1884, and in his first poem, the poet, speaking of himself, suggests that he may have been a Spiritualist, when he says:—

Not from earth's departed 'learnéd'  
Are his treatises obtained,  
But by ghostly intuition  
All his theories are sustained.  
Led away by secret tutors  
Who have left the world behind,  
Who to scholars more than earthly  
Teach the science of the mind.

It appealed to me, but I still had Capern in my mind. I turned to the next poem, wherein 'Woodlands' was mentioned. 'Woodlands,' I remembered, was the title of one of Capern's most exquisite lyrics. Then, to my great surprise, I read:—

But familiar friends . . .  
Of white Bideford's sweet singer,  
They who love the sunny Capern  
Know it fully . . .

The next poem was entirely devoted to Edward Capern and his 'Woodlands.' Probably this is the only book of poems among the many thousands published since his time that makes any allusion to him. That I should possess such a book at all is strange, but stranger still that that should be the very next one selected for study after laying down the writings of the singer who so impressed me.—Yours, &c.,

H. G. SWIFT.

## Battersea Relief Fund.

SIR,—We tender our sincere thanks to the friends who have forwarded the following donations to assist the Battersea Society: Mrs. Hylda Ball, 5s.; Miss Beckett, 5s.; Mrs. Yarnold, 5s.; her two sons, 10s.; Mr. and Mrs. Scott, 10s.; Miss Cameron, 10s.; Mrs. Gordon, 5s.; Mrs. Puckle, 5s.; Mr. Hansburgh, 3s. 6d.; Mr. J. Waite, 5s.; Mrs. Petz, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Fielder, 2s. 6d.

We feel sure there must be many who, having received the glad tidings at Battersea, would like to support the cause there.—Yours, &c.,

ANNIE BODDINGTON,  
Hon. Treasurer.

17, Ashmere-grove, Acre-lane,  
Brixton, S.W.

## Pre-existence and Reincarnation.

SIR,—Many persons fail to discriminate between pre-existence and previous incarnation. Origen's doctrine of the pre-existence of souls before birth into this world as humans, like that of Philo Judæus and other Pharisees of the days of Jesus and of Paul, was a doctrine of the pre-existence of souls in a pure and inexperienced state, and not a doctrine of previous incarnation. The Patristic allusions to John the Baptist, frequently quoted by reincarnationists, so far from being due to belief in reincarnation, were admittedly made by Fathers of the Church who held that Elijah, yet not John the Baptist, was seen with Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration.

It is doubtful if there ever was a 'Christian' doctrine of pre-existence, but quite certain that there never was a 'Christian' doctrine of reincarnation. Theosophists ignore the fact that these two things are not necessarily one and the same.—Yours, &c.,

J. DENHAM PARSONS.

58, Ongar-road, West Brompton, S.W.

## SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, MAY 28th, &amp;c.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—Mrs. Place-Veary gave successful clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. A. J. Watts presided.—15, Mortimer-street, W.—On the 22nd ult. Miss Florence Morse gave clairvoyant descriptions, many of which were recognised. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street.—Mr. Percy E. Beard gave an address on 'The Coming Light.' Solos by Miss Jeannie Bateman, R.A.M., and Mr. W. Basham.—67, George-street, W.—Morning, Mrs. Miles Ord gave an inspirational address on 'The Dawn.' See advt.—E. C. W.

CLAPHAM COMMON.—14, THE PAVEMENT.—Madame French spoke on the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, and gave good clairvoyant descriptions and helpful messages. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address and clairvoyance.—J. R.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mr. F. Fletcher gave an address on 'The Power of Thought.' Sunday next, Mr. G. R. Symons, of Ealing, will give an inspirational address.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Mr. E. W. Wallis gave splendid addresses, and Mrs. Cannock clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Jamrach, addresses and clairvoyance.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. J. Gambriel Nicholson's interesting address on 'Transformation' was much appreciated. Mr. E. P. Noall presided. Sunday next, Mr. and Mrs. Graham, address and clairvoyance.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mrs. Boddington gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7, Mrs. Maunder (vice-president) and members of ladies' circle will occupy the platform. Other meetings as usual.—G. T. W.

BRIGHTON.—OLD TOWN HALL, HOVE, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET.—Three excellent lectures were given by Mr. W. J. Colville, who also spoke on May 30th. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., also Monday, at 8 p.m., Mr. Horace Leaf. Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Curry. Thursday, 8.15 p.m., public circle.—A. C.

BRIXTON.—KOSMON HALL, 73, WILTSHIRE-ROAD.—Mr. F. T. A. Davies gave an address, which was followed by clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address and clairvoyance by Mr. George Morley. Wednesday, at 8.15, public service.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mr. W. Underwood gave a stirring and thoughtful address on 'The Spiritual Vision,' and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Podmore, short address and clairvoyant descriptions. Friday, May 2nd, 8.30 p.m., Mr. Hawes' healing class.—H. B.

HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning, Mr. J. Abrahall spoke on 'Spirit Helpers.' Miss Jose gave good psychometric readings. Evening, Mr. R. Boddington gave an address on 'Spiritualism,' and answered questions. On the 24th Nurse Graham gave well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, see advt.—J. F.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, helpful messages and healing were given through Mr. Abethel. Evening, Mr. D. J. Davis delivered a telling and forceful address on 'The True Purpose of Life.' Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Macbeth Bain. Thursday, June 8th, public circle. June 11th, at 7, Mrs. Podmore. July 2nd, anniversary.—A. C. S.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD.—Miss Morris gave an able discourse on 'The Power of Thought.'—A. B.

EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.—Mr. Elvin Frankish gave addresses, and Mrs. Letheren clairvoyant descriptions.—E. F.

CLAPHAM.—HOWARD-STREET, NEW-ROAD.—Mrs. Neville spoke on 'Peace, Purity, Power, and Prayer,' and gave psychometric delineations.—C. C.

SOUTHAMPTON.—VICTORIA ROOMS, PORTLAND-STREET.—Mr. J. Watts gave an address on 'Spiritualism: The always Present Faith,' the Rev. W. Garwood, M.A., presiding.—M. L. C.

SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—Mrs. F. Roberts, of Leicester, gave interesting addresses and excellent clairvoyant descriptions.—J. W. M.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—Mrs. Roberts gave an address on 'The Spheres,' and Mr. Roberts clairvoyant descriptions.—N. S.

LINCOLN.—PROGRESSIVE HALL, COULTHAM-STREET.—On both Sunday and Monday Mrs. Nowell gave addresses and clairvoyant descriptions.—C. R.

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—Mr. P. R. Street lectured on 'The Path of Development' and 'A Statement of Principles,' and Mrs. Street gave clairvoyant descriptions. 22nd, address, under influence, by Mr. Street.—M. L.

PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL.—Mrs. L. Harvey gave addresses, clairvoyant descriptions, and auric readings to large audiences. 25th, Mrs. W. D. Freer gave addresses and psychometric delineations.—W. D. F.