

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe,

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

We are between two fires. Some of our enthusiastic friends reproachfully declare that we do not attach sufficient importance to the phenomenal aspect of Spiritualism and charge us with being too critical. On the other side we are told by friendly critics that we think too much about the phenomena and not enough about the religious and spiritual aspects of our subject. Sometimes we are assured that we go to the spirits far too frequently, and appraise their counsel at too high a valuation. At other times we are informed that we do not trust them enough. Or, again, we are told that Spiritualism tends to weaken and unbalance the mind, and that we ought to trust the divine inner powers that we possess and think for ourselves; while other friendly counsellors tell us that we are too positive, too rationalistic, and too cautious. All of which we regard as a splendid testimonial to the success of our efforts to keep the medium course and hold the balance evenly.

To 'The Hindu Spiritual Magazine' for April Dr. Peebles contributes a glowing tribute to the memory of Babu Shishir Kumar Ghose, the distinguished Hindu reformer and journalist, who was also a devoted Spiritualist, and founder and editor of 'The Hindu Spiritual Magazine.' At the public demonstration in honour of the departed leader, which is reported in the same issue, the Maharajah Bahadur of Durbhanga, K.C.I.E., who presided, said:—

The object of 'The Spiritual Magazine,' which he edited in his later years, was to dispel materialism and to convince agnostics that there was an active life beyond the grave. As an advocate of a purely spiritual religion, he succeeded in gaining the friendship of such men as Professor Crookes and Mr. W. T. Stead, and many others who wrote to him in warm appreciation of his good work in the religious realm.

We of 'LIGHT' cordially concur in the expression of admiration and regret evoked by the passing on of our Hindu fellow-worker, and wish all success to the magazine which he founded and which is a worthy exponent of our subject.

As a writer in 'The Swastika' points out, Epictetus, the Greek philosopher of the first century, uttered things that deprive some of our modern ideas of any appearance of newness. Some of the doctrines of Mental and Christian Science, for example, are foreshadowed in the following:—

It is not things, but the opinions about things, that trouble mankind. Thus, death is not terrible. If it were so, it would so have appeared to Socrates, but the opinion we have about death, that is terrible—that is where the terror lies.

One of the particular teachings of our modern spiritual philosophy was well summarised by the sage when some perturbed inquirer asked, 'What if a robber come and find me alone and slay me?' 'Fool!' was the reply, 'not thee, but thy body. Thou art soul bearing up a corpse.'

It is strange to reflect that so great a thinker as Epictetus should have been a slave. But time has avenged his memory, for we know very much more of the slave than of his master.

Life to-day is so full of interest, charm, change, novelty and incident, and so many doors are opening into realms of possible discovery and achievement that we could almost wish to stay here just to watch developments and see what life on earth will be like in two or three hundred years. Indeed, seeing that we must soon 'pass on' we could almost wish that we might be permitted to return to life on this earth, provided that on re-awakening we should be able to recollect our present experiences and compare the people, their customs, environments and habits with those which exist to-day. But if one returned to earth, after the lapse of a couple of centuries, *minus* all conscious remembrance of identity and of a former visit here (with all its interests, pursuits, habits, hopes, accomplishments and companionships) there would be no sense of continuity, no point of contact, no means of comparison or comprehension. To all intents and purposes, therefore, it would be another individual, not the same, who would then exist. It seems as if we shall have to be content to watch developments here from the spirit world. As on-lookers proverbially 'see most of the game' that may be an advantage—especially as we may be able to telepathically inspire and encourage those who will carry on the work.

A New York publication, 'The Christian Work and Evangelist,' wrestles with the urgent question whether Christendom is Christian. The result appears to be a drawn battle, but the negative gets in some sturdy blows. How can we be Christians, it asks, when we let thousands of children toil and starve while 'one man spends a hundred thousand dollars for a dinner-set to use three or four times a year, in his gorgeous home, to entertain already overfed people?' or while thousands of professed Christians squander more money on a few balls and 'sports' than would suffice to run a good business that would give employment for a whole year?

'The word "Mystic," says 'K.W.H.' in 'The Christian Commonwealth,' is derived from "Muesis," which means the closing of the eyes.' Possibly, we should imagine, because the early mystics were mediums, who were more or less entranced. 'K.W.H.,' however, asserts that:—

There is a natural mysticism; the response of the personality, acting as a whole, to the Great Circumstance within which it stands. The soul is not a separable and distinguishable part within the man, the Soul is the Man as a Whole.

The mystical faculty, which 'K.W.H.' defines as being 'the immediate and direct apprehension of spiritual reality,' is, he says, latent in us all, and he concludes:—

This natural mysticism is the great dynamic of all healthy, vibrant, courageous life alike in the individual and in the community. It is the vision for lack of which a people perishes. It is an experimental interior knowledge of God, apart from which no people can be 'strong and do exploits.'

A writer in 'The Open Road' suggestively observes that it is not only *things* that matter, but also 'the relations between things.' In illustration of his point he remarks:—

We may put two boughs together and make nothing but a faggot, or we may bring them together so as to form a graft, and produce a new tree, differing in quality from both the old ones, having, perhaps, the strength of the stock and the flavour of the other tree.

A person may give one hour to one subject of study and one hour to some other subject, and the two groups of facts learned may stay separate in the mind, remaining isolated, unfruitful, fixed or diminishing in quantity. Another will let the two branches of knowledge come together in his mind, will see what light they throw on each other; his knowledge of one subject will grow and widen even during hours when he is learning something else.

This is well put, and it bears out the idea of a modern school of thinkers that all things are either positive or negative—even thoughts—and may be sterile or fertile accordingly as they are properly related to their opposites.

Nature, as we construe her purpose, in her dealings with man has something in view other than the evolution of a splendid animal. But the rickety baby, the sickly stunted youth, the neurotic man or woman, are even wider of her purpose.

Disease and infirmity are not attractive spectacles, but so far they have been repellent mainly from the physical standpoint. The old-time savage with his natural bias in favour of lusty animal vigour had his own barbarous methods of dealing with the sick and feeble of his tribe. Even when the evolution of a moral sense brought about the establishment of the hospital and the infirmary, disease was looked upon as purely physical in its repulsiveness.

With the refining of human perceptions the spectacle of disease will afflict not only the physical and moral sense, but also the æsthetic sense. So long as the man remains unrefined he will tolerate many offensive and incongruous things if they do not appear to menace his physical welfare. When he grows more sensitive—as we know he is growing all the time—they will hurt him, just as a crude picture or a discordant jangle of sounds pains the artist or the musician. And then he will set to work to remove what he will have realised to be an evil of which the remedy is in his own hands.

Many 'mental' and other 'scientists' set great store by the power of thought, but behind, or beyond, all mental processes lies a realm of consciousness variously labelled instinctive, intuitive, or religious. Whatever we may call it, the fact remains that we often feel more than we know, and yet we know that we feel, and feeling is, after all, a kind of knowing; and, as the Rev. F. A. Wiggin points out:—

One has truly said, 'History is not made by the intellect, but by the emotions.' We cannot trust to the intellect for the inauguration of reform movements, though it may wisely direct such movements to ends of righteousness. It is the emotions, the rising into expression of the hidden love-nature of human life which will do this. This is the soul or psychic force, in mankind, which radiates a powerful influence, setting into action the mental machinery, which turns the wheels of correct action.

Turning over the pages of that bright little book entitled 'Thinking for Results,' by Christian D. Larson (The Progress Company, Chicago), already noticed on page 254, we came across some shrewd remarks relating to a mode of thinking which takes the form by morbid sympathy. Mr. Larson says:—

The law that governs sympathy is this, that you enter into mental unity in a measure with everything with which you sympathise, and that whatever you enter into mental unity with you tend to imitate and produce in yourself. When you sympathise with a person who is in trouble do not think of the trouble or the weakness, but think of that something within him that is superior to all trouble in existence. The man who is sick and in trouble does not want more tears. He has had enough of them. What he wants and what he needs is that sympathy that can banish all tears and that can reveal the way to emancipation, power and joy. This being true, we must try to banish completely every form of morbid sympathy. It hurts everybody. It perpetuates weakness and keeps the mind in bondage. In applying this higher form of sympathy do not tell the unfortunate that you are sorry. Tell them how to get rid of their sorrow. Then do something substantial to speed them on their way. This is sympathy that is worthy of the name.

Mrs. Mary T. Longley, writing in 'The Progressive Thinker,' in answer to the question, 'Of what earthly use are funeral sermons?' very sensibly says:—

While it is pleasant for the relatives and friends of the deceased to hear good words spoken of the life and works of the latter—and while it may even be encouraging to the ascended spirit thus to realise he was well thought of and remembered, yet this is not the practical value of the sermon or address, but rather is it from the good it may do in causing hearers to pause in the search for material things to consider the promptings of the spiritual side, the immutability of law in relation to death as well as to life, and the value of right living all along the way. The true spiritual and uplifting funeral discourse will speak gently, but not fulsomely, of the ascended one; it will appeal to the finer sentiments of the hearers, will point them to the blessing of spiritual needs and graces, and urge their cultivation, not by neglecting earthly duties, but by ennobling them with the light of patience, the quality of courage, the power of perseverance, and the right light of unselfish aspiration and effort to do that which is right. At funerals, most people are in a spiritual and receptive mood, when they can bear to hear the truth, and it has a better chance of making an impression than it might have at any other time. The words that can give consolation to mourning hearts, comfort to the sad, information to the questioning, enlightenment to the ignorant, are of both earthly and spiritual good.

### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

DRAWINGS OF THE PSYCHIC AURA AND DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASE. —On *Wednesday next*, June 14th, and succeeding *Wednesdays*, from 12 noon to 5 p.m., at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., Mr. Percy R. Street will give personal delineations by means of the colours of the psychic aura of sitters, and will diagnose disease under spirit control. Fee 5s. to a guinea. Appointments desirable. See advertisement supplement.

### MR. W. J. COLVILLE'S LECTURES.

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.

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.

A RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT.—The 'Glasgow Citizen' of May 24th reported that 'the action in Paris to annul the will of M<sup>me</sup>. Niolet, who left a fortune of sixteen thousand pounds, on the ground that she was addicted to Spiritualism, has failed. The French tribunal which decided the case has declared that "The practice of occult sciences and Spiritualism should not in itself be considered sufficient to establish the insanity of the person possessing such beliefs." The litigation has excited considerable interest.'

## REMARKABLE PHENOMENA AT A VICARAGE.

On several occasions already we have given accounts of some remarkable happenings at a vicarage in this country, but for various reasons, which can readily be understood, we have been unable to be more explicit as to the locality, and those reasons still preclude our mentioning the name of the writer, but we may state that he is personally known to us and that we are confident he is careful to understate rather than to exaggerate the facts that he records. Our correspondent writes:—

Mother has removed, and there has been a marked lull in the phenomena since her departure, though they have not ceased, and they are apparently beginning strongly again. We had an investigator connected with a London society here for three weeks, and though it was after mother's departure, still we got several striking manifestations.

On April 9th my wife, servant, and little girl were all together in the kitchen, when suddenly a figure of a woman appeared bearing a huge coffin in her hands. She had to turn sideways to get it in at the door. She held it out to the terrified spectators for a moment and then turned it sideways again and passed up the passage and up the front stairs, followed by the three witnesses, then down the back stairs. Again up the front stairs and down the back stairs the figure went, and finally disappeared through the panels of the drawing-room door. When the investigator, to whom I have already referred, came here three days afterwards he examined all the witnesses on oath.

On Sunday, April 23rd, my wife, self, and the investigator went to church; my wife and the investigator left the house at 5.45. I had set out earlier. On returning together we were informed by the servant and the little girl that during our absence they had heard singing proceeding from the grey room. They said that they both went up to the top of the landing to listen; they were unable to distinguish the words, which sounded as though hummed, but the tune was 'Peace, Perfect Peace,' and the singing was very beautiful. It was followed by two loud crashes, and they ran downstairs very much frightened. Having heard the girls' story, we three ran up to the room, and on opening the door found the wardrobe thrown over on its face, two chairs thrown over, and the frame of the wash-hand stand twisted. The girls said this happened about half an hour after my wife and the investigator had left; this would be about 6.15 p.m.

Two days later, April 25th, we got a letter (posted on the evening of April 24th) saying that my aunt had passed away on Sunday at 6.15 p.m. I did not know that she was even ill, nor did any person in the house. On April 26th I went to the funeral, and was then informed that aunt had been a great singer in her youth, much in request at concerts and oratorios, and that for weeks past she had sung 'Peace, Perfect Peace' as she lay on her sick bed, and had done so up to a short time before her death! When too feeble to pronounce the words she had hummed it or crooned it over. I got signed statements from those who attended her. It is one more marvel added to the long series we have experienced, these last six months especially.

The investigator examined the witnesses on oath concerning the marvellous happenings here, also the various servants we have had in our employ for a considerable time past. A careful and systematic cross-examination by means of schedules, &c., was conducted, and the witnesses were found to substantiate one another. I was informed by the investigator that he was convinced of the integrity of the witnesses.

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MADAME ST. LEONARD desires to call the attention of her friends to the fact that she has taken rooms at 48, Conduit-street, Bond-street, W.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—Conferences will be held with the Tottenham Society at the Chestnuts, 684, High-road, on Sunday next, June 11th. An open-air meeting at 3 o'clock, addresses by Messrs. G. T. Brown, F. Dawson, and G. F. Tilby. Evening meeting at 7—speakers, Messrs. G. T. Gwinn, Brown, and G. F. Tilby. On Sunday, June 18th, at Kingston Assembly Rooms, at 3 o'clock, Mr. G. T. Brown will read a paper, to be followed by discussion. At 7 p.m.—speakers, Messrs. R. Boddington, G. T. Brown, and M. Clegg. It is hoped that there will be large audiences at these conferences.

## AN ECHO OF MEDIÆVALISM.

Goethe, the German Shakespeare, once told our forefathers a good story. It ran thus: A jovial company, sitting on an evening in a Leipzig inn, drinking beer and singing songs, found among their number a gentleman of fine physique and splendid attire, who had apparently just arrived from Spain. He joined in their gaily, mockingly sang them a song about the unnatural love of a King for an insect, and, as their liquor did not approach in quality the beverage he was used to drink, literally drew them 'wine from the wood.' Any brand and any quantity flowed from wherever Mephistopheles chose to bore the innkeeper's gimlet. The affair ended in a pyrotechnical display. They did not drink the devil's wine without spilling it, and what was spilled turned to fire!

It was quite an ordinary congregation which met at a certain London Congregational Chapel a week or so ago. No one could have predicted there would be any supernatural display, and no one saw Mephistopheles enter the porch. Yet it was just this service rather than any other at which his Satanic Majesty might have been announced to attend. One of the greatest of spiritual truths was to be treated of, to wit: 'Satan, the Adversary and a Son of God!' No doubt the prince of the power of the air thought that at last he was coming into his own; at last people were beginning to see he was really not so bad as from time immemorial he had been represented, nor so black as he had been painted. Strange doctrines have of late been taught in several London churches, which contrast most severely with the resolution of the Apostles of the Gentiles, 'I determine not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.' Nowadays our spiritual leaders aspire to teach us a theory of the universe which explains all things and all relations existing or capable of being dreamed of. Certainly our religious teachers fearlessly wander where even angels dread to tread. The sermon on this occasion was one of the usual intellectual feasts doled out to this elect West-end congregation. It was rich in thought, splendidly expressed both in language and delivery, and equal in spiritual insight to anything to be heard at the London ethical and theosophical societies, or even at the City Temple. It was a heart-to-heart talk from the pastor to his flock, revealing to these spiritual babes wisdom long hidden from the wise and prudent. He said the existence of evil was no less a problem to the ancient Jews than it is to thinking men of the present day. There had been a development in belief in the personal existence of the spirit of evil, particularly between the writing of the books of Samuel and Chronicles. Higher critics state that the former were written about 700 B.C., and the latter at approximately 350 B.C. The editor of the Chronicles stated that it was Satan who provoked David to sin against God. Apparently he could not believe that it was the Lord who tempted David, as the earlier book states. In early times the Jews in their monotheism could not allow the idea of Satan existing as a rival with Jehovah, and the preacher saw more truth in this position than in the later one which savours of Persian dualism. He proceeded: If we believe that evil is utterly antagonistic to the divine plan, we at once introduce chaos into the moral order! Modern dualistic thought represents evil spirits as seeking admission into the souls of men to possess them and thereby to accomplish their evil designs. This lowers the dignity of human personality in that it makes the central ethical question not 'What can I attain unto?' but 'Whom can I manage to keep out?' threatening also the serious impoverishment, if not even the very freedom, of the soul. Rather should we adopt the view dramatically set before us by Edward Carpenter in one of his fine poems. Satan, the adversary, like the prophet Zechariah saw him, stands defiant and invites the soul to war. They close. The soul is slain. Yet, lo! phoenix-like, the soul rises, clothed anew in a stronger vehicle, and the fight continues till Satan is again victorious, and he flings his opponent mortally wounded from him. Again and again the phoenix soul returns to battle, each time with renewed energy and increased vitality, till at last it conquers! Its eyes are opened, and it beholds in the adversary a very Archangel of God, a Ben-Elohim, who calls

him 'Friend!' and passionately exclaims, 'I love thee!' This, the preacher contended, is the true view of evil. Each conquered temptation gives its strength to the victor. Things cannot be divided into good and evil; all are good as soon as they are brought into subjection. The mastery of the lower over the higher is unnatural. It was never meant to be, and can never permanently be. Temptation resisted is a means of spiritual evolution, and the secret heart of everything, even of Satan, is love!

As the sermon progressed, one certainly felt, as Browning declared, 'God's in His Heaven; all's right with the world.' What report would have gone forth had it been preached a thousand years ago, cannot be imagined. For behold, it had the same pyrotechnical ending as Goethe's story! Hardly had he last word escaped the preacher's lips than sheets of lightning shot forth, and harmlessly but terrifyingly played about his very desk where that precious manuscript had lain. This continued for several seconds. The superstitious of a bygone age would have ignored the fact that something had gone wrong with the preacher's reading-lamp, and would stoutly have affirmed that God was greatly displeased with the pastor for whitewashing the devil. The twentieth-century congregation certainly thought Satan was equally displeased for having thus been ignominiously deprived of his horns, hoofs, and claws.

G. W. BUCKTHOUGHT.

#### INTERESTING PHENOMENA IN DENMARK.

Spiritualism is spreading in a quiet but forcible manner in some of the smaller towns and villages in Denmark. In the town of Hoblaek there has been formed a small circle of four persons, who have obtained wonderful physical manifestations. The medium is a young man named Larsen, who belongs to the working-class, and the séances are held at the house of Mr. Jorgensen. At first Mr. Jorgensen's dining-table, weighing eighty pounds, was used, but the manifestations were so rough that the legs got damaged. Then a deal table was made which weighed about sixty pounds, and so strongly put together that there was no chance of breaking it; rubber heels were put on the legs to lessen the noise when the table is banged on the floor. The usual table movements take place, and messages are spelt out by means of raps. The sittings are held in partial darkness, and at times the table is lifted entirely off the floor (with the legs quite clear of any contact). At such times the sitters have been permitted to switch on a little electric lamp, and see the phenomena. Messages have been spelt out by the table, giving facts which were not known to any of the sitters, and which have been verified afterwards. For example, a spirit came who said that his name was Severin Hausen, that he died at South Dakota, U.S., and his parents were living in a town in Denmark, giving the address. A letter sent to the address in question brought a reply from the father stating that the information was quite correct. The name of 'Zampa' was also given, which the father could not understand. At the last séance the spirit explained that 'Zampa' was the name of a dog. This statement, however, has not yet been verified. The medium also has the power of clairvoyance at times, and has been able to get test messages in writing. For instance, on one occasion he wrote in English the words 'little girl.' Now, he knows nothing of our language, and the Danish for 'little girl' bears no resemblance to the English. Another time a spirit was controlling, who said he came from Schleswig-Holstein, and a certain set of words was given which are only used in that part of the country, and not known in Zealand, the part of Denmark where the sittings are held. Sometimes the table is made so heavy that it is impossible to lift it. All these phenomena are taking place in a little quiet town away from any great centre, and the friends are receiving proof of spirit action that cannot be disputed.

ALFRED VOUT PETERS.

'HOLIDAYS ABROAD' is the title of a pretty little illustrated booklet, which gives particulars of a series of tours in less known districts of Holland, North Germany, the side valleys of the Rhine, the Belgian Ardennes, and the Tyrol, easily and inexpensively reached by the Great Eastern Railway Company's Harwich route to the Continent. It can be obtained free by sending postcard to the Continental manager, G.E.R., Liverpool-street Station, London, E.C.

#### 'LIGHT' AND REINCARNATION.

What a grand heading the above makes. It is in itself an answer to the question 'Is reincarnation true?' and it is the true key which unlocks the 'puzzle-box.' It is 'The Light' which reincarnates, and not, Mr. Editor, the personal Bruno-Hypatia who becomes the Mrs. Besant, nor the Mary Magdalene-Anne Boleyn who becomes the Anna Kingsford. I know of three alleged reincarnations of 'Jesus Christ'; two are in the asylum because they say 'I am Jesus Christ,' the other is at large because he is 'cute enough to say 'I was Jesus Christ.' The difference of the tense of the verb to be saved him. Now, if these worthy theosophical friends of ours were to cease teaching the reincarnation of the personal (the phenomenal), and to teach that the impersonal (the *noumenon*) throws up in its evolution differentiations of itself which return to itself by its own involution, thereby dropping all personalities, attributes, shapes, forms, and names; then, Mr. Editor, we 'mere Spiritualists' might say 'you have realised Deity; we admit that *light* reincarnates; we have known it for years'—the actuality behind the illusion of the personality.

Being used to pain and mental agony, I have learned to love those sweet ministering angels: sorrow, sickness, solitude, and death; and not for worlds would I 'come back' in order to have 'a happy life as a reward.' I am rewarded *now*, beyond all 'next incarnation' hopes, in having, through a dark and lonely valley, found the light which incarnates. As a psychic I have demonstrated all the clairvoyant faculties necessary to prove that I have facts at my back.\* Such facts as have not been demonstrated (to outsiders and investigators) by those who write books, and speak, as one of them has done, of 'a Spiritualist of the most pronounced type given to black magic'—a gratuitous insult, as childish and as ignorant as are the Papal curses which are hurled at the Spiritualism which 'has made Theosophy a possibility and Christianity, in its less materialistic aspect, an acceptable belief to the man of science. Meanwhile, I would like to ask for the production of one single well-evidenced clairvoyant demonstration by 'the trained' seers of Theosophy. True, Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater went astrally to the North Pole and found 'an island beautiful and spring-like.' Unfortunately a common explorer went there in his physical body and found solid chunks of frozen H<sub>2</sub>O and an unfathomable ocean beneath. Mars, the one inhabited planet according to science, is the uninhabited one according to Theosophy's trained seers. Venus is Theosophy's inhabited planet and science's non-inhabited one. Theosophy teaches that the moon is approaching the earth and vampiring (!) her. Science teaches that the moon is *receding* from the earth, and is gradually losing her pull upon the earth's tides!

Let us be granted the spectrum, and we can easily produce a book upon the colours in the human aura. If we knew (some of us) that the colour of the poppy is not in the flower, but in the mind of the person who sees the poppy (note, colour-blind people see blue poppies), we might have 'trained seers' admitting that the colour is not in the human aura, but in the psychic eye which sees the human emanations, and some of us might realise that the psychic eye often sees what it has been cons-'trained' to see (by hypnotism or suggestion).

'No-Body.'

It seems to me that belief, or non-belief, in reincarnation is entirely a personal matter, and that it is more than probable that many who accept it are in every respect quite as reasonable beings as the best class of those who do not. Be it true or not, by our life here on the physical plane we are preparing ourselves for the next stage, and as we sow, so must we reap; or in other words, the position we shall occupy and the work we shall be given to do, when we pass to the next stage of life, will be the position we have prepared for ourselves and the work for which we have qualified. Let those who consider they have sufficient reasons for believing in reincarnation do so, and let those who think differently do so, without on either part dogmatising. Surely the main point for each one is so to live this life as to secure the best results. Then, if reincarnation be true, we shall all the sooner be freed from the necessity of coming back to earth to learn more of its lessons. If not, we shall have made good progress and have helped many others to do so, and shall find the harvest well worth all the work we have done and the pain and trouble it may have cost us.

WELL-WISHER.

\* Our correspondent has certainly afforded many convincing proofs that he possesses clairvoyant and other psychic powers, having given many recognised descriptions of spirit people, accompanied by messages proving their identity.—[Ed. 'LIGHT']

## EVENING THOUGHTS.

'Oh that I might come even to His seat!  
I would order my cause before Him.'

JOB xxiii., 3, 4.

How great a change in so short space of time! A few brief moments since, and this spot seemed the very threshold of His wondrous throne-room. Yonder, where lingers still the after-glow reluctant to give place to night's advance, His glistening throne was set. And on the throne I even seemed to see the very form of the Unseeable—so bright its dazzling glory; while o'er the glistening silver pathway, laid across the azure floor e'en to this very spot directly from God's throne, innumerable sparklets showed where feet of angels trod in eager haste to do His hests Whose name is Love.

But now, the throne has gone; the silver carpet's rolled; and bright-robed spirits of the Light give place to Night's uncheerful crowd. Nearer the deepening shadows hold their chilling course, changing the sea's rich azure to lugubrious gray in sad agreement with the darkening skies. Alike the dancing wavelet on the deep below and fleecy cloudlet of the deep above feel their chill breath, and languish. Deep sighs to deep in heavy condolence, and all the air is filled with sighs in place of songs.

What is that mystic something in the spell of eventide that so transforms, with startling suddenness, the erstwhile happy music of the rippling swell upon a pebbly shore into a long-drawn, sobbing sigh of dourlest melancholy, and makes the deep-toned song of ocean seem one endless, hopeless moan? How great a change, indeed! For now no bee sings her sweet song amongst the heather bells; no soaring lark pipes her glad hymn of praise; no twittering sparrow flits across the gorse. Instead, from out the darksome wrinkles of the cliff's stern brow creeps forth the loathsome bat, to wheel his magic circles round my head, squeaking his hateful incantations. And the eerie owl darts stealthily by with no more noise, nor less velocity, than well-aimed arrow speeds intent on death. Amongst the gorse and bracken roams the fox, whose course is marked by hapless victims' cries of pain and terror. Nearer and nearer still those shadows creep, colder and colder yet Night's numbing breath, denser the awful veil betwixt my soul and my soul's Father. No helpful influence near that can consort with that of God within, and cheer the gloom. Alas! this creeping gloom! How does it shut out Heaven and Hope, and all on which the higher self depends. Just now 'twas good to be—but now life presses wearily: and all the ills that have been, are, and will be, seem concentrated in the essence of these shadows that on every side creep, so relentless, nearer. In terrified dismay my head sinks wearied into my trembling hands, and my whole being, body and spirit, quakes beneath the crushing load. Oh that the good God—if there be such God—would raise this gloom and show Himself my friend! Ah! *show Himself*, that's it! Could I but see Him, then would I plead my cause with all the eloquence of desperation, show Him the ills and wrongs of life, and beg an answer to its fearsome riddles that so perplex and sadden, sapping my life of all its sweetness, and but leaving me the bitter dregs of dark despair. He does not know! Or worse, He does not care! That vision of the sunset was but an idle fancy. Angels do not walk the earth, and God is not the Father we have thought Him.

And thus from bad to worse my thoughts ran on, till what dark ditch of horrid blasphemy would be their final goal I know not: for their course was stayed by a soft whisper, rather felt than heard, borne subtly on a waft of perfume from the golden gorse—"Tis false, for God is good, and Earth is full of Heaven." Like him of old who in the Spirit mused, I started up to see the Voice that spake—and lo! the dreaded shadows had but ushered in another world of beauty, softer, holier than the first. No longer bound to that thin line of light, God's angels filled the spacious vault of Heaven, a countless host of shining witnesses; and all the world below their presence felt, fitly responding.

I wake, as from a frightful nightmare freed. Those withering shadows, though they closed around and threatened, yet have been restrained by some benignant Power that said—"Thus far, no farther, shall ye come!"

In place of doubt, and fear, and dread, comes in that calm and confident repose of soul no pen may show to him who has not faced himself the raging storm and felt the stifling darkness. And this the most o'erwhelming thought of all as I look back upon the time of strain—*Before I called*, e'en while the bitter thoughts had filled my mind, *He answered*. Praised be God!

W. J. C.

## HEARERS OF SPIRITUAL VOICES.

'The Walking Parson' (A. N. Cooper), writing from Rouen to the London 'Daily Chronicle,' contributed, on May 30th, an interesting article on 'Joan of Arc and the Supernatural.' After referring to her remarkable life and martyrdom, he shrewdly retorts on those who regard her as a victim of hallucinations by asking: 'Was France able, in the hour of her national distress in 1871, to find a victim of hallucination ready to take the head of her armies, to restore victory to her banners, and to bring back to her maternal bosom the two fair provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, which the enemy had seized?' Continuing, he says:—

Joan's own account certainly explains things. The heavenly powers called her, taught her, aided her, put words into her mouth and thoughts into her mind which would never have been there but for them. With her latest breath Joan declared that the Voices she had heard had not deceived her.

The wise men to whom we are most inclined to listen to-day are ever telling us the world has never been different from what it is now. The same forces are at work as ever:—

Where rolls the deep, there grew the tree,  
O Earth, what changes thou hast seen:  
There, where the long street roars, hath been  
The stillness of the central sea.

If so, where are the voices of Joan? It is obvious that it is as necessary there should be ears to hear as well as voices that speak. Kossuth said of Joan that she was the only entirely unselfish person in profane history. No vestige of self-seeking can be found in any word or deed of hers. Provided there are people like Joan, are these voices still speaking?

When, some two years ago, Mr. Asquith made the sensational appointment of Dr. Lang to the See of York, naturally inquiries were made into his past. It was known he had not been intended for the Church. After gaining a fellowship at All Souls' College, Oxford, young Lang read for the Bar. He kept his terms and ate his dinners down to the very eve of his call, and on that evening a telegram was received at Lincoln's Inn cancelling all engagements, giving up the Bar, and stating that he was about to enter Holy Orders. What had brought about the change? A family living, or parental pressure? Neither, he heard a voice calling him, like Joan, to an unselfish renunciation of all he held dear.

Last year, in a Yorkshire church, there took place a marriage under circumstances some called romantic and others providential. A young man, who was making his way in a mercantile house in India, was engaged to a girl in England, who was a governess. One day the young man went to his superior and told him he must return at once to England. His chief remonstrated, told him his leave was not yet due, and pointed out that it would seriously interfere with his prospects if he went. Home the young man came, need it be said what house he made for, and found his fiancée about to be turned almost penniless from the door. No telegram or letter had been sent, warning him of the approaching dismissal; he had heard a voice, that was all.

Everything has now been done to rehabilitate Joan in public estimation. It is now taken for granted throughout France that the highest possible honour awaits her name, and that she soon will be canonised as a saint.

## 'DUGMAR.'

The interesting article entitled 'Dugmar,' which appeared on p. 254 in our last issue, was specially written for 'LIGHT' by Mrs. Alice Grenfell, who is deeply interested both in Spiritualism and Egyptology. We much regret that by a strange mischance the name of the author did not accompany the article in question, but we are sure that Mrs. Grenfell will be pleased to know that it has been much appreciated by many readers, to whom it has afforded a good illustration of the fact that in these modern days the 'Gift of Tongues' is not confined to the spoken word.



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### THE CHASTENING OF MATTER.

There is a great truth underlying the old idea of 'mortifying the flesh'—a great truth crudely apprehended and often expressed in a repellent and distorted way. The ascetics and devotees who sought and who still seek (for their race has not yet died out), by macerating their bodies, to attain spiritual victories are not without some measure of justification. In a dim fashion they have felt that matter is somehow a barrier, something to be broken down before the spirit can obtain full expression. In Europe the cult of (physical) self-torture and (physical) self-neglect attained its height in the Middle Ages—days of intellectual darkness, perhaps, but days in which men were prepared to do and suffer greatly for their religious ideals. To the man who desired to consecrate himself to the religious life the world was either a desert or a place of sham and specious delights, and the body an incubus. Even that winsome soul, the gentle St. Francis of Assisi, friend of all living things, came under the influence of the idea, and in his quaint way spoke of his body as 'Brother Ass.' But mild disdain was not sufficient for the austere pietists of those days, and they flogged, starved and tortured their physical frames for their soul's health, as they said.

We have come to think differently to-day. We have learned that matter has a dignity of its own, and that the body has its legitimate place in the scheme of things. In fact, at one time the strong reaction from mediæval doctrines threatened to carry us to the other extreme in which matter would entirely eclipse spirit.

And yet, as we have said, there was a truth underlying this old idea of the need of subjugating matter in order that the soul shall have more complete expression. In one aspect that truth relates to the necessity of subduing the purely animal appetites. But it connects also, we think, with perceptions of an even larger fact—the chastening of matter by the spiritual forces of Evolution.

In the dim beginning of things matter was gross and intractable. Fire and earthquake wrought and moulded it, and all the giant upheavals and catastrophes of the early world were needed to render it malleable to the more subtle forces that were to deal with it later. And in one form or another the stern disciplining continues.

We see the process still going on, but its chief activities now are concerned with mankind. On every hand we hear of the strain of existence, the tension on brain, nerve and body imposed by the conditions of modern life. Most of

us, alas, need not to be told of it—we have our knowledge at first hand! The arena in which is being fought out the stern struggle for existence is being gradually transferred from the physical to the mental realm and the 'wear and tear' of it, while it often means worry, anxiety and disquiet, means also a constant attenuation of the grosser animal elements, so that little by little the psychical forces are enabled to assert themselves. In short, a process of refinement is at work, painful and troublous, indeed, because man has not yet found that 'more excellent way'—harmonious co-operation with 'the Power that makes for righteousness.' Not yet willing to be led he must be driven, and he moves oftentimes under the lash. Petulant and rebellious he advances unwillingly, at times attempting to take refuge in the animal side of life—to submerge himself in the physical senses, but the way back is being cut off. At every step retreat becomes more difficult. With each advance in mentality the area of purely physical life shrinks. There is no going back. And with the wearing down of the grosser fabric of life comes, as we have said, increased activity on the part of the psychical forces. And here, we think, is one explanation of that growing responsiveness to the vibrations of the higher world referred to by Mrs. Besant in the last address which she delivered on the platform of the London Spiritualist Alliance. Alluding to the increasing sensitiveness of humanity to the more subtle forces, she remarked, 'How many are conscious now of what is called premonition—receiving a warning, perhaps, of the illness of some distant friend who is much beloved! How many have known of the death of a friend long before the telegraph or the post has brought the news! We find an increasing number of cases in which there is a definite communication with that world, irregular and spasmodic though it be.'

Those acute observations of Mrs. Besant were, and are, amply corroborated by the experience of all Spiritualists who watch the signs of the times. There is undoubtedly a great development at work, ultimating in the evolution of those finer senses that will still more closely relate the human race to that higher world towards which its attitude has so long been one of doubt, terror or vague speculation. From the physical to the mental, from the mental to the psychical, and from the psychical to the spiritual. Such is the route of the human pilgrimage.

Nevertheless, on this question of what we have called 'the chastening of matter,' let it be clearly understood that we are far from acquiescing in what is quite rightly regarded as a deplorable evil, we mean physical decadence. By all and every means let us have sound bodies, alert, active and responsive to the needs of the indwelling spirit.

We spoke in a recent article of 'The Supremacy of the Soul,' and it is here especially that the soul will display its conquering energy. Matter must be chastened and subdued that it may be the soul's fit and worthy instrument. The House of Life must be made pure and beautiful for its divine tenant. And in this work Spiritualists—and we include in that term all schools of thought whose work relates understandingly to the spiritual nature of man—are taking a leading part. To them is assigned the task of making the path straight, by recording and tabulating the evidences of man's spiritual origin and by providing the means whereby the unseen powers may demonstrate their existence, however imperfectly. Now and again some avenue of communication seems to close—we have seen it, for example, in the case of that curious cessation of physical phenomena which has so greatly exercised many earnest souls. The thing, at first sight, appears inconsistent with the idea of a breaking down of the barriers, a thinning of

the veil between the two worlds. The eclipse, of course, may be purely temporary—we are dealing with highly subtle laws whose working we are scarcely, as yet, even beginning to understand. Or it may be that those wondrous manipulations of the grosser matter of this world were sporadic and will not recur, at any rate to the same extent.

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.

However it be, we may cherish the thought that the light is coming through other windows. Might we not even put it that as we move on towards our arisen brethren the need becomes less and less that they should return to us? For this attenuation of matter means so much in the direction of closer and clearer communication. One of our keen thinkers to-day has expressed the idea that the removal by death of one of a pair of dear friends might mean not separation but an even closer fellowship. For so little does the merely bodily presence count in the case of the spiritually enlightened. And to that the chastening of matter (and of our ideas of matter) infallibly leads.

### UNIVERSAL SPIRITUAL RELIGION.

In her address to the League of Liberal Christianity in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, on Tuesday, May 23rd, Mrs. Annie Besant dealt with 'The Emergence of a World Religion.' As reported in 'The Christian Commonwealth' of May 31st, she gave a rapid review of the religions of the world, and then asked, 'What is the outcome?' answering her own question thus:—

Every one has its own note of music, and each one is different; though each incarnates one life, one love, the mode of expression differs, and the difference is a gain, not a loss. There is not one of these that you can afford to lose, not one of these dominant keynotes of the many faiths that you can leave out of your coming world religion. You must take from India her doctrines of the immanence of God and the solidarity of man; from Persia her teaching of purity; from Egypt science, which is part of religion, and not against it; from Greece beauty; from Rome law; from the Hebrew righteousness; from Christianity self-sacrifice. Which of these jewels of the faiths can you do without when your world religion emerges? The truth is that all the differences due to differences of mind, differences of temperament, tell one great truth—that spiritual truth cannot be transmitted by the intellect in its perfection. Only the spirit in man can realise spiritual truth. The intellect grasps phenomena, and reasons upon them to principles; the spirit intuitively knows itself at one with all, and all your religions, the religions of the world, are the intellectual presentments of the one great spiritual truth. The intellect is like the prism which splits up the white sunlight into its constituent parts; all of them are in the white light, although not visible there till it has passed through the prism, and all the beauty of the world comes from the differences, all the colours of the world are born of the whiteness of the sun. . . . So is it with the spiritual sun. There is one Sun of Truth that shines through every religion that has guided and consoled humanity, but each has taken the part that it needed. . . . In multiplicity, then, not in uniformity, lies the richness and the beauty of religion, as of all else there is in the world; and the world religion will not, I believe, wipe out the differences between faiths, but blend them all into one. . . .

In concluding her address, Mrs. Besant said:—

As we deepen our own spiritual nature, as we find out one truth after another for ourselves, as we realise what we are Gods in the making—growing into the perfection of the divine image—as we recognise that, we are laying the basis of the world religion; and that which can never come by argument, by controversy, by intellectual reasoning, will come when the heart of love within us has awaked the spiritual nature. For love is deeper than intellect. Love is greater than intelligence, and the love nature and the divine nature are so closely blended that the man who loves his brother will not be long ere he loves God.

In the 'Harbinger of Light' for May, Mrs. Annie Bright gives an interesting appreciation of the Rev. John Page Hopps, accompanied by a portrait. Evidently this article was written before the news of the passing of Mr. Hopps had reached Australia.

### 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 260.)

I am, as you perceive, looking upon this matter from a purely scientific point of view. I am not dealing with any ethical or theological considerations whatever. I can safely leave that to others better qualified to treat the matter from those points of view. But I have the less hesitation in adopting this rather novel method of inquiry in that I believe this aspect has been unduly neglected. Life is, after all, largely a biological problem, and during what we may describe as our most strenuous period of organic development, the biological aspect of life is the only one that interests us. The infant's outlook upon life has no element of ethics or religion in it—that comes later at the proper time. And so it is quite probable that the first stages of our life beyond will be devoted entirely to a rapid adaptation to our new conditions of life, without reference to the higher laws of our new world. Those higher laws may well be supposed to be administered by greater spirits, whose efforts are directed towards fitting the newcomer to take his place in a more exalted scheme of things.

But when our new faculties have attained their maturity what will be the activities in which we shall exercise them? For there is no reason to believe that the third of our essential conditions of life will be abrogated in the next world.

And here our inquiry enters upon a most difficult stage. We have what the mathematician would call an equation with two unknowns. If we knew the faculties we could more or less divine the activities. And if we knew the activities we could make a fair attempt at describing the faculties necessary for their exertion. As it is, we can only judge somewhat vaguely by analogy.

What, for instance, are our chief human activities? We work for our daily bread: at least, a good many of us do in some way or other. We endeavour to place ourselves in the fullest current of available energy, to bask in the most liberal amount of sunlight; in other words, we work to acquire wealth, so that our choice of activity may be wider and our rate of living more rapid and varied. We endeavour to crowd the largest possible number of separate experiences into a limited span of life. We travel, we go into society, we read, converse, and learn daily. Or we devote our lives to some great single task, a task which, perhaps, may benefit vast numbers of our fellow creatures, and thus we fulfil a higher destiny, and gain a deeper and more abiding happiness than that which is in store for the mere pleasure-seeker. The latter endeavours to keep his nerves at the highest tension, often oblivious of the fact that the inevitable fatigue defeats the object aimed at; and forgetting that the highest pleasure lies in a harmonious co-operation between the emotions and the will, and that nothing can exceed the zest of difficulties successfully overcome.

All the highest human activities are related to the life of the race rather than the individual. It is only in the service of the race that the highest honours are attainable. Altruism rather than egotism is the key to Paradise. Not that I deprecate selfishness. In one sense I unhesitatingly condemn so-called 'unselfishness.' We are here to fight and to maintain our existence, not against the powers of evil—there are no powers of evil—but against rival claimants to our place in the sun; claimants who have as much right to our place as they have might to capture it, neither more nor less. It is a matter of a fair field and let the best man win. We need not and must not be 'unselfish,' but what we must do is to enlarge our 'self' so as to include a number of our fellow creatures, be it large or small, and the larger the better. Our new 'self' will be that community whose joy is our joy, and whose suffering is our pain. That 'self,' in the most exalted form of Christianity, includes the whole human race. In some Eastern religions it is even

wider, and includes many animal species as well. But the very fact that the line must be drawn somewhere shows that the total merging of self in creation is quite impracticable and unnatural. After all, a good square fight is of decided benefit to the race, inasmuch as it tends to place the best individuals in the most influential positions, and forces the weaker man to concentrate his resources upon a kind of activity to which he is best adapted, and in which he has the best prospect of eventual happiness.

Thus the world's history makes towards co-operation, towards organisation, makes towards the building of the Kingdom of God on the basis of mutual help and goodwill combined with individual efficiency. The larger our social and political communities become the larger grows our outlook. It has been growing at an accelerated pace within the last century, until to-day no event of any importance can happen in any part of the world without creating a 'reaction'—to use a term derived from physiology—throughout the civilised world. That reaction may be a financial panic, it may be warlike preparations, or it may be ready and practical sympathy and help. And so it has come about that the human race is already *one* organism, bound together by ties of co-operation and mutual interest.

Can we not surmise that this is also the end kept in view by the spiritual powers above? The human race, for better or for worse, rules this earth, or, at all events, the dry crust of the globe. The interior of the earth, the ocean depths, and the upper atmosphere are untouched by us. They may be in charge of other races and other powers. But whatever these are, I am convinced that there is some link between them all, some earth-soul which labours towards the good of its many children, and fights to hold its own in the evolution of our stellar system.

Thus, when we enter the aerial realm above us we shall probably find, when our vision has been inured to the new light, and our wings have grown, that there, as here, we must find our place in an organised system working towards a definite and exalted end.

And now I can no longer resist the temptation to tell you of a wonderful discovery recently made by meteorologists. It concerns the stratification of the atmosphere. It has been known for the last ten years that there is a peculiar stratum in the atmosphere which commences some six miles up. It is called the Isothermal Layer or Stratosphere. In this layer there are no clouds, and the temperature, though very low, is constant, and does not decrease on ascending further. Three years ago I wrote \* concerning this stratum as follows:—

If we wanted to indulge in a somewhat wild guess we might say that this region of maximum cold, the region where the temperature gradient is reversed, is a true and effective division which separates two distinct portions of the atmosphere, and therefore also two distinct soul-worlds.

Since that was written there has been a remarkable further advance of our knowledge. It is now established beyond reasonable doubt that there are at least three, and probably four, distinct atmospheres above us.† These are: (1) The Troposphere, or region of clouds; (2) the Stratosphere, containing no clouds, but a greater preponderance of nitrogen; (3) the Hydrogen Sphere, beginning at a level of forty-five miles, and consisting mostly of hydrogen; and (4) the Geo-Coronium Sphere, beginning at a height of one hundred and thirty-four miles and extending upwards to about three hundred miles above the earth's surface. This last stratum is supposed to consist of a hitherto unknown gas lighter than hydrogen. It contains the steady aurora, whereas the radiating aurora and shooting stars are confined to the Hydrogen Sphere. The luminous clouds which were seen at immense altitudes after the Krakatoa eruption consisted largely of hydrogen ejected by the volcano, which penetrated right up to the Hydrogen Sphere and there condensed the slight amount of moisture which it bore upwards, and which could not condense in the Stratosphere. The two lowest spheres give us dawn and twilight; the Hydrogen Sphere gives us the faint blue light on which the stars appear as against a background; and the Geo-Coronium Sphere probably accounts for the Zodiacal light.

\* 'New Light on Immortality,' p. 172.

† See Wegener, 'Physikalische Zeitschrift,' March 1st, 1911; 'English Mechanic,' April 28th.

Such, in brief, is this remarkable modern development of meteorology, arrived at chiefly by means of self-registering balloons and the study of the echoes of great explosions, which are reflected by the Hydrogen Sphere as if by a roof above. It opens up a new chapter in earth-knowledge, and lends a new colour to the hypothesis that unknown but habitable realms are awaiting us up there, where pious eyes for thousands of years have looked for the 'summerland.'

If, therefore, we look for other worlds, for other possible habitations in which to dwell hereafter, here are three new worlds opening out before us, three realms of unknown possibilities, which in the course of the next generation we may learn to fathom and to understand.

But I am well aware that to some of you such an aerial existence does not appeal, that your love is rooted in the solid ground of Mother Earth, that it clings to a house, a garden, a favourite tree, or a beautiful landscape. With such I can sympathise also, and I can say to their comfort that no human mind can grasp the infinite diversity of life, and certainly no thought of mine can assign a limit to its possibilities.

My choice of the atmosphere as a future habitation has not been arrived at by a process of elimination, but by considering certain sets of collateral evidence which point towards the air as the most probable medium of immediate *post-mortem* existence.

The difficulties in the way of the cohesion of an aerial organism are more imaginary than real. I have dealt with them fully on another occasion. Here I need only remind you of the cohesion possessed by a swarm of bees, which is a very real bond, effectively linking up all individuals in a closely organised community. The invisibility of aerial organisms need not concern us. It is, as a matter of fact, closely paralleled by the practical invisibility of fishes. For, according to recent observations of naturalists, fishes, seen in water, by an eye itself immersed in water, are mere vague phantom shapes. This is partly due to the colouring of the surface. Why is a mackerel dark above and silvery white below? Because it is thus brought about that the upper parts, receiving much light, reflect just as much as the lower parts, which receive less light, but reflect a greater proportion of what they do receive. This ingenious optical device has the effect of rendering the fish almost invisible under water. Who knows but that the invisibility of aerial organisms is similarly acquired or 'evolved,' as the best defence against terrestrial enemies?

In a swarm of bees, loyalty and mutual dependence are the first essentials for the existence of the swarm as such. This community of interests is, perhaps, even a more fundamental condition of organised life than the essentials of food, faculties, and work, which we found before. And what is this community of interests but the bridging of the gulf which separates the individuals, a bridge thrown by mutual sympathy, by Love in its widest sense.

Christian De Wet, the great Boer general, in his book on the South African War, gives a vivid and somewhat pathetic description of the gradual disintegration of the Boer organisation under the pressure of the British military operations. He describes how the Boer fighters were ill-fed, how their administrators were unable to maintain order, how there were numerous surrenders and defections, and how loyalty and mutual trust were strained to the breaking point. We feel, in reading these chapters, as if in presence of a death-scene, the death-scene of a nation. Now that is real death, the only death we can know and witness and understand in all its phases. For in such a process the first and ultimate condition of life, of organised existence, is broken. 'Where two or three are gathered together' in mutual sympathy there is life, a life on a higher plane than that of the individual. On that foundation it is safe to build. Each of us is a cosmos, an army, an aggregate of an infinite number of entities striving by co-operation to reach a higher and higher plane of existence. And through the vista of successive phases of existence, here and hereafter, we perceive:—

'That all things tend still onwards; progress is  
The law of life, and in man's self arise  
August anticipations, symbols, types  
Of a dim splendour ever on before  
In that eternal circle life pursues.'



In bringing this address to a close I am vividly conscious of having but touched the fringe of an illimitable expanse. 'The conditions of life'—why, life is superior to all conditions. It alone exists, nothing else does. All we can do is to inquire into the special conditions attached to certain familiar types of life which we happen to be acquainted with. I think our inquiry has, on the whole, given us ample material for joy and consolation, and I am one of those who believe that our racial over-soul has implanted in us a wholesome dread of death lest the light shine upon us too brightly from beyond, and lure us away before our earthly task is done. (Loud applause.)

In reply to questions the lecturer deprecated as unnecessary any attempt to connect life with electricity. We knew practically nothing of electricity, and it was a dangerous thing to explain one thing in terms of another, unless that other was the more familiar. As to whether he thought the future life would be a physical one, he said that there must be no abrupt break of continuity. We had no direct means of establishing any relation between this life and a transcendental life. To trust to the latter alone was a measure of despair. It left the whole field to the enemy. It was better to take the world as it was and build on that.

The meeting closed with a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Fournier d'Albe for his instructive and thought-provoking lecture.

#### THE WONDERS OF THE BODY.

The Berlin correspondent of the 'Sketch' reports that Dr. A. Caan, of the Heidelberg Cancer Institute, announces that parts of dissected human bodies which could not possibly have come into contact with isolated radium, showed all the qualities associated with radium, like which element, they have the power of turning air passed over them into a good conductor of electricity, the air losing most of its isolating power:—

Parts of the body affect actinically a photographic plate, so that man, to some extent, could photograph himself in his own light. Dr. Borness announces that the brain substance is radio-active, and under certain conditions irradiates a faint glow. 'Science,' he says, 'has always derided the idea of the halo or nimbus, but now science comes to confirm the religious legend. The nimbus is a fact invisible, indeed, to the ordinary eye, but perhaps visible in another age and under abnormal conditions of the body and mind.'

#### A SUCCESSFUL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENT.

A large part of the May number of that lively little American magazine, 'The Nautilus,' is devoted to articles descriptive of a remarkable experiment in social betterment, which with very little expenditure has had marvellous results. This is nothing less than a children's 'garden city.' The city described, which consists of over seven hundred gardens, was inaugurated at Worcester, Mass., four years ago, in a district inhabited by twenty-two nationalities, and containing twenty thousand children. Poverty and intemperance were much in evidence, and offences against property prevailed to an alarming extent. The commandment 'Thou shalt not steal' was regarded as a good joke by the youngsters. Talk was of little use. It was felt that the best plan was to give them some property of their own to develop the feeling of ownership, and thus lead to a respect for property. So a five acre lot, a breeding place for malaria and mosquitos, known as 'Dead Cat Dump,' was secured. This was cleared by the children; the hollows were filled up with street sweepings and material from newly dug cellars, and the ground was then staked off into gardens, divided from one another by little streets, which were named after the children making the best record in good conduct and good service. There were over seven hundred gardens cultivated by eight hundred children, to whom, on payment of 2½d. each, packets of seed, and, in most cases, tools were distributed by the Worcester Social Settlement Association, to whose head, the Rev. R. J. Floody, the scheme owed its inauguration. Prizes were offered for the best gardens, with good conduct and faithful service to be included in the marking. The result of this encouragement was that the young gardeners raised on their little farms a crop of

vegetables estimated to be worth £500. To the community the experiment has been of value, not only from the moral point of view, but financially. A district, noted for its sickliness, is now one of the healthiest in the city, while property has been enhanced in value many thousands of dollars. To the children, the benefits, physical, mental, and moral, have been inestimable. They learn, too, the virtues of self-government, making their own laws and enforcing them. There are now two garden cities in Worcester, and by means of Electoral Committees they have appointed a Governor to preside over their joint destinies. Each city is organised with a Mayor, City Council of seven members, Garden Commissioner, Street Commissioner, Water Commissioner, Tool Commissioner, and forty police officers, who protect the gardens and enforce law and order. This is surely a step in the right direction, and one that is capable of wide application and extension. It is often said that children are little savages until they are properly trained; and, just as with 'children of an older growth,' these youngsters have been educated by being given something to do, by being trusted and held responsible. The moral will apply equally well in national affairs.

#### A NOTABLE SERMON.

Judging from the striking sermon he preached on the evening of Easter Sunday (reported in the 'Natal Witness' for April 29th) the Rev. A. G. Bridges, Congregational minister of Natal, must be a man after the Rev. Arthur Chambers' own heart. Indeed, he reminds us strongly of our friend the Vicar of Brockenhurst in the fearlessness with which he expresses advanced ideas. He began his sermon by protesting against a morbid view of death, reminding his hearers that Jesus came back from the other world a little more than a day after death, and his first words were 'All Hail!' rejoice! 'Be glad!' Death ought not, Mr. Bridges thought, to be the gloomy thing it was to most of us, after that 'All Hail!' With regard to the idea of prayer for the dead, he had no hesitation in saying that it was a very beautiful one, 'that it was far better that people should pray for the dead than that they should not pray at all,' and he could not give up the idea that they pray for us. He said:—

For forty years I know that my own father prayed for us his children, every day. I don't suppose he ever missed. He died three years ago this Easter, and I know that he is nearer to God now than then, and that he knows more about our needs now than he did then. I don't believe he has perfect knowledge or light yet, but I think it is growing, and is probably gradual. . . I can't conceive that the one of whom I am thinking has ceased to speak to God about me, now that he has not the same kind of body as mine. I am bound to think that the dead pray for the living. We, too, his children, prayed for him; why should we stop the day he died? Dr. George MacDonald, in 'Robert Falconer,' describes the perplexity of a poor old body who did not know whether her son was living or dead. She thought it would be a sin to pray for the dead, but she wanted to pray for him, and natural affection was the stronger. She went on praying.

As to the New Testament teaching about resurrection, Mr. Bridges pointed out that though there are passages in the Epistles that represent the dead as in their graves waiting for the last trump, Jesus himself clearly taught us to believe in a resurrection that is immediate:—

Death disconnects the spirit, that is the person, from a perishable body, which is dropped off and left behind for ever. There's no further use for it. It is refuse. We love even the dead body, but we should soon loathe it. I can't conceive the long wait that the creeds have spoken about. The perishable body no sooner drops away than the spirit is clothed upon. 'There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.' Don't feel that you have seen the last of, or spoken the last to, your dead. We shall not have these bodies, but we shall not be phantoms. We shall be clothed upon, as Paul put it. Possibly, if we have only known each other by our bodies, and not by the self that is at the back of them, we shall not recognise each other, or want to; there would be nothing to recognise. We may have to say to some people, 'Sorry I have forgotten you,' but where there has been genuine love and regard I believe, without knowing why I believe it, that the recognition will be more immediate than that with which the mother in the oft-told story recognises in the weather-beaten, bearded wanderer who knocks at her door for a night's shelter, the smooth-faced boy who ran away to sea so many years earlier.

### REV. J. PAGE HOPPS AND SPIRITUALISM.

The following characteristic confession concerning Spiritualism was found among the papers of our deceased friend, the Rev. John Page Hopps. It has a peculiar value now that the bright and keen mind that recorded it has passed to the spirit world of which he wrote so confidently. Mr. Hopps said :—

I am often asked what I am, what I believe, what I know, and what I advise concerning what is called 'Spiritualism.' It will save trouble if the following brief statement be accepted 'till further notice' :

I. *What I am.*—I think I am sane. I believe I am tolerably honest. I do not think I am a coward. I am not over anxious to be 'thought well of.' I know I am seeking the truth.

II. *What I believe.*—I believe that there is no such thing as death—that what people call death is only an act of 'transition'—the passing out of the real being from its temporary dwelling place ; that the real things are all in the spirit world, or, to use the words of Paul, that 'the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal' ; that, when the real immortal creature passes out of the body it finds itself in the world of eternal and essential forces, a world infinitely more real than this which serves for and is in harmony with the limited powers of the organs of the flesh.

III. *What I know.*—I know that singular phenomena occur which I am utterly unable to explain, except on the hypothesis that there are unseen intelligent human beings at work, controlling forces which the material eye cannot perceive. I know that these phenomena occur in the light of day and in the homes of some of the brightest and best people I have ever known. I know that the theory of 'imposture' is absurd, as a theory which covers any appreciable part of the ground, and that the explanation of 'delusion' or 'the devil' is simply the refuge of the destitute.

IV. *What I advise.*—I advise rational people to refrain from the assumption that this or that is 'impossible' or that they know everything—to call nothing 'common or unclean' that is true—to seek after truth and to be in downright earnest about finding it. To this end, I advise them to avoid lazy scepticism, to take trouble, to demand evidence, to sift everything to the bottom, to believe nothing that repels scrutiny, or that refuses tests—to go steadily on, careless of what the world says, of what the newspapers say, of what the 'men of science' and their gallipots say ; to believe there may be a God even though Professor Brown cannot take Him to pieces, that there may be an immortal spirit even though Dr. Jones cannot catch it ; that there may be a future life for real men, women and children, even though Sir J. Robinson cannot see it ; and that God's angels may be near us even though the vast majority of Christians, who talk as though they believed it, are shocked when we say it is really true. Finally, I advise the superior people who are free from superstition and delusion to leave a little room for discovery, to avoid the bigotry of unbelief which is often little better and not much wiser than the bigotry of 'orthodoxy,' and to be patient with all seekers in this direction if they can. The world before now has been greatly indebted to its 'impostors,' its 'idiots,' its 'dreamers' and its 'fools,' and it is just possible that it is destined to be indebted to them again.

### CONSCIOUSNESS IN LIVING MATTER.

Professor Henri Bergson, the distinguished French philosopher, lectured at Birmingham University, on May 29th, on 'The Relation of Consciousness to Life.' The 'Glasgow Evening Citizen,' of May 30th, states that he said :—

It seemed probable that consciousness was present in principle in all living matter, including vegetation, and that lowest form of protoplasmic organism, the amoeba, but that it was dormant or atrophied wherever such matter renounced spontaneous activity. On the other hand, it became more intense, more complex, and more complete where living matter tended most in the direction of movement and activity.

Seeing that consciousness, whilst being at once creation and choice, was also memory, and that one of its essential functions was to accumulate and preserve the past, whilst probably the

brain was also an instrument of forgetfulness as much as one of remembrance, were we not led to suppose that the effort continued beyond, and that in the passage of consciousness through matter consciousness was tempered like steel and tested itself, by clearly constituting personalities, and preparing them, by the very effort which each was called upon to make, for a higher form of existence. Agreeing that in man consciousness no longer remained imprisoned, there was no repugnance in admitting that in man, though perhaps in his alone, consciousness pursued its path beyond this earthly life.

### MENTAL THERAPEUTICS.

Under the presidency of Dr. Robert Bell, Mr. Arthur Hallam, hon. secretary of the Psycho-Therapeutic Society and editor of 'The Health Record,' lectured recently at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on 'Mental Therapeutics.' He said that mental influence played a very significant part in connection with general well-being, but if consciously applied in the acquisition and maintenance of perfect health, it was even more remarkable. Fear, worry, excitement or agitation all reacted upon bodily functions, causing a negative condition of mind and body ; indeed, no diseases, not even the common cold or influenza, were caught by persons physically and mentally fit. Anything acting prejudicially on the mind and body lowered the vitality and rendered one an easy victim to unhealthy influences. Arising from the harmful, negative attitude of mind also came introspection and self-analysis, followed by fixed ideas, neurosis, and often melancholia. Mental disturbances led to disorder of the nervous system, with consequent diminution of local nutrition, thereby leading to organic disease. If we knew the symptoms of disease, it was an easy matter to think ourselves into them, and especially was this the case with nervous diseases. It was equally true that health and strength depended on mental control, but few persons realised how the mental factor could be consciously utilised in the prevention and treatment of disease. We should be sufficiently positive and well-balanced to refuse to be influenced by injurious impressions from without. If our spontaneous cheerfulness were lost, we should act and speak as if cheerfulness were already there. If such conduct did not make us soon feel cheerful nothing else would. The power of thought was enormous, and enforced thoughts of happiness and well-being, even when trouble and ill-health were upon us, had an effect the beneficial character of which could hardly be exaggerated. How much brighter and happier life would be if people could be induced persistently to maintain a buoyant and cheerful mental attitude, to resolve steadfastly to preserve their mental equilibrium under all circumstances, and not, as now, allow themselves to be swayed and ruffled by every trivial worry. It did not make us any better to advertise our miseries, and it made other people worse. There could be no reason for telling our troubles except that we desired to be pitied ; and no one who desired pity was in a constructive frame of mind. The sympathy habit, once formed, was hard to break. The desire to tell our troubles and receive commiseration grew almost irresistible if we indulged it ; and yet the practice produced only evil results.

The great trouble and error of to-day was that, as soon as any organ was a little overtaxed or strained, its possessor was apt to think of it as weakened and diseased, and to dwell on such weakness. In this he was too often assisted by others, and there was a whole army of medical men anxiously waiting to diagnose him as physically weak, and treat him with physical remedies, all of which tended only to confirm and emphasise his own imaginings. Hence it was, indeed, a miracle if actual physical disease did not eventually supervene. But the man who had learned to realise his inner powers, and was conscious of the danger of uncontrolled thought, naturally stemmed the flow of morbid ideas ; he remembered that physical and mental disorders usually sprang from excess, or the attempted violation of natural law in some form or other. Consequently, instead of dwelling upon and magnifying his symptoms, he recognised that they were Nature's warning, and, a hint to the wise being sufficient, he took care not to offend against Nature in future. Meanwhile, he resisted in mind all that gave him pain and discomfort, and every thought so put forth was as real a resisting force as that which laid in the muscles of the arm to wrestle with a burglar or a madman.

A full report of Mr. Hallam's Address appears in 'The Health Record' for June.

## 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.*

## Letter from Madame E. d'Espérance.

SIR,—Having just returned after a six months' absence from home, restored in health and spirits, I am reminded of a promise I gave to send you a little report of the first Scandinavian Spiritualists' Congress held in Copenhagen on May 12th to 14th.

As I was returning from Sweden, I journeyed *vid* Copenhagen, and was able to attend some of the meetings. I found them of more than ordinary interest, delegates from Sweden, Finland, and various parts of Denmark taking part in the proceedings.

The Congress was opened with a cantata, written and composed for the occasion, and the excellently-rendered music excited no little enthusiasm. There were three meetings on each of the first two days, and two on the 14th, after which there was a picnic in the glorious beach woods of Klampenborg and an elegantly served 'high tea' at the hotel overlooking the sea. The day was exceedingly warm and the cool woodland shades very delightful. The guests who had taken part in the business of the Congress enjoyed both the meetings and the picnic, and parted from their entertainers with regret. Speaking for myself, I may say that my stay among the Danish Spiritualists gave me much pleasure. I certainly had not expected to find so much of interest or that they had so intimate a knowledge of scientific and religious Spiritualism. It astonished me also to learn of the great number of Spiritualists in Copenhagen. I do not remember to have heard the number, but there are several societies, and there is also a Spiritualists' temple—a fine building fronted by six splendid Corinthian columns. I was told that there were nine hundred paying members, and that seats were provided for those who wished to attend the services, but were too poor to become members of the Temple Society. There are two services held weekly, at each of which the building is crowded, the speaker being a lady trance medium.

A Herr Carl Soderling, a Swedish trance medium, gave an address on the second evening of the Congress. It was above the average standard of excellence, and was followed by messages to various persons in the audience.

Mr. Peters is a great favourite with our Danish *confrères*, who cannot understand how it is English Spiritualists let him leave their midst.

Myers' 'Human Personality' is about to be issued in Danish. This work is translated by Mr. Severin Lauritzen, who has also translated 'Does Telepathy Explain?' by the Rev. Minot J. Savage, which has just been published.

On the whole, my impression of the Danish Spiritualists who took part in the Congress is that they are thoroughgoing, earnest, and progressive, decidedly above the average as regards brain power and intellectuality. They are quite up to date in all matters concerning modern Spiritualism.

There are one or two Spiritualistic publications, and another is, I believe, to make its appearance this summer. The principal one, 'Sandhedssøgeren' (the 'Truth-Seeker'), is edited by the president of the Society of Spiritualists, Herr Christian Lyngs. It is a well-got-up and interesting magazine.—Yours, &c.,  
E. D'ESPERANCE.

## A Priestly Curse: The Devil as Co-worker.

SIR,—Perhaps Mr. Raupert and others who believe in his Satanic Majesty may be interested in the following extract from J. Lothrop Motley's 'Rise of the Dutch Republic':—

'In the twelfth century, whenever hand or voice was raised against clerical encroachment, the priests held ever in readiness a deadly weapon of defence—a blasting anathema was thundered against their antagonist, and smote him into submission. The disciples of Him who ordered His followers to bless their persecutors and love their enemies, invented such Christian formulas as these: "In the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, the blessed Virgin Mary, John the Baptist, Peter and Paul, and all other saints in Heaven, do we curse and cut off from our communion him who has thus rebelled against us. May the curse strike him in his house, barn, bed, field, path, city, castle. May he be cursed in battle, accursed in praying, in speaking, in silence, in eating, in drinking, in sleeping. May he be accursed in his taste, hearing, smell, and all his senses. May the curse blast his eyes, head, and his body from the crown to the soles of his feet."

"I conjure you, devil, and all your imps, that you take no rest until you have brought him to eternal shame, till he is destroyed by drowning or hanging, till he is torn to pieces by

wild beasts or consumed by fire. Let his children become orphans, his wife a widow.

"I command you, devil, and all your imps, that even as I now blow out these torches, you do immediately extinguish the light from his eyes. So be it. So be it. Amen. Amen."

'So speaking, the curser was wont to blow out two waxen torches which he held in his hands, and with this practical illustration the anathema was complete.'

And these were the forerunners of the people who dare to say that the holy cause of spirit communion is of the devil!—Yours, &c.,  
A. K. VENNING.

Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

## The Law of Karma.

SIR,—Permit me to point out that the opening sentence in the letter by 'D. R. F.' in 'LIGHT' of May 20th, 'Believers in the doctrine of Karma cannot imagine any explanation for life's misfortunes and deprivations, save that they are all the inevitable outcomes of some broken law or laws,' betrays the unfamiliarity of the writer with theosophical teaching on this subject. With regard to both pain and pleasure, theosophy teaches that they are means to secure a certain end, *i.e.*, the evolution of man. Neither pleasure nor pain is, as 'D. R. F.' says, an end in itself. The function of pain is to arouse the human self to activity; to promote the organisation of man's vehicles, physical and super-physical alike; to purify, for we naturally try to get rid of that which causes no pain; to teach and educate us, and to make us strong. As Edward Carpenter teaches, 'And the pains which I endured in one body were powers which I wielded in the next' ('Towards Democracy'). Pleasure brings about a harmonious condition of man's bodies, which enables the spirit of man to manifest his powers, his nature, through the lower vehicles. Hence the rapture, the ecstasy of the mystic, his sense of Divine union being accompanied by joy. Theosophy teaches that individuals are often placed in what seem to the world painful or troublesome environments on purpose to develop strength, endurance and patience, sympathy and understanding. For only by similar suffering can a man know another's pains. As the proverb runs, 'A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind.' Pain and pleasure are God's ways of educating His children, and the law of Karma—the law that we reap what we have sown—is one method of His working, the law of growth for His children. With regard to 'Agnostic's' difficulty, the making of degenerates will, it appears to me, be minimised as the knowledge of the twin doctrines of reincarnation and Karma is spread. For if we accept these doctrines and act on our knowledge, our treatment of criminals, which too often results in the artificial production of 'degenerates,' will be altered to more reasonable and humane methods, and each 'younger soul' among us, which in reality is what the 'degenerate' often is, will be trained, guided and educated, instead of being brutalised or crushed. As the more advanced souls accept the doctrine of reincarnation and realise the importance of self-control, particularly in sexual matters—self-control in *thought* as well as in *act*—the mental and emotional atmosphere will be purified, relieved of that overwhelming force of emotional stimulus, which is an unseen though potent agency in the production of degenerates. A more universally diffused physiological training and education of the young would also materially relieve the situation. While we confound 'ignorance' with 'innocence' the making of degenerates, in all classes of society, is not likely to decrease.—Yours, &c.,  
London.  
ELIZABETH SEYERS.

## The Problem of Test Conditions.

SIR,—Having had a long and varied experience with materialising and other physical mediums, I consider it my duty to express my views on the problem of test conditions. As was said in 'LIGHT' of April 1st, the fact that genuine materialisations and physical phenomena occur has been fully proved by scientific investigators and serious truthseekers all over the world, and anyone who at present denies the possibility of such phenomena only shows his own ignorance or prejudice, whether he be a scientist or not. On the other hand, experience proves not only that there are false mediums, but also that false phenomena sometimes occur in séances, even when the medium is absolutely genuine and truthful.

Concerning the false mediums there is not much to say. That such would come forward might naturally be expected, as there are imitations and frauds in all branches of science and industry, but my experience has convinced me that the false mediums are not nearly so numerous as they are considered to be, and that most of the so-called exposures of mediums are

only due to the ignorance or biased mind of the sitters. Mediums for physical phenomena, and especially materialising mediums, often become passive instruments for other wills, good and bad, and, according to the quality of spirits attracted by the assistants or according to the influence exercised by the sitters' own thoughts, the results will be good or bad, genuine and convincing or doubtful and apparently false. There can be no doubt also, among those who have had experience with materialising mediums, that the latter, unless very strong-willed and highly-developed morally, can, to a certain extent, be controlled by exterior influences even before the séances or outside the séance room, and that much can thus be done by them for which they are not really responsible.

This is a great psychological problem that is not sufficiently studied, either by scientific investigators or by Spiritualists, and as long as we do not take more care to protect mediums against bad influences, false or doubtful phenomena will necessarily occur. If good and wise spirits can use the medium as an instrument to manifest truth, bad and ill-intentioned entities can, if the conditions of the circle give them the necessary power, use the same instrument to oppose truth, producing phenomena that appear to be faked, and thus ruining the poor medium. If spirits can bring flowers to the séances, they also can bring masks, and if they can materialise full forms, they can also materialise or 'apport' drapery, throw it round the entranced medium, and take him out of the cabinet as a materialisation.

Of course, the medium's guides do their utmost to protect him, and generally succeed in preventing abuses of this kind; but if the mental and moral conditions of the sitters attract a majority of opposing and materially strong spirits, the control of the circle may be transferred from its legitimate conductors to the invisible enemies.

With regard to purely physical mediumship, there are many causes that may force even a quite honest sensitive to 'help' his phenomena. It would take too long to go into these causes here, or to speak of the dishonest way in which mediums are treated by certain arrogant sitters who take upon themselves to judge and condemn them.

Serious, unbiased sitters may be divided into two great classes—those who wish to study the phenomena from a scientific point of view, regardless of their origin, and those (convinced Spiritualists or not) whose aim it is to get into contact with the spirit world and to obtain proofs, advice, or spiritual help from the departed ones. The former, in order to satisfy themselves that the phenomena are not due to fraud, conscious or unconscious, will in most cases require test conditions, and I should say that it is in the medium's own interest, with such investigators, only to give séances under conditions that preclude all possibility of fraud. Such sitters are, as a rule, very sceptical, and not sufficiently initiated in psychic conditions to respect the medium's passivity. They will insist on this or that phenomenon, to be produced in this or that way, and so, if the medium is in half-trance and left free in his movements, the suggestions will act upon him in an almost irresistible manner, and he may be forced to bring about the phenomena with his own hands. This is in accordance with a natural law, his bodily members being automatically used to follow out the impulses given by the brain. Thus it is well known that Eusapia Paladino generally asks the sitters who control her never to let go her hands, as she cannot in such case be responsible for what she may do. Consequently it is advisable that test conditions should be secured at séances of this kind; but I would here like to make the following restrictions:—

1. The test conditions should be of such a nature as never to hurt the medium, a question to be very carefully studied.

2. They should be sufficiently thorough to exclude absolutely all kinds of fraud, because experience proves that a half test leaving some possibility for the phenomena to be produced by the medium, is worse than no test, and if it is found after the séance that fraud has been possible, investigators of this kind generally think that fraud has been perpetrated.

Test conditions should only be applied in séances for purely physical phenomena, such as those that occur with Eusapia, when she sits with scientists, and when no proofs of spirit return are demanded.

With regard to séances in which the sitters are anxious to obtain a demonstration of spirit return, 'fraud-proof conditions' should not be asked for. These always impress the sensitive painfully and deprive him of the passivity that is necessary to enable the spirit agents to manifest successfully. What is needed here is sympathy, harmony, and love—intelligent, spiritually-minded sitters who, with a sound, discriminating judgment, but without arrogance, can observe what occurs, always humbly bearing in mind how very little we know of the complex laws that govern these extraordinary phenomena. If right conditions are given by the assistants, the phenomena will be of such a

nature as to prove themselves, and the circle will feel the joy and the blessing of undoubted and uplifting spirit manifestations.

Materialisation séances should be reserved for sitters of this latter kind, these phenomena being of too astonishing a nature to be grasped by unprepared minds, and requiring too delicate conditions to be successful in promiscuous circles, and where test methods are insisted on. I do not mean to say that only convinced Spiritualists should be admitted; on the contrary, I have often noticed that many Spiritualists—or so-called Spiritualists—are more ignorant concerning psychic conditions, and also, alas! more ready to jump to unkind conclusions with regard to their mediums and other fellow creatures than many honest, but perhaps sceptical, truthseekers that do not style themselves Spiritualists, but who are anxious to become convinced of the great realities of the after-life. Only, no one should be admitted to a materialising séance, whether Spiritualist or not, without having previously assisted at other séances, thus satisfying himself of the possibility of the phenomena, and without having taken serious pains to study the subject and to initiate himself into the conditions.—Yours, &c.,

Paris.

ELLEN S. LETORT.

### SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, JUNE 4th, &c.

*Prospective Notices, not exceeding twenty-four words, may be added to reports if accompanied by stamps to the value of sixpence.*

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—Mr. W. E. Long's address on 'Telepathy: the Mystic Sense,' was greatly appreciated. Mrs. Beaurepaire kindly sang a solo. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided. —15, Mortimer-street, W.—On May 29th Mrs. Place-Veary gave successful psychometric readings. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 67, George-street, W.—At 11 a.m. Mr. E. W. Beard gave an able address on 'Man's Destiny,' and at 7 p.m. Mr. W. J. Colville delivered an eloquent address.—E. W.

BRIXTON.—KOSMON HALL, 73, WILTSHIRE-ROAD.—After Mr. George Morley's address on 'The Descent of Spirit,' many clairvoyant descriptions were given. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address and clairvoyance. Wednesday, at 8.15, public service.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD.—Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Jones rendered excellent service. Sunday next, the well-known speaker, Mr. T. A. Williams, of Bristol, at 7 p.m.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Mrs. Jamrach's addresses and clairvoyant descriptions were appreciated. Sunday next—morning, circle at 11.15. Evening—at 7, address by Mr. R. Boddington.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. A. Boddington gave good practical addresses and convincing clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis, at 11.15 a.m., on 'Summerland,' and at 7 p.m. on 'Truth for Authority.' Tuesday, at 8, and Wednesday at 3, Mrs. Clark, clairvoyant descriptions. On Thursday, at 8, members' circle.

BRIGHTON.—OLD TOWN HALL, HOVE, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST.—Excellent addresses and clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mr. Horace Leaf. Sunday next, at 11.15, circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Curry. Monday at 3 and 8, also Wednesday at 3, clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Curry. Thursday, at 8.15, circle.—A. C.

HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning and evening Mrs. Mary Davies gave addresses and clairvoyant descriptions, and named an infant. May 31st, Madame Maria Scott gave good clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. H. Cobley; at 7 p.m., Madame Marie Zaidia. Wednesday, Mrs. Mary Davies. 18th, opening of Lyceum Sunday School.—J. F.

NOTTINGHAM.—MECHANICS' HALL.—Mr. John Lobb addressed a large audience on 'Ghosts and Their Mission.'

WINCHESTER.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL.—Mrs. L. Harvey, of Southampton, gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions.—F.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD.—Mr. Rogers delivered a good address on 'Manifestations.'—A. B.

PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL.—Mr. Tayler Gwinn gave splendid addresses to large audiences. June 1st, address by Mr. McPherson, and psychometry.—W. D. F.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES'-CRESCENT, N.W.—Mrs. Vander gave an address, and Miss Jose psychometric readings.—A. J. G.

EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.—Mr. George Tilby, of London (secretary of the London Spiritualist Union), gave addresses and Mrs. Letheren clairvoyant descriptions.—E. F.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—MILTON-STREET.—Mr. T. O. Todd, of London, gave the first of his course of four lectures on 'Spiritual Teaching': his able discourse on 'The Temple not made with Hands' being much appreciated.