

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe,

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The name of Dr. William Sharpe will be known to many of our readers in connection with some poems of more than average merit—'The Dual Image,' 'Humanity and the Man,' and 'The Conqueror's Dream.' We have now to acknowledge a new volume by the same author, 'Niagara and Nature Worship' (William Briggs, Toronto, 25 cents). It is a small book, and in addition to the title-poem contains a number of lyrics and two short essays. The principal poem, in blank verse, shows a degree of power and insight that recalls the work of Wordsworth, but the rhymed lyrics do not shine by comparison. Dr. Sharpe is clearly at his best in the unrhymed measure. As we remark in our leader, Life and Death are not true opposites, and in one of his little essays Dr. Sharpe says much the same thing about Beauty and Ugliness:—

Ugliness being the negation of beauty, and not permanent or a primary aim of Nature, tends to vanish, while the Beautiful, which is good, remains as the noblest realisation of evolution on the human plane.

Feeling, as we do, that all human progress and development begins in the thought world, we take an especial interest in such ideas as that we have quoted. Many (perhaps all) of our errors and misdirections persist because they remain as thoughts in the mind. Correct the thought and the external evil will disappear. Death seems terrible because so many, in their minds, place it on an equality with Life, as a polar opposite. On the moral plane we have similar ideas of Good and Evil. Here, again, Dr. Sharpe speaks truly:—

Evil embodiment, to a certain extent, is negation, the fleeting expression of animal selfishness, and, in its most virulent forms, tends to vanish, for hate, as opposed to love, is repellent, and tends to move from the centre and dissipate, whilst love is attractive, concentrative, and abides for ever.

In 'The Spiritual Journal' (Boston, U.S.A.) Alice Herring Christopher, writing of the Fourth Dimension, says:—

Ideal considerations, imaginations, aspirations, are the pre-sentiment in a partial and fugitive way of realities we shall sometime come to know familiarly, and find to be the solid facts of existence. Now, the question about any thought is, Does it lead us on from where we are? An idea may be in itself very valuable, but if it does not lead us on to take one step after another, it is not valuable to us at the precise place we are in.

Thought, in short, should be suggestive and progressive. It should carry us forward. It is always disappointing to see the teachers of a movement remaining year after year in the same place, patient, hopeful, loyal to the truth as they see it, but never moving a step in advance,

In an article on 'Charles Dickens and Spiritual Philosophy,' in 'The Harbinger of Light' (Melbourne), Mrs. Annie Bright quotes the well-known statement of the great novelist regarding the production of his works:—

'When I sit down to write my book,' said Dickens, 'some beneficent power shows it all to me and tempts me to be interested, and I don't invent—really do not—but see it and write it down.' He is said to have declared that every word uttered by his characters was distinctly heard by him before it was written down. Yet on the other hand he averred, 'I work slowly and with great care, and never give way to my invention recklessly, but constantly restrain it.'

Quite true, and Mrs. Bright uses the fact to point a profitable moral which we would commend to all those who think that inspiration is necessarily always easy and spontaneous:—

We are not sent into this world to be automatons. Those who achieve fame in any department of life are not those who wait for so-called 'guides' to do their work for them, but who with mind and soul in tune with the infinite are open to the waves of inspiration that come from the spheres, which they use with all the skill that training and industry alone can give.

'Nerve Building and Plain Paths of Health and Healing' (L. N. Fowler and Co., 1s. net), is a useful little book by J. Wallace-Clarke. There is nothing new or striking about it, just a number of simple hints on the care of the health, enriched with appropriate quotations from well-known writers. We are glad to notice that he is 'down upon' hustling and the hustler:—

The activities of the 'hustler'—and they are manifold—are most fruitful in their influence upon the nervous system. When the naturally sensitive and nervous are brought into contact and conflict with a smart hustler, it is not astonishing that the nerves soon give out. . . . Specimens of the effects, in various stages of the process, are found in most 'up-to-date' commercial houses, where hustling is in full swing.

We know the truth of that from observation, and when the hustler's own nervous system has broken down and he has gone to join his victims, we have been human enough not to feel grieved. For the hustler's methods are a blasphemy against the tranquil holiness of the spiritual life. 'Peace, perfect Peace' is sung at his funeral—but he doesn't deserve it!

So much has been said and written about 'the noble red man' of North America, that a new book entitled, 'The Soul of the Indian, an Interpretation,' by Charles Alexander Eastman (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Mass., U.S.A.), is especially valuable as, being written by an Indian, it gives us an estimate of Indian character from one who knows the true inwardness of many things which a white man could not be expected to understand. Dr. Eastman deals with 'The Great Mystery,' 'The Family Altar,' 'Ceremonial Worship,' 'The Moral Code,' 'The Unwritten Scriptures,' and 'The Border-land of Spirits.' From this last chapter we learn that

death has no terrors for the Indian; 'he meets it with simplicity and perfect calm, seeking only an honourable end as his last gift to his family and descendants.' . . . Certainly the Indian never

doubted the immortal nature of the spirit or soul of man, but neither did he care to speculate upon its probable state or condition in a future life. The idea of a 'happy hunting ground' is modern and probably borrowed, or invented by the white man. . . . So much of reverence was due to the disembodied spirit, that it was not customary with us even to name the dead aloud. . . . A Sioux prophet predicted the coming of the white man fully fifty years before the event, and even described accurately his garments and weapons.

Dr. Eastman gives a number of predictions that were made by Indians which were literally fulfilled. He writes well and convincingly, and his book is of unusual interest.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many Shrines.)

Wondrous are Thy ways, O God! In diverse methods dost Thou reveal Thyself to diverse ages, always mysterious, but always manifest—so that as age succeeds age and evolution proceeds in its course, Thou dost ordain, through Thy prophets and great men, new laws and new gospels. These all alike, the old and the new, but proclaim Thee; all science doth but reveal Thy laws, all Nature is but Thy handiwork, all movements are right so far as they bring us nearer to Thee. We thank Thee that we live in an age when the old landmarks are being removed, the old artificial barriers broken down, and that the time is at hand when man shall be enabled to worship Thee in love and peace, irrespective of race, of dogma, of creed. We pray that reason and faith, according well, may make one music to Thy glory. Help us to do always the task that Thou dost give us without murmur and without fail. Vouchsafe unto us such an intense sense of Thy abiding presence, such a living faith in Thee and Thy ways, such a spirit of wisdom, of love, of worship, that we may truly glorify Thee, our Father and our God. Amen.

A GLIMPSE BEHIND THE VEIL.

BY CANON FRENCH, M.R.I.A.

The remarkable incident which I am about to relate occurred some years ago in a pretty village in the County Wicklow, on the side of the hilly ground above the railway and nigh unto the sea. The neighbourhood of this village provided an excellent site for one of those old, grey, grim fortresses which were so picturesque and so necessary to provide against the raids of the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles, who plundered the country up to the gates of Dublin, and in due course a strong fortress was erected there by the Normans. Under the shadow of this fortress there lived a young girl, who was deeply attached and eventually engaged to a young man of her own class. Here a tragedy began—her lover met with a very serious accident, of which, after a long and painful illness, he died. The girl was simply broken-hearted and took to her bed, which she never left till she died. During her long and wasting illness he was always present to her thoughts, and the day before her death she asked a friend to bring a flower from his grave. The day she died the rector's servant went on some business to the churchyard, and he saw a woman there; he called to her, and she turned round to meet him; he immediately recognised the dying girl standing beside her lover's grave. The man quickly returned to the rector's house, and then went on to the cottage inhabited by the sick girl to inquire for her. When he arrived he was brought to her room, and there he saw the pallid corpse of the dead girl lying on her bed, and the flower from her lover's grave clasped in her hand. She had died half an hour before, just at the time he saw her standing by her lover's grave in the churchyard.

Thus the tragedy ended. This story was told me by a lady who was the daughter of a clergyman of the Church of Ireland and the wife of a clergyman of the same Church. The man who saw the vision is dead, but he always bore testimony to the truth of what he saw and said.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, APRIL 11TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

MR. E. E. FOURNIER D'ALBE, B.Sc.,

ON

'THE FRONTIERS OF THE SOUL.'

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Address will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Hon. Secretary, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Meetings will also be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on the following Thursdays at 7.30 p.m. :—

Apr. 25.—'Cheiro' on 'Personal Experiences of Psychic Phenomena in India, America, and other Countries.'

May 9.—Rev. T. Rhondda Williams on 'The Soul as Discoverer in Spiritual Reality: A Study of Two Scientists.'

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

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Monday afternoon, April 15th, Mr. A. Punter will attend at the rooms for short private sittings. Appointments can be made with Mr. Punter by letter addressed to the Hon. Sec., Mr. E. W. Wallis. Fee 5s.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday, April 16th, Mr. A. Punter will give clairvoyant descriptions at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee, 1s. each to Associates; Members free; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.—On Thursday, April 18th, at 5 p.m. *prompt*, Dr. Avetoon will give an address on 'Psychic Experiences in India.'

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday, April 19th, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience relating to life here and on 'the other side,' mediumship, and the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism generally. Admission 1s.; Members and Associates free. MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to this meeting without payment. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of general interest to submit to the control. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

WELCOME RECEPTION TO MRS. MARY SEATON.

On Thursday afternoon, May 2nd, A SOCIAL GATHERING will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., at 3 o'clock, to welcome Mrs. Mary Seaton, of Washington, U.S.A., on her return to London. Tea will be provided during the afternoon, and at 4 p.m. Mrs. Seaton will give an address on 'Spiritualism: Its Relation to some New Schools of Healing.' Admission: Members and Associates, free; Visitors, 2s. each. No tickets required.

MRS. MARY SEATON'S LECTURES.

A series of Special Afternoon Lectures on 'The Unfoldment and Exercise of the Powers of the Inner Self' will be delivered by Mrs. Mary Seaton, at 110, St. Martin's-lane, at 3 o'clock. The following is the syllabus :—

Monday, May 6th, on Marie Corelli's work: 'The Life Everlasting.'

Thursday, May 9th, on 'A Study of the Soul—How to Use its Powers.'

Monday, May 13th, on 'The Soul on the Sub-Conscious Plane: Its Power to Maintain Health.'

Thursday, May 16th, on 'The Soul on the Conscious Plane: Its Power over the Sub-Conscious in Self and in Lower Forms of Life.'

Monday, May 20th, on 'The Soul on the Super-Conscious Plane: Its Power to Reach the Unlimited Wisdom, Love, Force—God.'

The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Mrs. Mary Seaton jointly invite Members and Associates of the Alliance to attend these meetings free of charge; Visitors 1s.

SPIRIT HEALING.—Daily, except Saturdays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for diagnosis by a spirit control, magnetic healing, and delineations from the personal aura. For full particulars see the advertisement supplement.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

'The resources of trance-mediumship are seldom more effectively shown than in the prompt and efficient handling of problems submitted by the audience at a public meeting,' writes a correspondent. And in illustration of his statement he forwards the following *resumé* of some of the replies given by Mrs. M. H. Wallis to questions from the audience at Cavendish Rooms at a recent Sunday evening service:—

CHILD-TRAINING IN SPIRIT LIFE.

To an inquiry regarding the growth and education of children in spirit life, the speaker said the process of growth proceeded on perfectly natural lines, and the methods of instruction were designed gradually to awaken the latent powers of the young soul and call them into healthy activity. All children passing from earth were cared for by those best adapted by character and inclination to minister to their needs. These persons acted as nurses, mothers and teachers, in virtue of their ability to understand the child nature, and to receive and convey the thought impressions which formed a part of the process of training and developing the young mind. Many children gained their earlier instruction by means of flower-presentation and flower-tending.

There were certain differences between such a method, as adopted in the spiritual world, and as it would be carried out in this. One of these differences was that the flowers of the spirit life were injuriously affected by inharmonious conditions of thought. Such conditions were registered in their colour and general appearance, and the children were early trained to observe whether the flowers about them drooped or brightened, whether the colour was accentuated and the fragrance more beautiful, or whether there was a dimming of the hues and a lessening of the perfume. The children were shown that these things were the results of the thought activities of themselves and their child friends. If a flower drooped the children knew that someone was near it whose thoughts were not attuned to sweetness and beauty. But in such a case they would not be taught to avoid the child whose presence had produced such a result. On the contrary, they were instructed to use their influence to overcome the discordant condition of the unhappy little one, and in that way, as the thought was changed, the flowers bore sweet witness to the changed conditions. The influence of children was sometimes brought to bear on evil and degraded souls who would respond to no other persuasion. The child nature, pure and unsullied, suffered no taint from such association, and could penetrate conditions difficult or impossible to those of maturer years. As to growth in form and stature, children developed just as they did in earth life. A child who had lived fifteen years in spirit life, for example, would present much the same evidences of outward growth as though it had lived in this world.

SPIRIT INFLUENCE ON INDIVIDUALS AND NATIONS.

Dealing with a question on this subject, the speaker said that the spirit world maintained a large amount of interest in the affairs of this world. In the earlier conditions of spirit life, national characteristics were decidedly manifest, and the interest of spirits in the welfare of the nations to which they belonged was long maintained. In the more advanced conditions of the spiritual realm, however, there was a tendency to grow away from these limitations. From the position of a patriot—one who is jealous for the success of his own country—there was a growth to a recognition of the good qualities of other nations, until, perhaps, the individual concerned regarded himself as a 'citizen of the world.' Spirit help and influence were exercised not only in the case of individuals in this world, but

also as regards national advancement. Just now there was concerted action in the direction of arousing deeper thought amongst the peoples of the world concerning the reality of spirit power and its application to everyday experience. There was an attempt to awaken the thought of the leaders of advanced nations to the possibility of eliminating disease and poverty. This concerted action was directed to quicken the spiritual consciousness of nations, and as its influence grew so would the workers in co-operation with it in this world increase in numbers and power. Individual spirit action exerted on sensitive persons in this world, combinations of spirits acting on the nations to which they belong, and associations of still more advanced souls acting on mankind at large—such were the means employed for the advancement of human welfare.

DO CLIMATIC CONDITIONS AFFECT SPIRITS?

Generally speaking, no, was the reply to this question. There might be some degree of effect experienced by those who returned to earth and penetrated very thoroughly to the earth conditions—but these would be spirits who had not grown very far away from the mundane state, and who had been 'of the earth, earthy.' Such individuals coming into the external condition of the earth—and it was to be remembered that there is a spiritual side to the earth condition—might be affected by the atmospheric changes. But apart from these conditions, there was an experience of heat and cold that related to mental states. We had a small illustration of it in the consciousness of cold after great stress or strong emotion—an outburst of grief, for instance, left the sufferer with a sensation of chilliness. On the other hand, exhilaration of mind brought a consciousness of warmth and vigour. On the spirit side the purely intellectual, unresponsive people, lacking in kindliness of feeling, self-centred, and caring nothing about the welfare of their fellows, suffered from the coldness of their natures, just as the opposite type, unselfish and sympathetic, enjoyed the feeling of genial warmth that came of the active thought energies they radiated around them.

SPIRITUALISM AND SOCIAL WRONGS.

Influence sought to be exerted from the spirit side of life was directed to the purpose of rousing mankind to a realisation of its higher consciousness. Man had within him a power which, rightly exercised, could and would result in the elimination of social injustice and misery. Through the concentration of this power and the direction of thought energies the conditions of human life were being ameliorated. The old idea was that God would remove the evils in His own time. But the influence of the spiritual world was helping to reveal the newer thought that God had given man the power to do this for himself. Through the knowledge of spiritual power, the sense of personal responsibility, and, it might even be, a certain selfish recognition that good could not be gained for one's self through the sufferings of others, the evils of life were being outwrought and overcome. Spiritualism, then, by revealing to man the source of many of the miseries from which he suffered and the means by which they might be removed, could offer, in the words of the question, a 'practical remedy' for the diseases of the social body.

DO WE TRAVEL IN SLEEP?

To a question concerning the truth of Prentice Mulford's statement that 'we travel while we sleep,' and whether the assertion is of general application, the control said: 'So far as our judgment and observation have enabled us to arrive at a conclusion, certain individuals who live on the earth are so strongly associated with the earth condition that even during the sleep state there is no measure of spiritual activity, and the statement, therefore, would not, as a rule, apply to these.' But as regarded more aspiring souls, travel, either in a very limited fashion or in a more extended range, was a possibility and a fact. Such travel really meant passing into certain spiritual states from which during the everyday life the individual was shut off by the external consciousness. But this did not always mean that the sleeper was enabled to visit actual spiritual planes of life. Sometimes it meant a visit to what might be termed a 'neutral' plane, where the sleeper could meet and associate with those more spiritually advanced and develop his own psychic powers and perceptions. Sometimes the experiences thus acquired were partially recalled when the ordinary consciousness was

regained; but more often there was little or no consciousness in the waking state of the friendships formed, the journeys taken, the observations registered during these periods of spiritual activity during sleep.

AFTER-DEATH CONDITIONS.

A questioner of a philosophic turn of mind contrasted Andrew Jackson Davis's doctrine that the grosser conditions of life are left behind at death, the evil side of a man being, so to speak, 'interred with his bones,' with the more general teachings of Spiritualism concerning earth-bound and depraved spirits. If the questioner considered this contradiction a poser, he (or she) must have been speedily undeceived, for the control dealt with the problem in an efficient and enlightening fashion. Much depended (was the reply) on the question whether the old-time conditions were left behind or whether there was carried on to the spiritual side of life something of that which was associated with the earth experiences. There was a type of individual in whom the spiritual possibilities were unawakened, gross, sensual and earthly, and this was the class which 'haunted' the abodes of vice and folly on earth, and sought to gratify its depraved appetites by association with the human beings who resorted to such places. A man was exactly the same individual after death as before save that he left behind him the physical body. He took with him his thoughts, feelings, hopes and aspirations. If he had lived only in degraded conditions he gravitated on the spiritual side to similar manifestations. None the less, it was true that some individuals left behind them much of the evil that appeared to pertain to them on earth. They had already largely outgrown it, and passed quickly to spiritual states, coming readily into touch with more advanced conditions. The revelations of Andrew Jackson Davis, as regards this particular question, related only to certain conditions of departed humanity. The degrees were almost infinite. Seership could not be wholly comprehensive, taking in the entirety of life, at present, and all the revelations given must perforce be more or less partial.

ANNIHILATION AS A REMEDY.

Wholesome, manly and vigorous was the reply to a pessimistic inquiry which suggested that in view of the miseries of existence total extinction was preferable to continued life. Even with all its burdens and sorrows, life was something to be prized. There was more of joy than of sorrow in the experiences of the majority of mankind. A wonderful power of adaptation was manifest, and that continually, even in what might be termed low and degraded states of earth existence. Everyone possessed the ability for better things. Even though the burdens were heavy and the road weary, life was to be lived, and the pain and the struggle were always educational, enabling the soul to grow stronger and better. It was a poor philosophy that demanded that everything should be made smooth and easy, that man should be enabled to drift aimlessly along without any necessity to use his powers to overcome difficulties and obstacles. True, the soul, after long and apparently hopeless striving or after some crushing disappointment, was reduced to weakness and despair. But it was only for a time. With the return of strength and the passing of the troublous period, fresh fields of activity opened out. There was a desire to be and to do, and a realisation of the truth that a life of stress, a life of continuous effort, was better than the blotting out of life. And if a life, however imperfect, was better than no life at all, how infinitely better, grander and more beautiful was the life that was lived by those who, obedient to the Divine laws, endeavoured to re-think the thoughts of God.

'LIGHT': 'TRIAL' SUBSCRIPTION.

As an inducement to new and casual readers to become subscribers, we will supply 'LIGHT' for thirteen weeks, *post free*, for 2s., as a 'trial' subscription, feeling assured that at the termination of that period they will find that they 'cannot do without it,' and will then subscribe at the usual rates. May we at the same time suggest to those of our regular readers who have friends to whom they would like to introduce the paper, that they should avail themselves of this offer, and forward to us the names and addresses of such friends, upon receipt of which, together with the requisite postal order, we shall be pleased to send 'LIGHT' to them by post, as stated above?

THE DYNAMISTOGRAPH.

In 'LIGHT' of March 16th we gave a letter from a correspondent at The Hague referring to a book entitled 'The Secret of Death,' in which the authors, two Dutch gentlemen, Messrs. Zaalberg van Zelst and J. Matla, claim to have invented an instrument which they call 'the Dynamistograph,' by means of which, they affirm, they have received direct messages from the invisible world without the aid of a medium. We have gleaned further particulars from recent issues of 'Le Fraterniste.' From 1893 onward Messrs. J. J. Zaalberg van Zelst, senr., G. J. Zaalberg van Zelst, junr., and J. Matla engaged jointly in a close study of Spiritualism and its phenomena. They promised each other that the one to die first should do his utmost to give physical proofs of his survival after death. Mr. Zaalberg van Zelst, senr., passed over in July, 1903, and ever since then the two surviving investigators have made every effort to solve the great problem. After weary months of waiting, they at last came in touch with their late coadjutor—the friend of one of them and father of the other. Under his guidance and advice, it is said, they constructed the above-mentioned instrument. It is most ingeniously conceived, but rather complicated. Its principal parts, however, consist of a cylinder (into which the spirit is supposed to enter), a table isolated by a sheet of glass and charged with an electric current, a pair of extremely sensitive scales, and a writing apparatus arranged on the Morse system.

If the spirit wishes to print, let us say, the word 'friend,' he waits till the letter F appears, then, with the aid of a key, he turns off the electric current, and the letter F is printed. Again the spirit waits till the next letter, R, shows itself, and for the second time he turns off the current for the letter R to be printed, and so on till the word 'friend' is complete. This process might be called 'telegraphy with the beyond,' or 'telepathigraphy.' The two inventors assert that in course of time they have received from the late Mr. Zaalberg van Zelst much valuable information about the future life, hitherto unknown to science.

Some of the theories propounded in the book are certainly unique, not to say extraordinary, but they are hardly such as will commend themselves to the readers of 'LIGHT.' Thus we are assured that the first form of human life can be followed by a second. This second is, like the first, temporal. The matter of the spirit body returns to its elements, the same as the matter of the human body; the individuality of man thus comes to an end. If the spirit can influence man, it follows that the latter ceases to be a free agent [?]. To us a world outside Nature, or a supernatural one, seems impossible, everything being natural. It is equally wrong to suppose that the human soul will exist for ever.

Some messages received from the late Mr. Zaalberg van Zelst make one wonder, and feel inclined to ask if some wandering spook has not been 'trying it on' with the authors to see how far their credulity will carry them. They were informed, among other startling assertions, that the awakening of the spirit is far from being agreeable; the spirit finds himself surrounded by unknown beings who mostly have skeleton heads. The fright caused by seeing these renders the spirit for a second time unconscious. The spirits frequent mostly the dwellings of man, and rain and wind are exceedingly unpleasant to them. The spirits see little of the habits of man, but they hear him think, sometimes a long distance off. The law of the strongest reigns supreme in the spirit-world. The body of a spirit is material and composed of a gaseous fluid. The movements of the spirits depend entirely on their own will. If a spirit moves quickly his body elongates itself and assumes a cylindrical shape, which changes into a spiral one as the movement increases in swiftness.

The authors discuss these statements, as well as the many spirit messages received through their instrument, or as they express it, 'through the collaboration of the living and the dead.' Students of the occult should find the work interesting, whether they can or cannot accept the alleged revelations as gospel truths.

HORNSEY.—'L.B.' has vacancies for two or three gentlemen in a private circle which meets at Hornsey. Letters addressed 'c/o "LIGHT"' will be forwarded.

SIGNOR E. BOZZANO REPLIES TO PROFESSOR FLOURNOY.

The passage in Professor Flournoy's latest work, in which that ingenious explainer away of psychic phenomena threw cold water on the possibility of any real advance ever being accomplished or satisfaction obtained by the scientific confirmation of the truth of the spirit theory, has already been noticed in 'LIGHT' of October 21st last (page 495), in an article entitled, 'Can Continuous Existence be Proved?' It has also received attention at the able hands of Signor E. Bozzano in a recent number of 'Luce e Ombra,' in which he deals with the Professor's somewhat melancholy conclusions. Signor Bozzano says:—

I venture, then, parenthetically to reply to Flournoy's assertion. It is not at all true that, if one day science 'should become Spiritist, such an event would leave unaltered the question of knowing whether the spirit hypothesis is true in itself'; and it is not at all true that the 'representation of the so-called discarnate would, like that of the ether or of atoms, still and always prove to be a pure supposition adopted for the advantage it yielded for the co-ordination of the phenomena, but as to the absolute value of which it would be the concern of philosophy and not of science at all to decide.' These are sophisms that are easily dissipated. And I would commence by affirming that it pertains to science, and not at all to metaphysics, to solve those problems which, like the medianic, appear to be exclusively founded on the facts; and at the same time I would point out how illegitimate and deceptive appears to be the analogy to the ether and to atoms, inasmuch as there exists an insuperable abyss between the problems of physics and those of psychology; so that if the question as to the 'reality in itself' of the ether or of atoms is shown to be an impenetrable one (neither more nor less so than the other questions proper to the physical world, such as the 'reality in itself' of matter, of energy, &c.), the state of things is quite different in the case of psychological problems, which, so far from aiming at a penetration of the impenetrable—that is to say, the essence of existence, propose solely to solve problems accessible to human knowledge, such as would be the identification of a given personality; and if such a task appears to Flournoy to be as insuperably difficult as the problem of 'final causes,' he owes that to the fact that in the course of his ultra-metaphysical distractions he forgot a fact of capital importance—namely, that the truth of hypotheses gets proved by the whole of the assembled facts, and not at all by basing the process on a very biased segmentation of the facts themselves, and that that hypothesis will vanquish all the rest, towards which the most diverse phenomena converge as though towards a natural centre that unites them all in one grand and fruitful synthesis; while, on the other hand, those hypotheses will be shown to be incapable of being sustained which are more or less adapted to explain one group of the facts, but which are incompatible with the existence of the majority of them; and this is the case with the psychometric hypothesis, and with all the others which have up to the present been put forward to explain medianic phenomena in opposition to the spirit theory.

So, for example: Whenever proof should be established of the existence of the phenomena of 'fluidic duplication' and corresponding formation of an 'etheric phantom' that is sentient, conscious, and temporarily exiled from the corporeal organism (a fact which would elucidate the mystery of survival, making it consist in the final detachment of the 'etheric body' from the somatic organism); whenever it should be established that in the subconsciousness there exist in a latent state marvellous supernormal faculties, the genesis of which does not depend on the laws of terrestrial evolution (as though it appeared that the senses of a spiritual being were pre-formed and were waiting to emerge and exercise themselves in a spiritual environment; as though, too, it appeared that the senses were pre-formed in the embryo and were waiting to emerge and exercise themselves in a terrestrial environment): whenever transcendental photography should confirm the existence in space of phantoms of the dead corresponding in every respect to the 'etheric phantoms of the living' (and hence by the laws of analogy inducing us to consider them of an identical nature); whenever the already copious collections of veridical manifestations of deceased individuals unknown to the investigators should increase quantitatively and qualitatively in a manner adequate to the importance of the subject (thereby definitively eliminating the telepathic and psychometric hypotheses); whenever the instances should accumulate, rare at the present day, in which a deceased entity unknown to the investigators should succeed in establishing his identity in manifold ways, mentioning, for example, incidents unknown to anyone present, manifesting himself in a tangible form, and

leaving an impression on a photographic plate (case of 'Sven Stromberg'—D'Espérance); finally, whenever it should be established that the very errors and confusions that are wont to embarrass the communications resolve themselves, when ultimately analysed, into complementary proofs in favour of the spirit hypothesis; whenever all this should be realised in the future, or, better, should become the definite acquisition of science, in such an event the marvellous convergence of the varied forms of mediumistic externalisation towards the spirit interpretation would present itself with such signal completeness, and the circumstance that these different forms mutually fill up one another's deficiencies would appear so signally convincing as to triumph over every theoretical objection whatsoever, and rise to the status of a full and entire scientific demonstration.

Be it well understood, though, that in making such an assertion I am referring to such scientific demonstrations as it is given us to attain to in this world here below, and I do not intend to assert that with the facts referred to we should ever arrive at the so-called 'absolute proof' of survival; but at the same time I am sure that Professor Flournoy will certainly never think of exacting it, considering that we ourselves, poor individualities, limited by the conditions of our existence, live and have our being in the domain of the *relative*, and that, therefore, it will never be given to us ever to affirm anything in terms of *absolute* certainty; inasmuch as the pretension to do so would be equivalent to the abolition of science, and that of every other form of knowledge and human experience as well.

Signor Bozzano goes on to quote from Professor Hyslop's address in the 'Proceedings of the American S. P. R.,' Volume IV., pp. 153-158.

Finally, he discusses the more intimate and personal bearing of the question in the following passage:—

And not only does this thesis [namely, that the spirit hypothesis is only one of many equally possible interpretative hypotheses] fall to pieces because founded on erroneous premises, but it would be easy to demonstrate to M. Flournoy that even if we should be temporarily willing to accept such premises and to place the medianic problem in dependence on metaphysics, he would, in spite of that, still be in the wrong. He asserts that even 'should the experimental method constrain us to recognise the reality of the intervention of the dead to explain the phenomena of mediumship . . . *Spiritism would have equally failed in its object* . . . inasmuch as there would always have to be a choice made between the different philosophies and, to utter the word, an act of faith, which would elevate to the height of personal conviction that which logically would be nothing but one interpretative hypothesis among others equally possible.' Well, for the moment let us admit this to be the case. Still, even in the narrow circle of acts of faith, there exist most notable gradations, beginning with acts of *blind faith* proper to the ignorant, passing on to those of *pure faith*, proper to simple souls, then to those of *illuminated faith*, proper to cultivated men, and finishing with those founded in great part on experimental facts proper to Spiritists. That being so, it appears quite plain that among the various kinds of faith alluded to, that should have the preference which contained the smallest doses of *pure faith*, which is as much as to say the maximum of certainty obtainable in a circle of convictions such as this. So that on applying such a critical test to our own case it would be observed that between the spiritual convictions of Professor Flournoy, founded exclusively on ethical and metaphysical considerations, and those of the Spiritists, founded as regards four-fifths on actual facts and only as regards 'one-fifth upon an act of faith, there interposed such an abyss as not to permit of a doubt as to the choice to be made if any deference is paid to science and to logic.

'ALL great world ideas and beliefs spring from instincts that are fundamentally true and sound. Intuition and inspiration anticipate scientific discoveries and historical events.'—THE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH.'

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold their annual Conference with the South London Spiritualist Mission, Lausanne Hall, Lausanne-road, Peckham, S.E., on Sunday, April 7th, at 7 p.m. Speakers: Messrs. G. Tayler Gwinn, Percy Scholey, and E. Alcock-Rush. Soloists, Mr. and Mrs. Alcock-Rush. Spiritualists in South London heartily invited.

'UNLESS we guard against the tendency to surrender to the spirit of bustle and excitement it may override our whole lives. The excited nerves will not calm down. True rest and lying fallow become awkward and painful, and seem almost sinful. We mistake rush for living, and are only at home in the midst of turmoil. The worst effect is that we have no time for the quiet cultivation of what is best in ourselves.'

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APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

EASTER EGGS.

Amongst the most ancient and most important of religious festivals, Easter brings us spiritual lessons as varied and numerous as the gifts with which it is most closely associated in our minds—Easter Eggs.

Last year at this season we said that the inmost significance of Eastertide was the witness borne by the human spirit to its own mastership—the persistence of life, the supremacy of soul. That in itself would be an almost inexhaustible theme, touching existence at all points, and dissolving as by magic all limits and divisions. Think, for instance, how before a realisation of the supremacy and universality of life the idea of death dwindles and shrinks into the mere shadow of a name. Before we apprehended the true position of matter, Life and Death appeared to sit enthroned as rival monarchs, rulers of warring kingdoms, each absolute in its own realm. 'Life and Death,' we said, looking upon them as separate and opposite things, irreconcilable, each alternately defeating and being defeated by the other. Even with the faith that Life would ultimately be the conqueror we came but to a partial perception of the truth. Only with the recognition that Life is absolute did our conception of the Universe fall into its true proportions. Then the 'last enemy' fled away to be no more seen—in reality not even an enemy, but an obedient vassal which human thought had strangely raised to an appearance of regal power. Life the absolute reality; death the episode, the incident—thus we see them now in their relations, and (for us) the old false dualism is abolished.

But Easter, although a fitting occasion for deep moralising, has its lighter side, and we have chosen for our theme this time those pleasant symbols of the feast which, with all their tremendous significance, appeal to the temporal as well as to the spiritual nature—Easter Eggs.

'Baubles,' some of our sour old Puritan forefathers would have dubbed them, but they are for the most part pleasant baubles, even when divested of their essential meaning. They add something to the light and colour which we are told is fast disappearing from our daily life under the pressure of a mechanical civilisation. The May Day revels have flown, the poetic rites of St. Valentine are nearly extinct. Let us not part lightly with the custom of the Easter Egg.

Thinking on the subject of late, we saw in it not only the great symbology which is attached to it by Christendom but a lesser parable. It is the essential necessity of an egg that it shall be a depository of life, but with the Easter egg of social custom it is notable that the greater its artificial adornment the further it is removed from the vital principle.

We dye the natural egg and convert it into something pleasing to the eye, but distinctly removed from the processes of incubation. Moving still further from Nature and reality we manufacture the chocolate egg, the wooden egg, the golden egg (hard food for Midas)—and thus in sweetmeats, toys and trinkets reproduce the form of life without its essence. In the natural egg we had at once the symbol and the reality, but when 'Art stepped in,' the egg had little more than a surface significance. It appealed to our æsthetic instincts (more or less) and served to perpetuate an ancient truth in the guise of a kindly old custom. But in the meantime the spirit had gone out of it. It is no very austere morality that would apply the parable to certain creeds and religious forms. They commenced their career with a core of vitality and generative power, but their pure simplicity palled on minds given to the love of showy externals, and they were duly coloured to suit a perverted taste. Later came profuse gilding and ornamentation, and with each stage of artificial adornment the vitality became weakened until only the form was left. The interior reality receded under each fresh addition of rite and ceremony. Like the ornamental Easter egg of the shop window, the creed lost not only its reproductive power, but even its value as an article of human sustenance. And yet, by some strange fatuity, its custodians claimed that it possessed both, and were even bold enough to decry the new faiths that came full of life and energy from the great reservoirs of creative power. How could truth be rendered fit for acceptance by cultured and civilised minds without gilding, colouring and cunning ornamentation?

Some such process was obviously necessary, if only to disguise its newness and consequent crudity. A splash of gold here, a touch of embroidery there, a little ornamentation to propitiate the taste for culture and the love of antiquity—the thing looks so cheap and so raw without embellishment. But the followers of the newer revelations protested. They had learned by experience that these things meant a doubtful beauty and a certain sterility, and decided that truth unadorned was adorned the most, and that its generative quality must be preserved at all hazards. They wanted something natural, something that would grow. They were not dismayed by the charges of presenting the world with something crude and simple—knowing well to how many of Nature's best gifts those terms could be applied. They had considered the lilies of the field, and had decided that it was quite unnecessary to paint them. Perhaps they had noticed, too, the case of the natural egg with its possibilities of endless fertility and increase, as opposed to that of the artificial egg, pretty but unproductive, and symbolical of something that, but for the natural egg, would be without point or meaning. Their attitude, in short (and it is our attitude, too), was the outcome of a desire to return to Nature and the primal simplicities. Weary of stale dogmas and ancient doctrines that had lost all possibilities of life and growth, they sought a new revelation and a faith pure, fresh and fertile. For truly antiquity (whether in creeds or eggs) is but a doubtful recommendation. The thinking portion of the world, in fact, has, after a severe scrutiny, discovered that certain modern faiths very highly embellished have no interior substance, and that others which make great boast of age have become by very process of age—addled!

MY REASONS FOR BEING A SPIRITUALIST AFTER MANY YEARS' EXPERIENCE.

BY WALTER APPELEYARD.

An Address delivered on Thursday, March 14th, to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, Vice-Admiral W. Usborne Moore in the chair.

(Continued from page 152.)

Of course I do not presume to claim that the four examples of convincing manifestations of spirit presence and power which I have related justify the laying down of a hard and fast theory; it is the accumulated testimony of the ages, from all parts of the world, recorded in every civilised language, and testified to by men and women in every walk of life, which affords ample justification for the now accepted fact that other planes of thought and consciousness interpenetrate this mundane world of ours, and that there are possibilities of communion and of interchange of opinion, under given conditions, open to the scrutiny and verification of everyone. The promise still remains good, 'Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.'

It is, however, with these, and similar materials of a more or less substantial character, that I have been able to erect a structure on a foundation of concrete facts, more solid to me than any hewn from the quarry by the Society for Psychical Research. The building, of course, is not complete; much is still required to beautify it and render it attractive to the uninitiated and those lacking in the sense of true spiritual perception. It is of modern design, and stands on an elevated site, independently, in its own grounds, with a bright and sunny aspect. There is a broad avenue leading to its ever open doors. It has a magnificent outlook, with a majestic sweep of natural beauty extending beyond the range of vision, that fills one with intense admiration. The rooms are spacious, well lighted, and richly adorned with pictures, symbolic of the progressive stages of humanity, and from the tower of noble proportions which crowns the edifice there floats the flag of religious liberty. It may not appeal to all; I can imagine the air being too rarefied, the view too suggestive of unreality, inducing hopes some dare not entertain, and aspirations that have long been suppressed as beyond the possibility of realisation. In this residence I have taken up my abode, having removed from the antiquated construction in which I spent my earlier years.

In other words, less picturesque, I have found in the philosophy and ethical teachings of Spiritualism, supported by its phenomena, an antidote to the ills from which I had long suffered; the malady (which so many thoughtful and sensitive minds have to endure) of fear, uncertainty, and doubt in regard to the fundamental doctrines of the Orthodox Church. For faith, it has given me knowledge; for theory and speculation, it affords me satisfactory evidence. It has inspired me with a brighter hope, and a more radiant conception of man's true relationship with the Supreme Being. I no longer anticipate the grim probability of eternal suffering for some error of judgment, or breach of moral obligation. I learn, instead, that the love of God enfolds all humanity in its paternal embrace; that progress—though determined by the character of our desires, aspirations, and efforts, which may temporarily retard instead of aid it—is nevertheless the universal law, and that the world to come is one of ceaseless activity, where the faculties of our higher nature, that may have been dormant, are readily called into life, and free expansion, in promoting mutual happiness. Away from the limitations of our imperfect bodies the liberated soul finds joy in its new-born freedom. Friends await its advent, and minister to its needs, the re-union of earthly ties affording infinite delight. Souls raised from the lowest depths of degradation and despair find, to their great surprise, new opportunities for unfoldment. With a readjustment of their focus of observation, they see more clearly the Infinite purpose, and are encouraged to enter on the work of self-redemption under the improved conditions. Hence we read that Jesus was

drawn to such as these in his continued mission of mercy, when he went to preach to 'the spirits in prison, which some time were disobedient.' (Applause.)

I venture, therefore, to suggest that *Spiritualism, rightly interpreted*, reinforces the authority of sacred writ, suffusing its pages with a new light, and rendering possible of acceptance by the agnostic mind its records of so-called miracles, thus placing Christendom under lasting indebtedness.

It has arrested the progress of materialism, which was becoming increasingly rampant.

It has laid hold of the imagination, and secured the attention, of the greatest intellects of the day, demanding from them the position which the Church has persistently denied it, though Jesus left it as a sacred legacy to his disciples, when he promised them, as they marvelled at his wondrous works, that 'greater things' should they do when he had gone to his Father.

I know Spiritualism is not fashionable, nor sufficiently popular for the world's reception, but the time is not far distant when it will be generally recognised, for the signs of the age point in this direction. As intimated by Mr. McArthur on this platform a fortnight ago, it is already breaking down the barriers of ecclesiastical dogma, undermining the foundation of priestly craft, and ere long the huge reservoirs of accumulated scientific evidence will burst forth with swift, all sweeping power, carrying conviction in the swell of their resistless waves. Already tens of thousands have been gladdened with the cheering messages from the higher spheres, bringing to the hearts of the bereaved 'the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness,' in the assurance that their departed are not dead. (Applause.)

Yet, on the authority of certain clergymen whose names we need not mention—who have been very prominent in pulpit and platform in their denunciation of Spiritualism—we are told that this is all of the devil, that such messages and manifestations are the work of evil spirits. If so, in all reverence I thank God for these accessible means of inspiration. These clerical gentlemen, whose puerile vapourings have been poured out regardless of the truth, in the spirit of bigotry and bitterness, have displayed the inconsistency referred to in my opening remarks. They cannot have realised how serious a reflection they cast upon the psychic manifestations recorded in Scripture: the visits of the heavenly messengers to the patriarchs, the mystic writing on the wall, the attendance of the angels in their affectionate solicitude for the Master when, treading the wine-press alone, he bowed his head beneath the oppression of his loneliness in the wilderness of sorrow, and again when—having on Calvary's summit paid the penalty of his fearlessness in the exercise of those *psychic faculties* with which he was so richly endowed—he appeared in materialised form to assuage the grief of Mary's heart and to strengthen the drooping spirits of his disciples. They must surely have forgotten the incident of Saul's conversion—how, when he set out, in the same spirit as these reverend traducers, on his mad expedition, with the purpose of haling men and women to prison, he was arrested by the voice that was so familiar, the recognition of which, with the memory of Calvary's tragic scene still fresh upon him, struck terror to his heart, and caused him at once and thenceforward to change his course, his name, and his character. While they regard Paul as an authority, they appear unmindful of his earnest and significant words in the 12th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, 'Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant,' and of the remarkable exposition that follows, which shows clearly how intimately acquainted its writer was with the various phenomena under consideration to-day.

Notwithstanding these undignified outbursts of unrighteous spleen, encouraged by the silly and grotesque distortion of facts by an unscrupulous Press, and despite the cynical smile and superior airs assumed by those who have no practical experience and whose antagonism one meets with every day, either judiciously repressed, or rudely displayed, I stand firm in my convictions, though, I trust, sufficiently chastened in spirit to enable me, in all sincerity, to forgive them—for, of a truth, 'they know not what they do.' (Applause.)

It will, I think, require no stretch of imagination on your part to apprehend my position and 'my reasons for being a

Spiritualist,' although I wish you to understand I use this term in its broadest sense. I am not a member of any Spiritualist association, having always been averse to increasing the number of religious sects, believing, as I do, that eventually all sects will be merged in One Universal Church of the One Universal Spirit. I have arrived at this stage of evolution by a circuitous route, through much tribulation, supported, strengthened, and encouraged by the devoted loyalty of my wife. To-day I feel the richer for what I may have given, from time to time, of my knowledge and experience. Moreover, I have been stimulated afresh by the earnest injunction of my father, who, on June 16th last, at Cambridge House, after many years of silence, addressed me at the outset of a séance in these words, uttered in his own emphatic and characteristic manner, 'You have held the fort; you have kept the flag high and dry. Go on!' (Applause.)

It is my intention to 'go on,' and though I may not have brought to you any new gospel or any experiences foreign to your own, I trust I may have been able to incite you to nobler effort and greater sacrifice in prosecuting your quest for further knowledge of the most sacred verities that ever engaged the philosophic or scientific mind. In the lines in which I conclude, I venture to submit an epitome of those thoughts that have been borne in upon me through manifold channels of communication, and for the inspiration of which I desire to pay my tribute of thanks to the unseen friends on whose behalf I have this night spoken.

We are compassed about with a cloud of unseen witnesses,
They, of our kith and kin. Born of flesh and blood,
And fashioned in the image of our kind,
Who, one time, walked this mundane sphere of ours
As units in the mighty army of the human race
Now foregathered on the eternal shores,
From whose ranks there are ever emerging, with silent tread,
The messengers of peace. Not with the gruesome story
Of an avenging God and a burning hell,
But with the sweet song of triumphant love,
Bearing the glad tidings to the sons of men that God is good
And man is now immortal. For there is no death.
And when, at last, the curtain falls athwart the stage
On which he hath his earthly part so aptly played,
He finds himself before another scene, with place allotted
To his need, or fitness for the further act
In life's continued play.
It may be in fantastic garb, or robes of sombre hue,
Or clothed upon with garments white and pure, indicative
Of grace acquired or progress made below,
But, whatever his lot, the scene alone hath changed, not he,
Beholding, with a clearer sight, the purpose of it all,
With all the beauty of the righteous laws
That work harmonious with creative will
In equity and love. Unfolding to his wondering gaze
The whole progressive scheme.

Eternal heights of wisdom's power,
Eternal depths of love Divine,
Eternal hope for rich or poor,
Eternal life for thee and thine.

—(Loud applause.)

In response to the Chairman's invitation for questions or comments, MR. FREDERIC THURSTAN stated that he was the Cambridge University man referred to in the lecture. The account Mr. Appleyard had given of the séance at which he was present was absolutely correct, but he would like to call attention to one thing. It might be objected that, the séance being in semi-darkness, it might have been one of the two ladies present who sang. Now those two ladies were the psychic and Mrs. Appleyard. The psychic was known to possess no singing voice whatever and no musical faculty; and it was hardly necessary to say it could not have been Mrs. Appleyard.

In proposing a vote of thanks to the lecturer for his interesting and convincing address, the CHAIRMAN said that he regarded such meetings as the present, in which personal evidence was given, as the most valuable. We could form our theories for ourselves, but could not get our facts unless people furnished them. Those facts would become so overwhelming that it would be impossible for an educated man to refuse the evidence. Spiritualists could see a

great change coming over society. He thought Mr. Appleyard was rather too pessimistic in regard to the attitude of the Church. In a few days' time Dr. Boyd Carpenter, the late Bishop of Ripon, would be enthroned as President of the Psychological Research Society, a society which professed to investigate the possibility of communication with the inhabitants of the next state. It went to his (the Chairman's) heart to hear the kind words in which Mr. Appleyard referred to Mrs. Wriedt. He was delighted to be able to say that, as far as it was possible to foresee events, she would be coming back to us in May.

The vote, having been unanimously passed, was suitably acknowledged by Mr. Appleyard, and the meeting closed.

'THE BRITISH WEEKLY' AND SPIRITUALISM.

BY L. V. H. WITLEY.

Readers of 'LIGHT' will recall the fact that during recent months I have had correspondence both with Sir W. Robertson Nicoll and Miss Jane Stoddart, of 'The British Weekly,' without, however, succeeding in getting either of them to accept my challenge or take up my rejoinder. Still, 'the truth will out' in relation to Spiritualism—even in 'The British Weekly'—and I am sure many will be interested in the accompanying excerpt from a recent issue of that paper. It shows how, fifty years or so ago, Spiritualism was exerting a powerful influence on Christian ministers—and such prominent ministers as Thomas Binney and Newman Hall.

To-day not simply clergymen and ministers, but the members of Christian churches are becoming increasingly interested in the facts to which Spiritualism bears special testimony—*viz.*, the survival of the spirit after physical death and the possibility of communion with, and ministry from, beloved friends gone before. Since writing 'The Ministry of the Unseen' I have had most touching personal testimonies as to conscious communion with, and prayer on behalf of, those gone before—most of them from Protestants, and some from matter-of-fact people the least likely to be influenced by mere emotional sentiment. We are undoubtedly on the eve of wonderful developments in relation to the consciousness of the unseen world and its inhabitants. Without further comment I append the extract from 'The British Weekly':—

I have said that Binney's prayers were singularly felicitous and devout. . . I had been invited in the winter of 1864 to a séance at the house of a Mr. Ridley, who, having made a fortune by some invention in Australia, settled down in what would now be called Lower Hampstead. . . Mr. Ridley was not only a strong but a devout believer in Spiritualism, and he seemed quite unwilling the sitting should commence without an act of invocation. But who was to officiate? There were five members of the cloth present, to whom our host naturally looked for assistance—Mr. Binney, Mr. Newman Hall, Mr. Henry Christopherson, then minister of New College Chapel, who subsequently took Anglican orders, and two representing the Established Church. No one, however, seemed ready to 'engage.' What-ever might be the case with *good* Mr. Ridley, none of us ministers could call ourselves either believers or even earnest inquirers. No higher motive than curiosity accounted for our presence there. How, then, was the matter to be brought before God in fitting terms? A decided opinion prevailed that the venerable pastor of the Weigh House must be our spokesman, and he at last consented with a very puzzled expression on his countenance. What he proceeded to say as we all knelt down around the fateful table it is too long ago to remember with any exactness. There only remains the clear impression of various involved sentences that seemed much like 'beating about the bush,' and an emphatic warning to any evil spirits that were within hearing that we were not going to be easily taken in, but would keep a sharp eye on their proceedings.

Some of your readers may be interested to know the upshot of this séance. Our medium was Mrs. Marshall, a lady much in demand at that time, and she certainly was the means of eliciting some communications that startled Newman Hall (his particular interest was in a certain ghost story) and Mr. Binney. Various circumstances concerning the early life of the latter at Newcastle-on-Tyne were rapped out, which proved so accurate that before we parted he felt bound to confess that, while not willing to commit himself to any definite conclusion there and then, enough had taken place to afford matter for grave consideration.—Yours faithfully,

CHARLES GREEN
(Late Vicar of St. Paul's, Beckenham).

THE REALITY OF HELL.

We are sometimes confronted with assertions respecting life after death which give us pause. For instance, a short time since we read a reference to 'the life hereafter, where pain and sorrow are unknown.' Now, this is one of the conventional ideas which Spiritualism confutes. Experienced inquirers know that spirit people are often grieved, sorrowful, remorseful, troubled with painful memories, and bitterly repentant. It is useless—nay, it is worse, it is wrong—to imagine that the after-death realm is a land of instantaneous freedom from sorrow, pain, misery, and the consequences of vice, criminality, and selfishness. The fact is, although there is no literal burning hell of fire, there is just as much real hell as ever there has been: the hell of torturing memories, of dark and limiting conditions consequent upon ignorance, folly, and wickedness. Life has a distinct moral meaning, and every motive has its spiritual value. Unless we realise this, we shall go astray in our judgment. Indeed, Spiritualism emphasises the fact that we suffer deprivation and loss if we are unspiritual, impure, untrue, and unworthy, and that the path of liberation and ascent must inevitably be one of actual suffering until we are purified and become lovingly obedient to the spirit of the All-Good. It will not do to say that 'pain and suffering are unknown over there because they belong to the flesh,' for pain and suffering are states of consciousness, and we endure far more acute misery from mental and moral causes than from mere physical conditions. Life is a constant seed-sowing and harvesting, and we begin immediately to harvest the crop of consequences from our thoughts, feelings, hates, lusts, loves, desires, motives and intentions. Our thoughts and purposes exert an immediate effect in us and on us, for our hurt or our good; they help to form our character and educate our powers or to injure us and hinder our unfoldment. And, further, we are so constituted that we are spiritually responsible for the influence that we exert on others by our inner and our outer life, our thoughts and actions; and our truest good and happiness can alone be secured by our loving and wise efforts to render helpful service to those around us, both by influence and by example. The wrongdoer, here as well as over there, and over there as well as here, must come up 'through much tribulation' ere he can win his way to the heights of wisdom—to the ways of pleasantness, love, and peace.

In the year 1860, speaking, under spirit influence, on 'Hades, the Land of the Dead,' Miss Emma Hardinge said:—

The only wealth that is there dispensed is the wealth which the soul of love has laid up in the storehouse of good deeds. And there is poverty in spirit-land—there is beggary there, starvation and want, and, alas! the want is the want of human love, and the beggary is for those attributes of kindness which man has failed to plant in kind deeds to his neighbour. Oh! there are misers in spirit-land. There are men of yellow souls, that have hedged themselves up within a wall of gold, and they find that this gold grows into prison bars in spirit-land. There are dungeons there, self-made dungeons, in which man has incarcerated himself by his own narrow, selfish purposes; self is the chain, and self is the prison bar, and the love of self, with all its columns, branching out into sensuality, avarice, or prodigality—these are the cold and the darkness—these the worms that cannot die—these the fires that are not quenched. Such are the different conditions of spirit-land, and over all, from the lowest to the highest, rides the triumphant car of progress, sounds the angel trumpet, Light, more light; and above all is the cry of echoing worlds, Come up higher, come up higher.

To restore once again the revelation of the Most High; to bring down to earth the true knowledge which will promote and excite good deeds, noble acts, kind feelings, and high thoughts among you; to lead you to work from the cradle to the grave, having in view throughout life this mid-region, this spirit-land, where each one's sphere is determined by his past acts and deeds; this is the true mission of modern Spiritualism. It is not to do the work for you, for none can practise for you but yourselves. Spirits are not creators, and can make you neither good nor bad. They cannot put into your hand or heart what is not there; they can only externalise that which exists, before unseen, and they offer you the very best prompting to a better, a truer, and a more harmonious life, by opening the gates and showing where dwell the dead.

THE UPRISING OF MAN.

By MARGARET MOORES.

QUESTION: What are you?

ANSWER: I am a being alive and conscious upon this earth—a descendant of ancestors who rose by gradual processes from lower forms of animal life, and with struggle and suffering became man.*

This is only one side of man's ancestry, that which gives him a body and allies him with the earth; but the divine side of him, which makes his other ancestor to be God, is difficult to trace. Although it is so evident that 'man's body is an animal,' yet there are many striking points of divergence between his body and those of the brutes. Of supreme importance among these differences is the assumption by man of the erect attitude, which, by liberating his forelimbs from the act of locomotion, allows him the free use of his hands to work with. This liberation of the hands is the beginning of all man's labour; and work, as man performs it (i.e., brain-directed), means eternal progression:—

Man's body is by no means perfectly adapted to the erect attitude. The valves in the veins of his limbs, for instance, are arranged for a due control of a flow of blood, as in a horizontal animal, and are by no means so placed as to suit him best. Varicose veins are often the price he pays for this innovation. Far more hardly does the assumption of the erect attitude bear on women. It is, indeed, the permanent underlying cause of the extraordinary contrast between human childbirth and its parallel in the case of the lower animals. The modern anatomist finds himself able, therefore, to translate the story of Genesis into his own language. The curse of Eve, 'In sorrow shalt thou bring forth,' passed upon her as the price of the knowledge of good and evil, is veritably the price which the Eves of the race pay to-day for the assumption of the erect attitude, and for the knowledge of good and evil which that attitude has greatly helped man to gain.†

We see, then, that the curse pronounced on Adam, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,' and on Eve, 'In sorrow shalt thou bring forth,' are both of them the direct result of the erect position. Is it possible that there was a time in the remote past when man's body was too embryonic, too undeveloped to allow of its sheltering that divine part of him which comes more directly from God, and which the animals have not? May not the allegorical account of the Creation in Genesis be taken to mean that man's bodily evolution having now reached the crowning point of ability to labour with his hands, God saw fit to 'breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul'? As for the two curses, they were the price paid for the blessing of the erect attitude, and neither man nor woman would wish to go back on to 'all fours' to avoid them. We may fitly conclude with the second question and answer in Sir Oliver Lodge's 'Catechism':—

Question 2: What, then, may be meant by the fall of man?

Answer: At a certain stage of development man became conscious of a difference between right and wrong, so that thereafter, when his actions fell below a normal standard of conduct, he felt ashamed and sinful. He thus lost his animal innocence, and entered on a long period of human effort and failure; nevertheless, the consciousness of degradation marked a rise in the scale of existence.

[We have met with this idea before, for, in one of her splendid and inspired addresses, delivered in London in 1865, Miss Emma Hardinge, when dealing with the question, 'What is Spirit?' after giving a masterly exposition of evolution, said: 'Every form of life seems struggling to assume nobler proportions, until the spine (which as the continued column of the mighty brain, the centre of nerve-power and the seat of mind, stands representative of Nature's highest organisms), no more runs laterally along the earth, but stands erect and drinks in the solar ray, in that triumphant and commanding attitude which draws the line of demarcation between the man and animal.'—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

TRANSITION.—The friends of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Bonney, late of Monk Sherborne, Hampshire, will regret to learn that Mr. Bonney has suffered the sad bereavement of losing his wife. She passed away on March 1st at Long Branch, State of Washington, U.S.A., after a long and painful illness.

* The Substance of Faith: A Catechism for Parents and Teachers. By SIR OLIVER LODGE.

† Harmsworth's 'Popular Science.'

AFTER-DEATH STATES AND EXPERIENCES.

BY JAMES LAWRENCE.

The primary hope of the human race is for a post-physical consciousness, an activity apart from that expressed through the members of the body, or through the mental faculties. Savage and civilised people alike have lived and thriven upon that desire; it has illumined for them many a dark and dreaded hour, has enabled them to bear much pain, many losses and crosses, in the simple confidence that some day the crooked would be made straight, the sufferer be relieved, doubts dispelled, and all earth's pilgrims be united in one great union. If these hopes are to be realised, it will be a pleasure not merely beyond words but beyond conception.

Amongst the friends whom I hope to meet will be many whom I never met face to face here upon earth, but whose words and example have inspired me with fresh strength and shed a ray of hope on a none too smooth pathway. But certain as is the knowledge which Spiritualism gives, the inevitable questions force themselves upon us at times—shall we meet and know each other there?

The evidence furnished by Eastern and Western religions alike in support of the promises made in their names is so flimsy and of so assailable a nature, that practical men and women who hunger after the definable in spirit, as in matter, find it difficult to settle down to an assured attitude on the subject.

Faith in ultimate inseparableness is a potent factor in human effort and achievement. It links up grades and ranks, and tends to the inviolability of kinships and general fraternal conditions. Secrets may be preserved, feuds continued, injustices perpetrated, and greater and minor evils condoned in this world, but the idea of a great revelation in the Beyond tends to put a check on man's doings.

I often think that instead of ennobling and strengthening humankind, the reiterated denunciations of fleshly failings and passions, with the accompanying threats of Divine anger and individual punishment, breed a spirit of cowardice, of duplicity, and evasion. Burns put the matter in a nutshell when he wrote that—

The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip,
To haud the wretch in order.

And this is exactly the position of millions of our sisters and brothers to-day.

Spiritual assumption and the knowledge of moral principles cannot fuse, the latter being the outcome of experience, the former an artificial goad wherewith to prod lapsing, so-called fallen creatures. The ceaseless girding at us as being a race of degenerates, a race ostracised from the friendship of the Almighty, and foredoomed to eternal exclusion therefrom, save through the workings of an elaborate system of vicarious intervention, which no human being understands, does a deal more harm than good. The slow Christianising of the world's peoples is my ground for so asserting. How much brighter and more hopeful would the outlook become, could it be borne home to the minds of men and women that a profession of, or adherence to, any form of dogma has nothing to do with their spiritual destinies.

If the 'human' race is privileged to enjoy (or otherwise) a life apart from that lived on this planet, then the chances of bliss for Hindu and Hottentot, Unitarian and Spiritualist, must be identical with those of the Roman Catholic devotee and the zealous Salvation Army lass. Reason could not decide otherwise. On all matters concerning which there is more than one opinion possible there will necessarily be diversity of view; yet, however great the gulf separating the disciples, none may be specified as 'false.' Electrical traction is a modern form of mechanical movement, but the factor has always existed; so has it been, and is, in the realm of spirit; diversity of outlook and sensation have but modified in some respects, and changed in others, the conceptions thereof.

If well-directed individual intelligence be the recognised turnpike to mundane success, is it too much to expect that the Father who directs universal energy, thought, and action will accept the results of individual understanding and attainment in spiritual things? The dignity of an Emperor differs only in

a superficial degree from that of a crossing-sweeper, and the mental status of a renowned scientist is really of no more value than that of a dock labourer, always assuming that the whole soul and sincerity of each are breathed forth in their several stirrings. The publican and Mary Magdalene were the friends of Jesus, and yet in outward sanctity and studied ritualistic devotion each was greatly the inferior of neighbouring Jews. I do not think for a moment that God, whose visible expression we are told Jesus was, has changed since those far-off days and in this sea-separated land, and upon that confidence I build my expectations. The good of all ages, of all climes, and all peoples have left their impress on the story of their day and their country, and the Eternal Scribe has not omitted to chronicle every item in their favour, no matter what their social position, their political tendencies, or their spiritual professions. God holds the universe, as it were, in the hollows of His hands, and on the palms of those hands are indelibly inscribed the records of His children, and on those children's consciences are graven corresponding impressions. Advancing theology and growing common-sense have struck deadly blows at the 'white throne' idea, and though one feels a touch of regret at the passing of once stable teachings, yet it is all making towards a strengthening of the race, morally and spiritually, and, mayhap, to the rearing of a race mentally stronger and of more robust physique.

I have many arisen friends who worshipped at different shrines from that which I hold sacred, but we all aspired towards the same ideal, the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Shall we then tolerate for a moment the idea that any of us will be found in the ranks of the lost, simply because, in spiritual matters, we held divergent views? Personally, I reject scornfully, and in the name of a divinely evolved humanity, such a suggestion. Are we destined never to meet in sympathetic oneness in those regions of undying progress and deserved happiness because we cannot all travel in the grooves that tradition has hollowed? I do not anticipate such perversion of Divine justice, but look towards that day of opportunity and realisation with perfect equanimity and confidence, content to believe that God will not look for a harvest more than commensurate with the seed He entrusted to my charge.

Were the efforts of Christian communities directed towards the dissemination of healthy, forward, non-committal moral teachings, spiritual development on the best and truest lines would not fail them. A being of a very low moral and intellectual standard may pose as a good Churchman, or even as a reputable Spiritualist, but one who boldly launches forth on the seas where ride freedom of desire, understanding, and spiritual discernment, cannot but have a lofty general outlook, bearing, and influence, no matter what his creed or professions.

No creed exclusively enshrines the saint, nor are all sinners outside all creeds and beliefs. Life eternal is for all, or it is for none. Heaven is for all, upon merit alone, or hell is for all, on a pre-natal indictment. If the Unitarian, the Theosophist, the Christian Scientist, the Spiritualist, and all minor dissenting, warring sects of religionists are outside the pale of modern tolerance then I say, 'What a pity for that tolerance!' But I cannot believe it so. The Jesus of dogma and the Jesus of principle are at constant variance, but the Christ is still a real power in the lives of men.

Death bows to none, favours none, and never refuses to strike. So will it be when his days of harvest are over, and the human sheaves are garnered in the celestial barn; there will be no distinction, no labels, no tests, save the one of individual fitness, after trial. Then will be the day of the great reunion, when all will know as they will be known, when my friends and I will meet and compare notes. They will guide me over the home they have been enjoying a little while before me. They will guide my steps by the thorny ways and the precipices, and will lead me to the fountains of inspiration, love, and progress.

But if my hopes be vain, if I be denied this pleasure, then the after-life will not be that unalloyed consummation I have believed it to be. Still, with the evidence of my every sense to encourage me, I joyously endorse the lines of that talented *doyen* of living mystics, James Macbeth Bain—

O sorrowing ones, whose wounded hearts
Are well-nigh broken
By lonely hours of silent grief
And tears unspoken,
The loved ones, whom ye mourn as dead,
And death made dearer,
Are with you still in very deed,
Yea, they are nearer.
Why deem this but an idle tale?
Why such misgiving?
Is it more strange we should not die,
Than that we're living?
O sorrowing souls, who for one ray
Of hope are sighing;
Wipe off those tears and sing for joy,
There is no dying.

'ETAIN THE BELOVED.'*

By E. WAKE COOK.

Mr. James H. Cousins, who lectured recently to a large audience of Spiritualists in Belfast, is one of the sweetest singers of the Irish Renaissance, that remarkable movement which is opening out a new realm of artistic inspiration in an overlaid Mythology, almost as rich as the Greek, but springing from a more spiritual root. It is one of the paradoxes of the time that the further we recede from the buried past the more we know of it. The restless impulse to explore, to delve deep into the desert sands of time, is laying bare treasures which enable us to reconstruct the past as never before. This enthusiasm of exploration, turned on the legendary lore of Ireland, has opened a veritable mine of wealth. As Mr. Cousins eloquently says in 'The Wisdom of the West':—

Page by page they have recovered and given to the world a literature of momentous import; epic in grasp; lyric in impulse; full of feeling after colour, and music, and form; subtle, naïve, simple, barbarically splendid. Cycle after cycle of myth-tales already known or newly found has taken shape, and in and behind them loom up the forms of titanic deities actuated by a life that knows nothing of the chain of time and space.

Mr. Cousins holds a central place in the more artistic phase of this pregnant movement; and since Mr. W. B. Yeats left lyric for the drama, he is its chief poet, and has given in 'Etain' its most sustained poem, 'epic in grasp, lyric in impulse.' While he is one of its sweetest singers, he is also a scholar and a philosopher, and has the rare alchemy which transmutes deep learning and high purpose into golden poesy. But it is as the mystic, the illuminated seer, that he chiefly appeals to us. The veil between the spiritual world and this is for him so thin that it transmits a glow suffusing his work which often breaks into scintillations of living light. 'Etain the Beloved' is a romance of two worlds, so artistically told that we may read for the story alone, and gather its poetic treasures by the way unconscious of didactic purpose. Founded on the old Irish myth, the poet takes us into the realms of pure imagination; imagination which, as A. J. Davis says, is 'the poet-laureate of the spiritual faculties; the Argus-eyed clairvoyant of the whole interior nature.' Etain, symbolising the soul whose birth into matter is but a sleep and a forgetting, after her adventures here returns to the higher plane enriched by those earthly experiences which are the soul's means of growth. Blossoming into matchless beauty, Etain weds Erin's king, who is 'strong in the strength that finds in gentleness a way to peace.' She reigns in all hearts, but only too fully and fatally in the heart of the king's brother, Ailill, who sickens to death for love of her. The king departing on a pilgrimage leaves Etain to nurse him, and with the command to withhold no gift his brother's sickness to assuage. With Ailill's returning health he sees the queen, too, has fallen under the mystic spell and is sickening at the thought that he must pass beyond her care. A declaration bursts from him phrased in verbal splendours, and with a passion raised to that religious intensity which is the essence of love. Etain, listening as to an inner voice, and remembering the king's command, appoints a tryst. She goes forth with the blushing morn,

and arrives, 'where leafy boughs in odorous dusk are blent. There she meets not her earthly lover, but Mider, her immortal spouse come to claim her return to those upper realms and to those transcendent joys of which earthly love is but a halting prophecy. Given a time of grace, she returns to her queenly duties with this promise treasured in her heart. The king, abounding in beneficent activities, also becomes the unconquered master of chess. He is challenged by a stranger chieftain who offers high stakes. The over-confident king proudly offers on his side, 'whatever thou shalt ask!' He loses, and the stranger demands Etain! Here is another intensely dramatic situation handled with rare mastery, insight, and poetic resource. A respite is granted the king, who fondly hopes to delay the momentous day, and so break the spell. On the fateful morn all approaches are guarded, and no stranger is to see the queen.

Now harp and song have touched their utmost height,
And fall in sudden silence at a sound
Deeper than sound, and pale before a light
Clearer than light. Above, beneath, around,
All heaven and earth are shaken with a might
Past might, swift chariots clash, and mixed with these,
Far thundering and roar of distant seas!

And in their midst is Mider, a shining God
From whose majestic presence swiftly spreads
Peace not of earth.

Thus was the forfeit claimed. Ailill, kept from his tryst by a trance-like sleep induced by Mider, had awakened in passionless calm to a higher joy in honour unstained; and the king, with deepening vision, sees in earthly loss a spiritual gain. Let us end with one lovely thought. Etain—

in service, found a hidden way
To strange new meanings in the eyes of life;

And grasped, in giving, life's most perfect gift—
Love that is raised by that which it doth lift.

In the other poems in this dainty little volume high thoughts are expressed with the same witchery of words; gems in a golden setting.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

'Keep Smiling' has been a favourite motto of ours for years. In America, we are told, it has been elevated to the dignity of a 'cure,' and is called 'The Smile Cure.' The habit of cheerful thinking cannot be acquired all at once, but the endeavour to cultivate the disposition, to look on the bright side of men and things, and of ourselves, is well worth while. The new cult has adopted this formula: 'Keep your face always towards the sunshine, and the shadows will fall behind you.'

A writer, dealing with 'The Smile Cure,' says: 'It is said that in our sleep our souls leave our bodies, and when we dream of far-away lands we do actually visit them; but so long as the body is alive, we must return to it as it awakes once more to consciousness. Now, if this be true, it seems a pity that our souls could not make these nightly adventures more helpful to us by letting us have a thoughtful look at ourselves before getting inside our bodies again. Probably it would give us a shock—we should scarcely recognise the miserable, worried-looking individual before us, and certainly we would have to acknowledge that the tired, depressed face was of our own moulding. So next morning we would start straight away with the "Smile Cure," and then—well, let us try it, and analyse the result for ourselves.'

The adherent of 'The Smile Cure,' we are informed, 'cultivates a certain complacency which is necessary for real harmony of mind. Of course this does not apply to the arrogantly vain and aggressively confident; they have overstepped the limits of common sense and good breeding, and are not worth considering. But there are many who are so keenly aware of their deficiencies and failings that they are more or less dejected and sad. They encourage a morbid introspection which acts as a blight on the life. To be inwardly pleased with oneself gives a calm, cheerful confidence which makes for happiness and also favourably impresses others. No need to fear that we will remain in blissful ignorance of our faults—the candid relation will take full responsibility for that. What is left for the "Smile Cure" patient to do is to discover his many good points and genially enjoy them.'

* 'Etain the Beloved, and other Poems.' By JAMES H. COUSINS. Maunsel and Co., Dublin. Price 3s. 6d.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPIRIT FORMS.

Several Continental journals have recently published more or less exhaustive articles on the late Dr. H. Imoda's book, entitled 'Spirit Photographs.' This book has aroused much controversy and criticism amongst the students of the occult; but as a fuller notice of it will appear in 'LIGHT' shortly, we will give a brief outline only. The work contains neither theories nor hypotheses, but merely plain and impartial statements of Dr. Imoda's experiences and experiments with Linda Gazerra, a materialising medium.

Linda Gazerra is twenty-two years old, and from the very beginning when she came under Dr. Imoda's observation he found that she was easily put into a hypnotic sleep or trance. Her principal control purports to be a former cavalry officer of the name of Vincent. Many striking phenomena took place during the numerous séances which Dr. Imoda systematically records in his book. The greater part of it, however, he devotes to minute descriptions of the conditions under which the flash-light photographs of the forms, of which there are a large number, were obtained. Some of the photographs give the impression of being perfectly genuine, others seem rather doubtful. The question which now occupies the attention of those interested in psychic phenomena is whether the spirits actually materialised through the medium, or whether there was some deception, intentional or not, on the part of Linda Gazerra.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A Question for Mr. Turvey.

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of March 9th Mr. Vincent N. Turvey, referring to Mr. Leadbeater, writes as follows: 'Yet we have his definite assurance that Madame Blavatsky died before she met Colonel Olcott, before she wrote "Isis Unveiled," before she founded the T.S. What, then, becomes of the "trained" seeress, Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater's co-worker, who, when she "learned to love H. P. B." did not even know that she was loving "two chelas, an adept, and a Tibetan woman who inhabited H. P. B.'s vacated body?"'

Will Mr. Turvey be so kind as to say where these statements are to be found?—Yours, &c.,

R. B. D. B.

[In our next issue we shall give Mr. Turvey's reply to Mr. Wedgwood and to the above question.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

A Mysterious Flame.

SIR,—In asking you to kindly insert this letter in your valuable paper, 'LIGHT,' in the hopes of obtaining an explanation of our experience, I would impress upon you that I am a level-headed, extremely practical, non-imaginative individual, and my wife is equally practical. On Saturday, March 16th, about 9.15 p.m., I was sitting at supper with my wife, when suddenly I became conscious of a 'something' behind me. There was a rustling sound, as if someone were brushing up against the wall behind the sofa. My wife heard it, and exclaimed, 'What's that?' Here let me say that, being in a flat, the bedroom we occupy is behind the dining-room, the head of the bed being against the other side of the same wall. Retiring to bed at about 11 p.m. I suddenly saw, a few minutes afterwards, a live burning flame, about the size of a teacup, issue from the top of the wall and slowly proceed along beneath the ceiling for a distance of about eighteen inches or two feet. It remained stationary for some seconds, then descended *over me* about midway between the ceiling and the bed, alternately ascending and descending. It was quivering and pulsating with life. I immediately whispered to my wife, calling her attention to it, and together we watched the phenomenon. It never moved right or left, but remained over me and the movements already stated continued. The room was in total darkness. I got out of bed and subjected it to every test I could think of, moving the mirrors, window-blinds, &c. Upon lighting up 'it' was not discernible, but immediately upon darkness 'it' was still there, *and was there when we fell asleep.* Last night all was as usual. We hope to be favoured with further manifestations. I might say that we lost our dear little girl last July. She loved us very dearly and almost her last words to her mother were 'Come with me.' Whatever this phenomenon may have been I am convinced that it was something not of this earth.—Yours, &c.,

OSCAR NILSEN,

Hastings,

A Premonition, or What?

SIR,—I should be grateful for an explanation of this fact. A friend residing with me came in on a recent Wednesday evening from a walk, saying she had just seen on a placard the news of an attempt to assassinate the King of Italy!

On the Thursday morning we searched the papers for details. There were none. On Friday came the tidings of an attempt made on Thursday! I enclose my card and beg to subscribe myself—Yours, &c.,

AN INTERESTED READER OF 'LIGHT.'

A New Manual on Spiritualism Proposed.

SIR,—I have written the manuscript of a book explanatory of the philosophy of Spiritualism, which I feel would be useful to put into the hands of both students and inquirers, but, through lack of funds, I am unable to print it. Several well-known Spiritualists who have read it are of opinion that it would be extremely helpful at the present time. One generous friend has promised to advance £2 2s. to assist me to meet the expense of production, and I should be pleased if others would kindly help in a similar way.

Being written concisely, it gives in a condensed form the general ground-work of the Spiritualistic philosophy of life here and hereafter, and could be produced to sell at a shilling per copy. I could supply copies at 9s. 6d. per dozen, 18s. 6d. for 25, or 50 copies, carriage free, for £1 16s. If readers would order copies in advance and send subscriptions with their orders it would help me to get it produced, and I should be very grateful for the help thus rendered.—Yours, &c.,

W. H. EVANS.

Coleridge-road, St. Thomas, Exeter.

'Out of the Body' Experiences.

SIR,—I have been 'out of the body' on two separate occasions after retiring to rest, but was not asleep. I experienced, however, *no horrors*, only delightful surroundings. I walked through beautiful groves and across green fields and woods full of flowers, all in their summer glory.

Here in Hampshire, when walking through forest and copse and across fields, the recollections of my experience of being out of my physical body have confronted me several times, and a soundless voice has asked me: 'Do you remember where we led you?'

Many would laugh at me, but I don't expect that from your readers. I used to say to myself: 'Now I am quite away from my body, quite free,' and I felt a delightful sensation of freedom. I met people and spoke to them, but at this moment I cannot remember who they were—it was some years ago—but they were friends. When I felt myself re-entering my body it was with a kind of shock, or great inward shaking, and a sound which rang in my ears like a thud.—Yours, &c.,

M. WOODMAN.

Freemantle Croft, 'Four Marks,' Hants.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- 'Are Prayers Answered?' By HECTOR WAYLEN. 3d. Bishop & Sons, Ltd., Nicolson-square, Edinburgh.
- 'Nerve Building and Plain Paths of Health and Healing.' By J. WALLACE-CLARKE. Stiff cover, 1s. net. L. N. Fowler & Co., 7, Imperial-arcade, Ludgate-circus, E.C.
- 'Mountain Pathways: A Study in the Ethics of the Sermon on the Mount.' By HECTOR WAYLEN. Cloth, 3s. 6d. net. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., Carter-lane, E.C.
- 'Our Life After Death.' By the REV. ARTHUR CHAMBERS. 111th edition. Cloth, 3s. 6d. net. Chas. Taylor, Brooke House, 22, 23, 39, Warwick-lane, E.C.
- 'The Essence of the Universe.' By EDWIN LUCAS. Cloth, 5s. Published by the author, 4, Grafton Mansions, Duke's-road, W.C.
- 'Clothed with the Sun,' being the Book of the Illuminations of Anna (Bonus) Kingsford. Edited by EDWARD MAITLAND (B.A., Cantab.). Popular edition. Paper cover, 2s. net. John M. Watkins, 21, Cecil-court, Charing Cross-road, W.C.
- From the 'Theosophical Publishing Society,' 164, New Bond-street, W.: 'Life After Death,' by C. W. LEADBEATER; 'Social Reconstruction,' by L. HADEN GUEST; 'Psychic Hints of a Former Life,' by E. K. BATES. Stiff paper covers, 6d. each. 'Prayer,' by DUDLEY WRIGHT, cloth, 1s.
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