

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe,

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

No. 1,632.—VOL. XXXII. [Registered as]

SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 1912.

[a Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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containing brown scented beads. 'Mr. Mhin, you must not give me these—they were your mother's.' He answered: 'When you took our baby, and he laid his head on your shoulder, both my wife and myself thought it was mother that held our baby, and she desires that you have the beads.' My heart was overjoyed, and they have ever since been my most precious Oriental souvenir.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

In the course of a lecture delivered in Boston (U.S.A.) recently by Professor James H. Hyslop, he referred to the importance of what to the superficial mind appear to be trivialities in solving the question of spirit identity, and remarked:—

I once performed an experiment at college. Over a telegraph wire a group of professors and students were to prove the identity of the person at the other end. If what we ask is trivial what those people asked seemed less than trivial, yet it was all scientific and it proved the truth.

We wish some such experiments could be arranged over here for the benefit of our critics. It would be a liberal education to them. The multitude of trifling details and little domestic episodes to which they would have to appeal to make out a clear case would astonish them. 'What happened to the guinea-pig you kept when you were a little boy?' 'Did you ever have a whitlow on your finger?' 'What was the colour of Aunt Maria's hair?'—it would be very funny—funnier for us than for them! By a coincidence, Sir William Barrett, in his address (reported in our last issue) made some suggestive allusions to the subject.

In an article entitled 'Accomplishment,' in the March 'Nautilus,' Alice B. Stockham tells a charming little story illustrative of the doctrine that (as expressed in New Thought teachings) 'the demand brings the supply.' She narrates how, in the course of her travels in India, she tried to obtain a string of sweetly-scented brown beads similar to those possessed by a relative. But the quest was long and apparently destined to be futile. There were such beads in India but they were rare and precious. 'I crossed India five times and bought fabrics and curios but no beads.' At last at the great Pagoda in Rangoon she met a native gentleman, Hpo Mhung Mhin, who said that he possessed such beads, but they had belonged to his late mother and he could not part with them. So it seemed that once more the desire was to be baffled.

Let us tell the rest of the story in the authoress's own words:—

From the temple we went to Mr. Mhin's to breakfast where I met his wife and five boys. The youngest, six years old, timid and bashful, came to me at once, and laid his head on my shoulder as if an old friend. The next morning I was to sail at six and Mr. Mhin was to meet me with some Buddhist formula for attainment. When I arrived he stood there in his gay Burmese costume. He had sat up all night to prepare the formula which he handed me. He also gave me four turbans and a piece of silk. Then he took an envelope from his pocket

We have read with no little interest a brochure, 'Psychic Hints of a Former Life,' by Miss E. Katharine Bates (The Theosophical Publishing Company). The subject of reincarnation is an old and tried friend, and although it is a little wearisome in some of its phases we are always willing to consider its claims to attention. Miss Bates deals with the question in an eminently reasonable manner, with playful references to the very human ambition of believers in the doctrine to win distinction as reincarnations of famous characters of the past. Nevertheless the book sets out the claims of a lady friend of the authoress to represent a reïmbodiment (partial at least) of Queen Elizabeth. The evidences, mainly of a psychic character, are decidedly striking, and are supported by the testimony of Mr. Stead's 'Julia.' The theory is that a portion of the personality of the Tudor Queen is manifested in the lady in question, 'Mary Vernon,' and Miss Bates contends that, as it is not easy to fix limits to the subconscious portions of an individuality,

there is no inherent impossibility in the suggestion that some portion or portions of this unmanifested Individuality may have received embodiment on the earth plane and be acting as object lessons to the portion which is now withdrawn behind the veil.

This is certainly a more philosophical theory than that which would have us regard the soul as a monad to be transferred from one embodiment to another. It is, of course, difficult to define the limits of possibility when dealing with 'the abysmal depths of personality.' In the universal aspect, as we know, all bounds and limits are transcended and the diverse selves of humanity are fused into unity. Separateness in the absolute sense is an illusion. But this theory of embodied portions of an individuality—resulting in communications from Queen Elizabeth to her *alter ego* on earth (as described in the book) or from Mary Queen of Scots to the late Countess of Caithness, who claimed to stand in a similar relation to the Stuart Queen—although involving curious and interesting speculations, takes us away from the main track of our subject. We are not unfamiliar with temporary identifications of one mind with another, as in the case of a great dramatic artist who feels that he is not merely playing the part of King Henry V. but that he is Henry V.—for the time being. One man in his time plays many parts, whether as a result of the dramatic powers of the mind or the still obscure phenomena of psychic sympathy and influence which may for a time apparently eclipse the normal expression of his own identity. The interaction of mind with mind, as between the next world and this, may have extremely complex results. There for the present we may leave the

matter. We do not feel tempted to quit the highway to plunge into the thickets. We leave that to more adventurous souls. *Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit*—those who know their Horace may finish the quotation.

A delightful and enlightening book is 'Mountain Pathways' by Hector Waylen (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., Limited, 3s. 6d. net). The work (which is in its second edition, revised and enlarged) is a study in the Ethics of the Sermon on the Mount. In an introductory letter Professor F. C. Burkitt, M.A., D.D., addressing the author, says:—

You have avowed your faith in the inner light; you are not ashamed to confess experiences of that order of things which is popularly called psychic. But at the same time you have done your best to avail yourself of the labours of scholars, labours which are too often rejected by the illuminated as 'unspiritual.'

The book is, indeed, a blend of scholarship and devotional insight. The author has a clear apprehension of the inward significance of the teachings of Jesus, so little understood by many of his modern followers and so often dismissed as impossible ideals. In the chapter entitled 'Many Powers,' Mr. Waylen deals in illuminating fashion with the question of psychical inquiry, and effectively answers the objections of that hide-bound theology which indiscriminately condemns all supernormal experiences.

Mr. Waylen's remarks on this subject, indeed, are worthy of consideration alike by believers in and opponents of spirit communion:—

If the world passes through a phase of thought in which the common convictions of the vast masses of mankind, in past ages, are criticised as though they had no real basis in the nature of things, then religion tends to become more and more a thing apart from daily life, an unreality and an abstraction—faith degenerates into mere intellectual assent to a historical tradition, and the way is widened which leads to lawlessness and pessimism.

And again:—

There is much that is called 'development' in these days, which is not so much the making of a skylight in our earthly house, so that Heaven's light may flood the interior, as a leaving open of doors and windows by night so that any thief may walk in. But the human soul is sacred and must not be made the subject of haphazard experiments in psychical research, as if it were a clock or watch that could be replaced if injured or out of gear.

We heartily commend the work, especially to those to whom Spiritualism involves questions of religious belief.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION AND RELIGION.

Dr. Percy Dearmer, writing in the April 'Commonwealth,' defends the inclusion in the 'English Hymnal' of a few hymns which contain requests for the intercession of those in a better world. He says:—

I have always felt—and have had the pain of differing from some whom I honour and love because I have felt—that the admission of intercommunion between this world and the next is bound up with the future of religion. I am more and more convinced that the belief in the immortality of the spirit dwindles into mere mortuary sentiment—that the cross is replaced by the cross-bones—unless it is understood that I have as much right to ask Keble or Kingsley or St. Paul for the help of their prayers as I have to ask the editor of the 'Commonwealth.' I find everywhere that this belief is in practice accompanied with a real belief among the people in the nearness of the unseen world. Indeed, to deny this belief would seem in the Eastern Churches to be the denial of heaven itself; and this view can be traced back earlier than the third century. It seems to me a natural and common-sense view. . . . In Russia an orphan asks his dead parents to pray for him; a father asks the prayers of a dead child. Dead! How meaningless the word at once becomes! 'There is no death.' Yes, we must give up the belief in death, and live again within the cloud of witnesses.

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 25TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

'CHEIRO'

ON

'PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA IN INDIA, AMERICA, AND OTHER COUNTRIES.'

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.

The last meeting of the Session will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on Thursday, May 9th, at 7.30 p.m., when the Rev. T. Rhondda Williams will give an address 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 Tuesday next, April 23rd, Mr. J. J. Vango 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 next, April 25th, at 5 p.m. prompt, Dr. Cornwell Round will give an address on 'Perpetual Youth,' to be followed by discussion.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday next, April 26th, 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.

RECORDS OF A PRIVATE CIRCLE.

BY JOHN DUNCAN.

(Continued from page 172.)

The medium, Mrs. Coates, was next controlled by another very old friend, who had passed over three years ago. I have had many convincing proofs of identity both here in Edinburgh and at Rothesay from this dear friend. Only three weeks after his transition he was described to his widow at one of our evening services, and a message was given to her by the medium, Mrs. Inglis, of Dundee, that all that Duncan had told him about Spiritualism he had found to be correct. We used to meet very often, once every fortnight, and on nearly every occasion the topic of Spiritualism was discussed in a friendly manner. I well remember our last chat, some ten days before my friend's transition, when he said to me, 'Well, if I had got the proofs you have had I would have been a Spiritualist, too.' He has twice reminded me of those words through mediums, although they were only known to him and myself. We will call him Mr. P. When Mrs. Coates was controlled by him, it was in marked contrast to Mr. Waddie; he came with a breezy rush, and spoke mostly in 'braid Scots,' which he prided himself in doing during his earth life. He was so delighted to have a talk with me again, and asked me 'tae be sure and bring his wife next time, I want tae hae a long talk wi' her.' She was 'tae be sure and bring "Daisy" wi' her.' "'Daisy,'" he said, was 'mair spiritually-minded than her mother.' 'Mother was a great Church woman, and was a bit feer't tae dabble intae things, bit they wud prove a blessing tae her yet.' The minister was against it, but he would get hold of him yet. I said to him, 'But you were very orthodox yourself and were just as difficult as the minister to convince,' to which he replied by reminding me of his words at our last meeting on earth: 'Yes, I know, but as I told you, "if I had got the proofs you had I would have believed in Spiritualism too."' I may state that Mr. P. was a lawyer and an elder in an orthodox church at Leith, and on every occasion that he has come back to me he has asked if his wife or I could influence his minister in some way, or if I could be brought in contact with him and tell him that he (Mr. P.) had been able to come back and communicate with me. I think on this occasion I have had as reliable a test as I could wish for. 'Daisy' is Mr. P.'s youngest daughter, and was always a special favourite with him. The name 'Daisy' was only known to her own family and most intimate friends, and never heard of by the medium. Further, Mrs. P., Daisy's mother, has said to her at times, 'If your father would only come back and mention your name "Daisy," that he was so fond of, such would be real proof to me.' Now such has been given to both widow and daughter, and cannot but be convincing proof to both that a loving husband and father is watching over them, guiding and influencing them for good during their earth lives.

Another change came over the medium, who now, in a lively manner, approached my wife, and said, 'Oh, mother, I am Bob! I was a strong fellow on earth, and I am strong still. I am bright and happy, and glad to be with you again. Bring Teenie too' (meaning his sister who was at home). And here the control rattled on in the genial and affectionate way of a young son chaffing his mother, touching on salient points, and expressing an opinion that his sister Teenie was not to be forced into this (she is somewhat averse from Spiritualism), but she would come of her own accord. 'What about Lizzie and Tom?' asked my wife. 'They are both here all the time, mother, and waiting a chance to have a talk with you.' This was followed by a little homily to his mother, who was advised to do her work with a contented mind, and to leave things in higher hands. She was not to worry. 'No tears, mother.'

They were tears of joy. Bob promised that there would be materialisation sittings here this summer, and that he was going to show himself: in fact, they would not be able to keep him away. With a few parting words to me, Bob departed, leaving a bright and cheery influence behind him. I may here state we have three on the other side who passed on in childhood. Bob was six years old at his transition and has now been in spirit life thirty-two years. He was among the first to come to me after I had fairly embraced the truths of Spiritualism. He was also the means of convincing his mother, and brought lasting joy and comfort to both of us. With reference to the materialisations, promises of this kind have been made before by Bob and other controls, and whether these should be taken at their face value or not remains to be seen. Mr. and Mrs. Coates are inclined to think that some effort of the kind will be made: they have not forgotten the promise made in reference to getting a psychic photographer, which was fulfilled as to time and in both letter and spirit. After Bob had left, the medium was controlled by a son of Mr. and Mrs. Bell, who were present. This was the first occasion on which Mr. and Mrs. Bell had been at these sittings. The medium said, 'Mother dear, I am David.' Mr. Bell appeared to be under influence, as he had been sitting motionless with closed eyes for some time. Mr. Coates called the attention of the control to him. In reply, the medium, waving her hand towards Mr. Bell, said:—

My father is all right. Mother dear, you have made me very happy in following up this subject. I want to tell you in my quiet way. I had always a quiet way with me. ['Yes, David,' replied Mrs. Bell.] It was a great awakening to me when I woke in spirit land. I am often in my home, I mean with you at home, mother. I try to help you. Indeed, I do help you all. You know I have been. But you will be able to hear from me in a more decided way yet. You will become clairvoyant, and it will be a great blessing to you all.

Here followed a long talk to Mr. and Mrs. Bell regarding a daughter at home, which was somewhat of a private nature. So intimately acquainted was this spirit with the affairs of his father and mother, so sympathetic, simple, and quiet in manner, that both the parents were affected to tears. In reply to the question, 'Do you recognise the control?' Mrs. Bell said, 'Oh, yes! No one else could know what he has said; it's just his words.' A favourite expression of his was, 'Mother, just imagine,' when he was interested and wanted to explain anything.

After this there was another change of control, the medium coming over to where I was seated. The control spoke rather fast, making it difficult to take full notes of all that was said. I at once knew the influence to be that of our daughter Lizzie, who passed over in 1884 as a baby of fourteen months old. She has come back very often to us since, but has only spoken to her mother and me through Mrs. Coates, and often for a long time, mostly in relation to homes in the spirit land and the various occupations there. This time she announced herself as wishing 'tae hae a crack' with me.

After a little banter, I entered into a somewhat serious conversation regarding some 'hard sayings' she had given us when she was present at our last visit. She did not make it clear herself, and I had made inquiries from various mediums and writers both here and in America, but could get nothing clear or definite on the subject. I expressed the wish to her that she would not say anything more about that unless she could make the matter clearer. The talk we had last October puzzled most of the members present, and I should very much like if any of your readers who come across this could shed light upon the subject. Her conversation at that time referred to physical-spiritual spheres and spirit-physical spheres, the one being interlinked with the other, thus the physical being lower than the spiritual, and the spiritual in one sphere being the physical in another. Whether this related to states of being or to actual spaces in the unseen could not be made out, although the latter seemed to be implied, as she said the sphere next the earth was physical to the one above it. Probably the control meant to give valuable information concerning things spiritual, but was

unable to find suitable language or symbols to convey the information to our understanding. I may say this is the view I take of the conversation, as well as being the view of others I have consulted, although it is very difficult to grasp. At this visit, after her buoyancy had toned down, she said that since our last visit she had been travelling in the spheres, but here, owing to the rapidity of the speaker and the difficulty in dealing with my questions to the control and the replies given, a clear account of her description cannot be given. We learnt that she, with others, was progressing onwards, and after a given period where she was at present, she would attain a high degree of knowledge and power, and would go to a higher circle or sphere where they had more difficulty in communicating direct with those on earth. Here I ventured to say that if she had passed into what she termed the celestial sphere when her mother and I passed over, she would not be present to welcome us on our arrival, as she had previously promised, to which she at once replied, 'I have elected to remain here and assist in the helping of those on earth until the time arrives when mother and you pass over; and rest assured, in any trouble or ailments you may have I will be near you to succour and strengthen you.' She explained to us that in the passing from one sphere to another they did not go through a process similar to what we know as death, but that in some way, not very clearly explained, in passing higher they shed off material belonging to the grosser ethers forming their outward bodies, and this *débris*, now no longer of service to them, in some mysterious way fructified the sphere they had left. To follow this was difficult enough, to understand it was impossible, and clearly the control was endeavouring to convey information beyond the powers of the medium to express. There was much to appreciate and enjoy in her conversation. Had the medium under control spoken more slowly a better report might have been obtained of what she had to say.

I had almost forgotten to mention in this report that Mrs. MacCallum's little boy came to her. I had never seen him in earth life, but he has come to me twice. The last time he urged me to write to his mother, which I did, and told her who had made me write to one I had never known or met. What was strange to me, meeting Mrs. MacCallum in Rothesay for the first time, was that whenever she came into the room I felt we were not strangers, and must have met before. Mrs. MacCallum was greatly pleased at her little darling being able to come back, and that he was so interested in his mother.

Here terminated what was, on the whole, a remarkable séance, in which were given many clear evidences of identity. Take the case of Mr. P., in which he refers to the last conversation I had with him before he passed over, and which was known only to him and myself, to his wife and her attitude of mind, and to his daughter, 'Daisy'—a pet name, only known to the family and more intimate friends, and never heard of by the medium. Mr. Waddie's conversation, again, was quite characteristic of the friend with whom I had had so many talks regarding Spiritualism and his attitude at first to the subject. He was quite a stranger to Mr. and Mrs. Coates, and I repeat they had only met him once before, when I introduced him, and they knew nothing really of his past. Note, lastly, the evidence furnished to Mr. and Mrs. Bell by their son, and his convincingly intimate knowledge of his parents' affairs, the interest he takes in them and in his brothers and sisters. It was Mr. and Mrs. Bell's first time at the Rothesay circle.

'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?

PROFESSOR CORSON'S 'SPIRIT MESSAGES.'

BY LILIAN WHITING.

Professor Hiram Corson's book entitled 'Spirit Messages,' which has recently received editorial recognition in 'LIGHT,' is a remarkable one in many ways. The sitter was a man of the utmost spirituality and beauty of life, and the medium, Mrs. Minnie M. Soule (of 110, Dartmouth-street, Boston, U.S.A.) is a woman of refinement, and of earnest devotion to her gift; indeed it is not too much to say that her work and life have placed psychic communication on an entirely new plane in the minds of all who know of her work, quite irrespective as to whether they believe in communications between the two states of life. Professor Hiram Corson, Litt.D., LL.D., was a great scholar. On the founding of Cornell University he was invited by Dr. Andrew D. White, its first president, to create the department for English Literature, which chair he held for more than forty years. He was the personal friend of Robert Browning, and his greatest interpreter; and his wonderful 'Readings' from Browning, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Tennyson, Walt Whitman—given in many cities—were creative interpretations, which for many years formed one of the leading features of literary culture in our country. So much must be said to define the personal characteristics of both the sitter and the medium.

During a visit I paid to Professor Corson in October of 1909, I told him of Mrs. Soule, and he professed a great desire to have 'sittings' with her. In September, 1910, he came to Boston from his home at Ithaca, N.Y., and for more than three weeks he was a guest here at the Hotel Brunswick, where, at 4 p.m. each day, Mrs. Soule came to him to give the sitting. The séances thus took place in his own room, under the most harmonious and agreeable conditions. The twenty-four sittings were consecutive, Sundays not being excepted. The communications came from his wife (who was a distinguished French woman of letters, a Dante scholar, and who translated Longfellow's 'Hyperion' into French), his daughter, his two sons, and a group of personal friends that included Robert and Elizabeth Browning, Tennyson, Phillips Brooks, Longfellow, Goldwin Smith, F. W. H. Myers, and Walt Whitman. All this group were near and personal friends of Dr. Corson, except Mrs. Browning, whom he had never met (his friendship with Browning beginning some years after her death), and Tennyson, whom he had met but once. In 1880, and again in 1885, Dr. Corson visited Browning in London, and they met in Venice, renewing their intimacy, only a month before Browning's death.

Now the remarkable element in these communications is the strong individuality revealed of each communicant. Here is a group of people of world-wide fame, whose writings and literary creations are familiar to the reading public. Each of the messages reveals subtle, delicate, and unmistakable evidences of the special trend and individuality of the person. Those of Mrs. Browning are as different from those of her husband as were their expressions here, and each of those purporting to be hers is like her expressions in letters and in literary work when here. The same assertion can be made of every communication.

Now, the sceptic would, of course, say that the very fact that these messages are so largely from well-known writers invalidates them, as such names would lend themselves to imitation. But when one comes to think of it more closely, there is no more marvellous literary feat than to imitate the style and the individuality of a well-known author. Mr. Mallock did this in his inimitable book, 'The New Republic.' But while his is one of the most clever and ingenious instances of literary imitation, even in this—the work, too, of a trained man of letters—the reader perceives that it is an imitation, and this suggestion is even a part of the cleverness with which it is done. But in this case the medium, Mrs. Soule, is in no sense a trained literary worker, an expert—as is Mr. Mallock, and as anyone would need to be to achieve successfully so intricate and exacting a result as the successful imitation of so large and so widely differing a group of authors. Probably not one person in a thousand out of the most cultured and sympathetic readers of these authors could successfully imitate their work, their individual

form of expression, charged, too, with its vital suggestion of their characteristics and personality, even if it were a matter of life or death to do so. Such a thing is, on the face of it, practically impossible. I doubt if Dr. Corson himself, with his more than sixty years of scholarship and culture behind him, savant and scholar that he was, could have created these messages had he tried. The question remains, then, if they are not the work of the persons from whom they purport to come, from whence do they come? The possibility of the medium concocting and memorising them to be given through her voice must be ruled out; and if, in any way, Dr. Corson's own mind worked in so dramatic a fashion, unknown to himself, and the medium drew it from him, the mystery is certainly not lessened! But entirely beside the published matter there was much of personally evidential matter between Dr. Corson and his family—those trivial allusions which yet prove so much. Mrs. Corson spoke of a lace shawl that he had bought for her abroad in the early years of their married life, and there were many similar things of a domestic and personal nature that the medium could by no possibility have known. I cannot now allude individually to some of the messages and point out certain salient facts regarding them, but many of these will readily suggest themselves to the attentive reader.

FATHER BENSON ON GHOSTS.

We have had occasion in the past to criticise Monsignor R. H. Benson for his hostile attitude to Spiritualism. It is therefore gratifying to find no trace of this in the very outspoken deliverance which he is reported to have made on the 10th inst. at the commencement of a lecturing tour in New York. According to the New York correspondent of the 'Daily Express,' Father Benson, addressing a large audience in the Hudson Theatre on the subject of modern psychical research, said:—

'I believe frankly and passionately in manifestations from the spiritual world. I cannot believe that the whole human race has been wrong all these centuries.

'We find ghosts and haunted houses in all countries and at all times. There must be something in it. I am perfectly sure that there is a part of our being which does not share in mortal dissolution and can, under proper conditions, make itself known to living creatures.

'Ninety-nine out of a hundred spiritualistic séances,' he continued, 'are frauds, but the hundredth one is true.' [How does he know that only one séance in a hundred is true?]

Similarly he emphasised his belief in haunted houses, but only in 'reliable' ones vouched for by intelligent people who knew the difference between a wailing voice and the wind in the garret.

Monsignor Benson related how he once met a priest in Rome who told him that he saw a vision one morning of his father in a coffin in his Canadian home. While pondering on the subject a cablegram arrived announcing his father's death, but further investigation showed that the father, while dead, was not in his coffin at the time of the priest's vision.

'The explanation of modern psychology,' said Monsignor Benson, 'is that when the father was dying he was unconscious, but his subconscious faculties became more active and were coloured by approaching death. It was this colouring which conveyed to his son's mind the idea of the coffin.'

Father Benson said that he did not accept the explanation of a haunted house in England where the appearance of the ghost of a man murdered by his brother was attributed to the furniture in the room being affected by the subconscious self of the man at the time he was being murdered. The furniture thereafter was assumed to convey to sympathetic people circumstances as they were at the time of the murder.

Monsignor Benson refused to divulge his own explanation of the appearance of the ghost, saying that it was a dangerous theory to deal with.

'BUDDHA.'—We understand that the impressive religious play, founded on episodes from the life of Buddha, which was performed some two months ago, will be repeated at the Little Theatre, Adelphi, on the 22nd and 23rd inst., both mornings and evenings, and continued, by matinées only, every Tuesday and Friday for a season. Mr. Arthur Cuthbert has written a special introductory scene, 'The Council of the Gods,' which shows the motives that led to Vishnu's incarnation as the Buddha. More songs, dances and music will be introduced. The cast is to be a very attractive one.

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

Now that the subject of the relations between Spiritualism and Theosophy is again up for consideration, it may not be out of place to lay before the readers of 'LIGHT' a few thoughts regarding certain distinctive characteristics of the two systems, from the point of view of a student of both, to whom it seems that they are fundamentally as far as the poles asunder.

Theosophy is deductive, assertive, and didactic. Its philosophy aims at covering the whole ground. It offers speculations as explanations, and affirmations as demonstrations.

Spiritualism is inductive, empirical and rational. It aims at discovery by investigation, observation and research. It offers phenomena as evidence and bases its affirmations upon ascertained facts.

Theosophy is autocratic and authoritarian. It has 'great leaders,' and unimpeachable (?) 'Masters.' It asks discipleship and encourages dependence on individuals. It has its esoteric teaching and inner methods of working. It is essentially undemocratic, and its 'brotherhood,' so called, is the brotherhood of the superior person, not that of all men, and to this extent it encourages caste and class distinctions. Spiritualism has no great leaders, no Masters—indeed, from its inception every attempt made by ambitious individuals to become 'heads' or Masters has been frustrated. Such persons have always had to go outside to start their 'osophies' and build up their sects. Spiritualism has room for all inquirers, learners, workers, thinkers, and lovers, but it does not ask for disciples. It believes in open doors and windows for rational and free thinking men and women who seek knowledge and recognise the authority of truth. Its aim is the discovery of facts, the comprehension of laws, the understanding of principles, the acceptance and application in all the concerns of life of the spirit of wisdom and love. It is essentially democratic, and affirms personal responsibility, aims at individual unfoldment, and seeks to banish mysteries. It trusts and appeals to the heads and hearts of men and women. It is opposed to secrets, mystical and otherwise—believing that the spirit-self can be trusted to the utmost. It stands for facts and truths; for trust in principles, not persons; for the 'Christ within,' not a coming great Teacher. Its brotherhood is the brotherhood of humanity, displayed in helpful service.

Theosophy advocates an unproved and unprovable assumption of a rotation of lives in human form, of personal experiences in physical bodies, which bodies, because of their limitations, necessarily give but imperfect facilities to the indwelling intelligence to acquire full self-knowledge, self-control, and self-realisation. The greatest men and women have ever been conscious of their failure to attain to the ideal life on this earth.

Spiritualism proves the continued, conscious existence of man after bodily death, the continuation of character and of educational experiences in the after-death spirit world. It does not attempt to explain all mysteries, to account for all seeming inequalities, but recognises that each of us is an angel in the making—a learner in life's school—and that we continue our progressive mental, moral, and spiritual education after the incident of bodily death. It is content that man in his search for God and truth should be faithful to his intuitions—that he should strive to exercise his power, to use and enjoy life well, to love and serve others, and that he should rest assured that there is a path of eternal progress open to everyone who wills to tread it, and realise that what he cannot know here and now he will learn to understand hereafter. W. S. M.

TRANSITION.—By the sinking of the ill-fated 'Titanic,' Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Brailey have sustained the irreparable loss of their only son, a bright and promising young fellow of twenty-five years of age. We are sure that their many friends will join us in tendering sincere sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Brailey.

SPIRITUALISM AND SOCIAL PROGRESS.—We shall shortly commence a series of able and timely papers on 'Spiritualism as Social Saviour,' written by Mr. E. Wake Cook specially for 'LIGHT,' based upon the teachings of Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis regarding social reconstruction. Mr. Wake Cook holds that Dr. Davis 'anticipated later reformers, and formulated a higher and, at the same time, a more scientific ideal than any which are now moving humanity. His is the one message most needed to-day.'

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, APRIL 20TH, 1912.

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.
PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. F. W. South, Office of 'LIGHT,' to whom Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable.

Subscription Rates.—'LIGHT' may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance. To United States, 2dol. 70c. To France, Italy, &c., 13 francs 86 centimes. To Germany, 11 marks 25 pfg. Wholesale Agents: Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent and Co., Ltd., 31, Paternoster-row, London, E.C., and 'LIGHT' can be ordered through all Newsagents and Booksellers.

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LOVE AND DEATH.

In 'The Drama of Love and Death,' of which we have already published a preliminary notice, Mr. Edward Carpenter has given us a book in every way worthy of his authorship. It is manifestly the product of much thought and study, a wide and direct outlook on the world, and that clearness of perception that sees life steadily and sees it whole. This clarity of vision is reflected in the style throughout. Nowhere is the thought obscure or the language involved. Ideas the most subtle are expressed in a few graphic sentences; the problems that in less competent or less conscientious hands would be treated evasively or shrouded in verbiage emerge with solutions which, whether true or not, are stated with crystalline clearness.

Mr. Carpenter summarises much of present-day philosophical thought in his recognition of the fact that Death offers a challenge that we of this generation can no longer ignore. 'This age,' he says, 'which is learning to look the facts of Nature steadily in the face and see *through* them, must also learn to face this ultimate fact and look through it.' He sees a possible solution of the problem in a realisation of the potency and significance of Love. And we agree with him to this extent—that Love will illuminate the intuitions and certify us of the greater realities. Nevertheless we look for much from Science on the groundwork of the matter. The intellect must play its part, for we are seeking the great synthesis in which the emotions, the intuitions, the higher reason and the intellect shall join hands in a common affirmation.

For that portion of the book in which the author deals with the wondrous permutations of the love principle in the visible world we have only space for a brief survey. He traces its activities from the Protozoa—the germinal forms of the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms—to its highest earthly expressions in humankind. Handling the subject with masterly skill—but in no aspect so finely as that in which with true intuition he sees its underlying relation with the problem of death—he discourses on 'The Beginnings of Love,' 'Love as an Art' and 'Its Ultimate Meanings.' He sees how the self-consciousness of the age has been hostile to the full expression of the soul:—

Self-consciousness is fatal to love. The self-conscious lover never 'arrives.' The woman looks at him—and then she looks at something more interesting. And so, too, the whole modern period of commercial civilisation and Christianity has been fatal to love; for both these greater movements have concentrated the thoughts of men on their own individual salvation—Christianity on the salvation of their souls and commercialism on the salvation of their money bags.

Our 'stuffy civilisation,' as Stevenson called it, has much to answer for—the perversion of a faith that in its springs was pure and unworldly—for we have no word against Christianity as taught by its founder—and the degradation of the business of Labour and Exchange.

But Death—the last enemy, the Grisly Terror, the Deliverer, the Revealer, the Opener of the Gates—each as we choose to regard it—what of this? Here equally we find the author speaking as the observer and the reasoner. He deals mainly with inferences and probabilities, although here and there, under the influence of some fine intuition, he sounds a strong note. He sees clearly that in the human personality the real self has but a partial manifestation, and he cannot resist the conclusion that death as a stage in evolution means the bursting forth of the soul into new form and utterance; that there is an after-death state—a state 'which, for reasons that at present we can only vaguely apprehend, has been folded from our consciousness.' He is not a little fortified in his views by his study of the records of psychical phenomena, and he refers to many leading writers in this connection. He is much impressed with the accounts of materialisations observed by Sir William Crookes and Professors Varley, Richet and Lombroso. But although he allows the absolute genuineness of a great body of psychical phenomena, there still is, he thinks, 'considerable doubt as to who or what the manifesting beings or forces are.' But this attitude on the part of Mr. Carpenter is explained by his subsequent admission:—

For myself—having so little personal and direct experience in this field—I do not feel in a position to form a definite opinion, and am content to leave the evidence to accumulate.

We wish that some of our other scientific and philosophical critics showed similar intellectual honesty. But, as our author shrewdly remarks, 'There is a certain fashion in such matters.' There is, indeed; but it is odd, nevertheless, that many of those who aspire to be leaders of opinion should be content to be the 'slaves of fashion'—to express in servile ways the views of the unthinking majority—to adopt the prevailing idea just as they might the prevailing fashion in collars. Mr. Carpenter, however, sees clearly that spiritual phenomena are now 'so thoroughly corroborated that it would be mere affectation to pass them by.' He notes, too (as we have noted in the past), that our phenomena 'have been so amazing and unexpected that they have often produced a kind of fear and dismay.'

The book is full of insight, of profound and illuminating thought on the mysteries of life and death, and it is not easy to do it justice as a whole. Naturally we have concentrated attention on those portions which relate to the subject we have most at heart, but even here the book is so fertile in its suggestiveness that we are not able to do more than deal with a few of the salient points.

In his concluding chapter we see the author at his highest point—as Poet and Seer. Doubt, speculation and hypothesis vanish, fused in a fervent glow of insight and inspiration. With the great apocalypse of Death the mystery of our mortal life is finally solved:—

The hour arrives when we look down on these local days, these self limitations, as phases—phases of some vaster state of being. Death is the necessary door by which we pass from one such phase to another; and Love is even a similar door.

The higher state of the soul, when it has passed those doors, is one of many wondrous revelations. 'Companion of Titanic and Cosmic beings,' the soul can yet recall its narrow past and the 'tiny limits from which it first sprang.' It passes on,

trailing for ever with it the wonderful cloud-wreaths of earth-

memory and association, and the myriad fragrance of personal remembrance.

But those are the higher states of the soul, realms to which it has not—in the majority of cases—the passport immediately on its departure from its earthly habitation. It has yet to pass through the gate of Love—a greater portal—into a more wondrous land than Death alone can offer, that land where, as Mr. Carpenter finely says, 'great Voices sound and Visions dwell.'

'THE FRONTIERS OF THE SOUL.'

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

An Address delivered on Thursday, April 11th, 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, Dr. Abraham Wallace in the chair.

THE CHAIRMAN, in opening the meeting, said that it was with extreme pleasure that he presided that evening. Through the addresses which Mr. Fournier d'Albe had given on previous occasions, the members of the Alliance had had opportunities of appreciating his high endowments. He was also known to them through his books. They knew him not only as a distinguished scientist, but as a philosopher and a psychical researcher of no mean ability. They might therefore anticipate a very interesting and instructive lecture.

MR. FOURNIER D'ALBE said: The problems which it is my privilege to put before you to-night are some whose solution has been somewhat neglected in the search for information on the origin and probable fate of the individual soul.

We think of ourselves as individuals, as entities having an existence apart from all other entities. We think of ourselves as if separated by an impassable gulf from our fellow-men, and there are moments in our lives when that gulf yawns wide, and we feel the unutterable loneliness of self-hood, of separate individual existence.

At other moments this feeling of independence, of separation, of aloofness, is rather a source of satisfaction or even delight, and it is just at moments such as these, when life seems full and precious, that the desire for personal immortality is most keenly felt.

What I wish to do to-night is to investigate the precise extent of this separateness of the individual, to study its origin and probable continuance, and to draw attention to certain facts and phenomena which limit the essential solitude of the individual, and which seem to indicate the possibility of its temporary or total merging and absorption in another individuality.

I confess to being a pronounced individualist, in the sense of regarding the separate identity of the individual as of the greatest importance both to his own welfare and to the welfare of the community to which he belongs. A prosperous and progressive community requires capable and harmoniously developed individual characters, and it requires efficient collaboration between them for the public weal. Individualism without co-operation may mean anarchy, but co-operation without individual character means stagnation and decay. There is an Irish Gaelic proverb which says: 'Quarrel is better than Solitude.' It means that pronounced and self-assertive individualism is no bar to social utility.

Having said so much, I propose to look on the other side, and to show how ineffective is the 'gulf' which is supposed to separate any two souls, how illusory is the separateness of each of us, how constantly the frontiers of our souls are shifted and merged, how often they are all but obliterated.

To begin at the beginning, at the origin of each individual soul.

No living being in this wide world but is a living refutation of the indivisibility of the soul, of the very 'individuality' we are treating of. Every living being, plant, animal, or man, has originated either in the division of a single cell or the merging of two cells into one. The former process is known as fission, and the latter as conjugation. It is by the latter process that

all higher organisms, including man, originate, whereas fission accounts for the origin of micro-organisms, and the subsequent growth of all organisms, including ourselves.

Man, then, originates in the fusion of two germ-cells to form one. Here is a case of complete merging of individualities. The new individual so formed proceeds straightway to diffuse or subdivide his life, his soul, his individuality by fission, by cell-division, by the division of the central flame of life into numberless sub-centres, until his body is completely differentiated and built up, and finally consists of a cell community having an incredible number of self-contained centres of life, whose harmonious and intelligent co-operation is the essential condition of the healthy life of the individual.

The healthy child is an individualist by nature. Its business is to acquire a footing in the world into which it is born, to fight for its 'place in the sun,' and to overcome the numberless enemies that beset its path. Parental care may do a great deal to ward off these perils; but the real scene of battle is the child's delicate organism itself, which learns to encounter and overcome the swarming micro-organic enemies of mankind, real dragons and monsters of deadly intent, and of a power, alas! too often fatal to the young life.

But as maturity approaches, the period of strenuous and necessary self-life comes to an end, and the claims of a larger life and wider sympathies make themselves felt. A new and delightful vista opens out, filled with noble ideals and altruistic impulses. Ideas of service, of self-sacrifice, of surrender cease to be distasteful, and the faculties of love and trust, of worship and emulation, newly implanted, illumine the young life with their warm radiance. Here we see the individuality, built up and asserted with such fierce and uncompromising energy, ready to merge itself in a wider life so soon as it shall have been found.

This merging of the individual in a larger life occurs in many ways. Any abnegation of self in favour of others constitutes such an absorption of the narrower self-hood in a wider self. It matters not whether the other 'self' be one's country, or regiment, or 'cause,' or family, or perhaps a single other being—it is in each case the sinking of the smaller self in a larger. Such a submergence may even be quite temporary, as when an audience rises like one man to greet or applaud a great personality. Whenever two or three are gathered together with a single common purpose or impulse, there a higher self is present among them.

It was Herbert Spencer who taught the world to look upon the State as an organism, or rather as a super-organism. There are communities which are as loosely organised as, say, a sponge or coral-reef, a kind of submarine city in which the inhabitants stand in their doorways and fish up their food out of the water as it flows past. Others, like the modern civilised State, are as complex as a small animal of the 'metazoic' or multi-cellular type, consisting of a large number of individual entities with different functions specialised to serve each other in a great variety of ways. No State, it must be admitted, has ever yet resembled man in the bewildering complexity of his organisation or the number of his component entities, which goes into twenty figures, as against the nine figures of the inhabitants of the largest world empire.

The very fact that every human being belongs to some community, however savage or primitive, shows that no human being lives for himself alone, that, unless he lives on a desert island, he cannot be alone in his world, and that his self-hood is, willy-nilly, merged to some extent in the superior self-hood of a wider sphere.

This consideration alone should suffice to show that our self-hood is by no means that circumscribed and sharply defined thing which we refer to in speaking of, say, a selfish person. In fact, if we consider thoughts and emotions alone, we may come to the conclusion that there is no such thing as a purely personal self or purely individual selfishness, since altruistic thoughts and emotions govern and sway most of us during most of our waking moments. But then, there is always the body. It is our material organism which fixes and defines our self-hood in this life. It is pervaded and governed by our spirit, it conveys to us information and messages from without, it carries out the behests of our will. Every one

of the trillion cells composing our organism contributes its share to our physical and mental life. Each of them carries within it a minute and integral portion of our life; its life is part of our life, its soul is part of our soul. And this co-operation of a vast aggregate of minute centres of life, all derived from a single cell by continual sub-division, is fostered and cultivated and developed by our everyday life, by our successful daily adaptation to environment.

Thus, if we despair of finding our one and indivisible self in the mental sphere, crossed as it is by altruistic thoughts and emotions, can we not at least find it in our material organism? If my soul is not my own, can I not, at all events, claim undisputed mastership over my body?

Many questions here crowd upon us. We are reminded of multiple personality, of control, of mediumship, of automatism, of cases where the control and, so to speak, the proprietorship of the body seems, for a shorter or longer period, to have entirely slipped from the grasp of the original master.

We have even to face abnormal physical accidents or states before we can see these questions in all their bearings—experiences under anæsthetics, in hypnotic trance, under the influence of lesions of the nervous system. We may have briefly to consider the puzzling phenomena of duplicate individuals, such as the Siamese Twins, and the very fundamental problem presented by the grafting of part of one organism upon another. Only thus can we hope to arrive at sound conclusions with respect to the limits of our self-hood, only thus can we be sure of our ground when we want to step onward into the unknown regions beyond the portals of death. For the problem of survival, of immortality, is entirely a problem of the origin, the nature, and the spatial and temporal limitations of self-hood. We cannot speak of personal survival until we know what is meant by personality. We must define its limits and mark out its frontiers.

It may be that we shall catch a glimpse of a wider self-hood than any attainable in this life. It may also be that the attainment of that wider outlook is preceded by an intensification of the personal self such as we see it in our own childhood.

And so I shall ask you to follow me for a moment through this maze of psycho-physical facts and considerations, in the hope that where all is yet so puzzling some leading principles may emerge to give us light.

The cohesion of the human individuality is to me a standing miracle. We speak, figuratively, of the rivalry between the head and the heart. We might much more pointedly refer to the rivalry between the two hemispheres of the brain. We hear with two ears and see with two eyes. One eye never sees quite what the other eye sees. The two eyes have, literally, two different points of view. Not only that, but we habitually and normally see all objects double, except those which our eyes happen to have 'fixed' upon. If we hold two fingers upright, one some distance behind the other, we can, at will, see either of them double by fixing our vision on the other. There are then, so to speak, two individuals gazing simultaneously at the doubled finger, and a third gazing at the single finger. Yet the centralising power present in all of us combines these multiple impressions into a single perception, unless, indeed, it is in abeyance owing to pathogenic causes.

For special purposes, as in measuring the magnifying power of a telescope, it is quite possible, with a little practice, to look at two different objects simultaneously, one with each eye. This is probably the normal practice with animals, whose eyes do not, like ours, normally point in approximately the same direction. But the interesting point is that it is also quite possible to *look* with both eyes and yet *see* with but one of them. You can always tell an expert astronomer or microscopist by what he does with the unoccupied eye. You will find that he leaves it open, whereas the beginner closes it tightly, or covers it with his hand. It seems incredible to the uninitiated, but after a few months of practice, the eye at the eyepiece is the only one actually in use, and the observer is not in the least disturbed or influenced by the uncalled-for indications of the idle eye. And it seems more remarkable still that the eyes can be changed frequently, and yet it is only the eye occupied at the

instrument which 'sees,' the other eye being practically blind as far as perception is concerned.

Here we have a clear case of 'control,' amounting almost to a 'negative hallucination'; a case, moreover, which is well known in scientific circles, and is taken for granted in all normal individuals. But it means that one cerebral hemisphere temporarily predominates over the other, and produces the inhibition of the faculties of the unoccupied eye.

Such a predominance of one hemisphere over the other is in many cases quite normal. There is a part of the brain just over the left ear which seems to be closely associated with the faculty of speaking and writing. The writing faculty is more 'unilateral' than the faculty of speech, simply because we are trained to use our right hands in writing. But it is a well-known fact that both cerebral hemispheres take part in every act of our lives. Only, one of them may do most of the work, waking but a faint echo in the other.

Now, suppose a circumstance arises which greatly enhances the activity of the right hemisphere, then the faint echo will become the predominant sound, and the actions of the individual will be reversed right and left. What was formerly done with the right hand will now be done with the left, and while up and down movements will be the same as before, outward and inward movements will be reversed. The best-known illustration of this process is found in 'mirror-writing,' a phenomenon frequently observed in left-handed people under pathological conditions, and also known in certain phases of mediumistic control.

That mirror-writing is sometimes performed with the right hand—I do not, of course, refer to mirror-writing acquired by practice—is due to the secondary connection existing between the right hemisphere and the right arm.

Let me explain. The sense organs and muscles of the right half of the body are controlled mainly by the left cerebral hemisphere, and *vice-versa*. But a secondary and much feebler connection exists between each hemisphere and its own side of the body.

When we perform the act of writing, therefore, we are really writing the same thing in four copies simultaneously, so far as brain activity is concerned. We produce the ordinary writing and its mirror image with the right hand, and the mirror image and the ordinary writing with the left hand. But the first of these is much the more powerful of the four, and 'controls' the others, so that, normally, only one copy appears on the paper. I should be inclined to arrange these four writing impulses as regards their comparative strengths in the following succession:—

1. Right normal writing.
2. Left mirror writing.
3. Right mirror writing.
4. Left normal writing.

According to this scheme, the rarest phenomenon for a normally taught being should be that he be found writing in ordinary style with the left hand.

It is evident that, as soon as the unifying power normally ours is weakened or destroyed, the duplication of the personality will take place. Thus it may happen that a person may appear to possess two personalities, simply because two duplicate sets of faculties, ordinarily working in harmony, become independent of each other. The writing centre of the right hemisphere, which normally plays a very subordinate part, may suddenly become the dominant one, and as its memories and traditions are necessarily different from those of the more active hemisphere, an apparently new and strange train of memories and associations may emerge, suggesting, as they necessarily would, a new personality. This is, of course, more likely to be accompanied by left-handed mirror-writing than by right-handed mirror or normal writing.

This consideration may give us some criterion to distinguish between the emergence of the 'subconscious' and what may be most simply described as 'spirit control.' The subconscious would naturally seize upon the dormant hemisphere, whereas a disembodied intelligence would endeavour to control the whole machinery and use it in the most efficient way. Left-handed mirror-writing I should, therefore, always be inclined

to attribute to the subconscious self of the individual, whereas the other three types might be due to control properly so-called.

I trust you will not consider that I have fallen into the vulgar error of the old materialist school which identified thought with the purely physiological activity of the brain. It is not the left pre-frontal lobe of my brain which writes or speaks these words, it is I, the total individual, the symbol and aggregate and over-soul of countless millions of lesser souls, just as it is a nation which makes war, or founds colonies, not only its soldiers or emigrants. When I, in common with brain experts, localise certain faculties in the brain, all I mean is that those parts of my soul which control those particular cells or regions have specially adapted themselves to carry out the mechanical operations necessary to translate my thoughts into the usual visible or audible symbols, into the spoken and the written word.

The paramount question for us to-night is how the central authority which unifies the individual is preserved, or how and to what extent it can be temporarily or permanently abrogated.

I believe I have an immortal soul—a soul which existed from the beginning of things, and will continue to exist *in secula seculorum*. The only question which to me admits of any doubt is to what extent the separate identity of this soul may be conserved. This separate identity only comes into existence at the moment of conception, at the moment when two germ cells become one, thus forming a new and independent centre for that soul-life which they embody, and which has been handed down to them through countless generations. If this new individuality had a beginning, is it not at least probable that it may also have an end?

My answer to this is that there is no such thing as a complete and completely isolated individual. Individuality rises and falls, waxes and wanes. It is most pronounced in childhood, when, in spite of appearances to the contrary, it struggles most valiantly to acquire a footing in this physical universe. Again, it is strongly pronounced in sickness, which is a struggle of the individual to assert his unity against enemies endeavouring to impair that unity. It is least at our 'best' moments, when we are at peace with all the world, or when we are enthusiastically sacrificing our personal needs in favour of some great cause or some beloved fellow-creature. The clearness with which the individual stands out against the background of his surroundings, the 'depth' of the relief, so to speak, which raises him out, depends upon his age and state of health, upon his moods and occupations, upon the varying aspects of his surroundings.

It is a mistake to suppose that liability to 'control' is necessarily a sign of feebleness or disease. Enthusiasm is control by an impersonal idea, and no sick person is capable of enthusiasm. It is when we are in the best of health that we feel generous, warm-hearted, willing to 'live and let live.' But *that* means a sinking of our individuality in the mass of mankind, a fading of the frontier lines, a 'control' by a larger soul-life than our own. If *that* is the kind of submergence which our soul-life may have to undergo in the life to come, then, surely, we can look forward to it with a joy begotten of luminous glimpses of an earthly paradise.

(To be continued.)

TRANSITION OF MR. W. T. STEAD.

The terrible disaster which overtook the 'Titanic,' involving, as it did, the loss of so many valuable lives, was especially sad to Spiritualists because of the fact that Mr. W. T. Stead, who for so many years bravely and fearlessly proclaimed his recognition of the truths of Spiritualism, was, it is almost certain, among those who lost their lives. We may be sure that, with his characteristic selflessness, he would do his utmost to encourage and inspire others to the very last moment. Mr. Stead suffered because of his Spiritualism; but that mattered little to him. He acted on the motto, 'Be sure you are right, then go ahead.' With his customary boldness and outspoken frankness he challenged public attention, and in his 'Borderland' magazine rendered valuable assistance to the movement at a critical time. More recently, by his 'Julia's Bureau,' he was instrumental in giving comfort and hope to many sorrowing souls, especially by bringing Mrs. Wriedt to London last year. We tender our heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Stead and family in their bereavement.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

We are informed that the Hope-street Christian Spiritual Church, Liverpool, recently issued circulars respecting a psycho-therapeutic class which was being formed, and three weeks later an advertisement appeared in the 'Liverpool Post' showing that Liverpool medical men are instituting a Psycho-Therapeutic Clinic. Is this a coincidence?

That there is immense public interest in all subjects connected with man's spiritual nature and destiny is forcibly indicated by the fact that the one hundred and eleventh edition of 'Our Life After Death,' by the Rev. Arthur Chambers, has just been published. It is a revised edition, with a useful appendix dealing with future punishments and God's purpose of the ages. The work needs no better recommendation than the fact already mentioned.

The April issue of 'The Herald of the Golden Age' (153, Brompton-road, S.W., price 3d.) is a more than usually interesting number. The portraits of Captain Walter Carey, R.N., and Mrs. Carey, leaders of the food reform movement in Winchester, are given on a plate-paper supplement, and Mr. Sidney H. Beard has a fine article on 'Social Transformation by Suggestive Ideals,' which he says 'is only a matter of inspiration and education. . . . We can all share the great task of uplifting public thought, and of emphasising the spiritual significance of life and its opportunities; and such service on our part will prove the surest way of promoting our own highest welfare and spiritual progress. This is the true path to attainment and illumination, and to the life radiant. For "they who turn many towards Righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."'

Dealing with 'The Value of Spiritual Science,' Mr. Percy E. Beard says: 'He who has reached the portal of the spiritual, sees himself, but sees himself as part of the universal life, and shares that which he has evolved with others, so that they may reach the heights where he now stands. He who treads the heights realises that those lower down need his aid and effort; he is wise only that he may teach; pure, that he may impart purity; and he possesses only that he may share. Valueless is all unfoldment, worthless all development, unless the goal is reached that puts an end to separateness, the gaining of a knowledge that all are parts of the universe, that all in life are one in Him.'

It would be amusing if it were not so pitiable to notice how many persons fight shy of Spiritualism. A correspondent writes: 'It is wonderful how much many people dislike anything in the way of psychical research. I am quite afraid to mention it, or to attempt to get a circle together, lest I should be looked upon with horror.' Poor Rev. F. B. Meyer is quite upset because the fact that he contributed a foreword to L. V. H. Witley's book on 'The Ministry of the Unseen' has led some persons to imagine that he has endorsed Spiritualism. What a terrible thing it would be if he had done so! In a letter in the 'Christian World,' he says: 'The incident has caused me vast [?] suffering and regret,' and he specifically declares, 'I am not a Spiritualist, and have never attended a séance or witnessed any Spiritualistic phenomena.' But, we would ask, why hasn't he? Surely, as a spiritual teacher, it is just what he ought to have done! The mourner will not get much light or leading from him apparently.

Mr. Ernest Bell, the editor of 'The Animals' Friend,' makes a strong protest against the cruelty of horse-racing ('Horse-racing a Cruel Sport,' 2d. post free, York House, Portugal-street, Kingsway, W.C.). He does not dispute the fact that many animals have a racing instinct, and enjoy it up to a certain point if they are allowed to do it in their own way, but he points out that this is not at all our system. 'The horses who are still in at the latter part of the race, are simply mercilessly flogged, and are also spurred in a way which in other circumstances would be regarded as brutal in a high degree, and would be visited with rigorous penalties. Such phrases as "collapsing," being "dead-beat," or "severely punished," which occur constantly in all accounts of race-meetings, are hardly consistent with enjoyment.' 'The fact is,' says Mr. Bell, 'that we have one morality for the high road and quite another for the racecourse. If a horse is flogged on the road so as to cause wounds or weals the driver has a poor chance of getting off, but if the same, or much worse, is done on the racecourse, the action is part of the game and no magistrate will convict. If the magistrates did convict in such cases, horse-racing would come to an end at once, and that is why they are afraid to do so.' The ample evidence which Mr. Bell adduces in support of his charges is very painful reading.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

An Explanation and an Avowal.

SIR,—As I see quoted in 'LIGHT' of the 13th inst. my husband's emphatic announcement that we are *not* Spiritualists, I think it is only right to point out that we are *firm* believers in the return of spirit friends and in spirit communion, but we object to be labelled '*ists*' of any kind. I trespass on your space, as it would be giving the lie to my life and my husband's and my belief, besides to the dear ones passed over, to suggest that I did not *know* of the spirit world. Yet I cannot call myself a Spiritualist, a Theosophist, or a Bahaist.—Yours, &c.,

FLORA AMES.

Hayter House, Cheniston Gardens Studio,
Kensington.

The Wisdom of the West.

SIR,—I am indeed pleased to see in 'LIGHT' of the 6th inst. Mr. Wake Cook's fine appreciation of James Cousins' last great poem, 'Etain the Beloved.' It is a beautiful appreciation, but it is only the truth. And I endorse all he says of the beauty of this work. But I would like to call your readers' attention to another work lately issued by the same writer, viz., 'The Wisdom of the West.' It also is well worthy of most careful study by every student of the fine arts of the hidden realm.—Yours, &c.,

JAMES LEITH MACBETH BAIN.

Spiritualism in Cornwall.

SIR,—On March 31st my wife and I had Mrs. Short down (a well-known Spiritualist medium, clairvoyant and psychometrist) from Plymouth for the week-end. We gathered a few friends at our home, and held three meetings, when elevating trance addresses and exceedingly accurate clairvoyant descriptions were given. The fact of greatest interest to us was that the medium was controlled by my own father and my wife's brother, who spoke of things of family interest only, and also told us that they had communicated many times through Alpha board, which was very true. I am sending this so that you and your readers can see that there is an awakening going on down here, and we should welcome any Spiritualists coming this way.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN TUCKER.

12, Ayr-terrace, St. Ives, Cornwall.

A Mysterious Flame.

SIR,—We had repetitions of the phenomenon mentioned in my letter in 'LIGHT,' page 168, on March 18th, 19th, and 23rd; the last time it was accompanied by raps upon the washstand—one rap, then two, followed by one again. We have recently removed and have only been in our present house two nights, but the raps have followed us here. As I said, I am a level-headed man, but there is something in this beyond my ken, and I should be thankful if any reader of 'LIGHT' can render me some assistance in getting to the root of it.

I believe one communication did arrive for me after I had left. If so, doubtless the writer has had it returned marked 'gone away.' I am extremely sorry if this is so.—Yours, &c.,

OSCAR NILSEN.

Hastings.

SIR,—An almost exactly similar occurrence happened to my husband and me as is described by Mr. Nilssen in 'LIGHT' of the 6th inst. One night, about two years ago, shortly after retiring to bed, we both noticed a round, steel coloured light, the size of a small tea-cup, situated about eighteen inches from the ceiling in a corner of the room. We both watched it intently and noticed the pulsations and varying intensity of the light: it looked like a perfect circle filled with thick luminous mist in a high state of activity. We were so entirely taken by surprise (no spontaneous phenomena having occurred to us before) that we could do nothing but watch and wonder, but my husband felt a strong conviction that the appearance was in some way connected with a little boy who had died the previous day. The light gradually grew fainter and finally disappeared, after having been visible for about five minutes. The following day my husband was constantly worried by a feeling that the child wanted his mother to be helped to bear the sorrow of his death by being told the facts of continued existence as taught by Spiritualism. For several reasons he hesitated to take this duty on himself, and he managed to get through the day without obeying the 'inward promptings.' No light ap-

peared that night. The following morning the impulse to write to the bereaved mother was stronger than ever. He no longer resisted, but sent her a letter telling the truth as he knew it, and received in return a most grateful acknowledgment. She said his words had given her the greatest comfort. That night the light appeared again, brighter than before. We had decided what to do if ever it reappeared, so, directly we observed it, we got out of bed and moved everything in the room which could by any possibility throw a reflection. Our efforts produced no effect on the light. We switched the electric light on and off several times, but as soon as the room was darkened the light showed as plainly as before. At last we went and stood just beneath it, and one of us said, 'If only it would move!' The words were hardly spoken before it *did* move. Very slowly it dropped about two feet, remained stationary a moment, and then returned to its original position. Gradually it began to fade, and we watched it till it finally disappeared. We have never seen it again, and we have always thought that this second appearance was an acknowledgment on the part of the little lad for the help given his mother.—Yours, &c.,

D.

Mr. Turvey Answers Mr. Hart's Questions.

SIR,—Permit me to thank Mr. Hart for having afforded me the opportunity of making good my statements which concerned Anna Kingsford, who was at one time the President of the London Theosophical Society. I am aware that this lady 'taught reincarnation before the Theosophical Society heard of it,' for we read in her biography that she and Mr. Maitland sat up all night trying to convince Mr. Sinnett, who denied reincarnation, as it was not taught by the Masters who wrote 'Isis Unveiled.' Allan Kardec taught reincarnation before Anna Kingsford, but teaching a doctrine does not make it true. We are not discussing reincarnation (upon which I keep an open mind), but I would like to mention that Mr. G. R. S. Mead, who was a leader in Theosophy, says 'We cannot but think that Anna Kingsford too readily identified herself with her imaginations' ('Lucifer,' Vol. XVIII, p. 8). 'I, therefore, gave up troubling myself whether any such a person [as Jesus of Nazareth] ever existed,' and, 'Christ Jesus was not the name of a person' (extracts from letters by Anna Kingsford). As she claimed to be a reincarnation of Mary Magdalene we can only suppose that, in their past lives, she and Maitland (St. John) walked about with a *sandalled allegory*. So much for their teaching reincarnation and their definite assertions about their past lives.

Mr. Hart asks for quotations which will confirm my statements that Anna Kingsford was a 'trance planchette writer' and 'her late control, St. John, was reincarnated all the time in Mr. Maitland.' He says that he is surprised that he 'cannot find anything in her [their?] writings to justify' my statements although he is familiar with them. I, too, am surprised, and will endeavour to assist him.

I admit that in stating that Anna Kingsford was 'a trance planchette writer' I made a slight error, because I wrote from memory alone. I should have said that she was subject to trance and also used planchette. It is a mere quibble whether she was in trance at the exact time that she used the planchette. As the controls of the planchette (I will put it that way) varied from 'John the Baptist' to a 'dog trying to write,' I can only justify my statements concerning 'her late control, St. John, of Patmos,' by a process of reasoning. I will do so after I have given my authority for the trance and the planchette-writing statements. I cannot agree with Mr. Hart that Anna Kingsford ever gave us anything, *vid* planchette, 'of great value,' but it all depends upon what one means by *great value*. Here are the passages which are my authorities:—

'As usual with those in a comatose state, she was insensible.'—('The Soul and How it Found Me,' p. 264.) 'These were evident cases of trance condition, unhappily not being understood by those about her.'—('Life of Anna Kingsford,' Vol. I., p. 12.) 'Our usual practice when communicating through planchette' . . . 'and Anna Kingsford was sitting alone at the planchette.'—('The Soul and How it Found Me,' pp. 221-222.)

These people afterwards posed as seers and sneered at 'mere mediums,' 'mere Spiritualists,' and 'mere adeptship.' It would be extremely bad form on the part of a seer if he were to sneer at those who are trance clairvoyants, or those who have developed into normal clairvoyants; but sneering is unpardonable from one who was subject to trance herself, and given to the lowest, if there be any lowest and highest, form of spirit communion. Now, as regards my statement, 'Her late control, St. John (of Patmos), was reincarnated all the time,' &c., I admit that I should have said the *table's* control. On pages 134-5 of 'The Soul and How it Found Me' we read that Mr. Maitland and Anna Kingsford were engaged in table-tilting. The following conversation took place: 'Is it really John the Baptist who

speaks?'—'The same spirit.' 'That spoke through Isaiah also?'—'The same spirit.' 'Through Hermes, Daniel, and *John of Patmos*?'—'The same spirit.' Perhaps, as things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another, Mr. Hart will now admit that (writing from memory alone) I was justified in saying 'her late control, St. John, was reincarnated all the time in Mr. Maitland.' Anyhow, I trust, Mr. Editor, that your readers will consider that I have proved my words to be true, save for a microscopical error. The spirits of 'a dog trying to write' and of a 'talking cart-horse' are very near the limit of sanity. We know that a horse is good-natured, charitable and generous, because he will stand any amount of 'chaff,' always listen to a cry of 'whoa,' and permit anyone to take the last 'bit' out of his mouth; but we have yet to see a cab-horse discussing politics with the fare; and we must be glad that Theosophy does not teach the survival of taxi-cabs!

Possibly Mr. Hart may be 'surprised' at my statements about the dog that wrote his tale with his tail, and the eloquent equine that said 'nay' instead of neigh. He may read of them in 'The Soul and How it Found Me' (p. 180), and 'The Life of Anna Kingsford' (Vol. I., p. 328).

These two wonderful people left Spiritualism for Theosophy, and (being 'controlled' by the spirit of humility?) wrote: 'All the spheres from the bottomless pit to the Throne of the Most High were opened to us *and us alone*.' (Vol. II., p. 6.) Italics are mine.

If Theosophists would refrain from continually reminding us of their vast superiority of knowledge, I, for one, would be glad to leave it at that, and say nothing about their gigantic claims and startling theories. A real superiority of knowledge does not express itself in silly attacks and a stupid patronising of the less enlightened. The Theosophical Society may well take a lesson in humility from Deity, Which in Its Incomprehensible Wisdom, manifests itself as, and in, the grains of earth beneath a 'mere medium's' feet. Permit me, Mr. Editor, to again state that I am *exceedingly* sorry that this senseless attack should have been again started by those who have far *too many* 'beams' in their own eyes to permit their talking about the 'motes' in the eyes of other people.—Yours, &c.,

VINCENT N. TURVEY.

A Spirit's Thoughts on Theosophy.

SIR,—Herewith I send you a spirit friend's views upon Theosophy, as the correspondence now going on in 'LIGHT' from 'incarnates' suggests that a view from an ex-carnate may be acceptable to some of your readers, if not to all. 'Stephanus' uses the table only as the means of transmitting his argument, so that his communications cannot be coloured by the mind of a medium.

We have received some remarkable philosophy from this spirit—notably a paper on the 'Labour unrest,' which one of the sitters, Mr. Strang, of Falkirk, sent to the 'Falkirk Herald,' in which paper it was published on March 13th last.

We, 'The Circle,' are somewhat divided by distance, Mr. Strang at Falkirk, Mr. E. E. H. Mann at Hull, and the writer at Retford; and we get the best results when we are all together. This occurs at Christmas and at Whitsuntide, when (such is our mental condition) we sit the holidays away 'pushing' a table. Still the subject matter is quite sufficient reward for our patience.

To no man is 'LIGHT' more welcome than to—Yours, &c.,
J. WILLIAMSON.

32, Chapel Gate, Retford.

CONTROL, 'STEPHANUS.'

New Year's Eve, 1911.

A sitter having expressed his opinion regarding the unreliability of some clairvoyant descriptions by professional mediums, 'Stephanus' replied:—

First, we would say, friend, do not burn the boat that saved you from drowning, or, having peeped into Nature's secrets yourself, do not lock the door and throw the key away; you may require it again.

Question: Will you give your views on Theosophy?

Answer: Let me show you the difference between Theosophy and Spiritualism. The first speaks of a Father and the destiny of the human race. Its language, however, is so vague that the soul directed by it loses its road in its search for God. So apparent is this that those who entertain the theosophic view picture themselves travelling so far, then, having lost their way, being compelled to return to the starting point and begin again.

Spiritualism speaks of a Father, and in the search for Him the inquirer is met at the commencement of his journey by those who have travelled the road before, and are guided right into that condition for which they are fitted. Or put it this way, Theosophy may be likened unto a planet in a system of

worlds enjoying the beneficent influence of the sun around which it keeps on revolving in its effort to get nearer, but never, in fact, leaving its own orbit, and so getting no nearer rest. Spiritualism, on the other hand, never deviates, but impelled by the strong attraction of its sun goes direct to its destiny, which was also its source. Theosophy has done less to dry the tears of the widow and orphan than any of your religions. It is always theoretical and never practical. Its God is lifeless; its ethics impracticable; and while it professes to discard creeds and dogmas is building up a system of priesthood that could soon outvie the churches. It negatives the loving counsel, 'Bear ye one another's burdens,' piling up the individual burden by its Karmic law. Its profession of the brotherhood of man lacks that sentiment which would unite the races, making it a cold psychic law instead.

True Spiritualism is the opposite to this. It gives 'the cup of cold water'; it says, 'Hand in hand together through the world we go.' Theosophy will not appeal to the common people; it is above them! We do not want you to live in the clouds theorising, but working with your coat off right down among the masses. Spiritualism demonstrates the conscious and active life incarnate, and clairvoyance, perhaps, is one of the best means whereby it does this. Do not discourage the phenomena, nor refuse a spirit visitor an opportunity of making his presence known.

Question: How is Theosophy building up a priesthood?

Answer: In olden times the priests were the holders of secrets, the diviners of mystery, which they, by a rigid system, retained to the exclusion of the common people, developing gradually into a tyrannical autocracy which kept the people in submission. This is the danger of Theosophy. Those who have attained the highest degree encourage—nay, insist—on the others looking upon them as superior Masters, in consequence of which the students are seldom admitted to a full knowledge of the esoteric doctrine.

Two Good Cases of Spirit Identity.

SIR,—I read with pleasure the very interesting article entitled 'A "Haunting," but not an "Evil" Spirit' in 'LIGHT' of March 17th. How it will appeal to the members of the S.P.R. I do not know, but to me it appears to be a clear instance of unsought, and even unwelcome, spirit communication—unwelcome, at least, until its verification and the subsequent action taken upon it proved such a blessing to the 'haunted' child. I am impelled to offer you two cases out of many others that have come under my own notice which, I think, display clear indication of the operation of conscious intelligence on the part of those who claim to be spirits who once manifested in the flesh, and are not explainable by the far-fetched theories of unconscious telepathy, the subliminal self, subconsciousness, &c.

Some little time ago Mr. Aaron Wilkinson, so widely known as an excellent medium with varied gifts, visited our society at Warrington. After his address, and while giving clairvoyant descriptions, he said he was strongly influenced by a spirit young woman who was near him on the platform. He described her, said she passed away many years ago a long distance from Warrington, and that she gave him the name of Mary Ann Headland; he was not quite certain whether the last portion of the name was one word or two. I stated that I had a half-cousin of that name of whom I had known nothing for at least forty years. He then got further particulars, and said she passed away in St. Thomas's Hospital, London. A cousin of mine, uncle to this girl, lived in London many years ago, so to him I wrote, and learned in reply that Mary Ann had lived with him and his wife for some years; but as a sister of hers, Fanny by name, was at that time a nurse in St. Thomas's Hospital, Mary Ann obtained a post there, and afterwards passed away in the hospital, some thirty years ago. My cousin wrote to the hospital authorities and to his niece Fanny for verification, which he easily obtained and forwarded to me. I was amused at the dubiety manifested in the replies, for it was suggested that probably Mr. Wilkinson was in London at the time of Mary Ann's 'passing,' and had thus become acquainted with the fact. Those who know our friend Aaron, and know his history, will understand that at that time he was a very young child, that he did not go from his Yorkshire home to London until many years afterwards, and could not have known anything about such an ordinary occurrence as this young woman's death. I did not know of it, so where did he get his information from? I can see no other possible explanation than that it was from the living, conscious spirit of Mary Ann herself. Probably some spirit friend had brought her to the only place where there was a possibility of being recognised, as all her near relations are totally unacquainted with Spiritualism, and, with the exception of the uncle referred to, who is something of an agnostic, are connected with the Methodist body in an out-of-the-way

Lincolnshire village. Perhaps our friends of the S.P.R. can formulate some other explanation.

Another instance, also given in a public meeting, I must record, as to my mind it entirely cuts the ground away from those who attribute all occurrences of this nature to thought-transference—except it be from the discarnate spirit to an incarnate one. Mr. Tom Tyrrell, of Blackburn, who is possessed of wonderful gifts, especially that of giving full names, date of death, occupation, and in many cases the earthly address of the spirit friends, gave us the following on his first visit to our society. He described, amongst others, the form of a man who gave the name of John H., but no one seemed to recognise the name. Then he said: 'This man says he used to keep the — inn, and that "Sam A., who keeps the —, knows me very well."' I omit the names on account of the relatives still living in Warrington, but the reference to 'Sam A.' (who was well known to several in the hall at the time) for confirmation appeared to me to be a striking testimony of conscious spirit personality.

In both these cases the only conclusion that fits the facts given by the mediums seems to be that discarnate persons were making determined efforts to establish their presence and identity, giving information that was beyond the ordinary ken of the mediums and of those present at the meetings. When we have mediums free from the faintest taint of suspicion, like the two gentlemen I have referred to, their evidence gladdens our hearts and encourages us to persevere in our humble, though 'unscientific,' efforts to bring the same priceless knowledge within the range of all with whom we come in contact to whom it would prove a blessing.—Yours, &c.,

Warrington.

WILLIAM E. STOUT.

DR. PEEBLES CELEBRATES HIS NINETIETH BIRTHDAY.

On Saturday, March 23rd, the fifteen organised Spiritualist churches of Los Angeles and vicinity, united under the generalship of Dr. Norton F. W. Hazledine, tendered a reception and banquet, in the First Spiritual Temple, to our pioneer worker and pilgrim traveller, Dr. J. M. Peebles, in celebration of his ninetieth birthday. Devoted workers made elaborate preparations and beautifully decorated the temple. There was a general reception at 2.30 p.m., the 'Pilgrim' passing with the chairman, Dr. B. F. Austin, through an evergreen archway, lined with representatives of the various churches. Then followed a presentation of the wreath of Friendship and Immortality by a little maiden, of some four summers, clad in white and offering words of greeting. The spectacle of youth offering to age this significant token of love presented a most beautiful contrast.

In giving the address of welcome, Dr. B. F. Austin spoke eloquently of the achievements of the Pilgrim. No other man, he said, was so widely and well known or had so many friends; indeed, no other man in our ranks was so revered for his unswerving devotion, loyalty to principle and persistent labours in the cause of Spiritualism. His writings would be read and his name would be honoured wherever a few Spiritualists were gathered together. Loud and prolonged applause greeted Dr. Peebles as he rose to respond. He acknowledged in a befitting manner the words of welcome and tribute paid to him. Though ninety winters have crowned his head with whitened locks, and given him a snowy white, flowing beard, time rests lightly on him. He stood, erect and tall, strong and robust, his intellect clear and his sight undimmed, a living example of right living. Congratulations were afterwards tendered by the representatives of each church, followed by greetings from old friends and workers and the reading of communications from friends all over the world. Musical items were given between the short speeches. A sumptuous banquet followed, and many toasts were offered to the honoured guest.

In the evening music, short speeches, and the reading of the Pilgrim's 'message to the world' on his ninetieth birthday, a deeply thoughtful lecture, bristling with epigrammatic sayings of great significance to Spiritualists to-day, concluded the proceedings.

Needless to say, the event will be memorable in the lives of all concerned and the Pilgrim, showered with hundreds of letters and postcards, realises more and more that his friends are numberless, stretching well beyond the oceans to far distant lands. A full account of the proceedings will be printed in book form. Friends wishing to possess a copy should write to Mr. Robert Peebles Sudall, at 519, Fayette-street, Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

In the course of his 'message' Dr. Peebles says: 'Spiritualism, be it remembered, is not a one-rut, narrow-gauged concern, but broad and wide and all-inclusive, lying at the foundation of every great reform that makes radiant our throbbing humanity; and such Spiritualists as are worthy of

the name are earnest, radical reformers, heralding the dawn of reconstruction and the establishing of the kingdom of heaven on earth. . . . Over sixty years have I been in this broad field and I have this to say to you especially: You have the grandest truth conceivable by the human mind—a truth that positively demonstrates a future conscious existence; and that you are now building your heavens and your hells for the hereafter; and I beg you to remember that you brought nothing into this world but little naked bodies, infantile screams, germinal tendencies and mighty possibilities; and departing, you can take nothing with you but individuality, consciousness, memory, mental unfoldments and moral attainments—all else you drop at death's grim door. What manner of people ought you then to be? Honest, pure-minded, benevolent, heavenly-purposed, free from envies and jealousies, and selfish ambitions—in a word, harmonious; organising, banding together and working for one common purpose.'

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, APRIL 14th, &c.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION—*Shearn's Restaurant, 231, Tottenham Court-road, W.*—Mrs. Imison interested a large audience by giving many remarkably convincing clairvoyant descriptions and messages. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Madame Beaurepaire gave an inspiring address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Robert King will give an address and answer questions.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. Horace Leaf gave a much appreciated address on 'Good and Evil' to a large audience. Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn presided. Sunday next, Mr. Gwinn, address and answers to questions.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD.—Mr. Connor gave address and Mrs. Connor clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Jackson. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Neville.—W. U.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Mr. W. E. Long answered questions in the morning and spoke in the evening on 'Jesus after Death.' Sunday next, Mr. W. E. Long: at 11 a.m., messages and visions; at 6.30 p.m., 'Doings of Jesus after Death,' by 'Pilgrim.'—M. R.

CLAPHAM.—HOWARD-STREET, NEW-ROAD.—Mr. Karl Reynolds gave an address. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Gilbert, address and clairvoyance. Monday, at 3, ladies' circle; at 8, psychometry; silver collection. Thursdays, circles at 8.—F. C.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mr. T. O. Todd lectured on 'Seven Years' Ministrations.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Todd's third lecture; 3 p.m., Lyceum. Circles: Monday, at 7.30, ladies'; Tuesday, at 8.15, members'; Thursday, at 8.15, public.—G. T. W.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—At the conference with the representatives of the London Union of Spiritualists, interesting addresses were given by several well-known speakers. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. J. J. Morse.—W. G. R.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mr. Aaron Wilkinson gave splendid addresses and excellent clairvoyant descriptions to crowded audiences. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis. Tuesday, at 3, working party; at 8 p.m., also Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Clarke, clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, members' circle.—H. J. E.

BRIGHTON.—HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST.—Mrs. Curry gave good addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Mary Davies. Mondays, at 3 and 8, also Wednesdays at 3, Mrs. Curry, clairvoyance. Thursdays, at 8.15, public circle.—A. C.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mr. W. F. Smith gave an instructive address on 'Man and his Resurrections,' and Mrs. Smith excellent clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Horace Leaf. Monday, at 8, circle. Tuesday, at 8.30, astrology class. Wednesday, at 8, Mrs. Sutton's developing circle.—N. R.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, selections from personal automatic writings, and interesting experiences by Mr. Barton. Evening, address and good clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Mary Davies. Usual after-circle. Sunday next, morning, Mr. Stott on 'The Purpose of Life and Its Achievement'; evening, Mr. Huxley. Tuesday, at 8.15, healing. Wednesday, study. Thursday, public circle.—A.C.S.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE.—Morning and evening, addresses were delivered by Mr. J. Wrench and Mr. C. W. Adamson. 11th, Mrs. Mary Davies gave successful clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., Mr. Wilmot on 'Influences'; at 7 p.m., Mr. W. R. Stebbens; 25th, Mr. and Mrs. Hayward; 28th, Mr. and Mrs. Connor.—A. T. C.