

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We recently heard quoted as a great saying the words of a famous political leader of the past: 'It is only death which truly integrates.' Whether this utterance was inspired by the stress and terror of political life we know not; but we none the less entirely disagree with it. It is only *life* which integrates—it is only life which adjusts and renews and remedies. And life is here and now, as well as in the region that we have learned to know as the Summerland. Here or there the divine evolution is at work making the rough places smooth and the crooked ways straight.

We are interested to observe in a recent issue of 'The Progressive Thinker' a letter from Dr. G. v. Langsdorff (Berlin), in which he refers to the 'poor knowledge and understanding our German people have about Modern Spiritualism.' He is referring, of course, to Spiritualism pure and simple, since mystical and occult subjects are far from being neglected by the philosophical German mind. Dr. Langsdorff mentions a prediction made to him in 1860 when in New York by Andrew Jackson Davis, who said, 'You Germans will finally, after a great world catastrophe, bring Spiritualism to a victory.'

Mr. James Leith Macbeth Bain ('James Macbeth') is a prolific writer of extremely emotional prose and verse. Several volumes of highly-wrought rhapsodies have already issued from his pen, and here we have another, 'In the Heart of the Holy Grail' (Percy Lund, Humphries, and Co., Ltd., Bradford and London). It consists mainly of prayers, hymns, and meditations, written apparently in a glow of spiritual fervour. We have known reputed mystics whose writings were cold, passionless, and detached. But Mr. Bain's mysticism is not of this order. He writes throughout at a white heat. The average reader, we fear, will not find it easy to enter fully into the spirit of the work, for the key of ecstasy which disregards niceties of form and phrase is a little beyond most of us. We are reminded, as we read, of that somewhat hackneyed saying, *perferendum ingenium Scotorum* (Mr. Bain's nationality is sufficiently indicated by his name). Nevertheless, the book, like its predecessors, has a meaning and a message for students of mystic literature.

In a well-reasoned article in 'The Nautilus' on 'The Effect of Religious Ideas on the Mind and Body,' Mr. Walter de Voe draws an encouraging lesson from the phenomenon of the stigmata;—

Cases of stigmata, by illustrating most vividly the possibilities of mental imagery on the nerves of sensation and nutrition, renew our faith in the influence of good and perfect ideals and their power to produce health and perfection. If concentrated thought of physical wounds will change the quality and texture of the flesh from normal to abnormal that it may conform to the image held in mind, then it is reasonable to suppose that concentration of mind on the idea of a vital, healthy body will restore depleted and diseased nerves and tissues to normal activity.

The argument is a sound one. By the way, although records of the stigmata relate almost exclusively to supernatural impressions of the wounds of Jesus when crucified, we have met with recent cases in which the bodies of sensitive persons have reproduced in a more or less harmless form the appearance of sores and other diseased conditions, the results of intense sympathy with the actual sufferers from such evils.

Discussing in 'The Occult Review' the question 'What is Man?' Madame Jean Delaire writes:—

Man is two-fold, as all religions have more or less clearly taught; his body, with all its desires and passions, belongs to the phenomenal universe, to *Mâyâ*, as they would say in the East, to the 'veil of Brahm,' to that which is ever-changing, ever-evolving, and therefore is not *real*, in the supreme sense of reality. But the true man, the spiritual entity, is he not the eternal son, 'very God of very God'? Has not the divine Life, which throbs in every atom of the universe, entered the heart of man, become *individualised* in humanity, and thus is not every man a God incarnate in the flesh? And may not this be the true answer to the old-world question: What is Man? From the view-point of physical evolution, a reasoning animal, a brute that has climbed its upward way from the protoplasm that formed it, born of the dust and to dust returning. From the view-point of spiritual unfoldment, a 'fallen' Angel; an eternal Spirit, 'spark from the Great Flame,' tied, for a brief time, to matter; a God imprisoned—self-imprisoned—in the veil of flesh, slowly emerging from its sheath, as a flower opening out at dawn. . . . Already this dawn is at hand: are not these its heralds upon the mountain top?

Dealing with that ancient problem, the nature of Good and Evil, a writer in 'The Progressive Thinker' remarks:—

Conscious sensation is the basis of all human activities. Conformity with the laws of its action results in good; non-conformity results in evil.

This, however, does not carry us very far, even if we accept the statement. At best, we are dealing with factors that are purely relative, what is good on one plane of thought or action being evil on another. It has been well observed, however, that, without so-called evil, man would never be able to develop true individuality, which implies self-direction, the power of choice. Love and Wisdom, the two great principles of existence, are to exercise Will and thereby attain what has been termed 'the voluntary life.'

Most persons who believe in a hereafter have taken it for granted that the departed are all intensely serious: that they are gravely saintly and placid or horribly wicked and miserable. Two places—a bejewelled Heaven and a fiery Hell—are supposed to contain all the spirit

people who exist: and, as the one half are thought to be all grave and saintly and placid, and the other half all wicked and miserable, these 'believers' have been unable to believe in the more modern experiences of spirits, who declare that the unseen people can be just as frivolous or insipid, just as silly or stupid, as some of the inhabitants of Great Britain can be. Nothing is more common than to hear it said that it is degrading to believe that spirits will 'come back' to move tables, or rap out ridiculous messages, or call themselves Shakespeare and talk bosh.

Well, it is quite natural for people to talk in that way, but many things seem quite natural that are quite wrong: and this may be one of them.

Surely, if there is a life beyond the present one, the likeliest thing about it is this—that the man or woman who 'passes over' to that life begins on the other side as he or she left off here, simply minus the physical instrument which we call the body. The selfhood will be unchanged, with all its ruling likings, tendencies, habits, tastes and capacities: and quite probably the first thing that the newcomer will find out is that there is no Heaven or Hell in the old sense, but that a new plane of existence has been reached with a selfhood to match it: and from that plane the spirit can work for the benefit of others or play the fool as readily as before; only with new instruments and with other powers: that is all.

We had occasion recently to pass through a cemetery, and, though we usually do not look at tombstones, we had to notice a rather prominent one which happened to rear itself right before the window of our halting carriage. It was in memory of a vicar, and its memorial inscription was:—

Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

Did the good people really believe that their beloved vicar was actually sleeping in that grave?

More recently, in a churchyard in Sussex, we saw a tombstone, on which, in 1886, four lines were inscribed; they concluded as follows:—

Rest till the trump from the opening skies
Shall bid thee from dust to glory rise.

Tennyson's great but seldom noticed poem, 'By an Evolutionist,' begins daringly:—

The Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man.

It is a rough but noble confession of faith which any Spiritualist might, in a certain mood, be glad to adopt, every word of it, as his own. In a milder mood, however, the following, by F. L. Knowles, tells the same truth, with even a loftier flight:—

This body is my house—it is not I;
Herein I sojourn until, in some far sky,
I lease a fairer dwelling, built to last
Till all the carpentry of time is past.
When from my high place viewing this lone star,
What shall I care where these poor timbers are?
What though the crumbling walls turn dust and loam,
I shall have left them for a larger home.
What though the rafters break, the stanchions rot,
When earth has dwindled to a glimmering spot!
When thou, clay cottage, fallest, I'll immerse
My long-cramped spirit in the universe.
Through uncomputed silences of space
I shall yearn upward to the leaning Face.
The ancient heavens will roll aside for me,
As Moses monarch'd the dividing sea.
This body is my house: it is not I.
Triumphant in this faith I live and die.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

DRAWINGS OF THE PSYCHIC AURA AND DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASE.
—On *Wednesday next*, July 12th, 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.

SYLLABUS.

- Tuesday, July 11—'The Human Aura from a Scientific Viewpoint.'
Thursday, July 13—'The Human Aura as Viewed by Clairvoyants and its Significance.'
Tuesday, July 18—'The Real Difference between Fortune-telling and Spiritual Vision.'
Thursday, July 20—'What is Destiny, and Wherein does it Differ from Fate?'
Tuesday, July 25—'Spiritual Disentanglement—The Real Harmony of Conflicting Philosophies.'
Thursday, July 27—Subject to be announced.

Questions invited after each lecture.

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

THE HYPOTHESES OF 'BILOCATION' CONSIDERED.

BY ERNESTO BOZZANO. Translated from 'Annales des Sciences Psychiques.'

(Continued from page 309.)

Case 5. The relation between the phenomena of doubling and those of clairvoyance did not escape the attention of the hypnotists of the last century; in fact, they frequently noticed that their subjects, after a period of lucidity, declared that they were outside their bodies in spirit, and saw the latter inert before them. Dr. J. Charpignon writes as follows on the ecstatic clairvoyant condition of such a subject: ('Physiologie Médecine et Métaphysique du Magnétisme,' p. 101):—

The explanation of the extinction of bodily life and of the apparent separation of the soul, which regards its body as a foreign machine, is of high metaphysical value. All ecstasies in whom this physiological phenomenon is developed have the same experience. I had a patient who became ecstatic during the night when it was necessary to obtain some information as to the progress of the illness. Her account of what happened was: 'I passed into a state similar to that which follows hypnotism; then, little by little, my body expanded, and then I saw it distinctly far from me, motionless, pale and cold as a corpse. I appeared to be surrounded by a luminous vapour; I felt separated from my body. In this state I understood and saw much more than in the hypnotic sleep, although as a hypnotic subject I can think without being apart from my body. After some minutes, a quarter of an hour at most, the vapour drew nearer and nearer to my body, I lost consciousness, and the ecstasy ceased.'

Case 6. In this account of hypnotic sleep the clairvoyant faculties are clearly manifest in the phantom doubled, without the latter going far from the body. The incidents, however, lack the verity, clearness and precision which would suffice to make them of great and incontestable value in connection with such phenomena. I quote the incident from the work of Durville (p. 105). Mme. Eugénie Garcia, in the hypnotic state, described as follows the sensations experienced during the first case of doubling:—

I saw myself suddenly standing in the middle of the room in which I had been put to sleep. It seemed to me that I was sitting a moment ago. I was then lifted without knowing it. I looked round me. I was luminous, transparent, light as a feather.

I saw my body motionless in a chair. Three or four people were round me, watching me carefully. Why did they look at me like that? I approached and looked at myself with the others. I distinguished clearly all the interior of my body, I saw the heart beating, the blood circulate; in fact everything as if I had been made of glass. I drew near to the hypnotist, rested my hand on his arm, and said, 'Am I dead?' But what was my surprise! It was the hand of my body, and my bodily tongue, which touched him and which spoke, and not my second-self. At the same time, I heard, or rather I read in his brain, in formation, the reply. 'You think not,' I said with vivacity, before he spoke. 'Yes,' he replied, 'Yes,' which I heard in the same manner as before. And, since then, always like that. . . I look round me, but instead of seeing the opaque and non-transparent surface of the houses and the furniture as usual, I see everything clear as glass. I see also people and the rooms of my neighbours as if we lived in house of glass.

Case 7. This is the first case which I cite of doubling, at the same time as movement at a distance, as well as sight of true incidents in relation to things and facts of which the percipient was ignorant. Dr. Franz Hartmann supplied the incident to the 'Occult Review,' 1908, p. 159. The incident occurred to a lieutenant in the German army, after breathing coal gas, with the result that asphyxiation began. The fiancée of the lieutenant reports the facts; she is personally known to Dr. Hartmann:—

My fiancé was an officer in the army, and had quitted the service a short time ago. One evening, some time before his resignation, he was going to bed when an instant later he found himself standing in the middle of the room watching his own body stretched on the bed. This situation appeared to the lieutenant quite strange, especially as he had never heard of such phenomena. He began to walk up and down the room, noting the furniture and other objects. He went towards his desk, and found there an open book, which he began to read, but when he wished to turn over the page, in spite of repeated attempts he could not do so. He went to the window, looked out on the street and saw the street lamps. He convinced himself that he saw everything normally. Suddenly he suspected that he was in the condition of a 'disincarnate spirit.' He wished to assure himself that it was possible to go through the wall. He tried to do so, and immediately found himself in the next room, where he saw one of his comrades seated at a table drawing. He tried his utmost to attract the attention of his friend, he touched him, spoke to him, blew upon his face, but it was useless. His friend calmly went on with his work, ignorant of his presence. He went out discouraged and went back to his own room, where he saw his body inert on the bed. Then he thought he would go out. He went through the closed shutters, and on towards the railway station, where he saw the confusion of the travellers and the movements of the trains. Seeing a tunnel in the distance he went towards it and watched the workmen. It was a tunnel into which he had never been before, and of which he was previously entirely ignorant. Returning to his room he saw the servant open the door, enter, sniff the air, go quickly up to the bed, roughly shake the body of his master, who stood in spirit at his side. Then the servant threw the window wide open. A breath of fresh air quickly woke the lieutenant, who asked his servant what had happened, and learnt that his room was full of gas and that the servant had believed him for a moment to be dead. On the lieutenant inquiring how it was that he thought of entering the room at that time, the servant replied that he had had a subtle and irresistible impulse to go and regulate the working of the fireplace. It is certain that if the servant had not arrived the officer would have died, and his spirit would not have re-entered his body. The next day he went to the tunnel which he had visited in his spiritual body and found each thing as he had seen it; he asked his neighbour questions and found that he had been busy with the drawing which he had seen. These are the facts, and in spite of their nature my fiancé does not yet believe in the conscious survival of personality after death.

(To be continued.)

THE 'Hibbert Journal' this month completes nine years of its existence as an organ of the higher thought, conducted without prejudice of party, creed, or opinion. Contributions from the recognised leaders of almost every important religious movement, or school of thought, in Europe and America have won for it a constantly increasing sphere of influence and world-wide circulation. The next issue, on October 1st, will be marked as the Decennial Number, and as it will contain specially invited contributions from leading thinkers in Great Britain, the United States, France, and Germany, it will have a unique significance.

COMFORTING SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

STRIKING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN SPIRITUALISM.

As the writer of the following interesting account of 'personal experiences in Spiritualism' occupies a high official position on the other side of the Atlantic he stipulates that his name and address shall not be published. He vouches for the entire accuracy of his statements, and our readers may rest assured that we are satisfied that his narrative is a *bond fide* setting forth of facts as they appealed to him. Our contributor, who has been on a visit to this country for some time past, is well known to us and is one of the oldest subscribers to 'LIGHT.'

(Continued from page 305.)

Paul's longings and prayers have from the winter of 1905 up to the present day been answered far beyond his expectations. In March, 1905, while he was spending some time in New York, he was advised by a friend to visit a public medium and his wife, who had recently arrived in that city, and who held so-called materialising séances. He found about twenty people, all unknown to him, assembled in a large apartment. The 'cabinet' consisted of a space of about four feet deep, hidden by a heavy curtain stretched across the room, and shut in at the back by a wooden partition about six or seven feet in height, extending across from wall to wall, and dividing the chamber from another room, used by the medium's friends and family as a reading and sitting-room. Anyone standing on a table or chair in this further room could readily enough pass over the wooden partition into the cabinet, if the medium needed the assistance of personating spirits in the flesh. Test conditions were thus conspicuously absent and suspicion aroused. One dollar admission fee was promptly collected from everyone on being admitted to the séance. The medium's wife entered the cabinet. We were told that her mediumship would supply the materialised forms for the spirit friends who would appear. Complete darkness was at first required while we were invited to collect our thoughts and meditate; this was followed by the 'Our Father' recited by the head medium, Mr. M., followed by an invocation, then a hymn with organ accompaniment. A gas or electric light contained within a lantern was now turned on behind our backs, as we sat in horseshoe formation facing the cabinet. The light was equal to about one candle power. Mr. M. now gave, for the benefit of new-comers, an explanation of what spirit materialisation consisted of: an emanation proceeding primarily from the medium, combined with somewhat similar emanations from the sitters, fashioned by the cabinet spirit-controls into the more or less semblance of spirit friends, and animated for a short space of time by the manifesting spirits themselves. The forms might not be perfect resemblances of the departed as they had been in life; some of the features might be so incomplete that their faces might be veiled. In such cases it was hoped that the identity of the spirit would be sufficiently established by his memories of earth life, his peculiar mental traits, his allusions to recent or past events, &c. We were informed that the mediums had three principal controls: Pansy (an Indian child), a Dr. James, and a Dr. Holland—in the order, presumably, of their efficiency in materialising or acting as cabinet controls, or masters of ceremonies, to use an irreverential term. The degree of light seemed to be controlled by Mr. M. (under spirit advice). The first to manifest was the little child Pansy, apparently three or four years of age, wearing a 'nighty' of white material. Her complexion was swarthy, and on her head was a diadem of phosphorescent upright feathers, each three or four inches in length. Pansy first walked from the right of the horseshoe towards the left, calling everyone and welcoming each individual *by name*. Some, of course, were *habitués*, but several were new-comers, among them Paul, unknown by name or otherwise to the mediums or anyone present. She then sat on a child's chair provided specially for her and proceeded to deliver an address to all present, very appropriate, expressed in excellent terms, full of spiritual thoughts and aspirations, dwelling on the mutual happiness of spirits and their friends in earth-life when they met again in mortal form and were able to recognise each

other. This address, coupled with the naturalness of the child's manner, and the fact of her giving the right names and titles to persons previously unknown to her, rekindled confidence among those whose doubt had been aroused by the manifest opportunities of counterfeiting the phenomena if the mediums were impostors. The séance then proceeded, lasting about one hour and a half, during which from thirty to forty materialised forms appeared, sometimes three or four at once—men, women, and children. Mr. M. invited to the front of the cabinet those inquired for by the spirit friends; conversations of from one to five minutes were maintained, and recognition seemed to be the rule. Some forms, in company with their earth friends, walked in front of the sitters, so as to be better seen by them; a few appeared in brilliantly luminous garments; most of them wore long robes of some white tissue, the head veiled, and the features completely or partially covered. On the other hand, the Indian spirits, of whom there were three or four, appeared in their native garb, their swarthy faces and hands uncovered. They had very powerful voices, all of them spoke in broken English, and their actions and movements were peculiarly energetic. Most forms proceeded from within the cabinet by parting the curtains. A few, however, appeared about the centre of the circle first as a luminous mass of vapour, perhaps eighteen inches in diameter, assuming within a minute or so a human form, clothed in white. Uttering in low tones the name of the person they came for, they would then enter into a short conversation. During these proceedings low music was performed on an organ by an engaged musician. The sitters were called upon at times to sing a hymn of the 'Sweet by and by' type, or some popular ditty such as 'The Swanee River.'

On this occasion Paul became acquainted for the first time with an Indian spirit, who gave the name of Brant; he wore an Indian costume and his skin appeared to be dusky. Paul said: 'I cannot recall knowing anyone of that name, but some years ago I studied, and was greatly interested in, the life work of Captain Joseph Brant, the great Mohawk chief.' 'I am he,' replied the spirit visitor. 'I have come to you on account of your interest in my past life, and as you have helped to keep my memory before the public, and have extolled the little good I did during my lifetime, I am anxious to assist you from this side of life.' Paul adds:—

My surprise was great at this unexpected visit and offer of services, which I, of course, accepted most gratefully. I had been led to believe that the earth life of the wild races was one essentially close to Nature, much less artificial than our own, and that in consequence their assistance in the physical manifestations of mediumship, which after all are natural, if as yet little understood by us, facilitated such manifestations. My subsequent experiences in many séances have amply proved this to be a fact. I have heard sitters on certain occasions find fault with their intervention; they are sometimes noisy, sometimes with difficulty understood owing to the absence of knowledge, or imperfect knowledge, of English. I have seen on one occasion three or more rush out of the cabinet with blood-curdling war-whoops, decorated with feathers, and clothed in leather garments of the Fennimore Cooper period. After two or three rounds of the circle they subsided into a sort of war dance, lasting a few minutes. 'Why these exhibitions?' one may well ask. Perhaps to divert the thoughts of the sitters, which had become too intense or too set, and, therefore, not conducive to the best results; perhaps to intensify or alter the mode of vibrations, or simply to demonstrate the possible energy of such manifestations under favourable conditions.

At my right hand in the circle sat a lady of about fifty, evidently belonging to the fashionable world. The séance was far advanced. She was disappointed, for she had been summoned by no one as yet. The light had been shut down for a few moments, when I noticed a mass of luminous substance gathering at this lady's feet, and faster than I can write it, there grew up a beautiful spirit form of a young woman. Her flowing drapery sparkled with light, but her features were indistinct. The lady arose and embraced the apparition, who responded in the most affectionate manner. Both now retreated towards the cabinet, and remained interlaced in each other's arms, apparently engaged in earnest conversation. The spirit soon vanished, and the mother returned to her seat next to me. After allowing a few moments to elapse, in order to permit her emotion to subside, I ventured to say, 'Madame, let me congratulate you; you have waited long, but not in vain.' 'Yes,' she replied, 'I hardly hoped to see my daughter, as I have never before come to

Mr. M.'s séances, and I hardly knew what to think of them. This spirit form, however, was undoubtedly my daughter. Two years ago she died in Florence from typhoid fever. Since then she has been able to materialise many times for me in Boston. I was anxious to know whether she could come to me elsewhere, and under new conditions. I know now that she can, and certain doubts which came to me are happily removed. But I must say that she comes far more perfectly in Boston than here.' I did not know enough then to suggest that if she returned to this medium at reasonable intervals she would obtain results equal to, if not better than, those she got at Boston. I begged for the address of her Boston medium. In reply she gave me the name and address of a Mrs. S., who, she said, held a public séance every Saturday afternoon at three o'clock. I had reason to hope I would have an opportunity of seeing Mrs. S. at an early date in Boston.

My time came soon after to be called to the curtain. My dear Adela uttered her own name and threw her arms round my neck, while I clasped her in my arms. This was our first meeting in the material form. When I had recognised her once before—on November 1st, 1900—her form was ethereal. Our mutual emotion was great, the light was imperfect. In kissing her lips I found that her face was tightly veiled with some transparent thin tissue through which I could see the sparkle of her eyes, but it was not possible to distinguish her features. On the impulse of the moment, and perhaps thoughtlessly, I addressed her a few words of endearment in French, as I would have done in her earth life in days long, long ago, before she had sacrificed all to religious fanaticism. What was the result? A convulsive shudder of her dear form, the word 'chéri' faintly uttered, her head fell on my shoulder, and the sweet apparition melted away. I returned to my seat bewildered, for days after obsessed by conflicting emotions of hope, of joy, of doubt as to the reality of this recent experience.

(To be continued.)

NINTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS.

It was pleasant to enjoy the bracing atmosphere of northern heartiness and hospitality at the annual general meeting and conference of the National Union of Spiritualists, held in Newcastle-on-Tyne on Saturday and Sunday last. Saturday's meetings were held at the Geographical Institute, St. Mary's-place. The assembled representatives and ordinary members, numbering about one hundred and thirty, were heartily welcomed by Mr. Taylor, the president of the Northern Union. The president, Mr. Albert Wilkinson (Nelson, Lancashire), opened the proceedings with a stirring speech, and the report and balance-sheet, after some discussion, were adopted unanimously. It was satisfactory to learn that the receipts were larger than the Union had ever had before, and that there was a cash balance in hand of £359 7s. 5d., besides £37 16s. 6d. value of the stock in hand. The Fund of Benevolence report also showed a cash balance in hand of £133, after some £90 had been expended in grants in aid.

A pleasing interlude in a dry discussion of details was afforded by the chairman expressing the pleasure it gave him to welcome, in the name of the Union, Herr Brinkmann, of Düsseldorf, who was present on the platform as representing German Spiritualists. In reply, Herr Brinkmann expressed his warm thanks, and at the same time conveyed a message of cordial greetings from his fellow-countrymen.

The following resolution, framed on the lines of one carried at the meeting of the London Union in May, was moved by Mr. R. Boddington, seconded by Mr. Forsyth, and carried unanimously, it being decided that copies should be sent to the Prime Minister, Sir Edward Grey, and President Taft:—

That this annual general meeting of the Spiritualists National Union, Limited, meeting at Newcastle-on-Tyne, regards with sincere approval the efforts now being directed to the maintenance of Peace between nations, and cordially welcomes the Taft-Grey proposal as a contribution of great value to the accomplishment of that end.

A somewhat similar resolution, proposed by Mr. Alfred Kitson, secretary of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union, was also adopted.

Considerable discussion was evoked by a resolution moved by Mr. G. P. Young, of Glasgow, but after Mr. Young had

modified the opening sentence it was carried with but one dissentient. In its final form it ran as follows :—

That we, the representatives of the organised Spiritualist movement, in conference assembled, express approval of the principle of a national insurance scheme, but at the same time desire that the conscientious scruples of individuals should be safeguarded in the medical and other provisions embodied in such scheme.

Members were next informed that everything was in as forward a state as possible for the holding at Liverpool next year of an International Congress. Already Spiritualist societies in half-a-dozen countries had offered to send delegates. Saturday, July 6th, 1912, would be devoted to the affairs of the Spiritualists' National Union, and as many of the subsequent days as the business rendered necessary would be given to international questions, though it was not anticipated that that business would occupy more than the Sunday and the Monday.

A vote of sympathy with those who had been bereft during the year of the outward presence of their loved ones was moved in touching language by Mrs. Stair, and passed by the members silently rising to their feet.

The election of president and officers for the coming year resulted in the selection of Mr. Geo. P. Young, of Glasgow, as president ; Mr. Reuben Latham, of Burnley, vice-president ; Mr. A. E. Button, of Doncaster, treasurer ; Mr. Hanson G. Hey, of Halifax, secretary ; and Messrs. R. Boddington (London), E. Oaten (Sheffield), J. J. Morse (Manchester), H. J. Webster (Sheffield), and R. A. Owen (Liverpool) as members of the Executive Council.

The question of the advisability of appointing an Organiser for twelve months was well discussed, and adjourned until next year, the Executive in the meantime to draft a scheme to utilise the services of such a worker.

On Sunday morning, in the Town Hall, Mrs. Despard, of London, delivered an eloquent address on 'The Spiritual Ideal of Womanhood,' and replied to several questions. The afternoon session was devoted to the consideration of 'The Rationale of Growth,'—an able address being delivered on that subject by Mr. Percy R. Street, of Reading. At night an audience, estimated at about two thousand persons, listened to stirring addresses by Mr. Street, Mr. J. J. Morse, Mrs. Despard, and Herr Brinkmann. We shall report these addresses more fully in our next issue.

A delightful musical programme, kindly rendered by the Imperial Quartette Party, added largely to the harmony of the proceedings.

SIR OLIVER LODGE ON HUMAN IMMORTALITY.

Sir Oliver Lodge deals with 'The Christian Idea of God' in the current issue of 'The Hibbert Journal,' and makes a powerful 'plea for simplicity.' The whole article is timely, lucid, and suggestive. But certain passages will be especially interesting to the readers of 'LIGHT.' After admitting that our senses are confessedly limited, Sir Oliver says that 'if there is any truth in the doctrine of human immortality, the existence of myriads of departed individuals must be assumed on what has been called "the other side." ' Replying to the question, 'How are we to get evidence in favour of such an apparently gratuitous hypothesis ? ' he says :—

Speaking for myself, and with full and cautious responsibility, I have to state that as an outcome of my investigation into psychical matters, I have at length, and quite gradually, become convinced, after more than twenty years of study, not only that persistent individual existence is a fact, but that occasional communication across the chasm—with difficulty and under definite conditions—is possible.

This is not a subject on which one comes lightly and easily to a conclusion, nor can the evidence be explained except to those who will give to it time and careful study ; but clearly the conclusion is either folly and self-deception, or it is a truth of the utmost importance to humanity—and of importance to us in connection with our present subject. For it is a conclusion which cannot stand alone. Mistaken or true, it affords a foothold for a whole range of thoughts, other conclusions, other ideas ; false and misleading if the foothold is insecure, worthy of attention if the foothold is sound. Let posterity judge.

Meanwhile it is a subject that attracts cranks and charlatans. Gratuitous opinions are freely expressed on both sides. I call upon the educated of the younger generation to refrain from accepting assertions without severe scrutiny, and, above all, to keep an open mind.

If departed human beings can communicate with us, can advise and help us, can have any influence on our actions—then clearly the doors are open to a wealth of spiritual control beyond what we have imagined.

A BUOYANT FAITH.

It is quite right to long for a freshening tide, for new manifestations of spirit power, for even the 'mighty rushing wind' of a new Pentecost ; but this longing ought to be free from any trace of despondency ; in fact, it ought to be the expression of a buoyant faith, and of a faith that can wait.

That thought has been encouraged by the sight of a discourse by a certain Dr. James de Normandie on the fine old text, 'He that believeth shall not make haste,' in which the gallant preacher counselled confidence in the grand sweep of the far-reaching powers. All the big things take time, and all big souls ought to be, and usually are, patient. 'One day, with the Lord, is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,' said Peter—a noble saying. 'We begin to see what a mighty universe this is,' says Dr. Normandie.

It is not the work of six days nor of ten thousand years nor of a million years. Mighty things are to be done, and they require vast ages. Slowly they come to brighter and better things ; but if he, to whom a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past, can be patient, need we be so impatient and fret ourselves because of evil-doers ? Politics may disgust us because persons otherwise respectable and honourable will, in politics, do such base things ; men may forget every law of integrity in business ; fashion may crush out every impulse of sympathy ; passion may turn man again and again towards the beast from whose nature we do slowly escape ; worship may seem to have a slight influence over our ways ; the perplexities of life may for a time obscure our vision, its burdens break us down. Courage, O heart of man, courage, this is a mighty universe and comes slowly to its fruition ; but, if it is God's universe, and we are fellow-workers with him, though a thousand years may be as a day, the day of light, of truth, of peace, of righteousness, must come. Ah ! it all comes to that question and solution at last, Are we fellow-workers with God ? If not, we go backward instead of forward, as the ruins of many a great nation, of many a promising life bear witness. Only believe in the great principles of the higher life, of the spiritual realities : work for them, and the triumph must come.

The argument for a future life, based upon its necessity in order to give meaning and greatness to life here and now, is greatening in value, for life is all round greatening with its larger knowledge, its vaster problems, and its more urgent demands. This is being felt and admitted even by those who just fail to find refuge in faith. Thus, the author of 'Natural Religion,' a book that stopped short of belief in any life beyond, broke out, in the end, into what was almost a wail of regret. He said :—

We may well doubt whether the natural, the material, can suffice for human life. No sooner do we try to think so—no sooner do we try to get rid of the idea of Immortality—than Pessimism raises its head. The more our thoughts widen and deepen, the more accustomed we become to boundless space and time, the more petrifying is the contrast of our own significance, the more contemptible becomes the pettiness, the shortness, the fragility of the individual life. For a while we comfort ourselves with the notion of self-sacrifice. We say, What matter if I pass ? let me think of others. But the other has become contemptible, too, no less than the self. Human griefs seem little worth assuaging ; human happiness too paltry (at the best) to be worth increasing. The whole moral world is reduced to a point. Good and evil, right and wrong, become infinitesimal, ephemeral matters. The affections die away—die of their own conscious feebleness and uselessness. A moral paralysis creeps over us.

This is rather overdrawn, yet it has truth in it—especially to the world-weary and disappointed. Truly the encouraging thought is needed of an immortal life that will not only compensate for present ills, but eventually enable us to round out to fruition and realise the divine ideal of a perfected humanity.

H.

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DEATH AND THE POET.

We have often listened and smiled at the objection frequently offered by the educated sceptic against communications (spoken or written) from the unseen world. They are, it is urged, generally crude and commonplace—sometimes utterly inane—and far below the level of normal oratory and literature. Now and again, indeed, we are confronted with something entirely deplorable, although purporting to be derived from the spiritual world, and are asked to compare it with the normal work of a reasonably educated person in this world—and then we do not smile. For, truth to tell, the work of the spiritual missionary is sadly hindered, in this direction, by well-meaning but indiscreet experimenters. And it is an unfortunate circumstance that such instances are eagerly seized upon as texts against us. And yet literary men, for example, are frequently pestered with immature and grotesque productions by aspiring poets and authors, who think, and are encouraged by their friends in thinking, that their feeble effusions are prodigies of genius.

We have never heard an argument against the reality and beauty of literature and poetry based upon these cases of callow workmanship. 'No,' rejoins a hostile critic, 'because we have great literature and fine poetry to compare them with.' Truly; but the argument applies equally to ourselves, for we, too, have many great utterances from the world beyond with which to compare the foolish babblings which it suits you, our critic, to take as its typical productions. The lover of literature smiles at the persons to whom poetry means 'The Village Blacksmith,' 'The Fireman's Wedding,' and 'Little Jim,' but who know nothing of 'Aurora Leigh,' 'The Revolt of Islam,' 'Hyperion,' or 'The Rubáiyát.' Similarly the cultured Spiritualist regards those good people who proudly display a little kindly doggerel, or a few lines of copy-book morality, received at a séance, as wondrous examples of inspirations from the spirit world, but who know nothing of Swedenborg, Behmen, or Davis. The cause is the same in both examples—merely inexperience. And let us tell our critic that of the two classes of inexperienced persons, the admirers of unlettered communications from the beyond are the less to be pitied. For this reason—that once in touch with the unseen world they will receive a greater degree of knowledge regarding that world than has fallen to the lot of most of our great poets. That is a bold claim to make, perhaps: but we speak advisedly.

We may point, for example, to the fact that the subject of death in the mind of poets has resulted in a perfect 'derangement of epitaphs'—of mixed metaphors and confusion unspeakable. The poet writes of the calm sleep of death, of the beatitudes of the arisen soul, and the future resurrection—almost in the same breath, as it were. We could point to many noble poems which, as regards any reasonable idea of the actual state of the dead, would not bear a moment's analysis. We think of James Russell Lowell's 'Poet's Dirge,' addressed to a dead poet who is at one and the same time slumbering under the turf, 'neath the rustle of green trees,' and 'star-crowned' 'high above the spheres.' If he had added some lines indicating that the poet's soul was also hovering about somewhere, awaiting reunion with his sleeping form in order to be properly and truly alive again, he would not have exceeded the absurdities perpetrated by some other great singers of the mystery of death.

Not long ago we heard a distinguished literary man remark that even the mighty Shakespeare had given us no new light on the great mystery. Doubtless for the very good and sufficient reason that he had no new light to impart. His majestic utterance and wondrous range of thought and perception are related to the soul in the flesh. Beyond that it was not given to him to soar.

A great critic (Pater, if we remember aright) has said somewhere that the theology of the past has so deflected the thought of mankind that it will require ages for it to recover the true line of natural evolution. Sometimes we think and fear this is true. We are struck, for example, by the horror which the worldly-cultured man expresses at the idea of a *natural* life after death. He demands an amaranthine sphere, part fairyland and part paradise, peopled with angels and seraphim—a realm in which he could not exist for a moment and retain his personal identity.

In a world where thought had escaped this quasi-theological distortion, men could profitably look to the poet for light on the mystery—for the true poet is the *vates* or seer. Alas, the poet, too, as we have seen, has suffered, though in a smaller measure, from the distorted standards of thought. And this, we tell our critic, is where the prejudice in favour of so-called normal teaching has landed us. Not that we are arguing for abnormality. Our argument, simply stated, is that on this tremendous subject of death the 'normal' thinking is really abnormal, unnatural—that the revelations of spiritually-inspired seers and writers, given in what is admittedly an abnormal fashion (merely because it is a little in advance of the general line of evolution) are vastly truer to Nature and reality.

And let us be fair to the poets. They have not all bowed the knee to Baal in this matter. Walt Whitman, one of America's greatest voices, has suffered very little from the influence of the old ecclesiastical school. He has spoken greatly on both life and death under the purest influences of Nature. Shelley and Tennyson, too, have uttered things that are in unity with the highest spiritual teachings. And with the gradual leavening of thought that is now going on, impregnating theology and poetry alike, we shall in due time hear the authentic voice of the Spirit through the poet. He will have gained a new inspiration, and we shall be able to read his deliverances on the subject of death and the after life with joy and profit, and not, as at present, with perplexity. The New Poet, as we may call him, will have had his forerunner, his John the Baptist, in the guise of some rough old pioneer of a Spiritualist, knowing little and caring less about poetry, but greatly concerned about truth.

THE CREDULITY OF INVETERATE INCREDULITY.

(Continued from page 303.)

On page 474 of 'Esprits et Mediums,' Professor Flournoy assures us that 'people who give themselves over to Spiritualistic exercises, who abandon themselves to a certain state of passivity with the idea of serving as instruments for the spirits, translate the sub-conscious mass of memories and preoccupations of every kind accumulated in the course of life.' Having made this assertion, he bases on it the assumption that this supposed action on the part of mediums suffices 'to generate messages which have every appearance of coming from extraneous personalities':—

As for the elucidation of the phenomenon and the explanation of how it happens that by means of a little passivity on our part, the vague tendencies floating in the margin of our personality come to 'personalise' themselves independently to the extent of constituting spirits that are momentarily real, possessing an 'I' distinct from our own, subject to the loss of it an instant later and to absorption once more in the misty background of our *psyché*—that is another problem, the examination of which would lead me too far just now. We can say, if you like, with W. James, that 'every consciousness tends towards the personal form,' or tends to constitute some character of *Ich heit* (according to German expression), or of *I-ness*, the inalienable, universal trait of all reality; so that the elements which we cease to maintain beneath the spectre of our attention tend immediately as in dreams to form an independent person and an *I* for themselves. However it may be as to the ultimate explanations, the fact is that there are in us spirit-generating (spiritoid in Boirac's language) functions or processes whose transient products are singularly difficult to distinguish from the spirits claimed to be permanent by Spiritism.

But even admitting that the imaginative faculty enables novelists to picture fictitious individualities, such as 'Mr. Pickwick,' for instance, this fact will not cover the observed phenomena of the identity of those personalities who manifest through mediums and supply evidences of character, idiosyncrasy, memory, and knowledge conveying to the observer in many ways the indubitable feeling of separate individuality.

The Professor, however, is compelled to admit that all these partial hypotheses remain insufficient when confronted with cases of materialisations of hands and faces without physical resemblance to Eusapia, so many examples of which are reported, above all by the Italian observers. And unless these accounts are rejected on *a priori* grounds as too hard to swallow we must certainly, if we want to sketch out some rough form of explanation or semblance of a theory, push on to the one propounded by Morselli.

Morselli's theory of the phenomenon of materialisation is that it is

due to the co-operation of the following processes: firstly, the memories which the sitter has preserved of the deceased are mentally communicated to Eusapia; secondly, the latter's imagination, haunted by these memories, impresses their traits on her exterior force, which thus gradually assumes the recognisable appearance of the deceased. In two words, telepathy and teleplasty. The peculiar faculty characteristic of the physical and particularly of the materialising medium consists precisely in this power of giving a momentary objective reality to the creations of his imagination, which in their turn may be only the copy of what the surrounding persons are internally picturing to themselves.

What a wonderful woman Eusapia must be—sub-consciously at any rate—if she can unconsciously 'give objective reality to the creations of her imagination,' which creations, however, are merely copies of the mental pictures formed by the sitters! Here again we have a great deal taken for granted. Professor Flournoy unerringly puts his finger on the weak spot of Morselli's theory, and attempts to modify but not to simplify it, so that it may be thought to fit the facts. As it will not cover 'the appearance of a deceased person whom Eusapia has never known and who returns to express his or her tenderness or regret to one of the spectators,' we are asked to suppose that Eusapia, by a kind of catalytic influence, sets in motion the stereoplastic faculty of the sitter so that his own emotional complexes become materialised in objective form without passing

through the medium. But we had better give the Professor's own words; they are:—

The sole modification which these accounts seem to me to suggest (but would it be a simplification?) would consist in replacing, every time the mental content of the materialisation proceeds from the sitters, the passage or telepathic induction of the memories of the sitters to the medium by an inverse transmission of the psycho-dynamic faculty of Eusapia to the sitters. I will explain. When at the séances of Paladino, Messrs. Morselli, Venzano, &c., saw and touched faces or hands different from those of Eusapia, but which might (like those of the famous 'John') have been the product of her imagination, it is clear that these apparitions, admitting their reality, would be sufficiently [?] and necessarily explained by the materialisation of the mental representations peculiar to the medium. But when the phantoms incarnate, so to speak, emotional complexes proceeding no longer from Eusapia, but from the sitters—when, for instance, we witness the appearance of a deceased person whom Eusapia has never known, and who returns to express his or her tenderness or regret to one of the spectators—we are confronted with two possible explanations. For Morselli it is the memories of emotional complexes of the spectator which pass into (or more exactly, which telepathically induce their counterpart in) the imagination of the medium, whence they are then projected as real forms by means of the medium's psycho-dynamic faculty. But we might also suppose that it is Eusapia who transmits her psycho-dynamic forces to the spectator; or that by a kind of catalytic influence she sets in motion a latent psycho-dynamic or stereoplastic faculty in him, by means of which his own emotional complexes attain direct objective self-realisation without passing through the medium.

What an ingenious pastime it is! Suppose this, assume the other, and then perhaps, or possibly, something may occur, and this will sufficiently and necessarily explain what does happen, and there are no spirits in it at all.

But, after all, our genial Professor does not appear to be quite satisfied with his theories; for, towards the close of his book, replying to his own question: 'Does that mean that I consider Spiritism to be from henceforward a condemned error?' he says:—

Such a conclusion on my part would be truly grotesque. For in the first place, being by no means infallible, I may have been mistaken in the interpretation of the facts which I have endeavoured to unravel; and in the next place these facts constitute but an infinitesimal collection compared with those which the literature of the subject contains and which I have not examined, and, above all, compared with those still more numerous facts which for some reason or other escape all serious investigation.

To sum up, so far from estimating the spiritual hypothesis to be essentially absurd or anti-scientific, I admit on the contrary that it may be fundamentally true; but there it is, that is a matter that awaits demonstration.

So, after all, the spirit explanation may be fundamentally true, but that truth *awaits demonstration*. We wonder what amount of evidence *will* demonstrate it. Does all the testimony, the independent and consentaneous testimony of so many of the brightest, brainiest and best men and women of the past half-century count for nothing?

We see that it is stated in the newspapers that Madero, the leader of the Mexican insurgents, is a Spiritualist. The report says that: 'At college he was a typically flippant undergraduate, but when he became interested in Spiritualism his whole life changed, and he began to live in earnest. Since his marriage ten years ago he has become a close student of economics and politics and religion. Four years ago he began to take an active interest in the government of his native State in the north of Mexico. He ran as candidate for the Presidency against Diaz, and we are told that when he became too popular he was arrested and put in gaol. This was in 1910. No sooner was he out of prison than he issued a proclamation calling the people of Mexico to arms. He then escaped to St. Antonio, in Texas, disguised as a labourer, for a price of ten thousand dollars was placed on his head. He remained in the United States until February last, when he joined the revolutionary force, and from that moment his career is well known. In his campaign he was supported by General Ben Viljoen, a veteran of the Boer war, who proved of great assistance to him. Madero does not look his part, being a small man of about five feet three inches in height, with a Vandyck beard and small hands. He dresses neatly and quietly. He is a vegetarian, and is still a Spiritualist.'

AN OCCULTIST, BUT NOT A REINCARNATIONIST.

Writing in 'The Message of Life,' New Zealand, Mr. H. M. Boucher, after shrewdly observing that, logically and reasonably considered, the value of an opinion must be in exact proportion to the knowledge possessed by the speaker on the subject under discussion, goes on to explain that his conclusions regarding human reincarnation are not only the result of deep thought and extensive study of occultism, but are based on experience gained during years of astral travelling, conscious spiritual illumination, and intelligent intercourse with the spirits of the so-called dead. Continuing, he says:—

I also have gazed upon the prehistoric past and clairvoyantly viewed the scenes of long ago,

'When the pyramids were new,
And the ancient land was young;
Long before the siege of Troy,
Or the songs that Homer sung.'

My occult studies and psychic experiences unitedly prove to me that physical reincarnation in human form is entirely an erroneous theory, chiefly because a series of physical rebirths in human form are not necessary to the ego's evolution, for every phase of mortal existence and every possible kind of material experience can be gained by the ego after the change called death.

Mr. Leadbeater is a medium, like myself, and therefore not infallible; but I will quote statements from Mr. Leadbeater himself, confirming my argument that reincarnation is unnecessary, and therefore a useless process. In Sydney I heard him say publicly that 'the astral life was but a continuation of this life, under slightly different conditions.' On page 52, 'The Other Side of Death,' he says: 'The astral plane is one stage higher than the physical, and therefore its possibilities, both of enjoyment and "progress," are in every way very much greater than those of the lower level.' Further on he writes, referring to an unselfish ego: 'The astral life will be for him one of the most vivid joy and the most rapid progress.' Again, on page 53, 'He may do more good in a few years of astral existence than he could have done in the longest physical life.' Why, then, waste the time in becoming a pining, whining, suckling babe, going round even as a wheel goes round over and over again, through the various processes entailed upon being born, time after time, physically, even as the animals are?

Mrs. Besant, in 'The Theosophist,' also confirms the teaching of Spiritualists, that discarnate spirits assist their friends in their material affairs, for in her speech at the unveiling of a monument (in India) to Col. Olcott, she told her audience that 'he was as much interested in the welfare of the Theosophical Society as ever.' And recently, writing upon her last visit to New York, she states that while walking along a street in that city, 'I thought of W. Q. Judge, and how fond of New York he used to be—"and am so still" a voice said in my ear; and there he was walking beside me.' She also writes: 'I feel he will be of great assistance to me.' Please note that Mr. Judge died physically some years ago, yet he is neither reincarnated in human form, nor is he in Devachan, sitting in a little mental world of his own creation, and talking to phantom forms; no, he is actually walking a crowded city street, like any common, ordinary spirit guide. In fact, the whole reincarnation theory is a bundle of contradictory paradoxical complexities, and it is no wonder that many weak-minded people, embracing its teaching, believe themselves to have been queens, kings, and emperors; yea, even gods and goddesses, in their former lives.

There are several schools of reincarnationists, with diverse teachings. One noted Theosophist, named Eliphas Levi, in a book called, 'Mysteries of Magic,' page 106, says: 'It is impossible that the same individual should incarnate twice on the same earth.'

Intellectuals think for themselves, while mental nonentities not only let others think for them, but also think in multitudes, just as sheep travel in mobs; consequently, to the thinker, it does not matter how many millions of people believe a certain doctrine, for belief does not alter facts, and it is well to remember that Theosophy teaches that the adepts never gave the multitude the 'truth naked,' but always veiled as a mystery. . .

To me reincarnation is admirably adapted to clog the wheels of mental evolution, and block the spiritual progress of millions, by chaining their minds to earth, so that they become earth-bound spirits, instead of free souls. They are mental slaves, bound by the fetters of the false theory of reincarnation.

THE primal duties shine aloft like stars;
The charities that soothe and heal and bless
Lie scattered at the feet of men like flowers.

—WORDSWORTH.

PROFESSOR HENRY CORSON'S TRANSITION.

The venerable and venerated American savant, Henry Corson, Emeritus Professor at Cornell University, and friend of Browning, Tennyson, and other famous literary men, passed away on June 15th at his residence, Cascadilla Cottage, Ithaca, New York, U.S.A., in the eighty-third year of his age. He was the author of numerous publications of a critical and appreciative nature on the great standard works of literature, and his introductions to the study of Shakespeare and Browning are especially well known. Probably higher tributes were never paid to a scholar and writer than those uttered at Sage Chapel, on the occasion of his funeral, by his friends, Professor Burr and Dr. Tyler. Professor Burr, in the course of his tribute, said:—

His lectures on literature were luminous, but his message was not about literature; it was in literature, and through it. Life, he taught us, is to be fed by life alone. Goodness does not come by maxims. Faith itself is not slavish assent or blind belief, but passionate intuition. Christianity is a revelation, not through a book, but through a life. Religion is not obedience to some authority outside us; it is the soul's spontaneous welcome of the God whose kingdom is within us. . . . Beautiful has it seemed to me that in these latest years of growing loneliness, as earthly friends grew few and dropped away, there should reveal itself to his anointed vision such sweet and noble companionship from a world beyond the veil. Not for most of us his childlike faith in that world supernal. Not for all of us, perhaps, even the hope which gave it birth. Yet for us all that witness to the deathlessness of even human love, which he that once hath known it loseth no more.

Dr. Tyler, speaking of Professor Corson's philosophy of religion, said that in general he was wholly aloof from metaphysical systems of thought:—

He desired me to state that he emphasised the importance of the co-operation of the discursive intellect with the spiritual faculties in man. For isolated intellect he had no respect. The eternal essential man is realised only by this mutual operation. The essential man was to him one with the universal substance or spirit, and therefore immortal, for death is impossible—death is only transition. . . . The physical world, the body of man his tenement, were for our friend but the expression of the universal spirit.

For the last forty years of his life, the Professor had been a confirmed Spiritualist, and was always fearless and outspoken in the expression of his spiritualistic views. Dr. Eugene P. Corson states that his father, at the time of his transition, was about to publish a work which would prove a valuable contribution to the literature of Spiritualism. Dr. Corson says:—

Much of his talk in his last days was of his book, which should have been in his hands before his death. Through the bad management of the publishers it was delayed. The book is a collection of spirit messages (received through the mediumship of Mrs. Minnie M. Soule, of Boston, Mass.) from his wife, his children and his poet friends. Years ago he wrote an article for the 'Cornell Era' on Spiritualism as a religion, and at a time when such an announcement rendered one liable to expulsion from any university or other association. . . . The new book contains an introductory essay on 'Spiritual Vitality,' which is an elaboration of an article he wrote for 'LIGHT' several months ago. [See 'LIGHT' for July 9th, 1910, p. 322.]

In a private letter to us, Dr. Corson adds: 'I have read the entire work in page proofs. I know of nothing finer in the literature of Spiritualism than these messages as messages. They were taken down word for word by my father without any omission or addition. As soon as I can get a copy of the work I will send it to you.'

In 'LIGHT' of May 6th, p. 215, we printed a letter written by Mrs. Frank Andrews, of Southend-on-Sea, in which that lady recounted how Spiritualism had helped and comforted her after the decease of her husband, and how she was developing power as a drawing medium. We regret to learn that since the publication of that letter Mrs. Andrews has been abandoned by her friends, and is, in consequence, in such distressed circumstances that she is compelled to seek a situation. A Spiritualist friend sends us an advertisement, which appears on the front page of this issue of 'LIGHT,' and we trust that the desired help will be secured.

A BROWNINGESQUE POET.

From Messrs. Putnams we have received a heavy volume—over twelve hundred pages—of poems by Frederick Fanning Ayer. We must confess that we find it heavy in more senses than one. Not that Mr. Ayer's verse is slow and monotonous. It is anything but that. Rather, it is its extreme jerkiness, and the fact that it out-Brownings Browning for abruptness and eccentricity of diction that makes it difficult reading. We do not deny a certain fierce vigour of expression, but we fail to see why ideas should be conveyed more obscurely in verse than they would be if set out in prose. The following verses, from a poem called 'A Bachelor,' please us, being both simple and musical:—

My wife!—There's the thought I think
As I front my fire my evening way,
Watch the embers blossom and sink,
Dodge the sparks in their battle-play!
What would she seem like or be
Once she were here by the side of me?

My wife!—How the sweet word sings
Just as a linnet bubbles his note
And the empty cloiser rings
Like chime in a silver throat!—
What may I seem like or be
To her should she try to think of me?

So well I can see her now,
Her way she would sit to look at me
Under the fine peaceful brow,
As if she were trying to see
My deepest thought, just to know
If my love could fail her ever or go.

... in such an undertone
I think while I nurse my heart alone
At my fire my evening way,
To wonder if I shall ever know
Her rose-face or dimple-play
Or gentle touch before I must go,
Or what she would seem like or be
Once she were here by the side of me?

TRANSITION OF MRS. JAMES BOWMAN.

There passed away at Gourrock on the 27th ult. one of the oldest workers in our ranks, Mrs. James Bowman, at the age of eighty-seven years. She was truly a link with the past, and joined us on to the days of storm and stress, when the cause in Scotland had an uphill battle to fight. Along with her husband she was for years the mainstay of the movement. This pair of workers generously gave of their means that the truth might be known in many quarters. No more enthusiastic workers than Mrs. Bowman and her husband have adorned our ranks. During many years their house was the home of all the workers who visited Glasgow, among them being Dr. Monck, Dr. George Sexton, Miss Kate Wood, Miss Fairlamb (now Mrs. Gleave), and few there were that did not speak in terms of affection regarding their kindness of heart and generous spirit in all things.

Reared in the secular school of thought, Spiritualism, with its gladsome message, awoke a new joy in Mrs. Bowman's heart, which was ever treasured by her. She had memories of the saintly Robert Owen; of how, when she was a girl, he patted her on the head and spoke some words of gentle cheer. Her home was the resting place for many years of all the mediums in our ranks and no claim for assistance was ever put forth which did not obtain her aid. Mr. J. J. Morse, Mr. James Burns, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis could alike speak well of her motherly care and tenderness of heart. Gerald Massey had the highest admiration for Mrs. Bowman, who was a woman of considerable intellectual power. I have heard the poet and her, sparkling with humour, each seeking to cap the other's mirthful stories.

For years since the death of her husband Mrs. Bowman resided at Gourrock, where she was visited by Mrs. Britten, Dr. Peebles, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, and others who appreciated her genial humour and kindly ways. She had no fear of death, and spoke of its coming in the most pleasant way. What Spiritualism had taught her was an ever-abiding consolation. Six months before her demise, when she was comparatively active and well, she sent for the undertaker, and set down

all she wanted done at her funeral. Her remains were laid in Greenock Cemetery on Thursday, 29th ult. Mr. George Young conducted the service, while some words of appreciation were added by the writer, who has memories of her extending back to fifty years ago. All over the world there are many who will have loving thoughts regarding this noble and true-hearted woman.

JAS. ROBERTSON.

[We heartily concur in everything that Mr. Robertson has said about Mrs. Bowman, and gratefully add our tribute of appreciation. She was one of the kindest and truest friends we ever met. Shrewd, sympathetic, large-hearted, intelligent, and thoroughly capable, her ripened spirit was ready, after an unusually long, eventful, and useful life, for the promotion. Truly, for such an one 'to die is gain.' She fought a good fight, was faithful to the end, and will ever be 'remembered for the good that she has done.'—ED. 'LIGHT.']

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

A Birmingham preacher, the Rev. Arnold Pinchard, discoursed on Sunday evening last on 'The Folly and Danger of Spiritualism.' We suggest that he should now expatiate on 'The Folly and Danger of Christianity without Spiritualism.'

It was a Hebrew Psalmist who bluntly said, 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God'; but we might as justly say it of the conceited or the egotist. Fancy poor little man imagining that his wisdom, his intellect, his knowledge and his power are the highest in the universe! It really is too ridiculous. But it is almost as ridiculous for the believer in God to try and define or comprehend Him.

An earnest Spiritualist writes: 'I have felt for some time past that Spiritualists ought to have a funeral card of their own—one of a reformed character, telling the truth of the passing on, called "dying," to brighter spheres—to the land of reality—leaving the beautiful shadows behind. I don't want any of the old-fashioned, depressing cards to be sent to my friends when I pass on. Such are now worn out, like many of "the good old things" which did service for our ancestors. I send you with this letter a rough sketch of the kind of thing that I should like to see, and that I should like my friends to have after I have left "the old shell" behind for disposal. I feel sure that if someone could see his way clear to have a card nicely got up, not larger than the sketch, that there are many Spiritualists who would use them.' Any reader who is sufficiently interested can see our correspondent's specimen card on application at 'LIGHT' office.

We have received a cutting from 'John Bull' which gives a 'polite communication' sent, it is said, 'to a lady who had at one time sufficient belief in Spiritualism to advance considerable sums of money to a Brighton "circle," but whose waning faith has now caused her to make pressing inquiries regarding repayment.' The writer, one Laura A. Hight, is connected with, or runs, 'St. Michael's Mission' at Brighton, and styles herself a 'deaconess.' Her letter, as given in 'John Bull,' is a crazy production that affords a striking illustration of how Spiritualism is wounded by its self-styled 'friends.' The writer threatens the lady to whom she writes and says that the president of her society, 'the Lord Prince Michael Archangelus,' will deal with her and 'strike her down,' that 'his anger is hot' against her, and so on. It is as deplorable as it is absurd.

The 'Banner of Life,' Boston, Mass., U.S.A., well says: 'Death is either nothing at all, or a passing from one stage of life into another—one of the two; and in either case it is nothing to fear. When people think of death it is of disease, of pain, of funereal black, of grief, of physical wreck and decay, or of something that may follow after death, or something that precedes it or accompanies it. It is not of death itself of which people are thinking, for death is itself nothing. To die is to live, to live in a larger world with greater opportunities. Marie Corelli has said: "There is nothing heroic in dying, it is as common as going to sleep. Anyone can die, one pang of far less anguish than the toothache, and all is over. It can be successfully accomplished by a child or a warrior. Life is heroism, death is simply going to sleep. Then let us prepare to live and for life. If we were going to a different country to do business, we would learn what we could of it before going." We are (sometime) going to a different country to do business the spirit land. Let us learn what we can of it before we go.'

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.

Karma and Reincarnation—A Reply.

SIR,—I should like to express my indebtedness to 'C. B.' and Elizabeth Severs for their kind letters (pp. 257 and 273). So far as her own belief is concerned, I must frankly own that I have no reply to make to Miss Severs. The belief which I attacked is clearly not that which she defends. A Karma that can be described as merely 'one method of God's working'—'the law of growth for His children'—needs no defence. But is this always what is meant by the word? I have heard and read statements which seem to imply that all the apparent disadvantages—mental, moral, and spiritual—with which some of us start life, are the consequences of lapses in some previous incarnation or incarnations. What conclusion would this view lead to? Parents early discover in their children differing traits of character, some of which they regard as faults, others as virtues, and check or encourage accordingly. Is it to be assumed that these traits were acquired in previous incarnations—that in 'the beginning' the souls of those children were turned out all of one pattern, with no distinctive characteristics whatever? I do not credit Miss Severs with this idea. 'Pain and pleasure,' she beautifully says, 'are God's ways of educating His children.' She evidently entertains no misgiving as to the resources of the Teacher or the results of His teaching. I would that every Reincarnationist shared her confidence. We should not then have such a terrible picture as that painted by Mr. Walter Winston Kenilworth in a book reviewed in 'LIGHT' of May 6th (p. 213)—a picture of the slow sinking of the human personality through successive lives of perversion till its existence is closed by the final Karma of extinction. This theory, of course, implies that some children are born with no soul of innocence in them. In such a Karma we can see no law of growth, no trace of God's working, only the old doctrine of original sin in a new and even more revolting form. If Karma merely means that every effect must have its cause, well and good, but if it assumes always to be able to state what that cause is, to tell every sufferer—not 'This is part of your soul's discipline whereby you may gain strength and patience and sympathy,' but 'You have brought this on yourself, you are only getting what you deserve,' then I object. Miss Severs has plainly dissociated herself from such a view. Her Karma is purely beneficent, and the only criticism I can make in connection with it is that I fail to see why its working should involve the coming back to earth. To hold that reincarnation is necessary is, it seems to me, to limit very gravely the educational possibilities of the spirit world, and to suggest that pain and pleasure and progress are confined to this plane of existence. It seems also to imply that in order to learn identical lessons we must all run the gamut of identical or nearly identical experiences. The least observation of life should convince us that this is not the case. All teaching, all revelation, though apparently from without, is really from within. The beauty of Nature, the pain and pleasure that come to us through our earthly environment—these can of themselves impart nothing. They are but the picture alphabet in an infant's primer. We are sleepy scholars: if the Teacher does not waken us, if we do not with our inner senses hear Him speak to us and see His finger point to the page, the lesson will be unlearned, and the book might as well be closed. Nay, He may sometimes dispense with its aid altogether, and teach us direct. His voice may come to us 'without observation'—in silent watches of the night. He is not limited. His methods of teaching are infinite. One lesson on which Miss Severs specially insists is the need for controlling the lower appetites. If these appetites are only connected with the physical body and perish with it, it hardly seems necessary to come back to the earth plane to resume them. If, on the other hand, all appetites and passions are spiritual, there will surely be ample scope on the other side for such exercise of the higher nature as will enable it to keep the lower in subjection.

I have a little quarrel with 'C. B.' She misuses the most beautiful word in the language, and introduces as its corrective another word of which I am seriously distrustful. Its exact meaning is not easy to define, as it is usually symbolised by a woman with bandaged eyes, holding in her hands a sword and a pair of scales. What is this attribute of Justice which 'C. B.' wishes us to understand is needed to supplement Love? Swedenborg predicated two attributes of the Divine nature—Love and Wisdom. Apparently he thought these two sufficed without adding a third. Men only call on the blind goddess of their creation when Love fails to be true to herself. Love has no use for scales. She does not balance our deserts; she looks only at

our needs. (Is it by accident those scales are always represented as empty?) The mother who spoils her child does so not from any excess of affection, but because she either has too little wisdom to know what is best for the child's welfare, or else loves her own selfish ease too much to take the trouble to correct it. A wise love always seeks the best it knows for its object. If the soul needs pain to develop the best that is in it, Love will see that that need is supplied. It is no question of some law that insists on equal measure for all. Love is not bound. Nobody is wronged by not receiving what his neighbour receives, providing the treatment accorded him is the best for him; and Love will see to that. She needs no other motive than herself. The idea of some imaginary law, not that of Love, which binds the Supreme Being to allot penalties to some of His creatures and rewards to others, according to their supposed deserts (and it is clear that the possibility of deserving evil involves the possibility of deserving good) has ever been a hateful and mischievous one in theology. Even after good Christian men have escaped from the old notion of the death of Jesus as a sacrifice to appease an angry Deity they have not been able to get away from the idea that God was somehow in the grasp of some mighty principle called Justice which, unless He could find a way out, compelled Him to do violence to His own nature by consigning most of His creatures to annihilation or endless misery. Our physical, mental and spiritual health is, of course, dependent on compliance with the physical, mental and spiritual laws of our being, and discomfort and pain follow from their breach; but to convert the working of natural law into a moral principle—to say that, because law carries with it a penalty for disobedience, therefore if my boy disobeys me I am bound to whip him, and if he pleases me I am bound to reward him, is to enunciate a most mischievous doctrine. But that is how human law works and that is what is usually meant by 'Justice': 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth'; not a search for the best way to train the growing life or to cure mental or spiritual disease, but the measuring out of penalty in imagined proportion to the wrong which society thinks it has suffered. Society feels that it must pay back the injury which it conceives has been inflicted on it. It does not conceive that it may owe a debt of love to the offender. Of course, I do not imagine that 'C. B.' meant all this by pitting Justice against Love, but it is a dangerous thing to do. Let her be content to leave things in Love's hands, and not, in her desire to defend reincarnation, resort to the plea that Justice requires that everybody should go through precisely the same mill. This is not necessary to the attainment of the full stature of human perfection, and, after all, that is the ultimate aim of existence. If there are seeming inequalities here it does not follow that we need come back to have them put right. 'Heaven shall make perfect our imperfect lives.'—Yours, &c.,

D. R. F.

P.S.—The foregoing was written before the appearance of 'C. B.'s' second letter, in last week's 'LIGHT.' As a comment on her first letter, however, I still think it justified, and have concluded to let it stand unaltered.

SIR,—In a letter by 'C. B.' in 'LIGHT' of June 3rd, justifying the cult of reincarnation, are the significant passages: 'Surely the first thing we demand from our earthly parents is justice. Love without justice often produces more harm than good. . . This leads us to expect from our Heavenly Father justice in its purest form. . . This conception so far as it concerns a very limited likeness between man and God is good, but is it sufficiently comprehensive and adequate? I do not think so. Aside from the circumstance that reincarnation cannot, except by a crude, materialistic distortion be 'read' from the Hindu Scriptures, but is a cult reared by its priests, the argument universally made that 'Justice' necessitates 'reincarnation' is specious, to say the least. What is 'Justice'? Once rightfully concede, as does 'C. B.,' that we are as little children, the confusion of human justice and divine justice is at once apparent and shows the danger of the argument. Divine justice is the composite result of the enforcement of natural, i.e., divine law. Human justice is similarly based on human comprehensions, customs, usages, statutes, constitutions, &c. The former is changeless, the latter is ever changing with human development. 'My ways are not your ways.' Under which system is the idea of reincarnation justifiable? A combination of both? Then it is not justice, but divine mercy! It is not justice, either human or divine, unless we can demand it as a matter of right, while mercy is an indulgence, a divine gift. If it is the human idea of justice that is intended, then, far from being a divine canon, 'reincarnation' is a vain figment of the human imagination. This process could profitably be carried a little further by imagining the execution of Divine Justice. Verily, 'no flesh could survive!'

Surely it is a divine mercy to the 'reincarnationists' that their demand for Divine 'justice in its purest form' is not executed upon them.—Yours, &c.,

GEO. F. ORT.

167th, Washington-street, Chicago, U.S.A.

How Spiritualism Spreads.

SIR,—I was brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, and always believed in God, because it was taught at school, and the Bible and catechism were easy enough to understand—at least, I thought so, and I lived a common every-day life. Then I married, and we went to England. I was scarcely eight months married, when one night I felt a cool hand on my face several times, as if someone was fondling me. Then I awoke with a sudden, loud, joyous cry. I saw my father before me. He was a very healthy, strong man; but, strange to say, I immediately understood that he was dead, and that what I saw before me was his ghost, not his earthly body. My husband woke up, and thinking that I was dreaming, shook me so that I should awake; but I told him not to disturb me, as I was speaking with my father. My husband was dreadfully frightened; he thought I was mad. My father told me many things which afterwards we realised as true. In the morning we received a telegram stating that my father had died suddenly. When we compared the hour, it was evident that at the time I spoke with him he was dead, but not buried. A week later, one bright sunny morning, I saw him again in my bedroom. The sun's rays shone through him. I saw him waving his hand and smiling at me. After that time I began to take an interest in Spiritualism. Then we returned to Hungary, and life was very hard on me. I was on the verge of suicide; but when I was tempted to make an end of all my struggles, I always heard a loud, clear voice saying, 'Don't do it; don't do it.'

Then, again, I sought to come in contact with Spiritualists, and I had an opportunity to attend a séance, but when I saw the rather primitive preparations that were made, I did not have much faith. A sitter wrote the alphabet in a circle on a sheet of paper, placed a silver coin in the middle, and put the finger-tip on the coin and said a prayer. I awaited results, but with no confidence. At last the coin began to move, and to the medium's question, 'Who is there?' I heard spelled out the name of my playfellow, who later in life killed himself. I was overwhelmed. The medium was quite a stranger to me, and it was not possible that she could have known that name. The truth was so unexpected that I began to cry. She told many more things—everything was exact. I went away comforted, and since then have been an ardent Spiritualist. Later on I found friends who held séances regularly. On one occasion I began to write, and it became evident that I had mediumistic power. Then I had my own séances, where wonderful things happened. In the automatic writings, facts, names, circumstances that were quite unknown to me came out; signatures of defunct persons came with astonishing accuracy. A year ago the automatic writing ceased, and I became entranced; since then I am always in the trance state at the séances. My friends tell me about wonderful things that take place—things of which I myself know nothing when I am awake. Beautiful poems and recitations in Hungarian, German, English and French are given, which are greatly admired by the sitters. When in trance I sing songs and operas (I am told 'to perfection'), although I am a poor musician and have no trained voice—no voice at all. My friends tell me that when the recitations begin I am transfigured—the expression of my face and my whole being changes utterly.

I now realise that Spiritualism is the golden chain which will link together people of all nationalities.—Yours, &c.,

Hungary.

K. V.

Theosophy: Why Spiritualists Protest.

SIR,—Your correspondent 'C. B.' thinks that it is curious that so many Spiritualists protest when theosophy and reincarnation are advocated in 'LIGHT'—permit me to say that to me it would seem curious if they did not. A number of Theosophists regularly visit the meetings of the society to which I belong and fraternise with our members, but in our talks together they have condemned in no moderate language 'negative, or trance mediumship.' I have stoutly defended this phase of Spiritualism, and one or two of our members are making excellent headway in their development. One of the most promising of our young mediums is the daughter of a gentleman who is much interested in our movement. He enjoys the circles, by means of which he gets into touch with many spirit friends and helpful 'controls,' but when these argumentative Theosophists warn him of the grave dangers of mediumship (though I find they know little *practically* about it), he is troubled greatly and wonders if he is doing right to have a circle at all, in spite of the fact that we sit for spiritual

purposes and have uplifting times. Several speakers who have visited us of late have adopted this theosophic attitude and have declared that sensitives must 'develop positively,' ignoring the fact that there must be a beginning to all things, and that for young mediums to attempt to do this would be to shut out the spirit operators. It seems absurd that a lady who is a capable trance medium should refuse to come to an intelligent understanding with sensible spirits and co-operate with them for good purposes. Surely, temporary submission to control need not be otherwise than beneficial to both medium and sitters, if it be wisely and carefully exercised.

I take it that Spiritualism stands on the foundation of mediumship—does it not? and it would be well if the Theosophists realised that they are mistaken in condemning 'negative' mediumship, which is, in my opinion, of the utmost value when spiritually developed. Spiritualists are as ready as Theosophists to oppose blind and unreasoning surrender by sensitives to influences of persons out of the body—and *in* it, for that matter—who claim great authority and exercise an unwholesome dominating power over them.

So long as Theosophists ridicule and condemn our circles and our methods of communication with the other side and beland their own practices as being so much superior, so long must there be division between us, and it is a pity that this misunderstanding should divide us, especially as it is so largely due to misconception on their part.

To them 'the astral world' is a chamber of horrors, full of murderers, suicides, and other undesirables who are ready to raid every circle and obsess every pure-minded girl who renders herself passive! A little knowledge is a dangerous thing in their hands—just as it is in the hands of others. All sorts and conditions of people pass to spirit life from this sphere, and dangerous persons are dangerous on both planes until they improve, but sensible persons do not allow their fears to make life a continuous nightmare of dread because there are rogues and scoundrels in this world, neither is there any need to yield to superstitious terror because there are spirits of a low order on the other side—nor is it necessary to refuse to enjoy the blessing of loving spirit guidance and helpful ministry. What is needed is the protection which a high moral purpose and a lofty ideal give, allied to a careful study of the subject and the observance of those conditions which tend to secure the best results. There are trance mediums who have been such for thirty or forty years, who are well in health, sane in mind—rational and self-possessed, who have wise and intelligent and trustworthy controls who know how to use them and who do not abuse their power. No ill results have attended the association that existed between these mediums and their guides—on the other hand the co-operation has been extremely beneficial to the sensitives. Why, then, should these facts be ignored and all the beneficial evidences of human survival, of spirit identity, that have been given to the world through mediumship, be lost sight of, and the door of communication closed just because we are afraid? To do this is to belittle the powers of the good and true spirit people, and to write ourselves down as cowards.—Yours, &c.,

Kingston.

A SPIRITUALIST.

Habitability of Mars and Venus.

SIR,—Many of the statements in the letter by 'No-Body' in your issue for June 10th (p. 268) seem to me to call for comment, but I shall confine myself to two.

The writer said that Mars is inhabited according to science, Venus uninhabited, and that 'Theosophy's trained seers' contradicted this. That Mars is inhabited or even habitable, is not accepted as probable by scientists in general. Many astronomers of considerable reputation have combated the idea of 'canals' (explaining them on optical grounds), and all the evidence adduced in favour of the theory that Mars is habitable or inhabited. They have besides brought forward good evidence for the negative view. Mr. E. W. Maunder has written that 'we have little more reason to suppose the existence of animal life, still less of intelligent life, on Mars than on the moon.' And he has concluded 'that Mars, on the whole, must approximate in its condition to that of the moon, whilst Venus will far more closely resemble the earth.'

As to Venus, Professor Young has termed it 'the earth's twin sister in magnitude, density, and general constitution.' Mr. F. W. Henkel, B.A., F.R.A.S., concludes an article on 'Venus as the Abode of Life' ('Knowledge,' Vol. VI., p. 206), with the words: 'We may thus conclude that the planet [Venus] is in most respects not dissimilar to the earth, and is the abode of life, at least in the regions north and south of the Equator, if not on the "torrid zone" itself.'—Yours, &c.,

C. NELSON STEWART,

Aberdeen.

Pentecostal Manifestations.

SIR,—On reading your leading article in 'LIGHT' for June 3rd, my mind reverted to an incident which occurred some thirty years ago. Mr. and Mrs. Everitt were the guests of Mr. John Chapman, in Liverpool, and I was invited one evening to a séance held at his house. Although the room was warm the window was closed and the door locked. The control 'John Watt' requested Mr. Everitt to read about the 'day of Pentecost,' which he did. We had much the same kind of manifestation that the disciples witnessed on that day. There was the rushing mighty wind sweeping across the room, and the cloven tongues as of fire. These latter moved about the room as requested, and answered questions by going out once for 'No,' and three times for 'Yes.' 'John Watt' talked for some time and answered many questions. Mrs. Everitt was not entranced. If she began to talk to anyone of us, 'John Watt' would tell her that if she would insist upon talking, he would put her to sleep, a threat which quieted her. He said her talking took too much power from him. It was a grand and most wonderful séance.—Yours, &c.,

H. J. CHARLTON.

2848, North 5th Street, Philadelphia, Pa., U.S.A.

Is God Omniscient?

SIR,—Practically all religions teach that God is omniscient, and yet I think that an acceptance of this belief brings us face to face with the problem of predestination, for if there exists an omniscient consciousness, somewhere within it must be registered not only all that has ever happened but also all that ever will happen, so that just as a psychometrist, by getting into touch with a certain part of this great consciousness, is able to recall the past, it should be possible, by getting into touch with another part, to read the future, and therefore the state and condition of any individual in one thousand or two thousand years' time could be known; this seems to point to the fact that he is *predestined* to fill that position. The following quotation from the 'Rig Veda' is of interest:—

'Who knows the secret? Who proclaimed it here?
Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang?
The Gods themselves came later into being—
Who knows from whence this great creation came,
Whether Its will created or was mute?
The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,
He knows it—or perchance even He knows not.'

—Yours, &c.,

J. J. HERBERT.

Pre-existence and Reincarnation.

SIR,—In brief reply to the interesting suggestions of Mr. H. Bloodworth on p. 299:—

1. Elisha's request for a 'double portion of thy spirit' was a reference to the right of the first-born son of every Hebrew to two portions of his father's property, and thus was a request to be made the first-born among the sons of the prophets—the true spiritual heir of the great Elijah.

2. A request for the 'fission and reincarnation of a portion of the human spirit' of Elijah would have been a queer request to make to such human spirit, even apart from the fact that Elisha was a full-grown man at the time of his petition—and thus already incarnate. Is it suggested that from that day onwards the name of Elisha should have been 'Legion,' and that the identity and integrity of a human spirit as a reasoning entity can survive any amount of 'detachment' of 'portions' thereof—double or single?

3. It is not logical to suppose that the 'soul-body' of a reasoning entity is 'embryonic and formless,' if by 'soul-body' one means or includes the human spirit or reasoning entity. There is, therefore, no analogy with the low types of living material forms known to propagate by fission.

4. Mr. Bloodworth asserts that Origen taught the doctrine of 'future incarnations.' And Mrs. Besant, in her just issued 'Riddle of Life,' is, despite past protests, again claiming that such great Father of the Christian Church taught the doctrine of 'reincarnation.' But reincarnation *upon this planet called Earth*, which is what is commonly signified and understood when such term is used, was never taught by him. True, he is often *quoted* as if he so taught. But the appearance of having so taught is in every case due to some omitted 'For if by hypothesis' or 'But if this be granted' or other nullifying context. And that this is so, can be seen from Origen's chief pronouncement upon the famous allusion of Jesus to John the Baptist and Elijah—the two opening sections of the thirteenth chapter of his commentary upon the first Gospel. For instance, Origen says therein: 'In this place it does not appear to me that by Elijah the soul is spoken of, lest I should fall into the dogma of transmigration, which is foreign to the Church of God, and

not handed down by the Apostles, nor anywhere set forth in the Scriptures.' (*Comment in Mattheum*, xiii., 1).—Yours, &c.,

J. DENHAM PARSONS.

West Brompton, S.W.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, JULY 2nd, &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*.—Mrs. Cannock gave remarkably successful clairvoyant descriptions.—15, *Mortimer-street, W.*—June 26th, Mrs. Imison gave well-recognised descriptions of spirit people. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided at both meetings. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, *Prince's-street, Oxford-street*.—Evening, Mr. E. W. Wallis delivered an address on 'Spiritual Science, Philosophy and Religion.'—67, *George-street*.—In the morning he dealt with 'The Devotional Aspects of Spiritualism.'—E.C.W.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, *ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN*.—Mr. W. E. Long, under control, gave an instructive address, and Mrs. Beaurepaire ably rendered a solo. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Annie Boddington.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, *BECKLOW-ROAD*.—Miss Burton gave an excellent address on 'The Splendour of Life.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Todd; subject, 'The Keystone as a Spiritual Symbol.'

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK. —Mrs. Neville gave an address on 'Ministering Angels,' and the Lyceum anniversary was held. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Horace Leaf will give an address and clairvoyant descriptions.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, 27, *ROMFORD-ROAD, E.*—Mrs. Podmore delivered an interesting address on 'Inspiration,' and gave clairvoyant readings. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address by Mr. G. R. Symons.—W. H. S.

HACKNEY.—240A, *AMHURST-ROAD, N.*—Mr. W. F. Smith gave an address and Mrs. Smith clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton. Monday, at 8 p.m., circle. Tuesday, at 8, astrology class. Friday, at 8.30, healing circle, conducted by Mr. Hawes.—N. R.

BRIXTON.—8, *MAYALL-ROAD*.—Miss Chapin gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Fogwell; at 3 p.m., Lyceum. Monday, at 7.30, ladies' circle; Tuesday, at 8.15, members' circle; Thursday, at 8.15, public circle. Wednesday, at 7, Lyceum.—G. T. W.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, *LAUSANNE-ROAD*.—Anniversary Sunday. Morning, a good circle was held. Evening, a splendid meeting. Our best thanks are due to Mr. E. W. Beard and guides for their inspiring and encouraging addresses, and to local friends for their support. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Mary Davies. July 16th, Mrs. M. Gordon. July 20th, Mrs. Webster. Annual Excursion.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. A. Boddington gave fine uplifting addresses and good clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, addresses, answers to questions, and clairvoyant descriptions Tuesday, at 8, and Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Clarke's open circle for clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, members' circle.—A. M. S.

BRIGHTON.—OLD TOWN HALL, HOVE, 1, *BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST*.—Good addresses and clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mrs. Curry. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., addresses and psychometry by Mrs. Neville. Clairvoyance by Mrs. Curry on Monday, at 3 and 8, and Wednesday, at 3 p.m.; Thursday, at 8.15, public circle.—A. C.

LITTLE ILFORD.—THIRD AVENUE, MANOR PARK, E.—Mr. Horace Leaf gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. June 28th, Mr. G. F. Tilby gave an interesting address. Sunday next Mrs. Jamrach will give an address and clairvoyance. July 11th, Mrs. Annie Boddington, séance; admission free, silver collection. 12th, public circle, Mrs. Jamrach.—E. L. V.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Morning, Spirit teachings were given through Mr. W. E. Long, followed by spirit messages. Evening, an address was delivered through Miss Siegenthaler on 'The Christ of God.' July 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long.—E. S.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE lectured on Sunday last to a crowded audience in Princess Hall, Princess-road, Manchester, and in Colne on Monday last. He was announced for Burnley for July 4th and 5th, and Manchester (Princess Hall) for the 6th, 7th, and 8th, at 8 p.m., and Sunday next at 6.30 p.m.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—Mr. Thomas and Mr. Adams gave short addresses.—N. S.

BRIXTON.—84, *STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD*.—Mr. Smythe gave a good address.—S. W.