

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,690—VOL. XXXIII. [Registered as] SATURDAY, MAY 31, 1913. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.
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SATURDAY, MAY 31, 1913.

[a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

French medical science, as represented by the experiments of Dr. Alexis Carrel, is, we learn, beginning to place a new interpretation on the idea of death. Dr. Carrel, it seems, is able to restore every function of life, except consciousness, after the life is to all appearance extinct. It is largely a question of hypodermic injections, and the results encourage some enthusiasts to predict that medical science may even succeed in restoring consciousness also 'provided fundamental chemical transformations have not supervened.' That, of course, is the whole point. It is well known to those who are familiar with the interior side of the death-process that the subtle cord which connects the soul with the body is not always severed until some little time after death (to all outward appearance) has taken place. But when 'the silver cord' is finally sundered, then the chemical transformations referred to manifest themselves, and then not all the resources of medical science could 'back to its mansion call the fleeting breath.' That lies beyond the possibilities involved in such experiments as consist in the stimulation by artificial methods of the bodily functions so that they manifest a temporary appearance of life. Consciousness can be and has been recalled in the case of persons pronounced dead by physicians. But only when the cord of connection (seen many times by clairvoyants) has not been sundered.

Professor James's plea for an 'entirely mystical conception of man's moral activity' has found warm support amongst French thinkers. Nevertheless a French writer, M. Sellière, has risen up to denounce the conception. He refers to Professor James as having been brought up in 'the extravagantly mystical atmosphere of North American Protestantism,' a phrase which sounds strangely in our ears, for we are little accustomed to connect any kind of Protestantism with the mystical spirit. Protestantism of the ordinary type usually strikes us as providing a corrective—and sometimes a very healthy one—to extravagant spiritual fervour. It stands for the rational element in religion, so that it is difficult to follow M. Sellière's argument which connects James's doctrines with the prevalence of neurosis amongst Americans. Our own reading of the Professor's works rather revealed him as a mind of singular robustness, and the alleged 'thinness' of his arguments for the reality of the invisible seems to derive that appearance only by contrast with the materialistic bases of certain European schools of philosophy. If the reaction against materialism has been carried to extremes in some quarters, it is but natural. Action and reaction

tend to be equal. But we see no trace of this extremism in Professor James's case. His mind was too well poised.

The search for happiness is a never-ending one, doubtless for the reason that happiness always eludes its pursuers and mainly visits those who have not made it the only object of their quest. A writer in 'The Edinburgh Review' discourses thoughtfully on the matter. Physically speaking, happiness, he claims,

is in proportion to the fulness of the life generated, to the volume of freely-flowing nervous energy, of functional activities and affections, combined with the fulness and the permanence of the provision afforded for their satisfaction.

He sees plainly, however, that this is happiness in a very limited form, and that even when all these conditions are satisfied mental and psychic needs spring up. When the higher sensibilities are evolved, while there is a great increase in the capacity for enjoyment, there is a correspondingly enlarged possibility of suffering. But he can see no reason for pessimism, for if good involves evil, evil equally involves good. Here comes in the need for observing the 'golden mean.' We are not to ask too much of life, either in grasping greedily for pleasure or in shrinking affrightedly from pain. Human nature is balanced by forces higher than itself—its capacity for happiness and misery is strictly limited. There are worlds of joy and peace far exceeding our highest imaginings but they are worlds to come. Meantime we are well advised to walk with the 'magic staff'—the rule that bids us 'never to be elated or depressed.'

In the 'Spiritual Journal' (Boston, U.S.A.) for April, Mrs. Alice Herring Christopher discusses the question: Is there any conscious intelligence acting within matter? As might be expected, she takes the affirmative view:—

To try and account for the presence of what we call life, and for the activity of matter, without the intimate and continual presence of consciousness inherent in its every atom, is evidently becoming increasingly difficult with every advance of man's investigation into Nature's processes. I think we may confidently look for a corresponding increase in the conviction by men of science, that matter acts as it does, in response to a conscious intelligence which is an inseparable part of itself.

That is undoubtedly the case. We are outgrowing the old idea of intelligence as something revealed only through the brain. The whole Universe is an expression not only of life but of intelligence. In man it becomes self-conscious, the attainment of that self-consciousness being the purpose of the birth of the spirit into the material world, and the idea of that world as a school of training and experience representing only a secondary consideration, however important a one. The main purpose of Nature in the physical world, as a recent writer expressed it, is 'to get souls born': the education and training will follow in our world or worlds beyond. The resources are ample when once the primary object of individualisation is accomplished.

'Modern Miracles' (L. N. Fowler and Co., 1s. net) is a little work, by Mr. J. Wallace-Clarke, which deals with

mind-cure and faith-healing in an analytic but quite sympathetic spirit. The book covers a considerable range of questions related to the main subject: 'Christian Science,' Telepathy, the Drug habit and Music as a curative agent, to mention a few. There is nothing very new in the conclusions arrived at, but the sober and restrained temper in which the author treats his subject lends weight to his judgments. He rightly deprecates the disposition on the part of followers of various cults of the healing science to maintain a hostile and exclusive attitude towards each other:—

The many-sided schools of science and medicine and 'New Thought,' by the cultivation of a more liberal and open-minded estimate of one another's modes and methods, would save needless confusion and conflict, and also help to bring together for the mutual benefit of all concerned much that is now rendered almost valueless because of isolation. This attitude would at the same time help to extend the scope of differing methods, and by amalgamation enhance their service in the art of healing.

The recent terrible floods in the United States have, it is said, had widely different moral effects, stimulating the religious life of some of the sufferers and their friends and tempting others to atheism. The view of the religious-minded may thus be briefly summarised: Floods, destruction of life and property and an appalling mass of suffering. They were designed to punish us for our sins; to teach us the insecurity of life and the vanity of human affairs and show that there is peace and safety only in faith in the power and wisdom of God. As to the other view, it may be expressed in a sentence: The idea of a benevolent Deity is clearly a delusion which this catastrophe should sweep from the minds of all rational beings. Sufficient time has now elapsed since the great calamity to permit of the more thoughtful persons arriving at the reasonable conclusion that the world is ruled by inexorable law—that natural catastrophes come neither as rewards nor punishments; that the law was made by a Law-giver; that another life awaits those swept out of existence here; and that nothing, in any deep and real sense, is ever destroyed or lost.

OUR GRAND OLD MAN.

We have received a cutting from a copy of the 'Los Angeles Examiner,' of March 24th, containing an interview with Dr. J. M. Peebles, who had celebrated his ninety-first birthday on the previous day, illustrated by a reproduction of an amusing photograph of the doctor in the act of dancing a jig.

A warm welcome (we learn from 'The Sussex Daily News') was accorded Dr. Peebles by a crowded audience on the evening of the 19th inst., when, leaning on the arm of his secretary, he came upon the platform of the Brighton Spiritualist Society, Manchester-street. After a most appreciative introduction by the president, Mr. F. Grayson Clarke, Dr. Peebles commenced his address, but was obliged to ask the indulgence of his hearers, and indeed was not able to continue for long. He told again the story of his own conversion to Spiritualism, so eloquently related on page 212, and reiterated his desire to see a more burning enthusiasm for the truth of Spiritualism. At the close he pathetically referred to the physical weakness which was affecting him in the carrying out of the programme he had outlined during his tour, and his voice shook for the first time as he said, 'It makes my heart ache and tears come into my eyes.' He was obviously greatly affected, and after an earnest exordium, he sat down amid cordial enthusiasm.

Mr. Gambier Bolton followed with a most interesting lecture on materialisation. Dr. Peebles remained during the whole time of his address, and questions were invited at the close.

NEXT WEEK we shall give a thoughtful article on 'The Genesis of the Ego' by Mr. R. Bush.

SPIRITUALISM, A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

BY W. H. EVANS.

(Continued from page 244.)

GOOD AND EVIL.

Every earnest soul finds itself sometimes face to face with the problem of good and evil. Apart from human limitation there is neither evil nor good. It is the contrast, which our rising spirituality compels us to draw, which cause us to speak of good and evil. But in the Divine economy all is wisely ordered. What to our limited comprehension seems evil is but the outworking of the Divine Will in directions of which we know but little. The question of pain cannot exist apart from us. But pain *per se* is not an evil, it is part of the Divine process of evolution. Cataclysms in which whole cities are overturned, in which countless numbers are overwhelmed in one huge catastrophe, may make men question the goodness of God. But let us see.

Earthquakes and volcanic outbursts are manifestations due to the nature of our planetary home. And their happening is a proof that they serve some useful purpose. The fact may be uncomfortable, but it is there, and one has to consider these things. Investigation leads the seeker to discover that there are earthquake zones. Had our planet not had a fiery birth, perhaps such things as earthquakes had never been. That there are zones where the steam and gas generated in the earth must burst through is a fact for which we may be thankful. It gives us a sense of security, for we see in these zones, as it were, Nature's safety valves. We must remember that we are endowed with the capacity to discover and invent ways and means to combat many of the 'evils' of life and turn them to our own account. Besides, as this is but one phase of existence, those whose planetary career is closed by earthquake or volcanic eruption are only being transported to the spirit world, like Elijah of old, in chariots of fire. It is we onlookers who mourn the occurrence as evil. We forget to ask ourselves how it may be regarded by those who have been ushered into spirit life. Do they consider it evil? Shall we not also in a little space, with the larger vision which death gives, see that, after all, the wisdom of God has provided for all contingencies? As all these things do not last and are but experiences on the road of life, a few years make a vast difference, and that which we regarded as evil becomes revealed to us as blessing.

In the long upward march of man there has been the continuous urging forward of something within, which has made him strive for better things. Man, unlike his brother the brute, is never satisfied. He works and strives for the future. He has foreknowledge, and, as his intellect grows, so does he strive more and more. He works to subdue all kingdoms. He aspires to be master—a god among the gods. He has stolen the lightning of Jove, has imprisoned the echo, has dived beneath the sea and soared among the clouds, and still he strives. Will the material universe ever satisfy him? Will he, can he, find amongst the stars, in the depths of the sea, or the currents of the air that which will satisfy him? Let the past with its mighty achievements answer. He never has been satisfied; he never will, and, we think, never can be. Full is he of infinite potencies and resources. The opening of one door but reveals many more. Has there been a pain, a sorrow? it has led to something. And the greatest blessing that ever came to man was that which he called evil. For evil is a manifestation of love. Yes! the thought may seem strange, but there is nothing but love in God, and in the outworking of His purpose we shall yet see that the things we have deplored are the things which have been of most use to us.

Religious devotees in the past set themselves the task of reconciling God to man. There has existed, and still exists, an idea of a wrathful God, whose honour had been outraged by man, and who as a punishment sent into the world pain and death from which man was to be redeemed by sacrifice later on. These crude ideas suited men in a lowly stage of development, and we need not stay to combat that which enlightened reason has outgrown. There never has been any need of reconciliation between

God and man, and as we view the growth of man's mind we can see how wisely all things have been ordered. Every soul which has caught a glimpse of its own innate divinity knows well that what we call evil is but a passing phase. We have outgrown the idea of an interfering Deity whose power is only seen in catastrophe, epidemic and malevolent action. God in this age is being re-conceived, in the terms of Jesus, as Love. We see the universe governed by law, and we pause not to criticise that which is done better than any human being could do it. But we realise that, with the conception of law in every department of Nature, there rests upon us a great responsibility. If we read God's purpose aright, it is to produce a perfect man. To do this He works by the law of evolution, and, so working, creates or makes and sets out on the path of life, man in a lowly state. By slow processes, by weary trial and many slips by the way, man evolves. He is yet in the making. The perfect man has not yet been seen, though many prophets and seers have sung of his advent. But for the coming of that King the whole of Nature is being prepared. Every age marks some slight improvement. The tendency is ever towards the refined, and away from the gross. Every kingdom of Nature is a workshop wherein is wrought something of the Divine pattern. The whole is knit together; all suffer if one suffers, all are benefited if one rejoices. The making of man demands that he have some degree of liberty, and his intellectual life demands it. He is something more than an automaton. He does not live in the narrow circle of mere animality. His aspirations and upward strivings reveal him as something more than the beast of the field, and it is in this very liberty that we come face to face with the problem in its most acute form.

Man is governed by law, and if he obeys, he wins for himself freedom from pain and disease, and corresponding happiness. The infringement of law brings with it disaster. He suffers as a result, and if we look around us we find countless examples of this truth. If man is isolated from his kind he may obey the physical, organic and moral laws so far as they relate to himself. But there is within him an altruistic germ which demands for its unfoldment association with his fellows. Likewise there exists in Nature all that is necessary for mankind. What, then, is it which prevents us from having all that is necessary to make us free in the truest sense of the word? The answer is in one word, selfishness. When Jesus said: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew xvi., 25), he stated a profound spiritual truth. It is only as we go away from the lower self that we get a deeper realisation of that abiding self which is God in us. Immersed in the flesh, with fleshly appetites and desires, we fall in love with the mask. We deem our personalities of such transcendent value, and our self-importance is so great, that if anyone dares to cross us we are ready to fight for our rights. Our rights! What are they? Our rights are equal, and if we recognised this fact we should soon have them. But we erect barriers which we slowly and painfully have to climb over. Man makes most of the ills from which he suffers, and man must conquer them. But it is well that we make mistakes; it is even well that we go astray. We are tried in the fire of trial and sorrow, and slowly there dawns upon us the knowledge that the things which we regard as evil, and from which we try to flee, have been blessings in disguise.

Now in this age many evils arise from the fact that one has much and another has little. Evils of an economic nature press around us on all sides. The struggle to live grows increasingly keen, and the weapons used to wrest from those in power the right to live are the weapons of the beast. We still think that might gives right. Pain exists in our highly civilised state in greater proportion than amongst savages. We increase our wants and increase our care at the same time. And until we learn to live the moral law, 'do unto others as we would be done by,' we shall continue to suffer. Mankind is slowly and painfully emerging into a fuller consciousness wherein it will be seen that the interest of our fellows is our interest, and that that interest lies in the production, not of a dead level, but of a condition in which each man shall have sufficient leisure and opportunity to develop the spiritual side of his being, as well as the physical—a condition something better than the present,

which may be summed up as 'I go to work, to get some food, to go to work.'

Man is an individualist, and it is in seeking to express himself that he comes into conflict with others. No man wishes to live under the restriction imposed on him by another. Although majorities claim the right to rule, every man has a right to protest against any law, no matter how great the majority in favour of it, if he find that such law restricts his development in any way. The reason for the existence of the reformer has been the necessity to protest against bad laws. But no law imposed from without can be perfect. It has the seed of despotism in it, and every spiritual man is above such law. I believe, from a close acquaintance with Spiritualism, that a state of philosophic anarchy or communism is the ideal to work for, the condition in which men are ruled by the inherent law of right—and there is no law worth a spoonful of salt except the law of right recognised by each one in himself. This may be deemed idealistic, but ideals are the adumbrations of the future, and that which we call evil and protest against will yet bring us to a recognition of the goal of life, which is to live up to the highest.

That many feel this, may be readily perceived. For how responsive is the heart of man when he hears enunciated the truth of man's right to live! How responsive and quick to act are his sympathies! The divine germ within recognises at once the divinity in another.

The imputations of selfishness, which are levelled by men at one another, are due to the competitive industrial system under which we live. We are ruled by our ideals, whether we believe it or not. The man whose ideal—that is if such can be considered worthy the name—is to get gloriously drunk, gets drunk. The man whose ideal is to get rich, strives to get rich. And in proportion as both objects are selfish they are on the same moral plane. And the man who amasses wealth may even create more evil than he who gets drunk. We live in an age of shame; yet also an age of tremendous realities. Even religion has not escaped the pernicious influences of a degrading commercialism. Commercialism need not be degrading, but in a state of society where the competitive law rules, the natural corollary of adulteration inevitably manifests. Legal robbery and judicial murder are committed by men who sit in the pews of our churches, and men who preach the gospel of a democratic Christ wink at the doings of their congregations. It does not pay, from a material point of view, to live the religion of Jesus. So we are content to make merely spasmodic efforts to stem the tide of evil, until at last Nature, sick of the tremendous lies, declares in thunder tones that she will have the truth. We get it, but how great the cost we have to pay! How much more simple, how much more easy, so to order our lives that each may have enough and to spare! But the petty ambitions, the grasping avariciousness of the lower self, have blinded us, and we no longer see the sacredness of our fellow-man. The remedy lies in our own hands. We hold the key of a treasure-house of blessings and yet forget to use it. With the flush of life's fitful fever on our cheeks, and hidden misery in our eyes, we flit through the world and think the gift of life dear. Alas! there is no way out except we return to the true path, trodden by the Christs of the past. Not in despising the world shall we find the remedy for our ills, but in using it wisely and well, by living truly from the spirit. Then shall we learn that God is infinite love, goodness and power.

(To be continued.)

SPIRIT HEALING.—Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., for diagnosis by a spirit control, magnetic healing, and delineations from the personal aura.

A BOOKLET has found its way to our table, entitled 'The Reading of the Stars: for those who love them,' by A. M. Wrey (Simpkin, Marshall & Co., Ltd., London, price 1s. net). It is a thoughtful little work, presenting in simple form the fascinating symbology of the zodiac and the planets, and its connection with the law of Karma and the evolution of the Ego. But the authoress is more a mystic than an astrologer, and we venture to think that her teaching would not always commend itself to the 'mathematical seer' of to-day. Still, there is much that is interesting and useful in the book, and we willingly bring it to the notice of students.

OCCUPATIONS IN THE LIFE AFTER DEATH.

The letter in 'LIGHT' of May 10th, p. 228, by 'A Belfast Lawyer,' has aroused considerable interest, and several correspondents have kindly offered to send him, privately, communications which they have received from relatives on the other side in which information such as he desires has been given to them. One reader suggests that the work by Dr. J. M. Peebles, on 'Immortality and our Future Homes; or, What a Hundred Spirits say regarding their Homes and Daily Occupations,' will give the particulars desired. The following replies are, perhaps, of sufficient general interest for publication in 'LIGHT':—

SIR,—'A Belfast Lawyer' states that the evidence of the truth of the survival of the human personality after death is, to him, so overwhelming that he accepts it as proved. But he further states: 'There are, however, many things that puzzle and perplex, many questions I would like to ask, and one is, What is the environment and daily life of the ordinary work-a-day business man after passing into the Beyond?'

Though I do not pretend for a moment that I can reply fully to the question, still I think something may be said in explanation.

What is the environment and normal life of the work-a-day business man? We have an analogy to hand. Let the Belfast lawyer imagine he is at a cinematograph representation, and there is shown him the work-a-day business man engaged in his normal life-work—moving, talking, and acting as he, in fact, does as a human being. Does this represent the environment and normal life of the man? To the observer it does: it shows all he knows and sees of the work-a-day man. But does it show the real life of the work-a-day man, and, if not, what is it that is not revealed? I submit the cinematograph does not show the real work-a-day man. What in the man as represented is wanting? As to this, in a letter, I can only suggest.

The ordinary, material life of each one of us, from duke to guttersnipe—that which we ordinarily refer to as our environment and normal life—is a negligible part of our real life. We live in what we term imagination: love, fear, hope, despair exist for each one of us, and it is in play of feeling and imagination that we really make our life in the flesh bearable. Each one of us can imagine his daily work-a-day life put off with the abandoned body, and existence opened to him in a fuller, freer life—a life which is real to us, as against the unreality of our life in the flesh.

If mankind did not live on hope and imagination, society would dissolve to-morrow. For the vast majority of mankind toil hopelessly through earthly life at the beck and call of the few, and if they were beings solely of brain intellect, lost to hope and imagination in some future, they would rebel. We cannot fathom what our coming bodiless existence will be, but we can imagine it. For some of us—many more, perhaps, than is generally thought—flashes of insight are given of this future life.

May I suggest that no one of us wants a continuance of our bodily life in our after bodiless existence? That no one even imagines it? Even the golf or bridge player may be conscious of a soul worthy of something better.—Yours, &c.,

F. C. CONSTABLE.

SIR,—Your correspondent, 'A Belfast Lawyer,' takes, for one who is admittedly non-practical, a most level-headed view of Spiritualism, and it is a matter for regret that the majority (rapidly diminishing) are not of his mental order. Unfortunately, his query as to the occupations and locale of our absent ones cannot be answered with absolute knowledge. We can only submit him our evidence, plead, and leave him—judge. Here is a case to try. During a séance with Mrs. Etta Wriedt (a lady whose integrity and phenomena are beyond dispute) a 'direct' voice announced itself to me as 'Uncle Sidney.' 'I have no Uncle Sidney—what's your full name?' 'Why, Sidney Cooper, of course!' came the answer. Cooper was my grand-uncle. After my asking him where he lived, and his breaking down after the first syllable of 'Can—' (Canterbury), came my pertinent question: 'Are you still at work, uncle?' 'Oh, yes, my boy—I love my brush more than ever!' Mark the ambiguity—'at work.' Sidney Cooper was the cattle-painter, and 'my brush' was always his expression for his work—evidence of identity, this. Here is no 'dream of a visionary'—merely plain statement of fact.

Now, I am sure that 'A Belfast Lawyer' will hold me justified in my belief that Cooper is still painting—somewhere, and that the spirits of men follow avocations (some of such unknown to us), and for which they still qualify to better fit themselves in the near other world.

With regard to its locale, I submit that we, who cannot conceive the confines of space or demonstrate the 'fourth

dimension,' could not possibly conceive position, if such there be in either; and furthermore, a spirit manifesting here may be partly oblivious of its new associations in the newly absorbing interest of the old. I have, this evening, just returned from a séance with Mrs. Wriedt, and my experiences, too long for a letter, only go to confirm the above.—Yours, &c.,

W. COOPER LISSENDEN.

34, Stockwell Park-road, S.W.

SIR,—The chief idea which 'A Belfast Lawyer' must adopt is that the next state of life is a perfectly natural one. People on earth are often forced into trades and professions for which they have no natural liking, but it is not so there; and in this fact lies the secret of the occupations of the next life. Spirits who, through having lived selfishly on earth, are so closely surrounded by a cloud of matter, in nebulous form, that they cannot even see bright spirits standing close by, have, therefore, to live for a time in practically the same element as occupied their minds on earth. This sphere, the first, surrounds the earth; the second is a belt or zone, much like a ring round Saturn. When a spirit is liberated from the body the greatest principle which obtains is the law of affinity; and this is extended to choosing one's occupation. Each intelligence is free to pursue its natural bent, being unhampered by the limitations of matter. Having gained a knowledge of truth in any particular branch, the spirits nearest the earth find congenial occupation in transmitting their knowledge to people here, using those means which are easiest and those people whose pursuits and interest are in affinity with their own. Many brilliant inspirations are thus given to earth people, but they are not made public because the scientific world is not sufficiently advanced to assimilate them.

When it is fully understood that spirit is merely a finer kind of matter, and plastic to thought force, it will readily be seen how natural is spirit life. The chief occupations of spirits are centred in sciences, arts and missionary work. There are schools for new comers, and multitudes of teachers are occupied in imparting to them the laws of the spirit world. Trades and professions which depend on the physical body have no interest for spirits, except so far as by coming back at intervals to guide and assist those still engaged in such callings, they themselves may make progress. Humanitarian work on earth occupies many spirits who go about among the suffering, casting over them the mantle of peace and consolation. Few people know to what extent they are indebted to the spirits for helpful and cheering thoughts and hopeful healing influences. The social problems of earth occupy the attention of most enlightened and earnest spirits, and reforms, like scientific discoveries, are first thought out in the spirit world and then impressed on the minds of reformers and legislators until the desired end is gained. This may seem an anomaly in sociology when one considers the amount of suffering which reforms often entail; but it is a necessary process in evolution, and evil is only allowed where it is to prevent a greater evil. The law of affinity draws the spirits to those tasks which are most congenial to them, and their work is divided between the two worlds. The man whose mind did not rise above honest manual labour here will find suitable occupation, for there are flowers and trees in greater profusion and variety than on earth; and the cowherd 'to the manner born' will also be needed, for every living thing yields up its spirit, and many people entering the spirit world are more than surprised to find themselves greeted by their old pets. (It is interesting to know that where affection is not stimulated in animals, especially in the lower and the reptiles, they become disintegrated into the universal spirit matter.) In the spirit world the law of life is love, and happiness is found in active service for others. Women are usefully employed in the spirit world chiefly as teachers and mothers. A woman mothers children according to her maternal instinct, and chooses her charges accordingly, and by affinity. Thus many take charge of foreign babies. It is one of their tasks to weed out bad inherited traits in the character of children. It is the law of progression that adults weed out their own. Then there are stillborn children to be developed, and idiots and imbecile children to be trained.

It is surprising how much liberty is accorded to rational children; they often go to school with earth children and take a great interest in their games. This is permitted for the purpose of developing in them a sense of responsibility and giving them knowledge of earth experiences. But when grown up they do not make the same powerful guides as people who have passed the allotted span in the flesh. Spirit mothers never allow the children of their adoption to forget who are their earth parents. Were 'A Belfast Lawyer' a good clairvoyant he would in his daily life see in what manner many spirits are occupied. Judges, lawyers, statesmen, preachers, musicians—in fact, all in the body—have their inspirers; while many great actors owe

their success to spirit influence, for they often interpret scenes and passages in a totally different manner before an audience from that which they originally intended. They are often unknowingly spirit-controlled. Thus are the spirits of the second sphere directly occupied and concerned with the earth. All is natural and rational; each chooses his work according to his taste, and when it is seen that on an average sixty thousand spirits enter the spirit world daily, in varying stages of ignorance, it will readily be understood how many spirits are engaged in receiving them.

The above was received directly from the spirit side, and accords with what has been told me through trance mediums by dozens of other spirits, whom I have closely questioned during many years' constant sitting in private circles.—Yours, &c.,

WILFRED OAKES,

Vice-President, Harpurhey Spiritual Church, Manchester.

SIR,—Surely the environment of the ordinary work-a-day business man, after passing into the beyond, can be nothing but what he has made it by his actions and his aspirations here. I am not referring to the theosophical view, but to what common sense and some personal communications lead me to think.

We have it on high authority that there is no marrying or giving in marriage in Heaven (for which some of us are devoutly thankful), and it may be that even the necessary harmless golf may be barred there by the necessity for something more important.

More difficulty arises from the unfortunate word 'plane' than is at all necessary. If our friend from Belfast will substitute 'state' for it, he will in the majority of cases lose nothing, and may gain some clearness in apprehension. We are on three or more planes here—the physical, the soul plane and the spiritual—but they coincide and interpenetrate, and the spirit man is one in the physical casing, and has different attributes and capacities rather than planes to his name.

The crowning need of Spiritualism seems to be spirituality, and curiosity about the occupations in the next world (however natural or even laudable) seems to me to postpone the spiritualising of people. In nearly all the sêances I have attended there is a large proportion of visitants whose advice our Belfast friend would hardly recommend us to take, to judge from its evident superficiality. It appears as if the choicer spirits (as one might suppose would be the case) have mostly gone further.

As a seeker myself, may I earnestly recommend our friend to consult more and more the best of all Spiritualist manuals, the grand old Bible? I am painfully familiar with its difficulties, and he will not find certainty, but he will find as much illumination as he can absorb.

Should our friend become personally an investigator, I would suggest that he should pursue his investigation along the path of intensive prayer and aspiration. So he may by searching find out God, if he will but be still and know that He is God.

I do not like too much curiosity about the future. What is wanted from the friends who have gone out of view is the touch of a vanished hand, the sound of a voice that is still, and the sense of their continued presence and companionship, and this we may get without knowing or caring much how they are otherwise occupied. One would fain hope that their occupations are much better for their spirits, and more selfless, than those of the ordinary work-a-day business man or the workman or the 'leisured chum' are here.

Meantime, until we meet again, let us be content to leave our dear ones in the kind hands to which we have surrendered them—sometimes with anguish, sometimes with resignation—in unfading confidence that all is well with them, of which they give us ample assurance.—Yours, &c.,

IGNOTUS.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to point out that no one, least of all a lawyer, is justified in passing judgment upon a book because of a single sentence, and that detached from its context. It reminds me of another critic who wrote a column article concerning 'Words from Within the Veil' (not in 'LIGHT'), in the course of which he mentioned that he was disappointed that a certain aspect of life hereafter was not emphasised. The editor of the paper was good enough to allow me to point out that the very thing which my friend desiderated found a prominent place in one of the messages. When 'A Belfast Lawyer' has read all that my wife has to say about the life within the veil, he might turn his attention to such books as 'Through the Mists,' 'The Life Elysian,' 'The Next Room,' and 'A Little Pilgrim in the Unseen,' although it is possible that when he has read them he may say that each and all are but the 'dreams of a visionary.'—Yours, &c.,

L. V. H. WITLEY.

A GHOST AT AN OPERA.

We cut the following from 'The Literary Digest' (New York):—

A problem for the Society for Psychical Research seems to be furnished by a ghost story coming from Paris. Massenet, it appears, attends rehearsals of his opera 'Panurge,' about to be produced, and is seen by nearly all the people connected with the theatre—stage-hands as well as singers. The 'tenors and basses were as nervous as schoolgirls' at first, but after a few days began to accustom themselves to the apparition, and worked on comfortably with him. This account, furnished by the baritone Marcoux, is printed in the Philadelphia 'Ledger':—

'I first noticed the apparition at the second rehearsal. It appeared at the end of the second act at the right-hand corner of the stage. I thought it was a hallucination, but try as I might I could not keep my eyes from the figure, which I could see distinctly clad in the familiar grey frock coat. It beat time with its hands and would shake its head with approval or disapproval. I said nothing for fear of being ridiculed, and as the ghost or whatever it was did not appear again that day I took a dose to steady my nerves.

'Next day Mlle. Lucy Arbell, who has the principle rôle, clutched my arm suddenly during a duet in the second act and whispered in a terrified voice, "Look! Look!" There in the same place stood the strange figure going through the motions of conducting the orchestra. I confess our voices sounded quaky as we continued singing.

'During an interval several stage-hands approached the stage-manager and told him they had seen the ghost of Massenet. At every rehearsal we saw the apparition, always in the same spot, but not always in the same act. The strange thing about it is that those not connected with the theatre were unable to see the ghost. Director Isola had a camera pointed at the stage one day, the operator standing by ready, but although he snapped at the exact moment when four of us saw the figure plainly, the negative, when developed, showed a blank. I cannot explain it. I could have doubted my own eyes, but there is the testimony of the others.'

The director of the theatre adds this:—

'The history of the Gaieté Lyrique, dating back centuries, contains many extraordinary incidents, including ghosts. Some old employés of the theatre are quite ready to accept the theory that the theatre is haunted by another uncanny visitor. Personally, I have no theory whatever, but at one time I feared we would be unable to continue the rehearsals. Everybody was absorbed in the extraordinary phenomenon.'

REMARKABLE VISION AT A DEATH BED.

The 'New York Times' publishes a strange story told by Mrs. Baldwin, of Christopher-street, Montclair, New Jersey, concerning the transition on April 10th of her father-in-law, an old gentleman of ninety-six. About eight in the morning, hearing a noise in his room, in which he was lying ill, she hurried to his bedside and asked if she could help him. His eyes closed and he gave a gentle sigh. The same moment there issued from between his lips, and rose toward the ceiling, what seemed like two wings, each about a foot long, resembling those of a butterfly, and unattached to any other shape. Mrs. Baldwin at once called in her husband, who found that his father was dead. The woman believes that the soul of her father-in-law developed visible form as it dissociated itself from the body in the final moment. She declares that she was not excited at the time, and there was no reason why she should conjure up the sight. She did not think of death until after the appearance of the strange thing in the sick room. Mrs. Baldwin is not a Spiritualist and has never been a student of the occult. Neither has she had any previous experience that would induce the belief that she has mediumistic powers.

UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—Annual Conference with the Tottenham Society, at 684, High-road, on Sunday, June 1st. At 3 p.m., paper by Mr. A. C. Scott, of Peckham, 'The Sacredness of Life.' Tea at 5 p.m. Public meeting at 7 p.m. Speakers: Messrs. G. Tayler Gwinn and A. C. Scott; soloists: Mr. and Mrs. Alcock Rush. Annual visit to the Kingston-on-Thames Society, on June 15th, at the Assembly Rooms, Hampton Wick. Public meeting, 7 p.m.; speakers, Messrs. Tayler Gwinn, P. Scholey and E. Alcock Rush.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.,
SATURDAY, MAY 31ST, 1913.

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 pfgr.

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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THE SPIRIT OF RELIGION.

'Is Spiritualism a religion?' is a question that has been many times debated, the debaters no doubt being led to dispute on the matter by a failure to recognise that Spiritualism has a threefold aspect, and is at once a science, a philosophy and a religion. That it is a science can hardly be gainsaid in these days of psychical research; its philosophy is attested by many volumes, and much lofty ethical teaching from platform and Press. As to its religious aspect, that is at the very core of the matter. We need travel no further than Nuttall's Dictionary to learn that Spiritualism is 'the state of being spiritual,' while we have it on the authority of Walter Savage Landor that 'Religion is the elder sister of Philosophy.' But it can be urged that Spiritualism may have religious associations without being in itself a religion, just as a man may be, and is, a spirit-being although he may be singularly deficient in the religious sense. The reply is that religion is essentially of the spirit—that there has never been any religious system that did not draw its inspiration from the idea of a Higher Power and a world beyond the present one. Divorced from these considerations it never rises beyond a code of ethics, a scheme of morals. A definition of religion which has become famous represents it as 'morality touched with emotion'—somewhat inadequate, but certainly helpful if we accept the emotion as proceeding from the deeper consciousness, and taking a form of joy. For we are very much at one with the 'happy saints' of the past in this matter. The religion of the long face and the black garment never appealed to us. It belongs to the idea of death as a solemn mystery and of the life beyond as a matter of speculation (mainly dismal). The very fact that religion is closely related to the question of a world beyond is shown by the instinctive resort to it in the presence of death. And if the aspect of death as a terror tinged religion with a funereal aspect, then it should follow logically that the removal of that terror by a knowledge of the true meaning of death should transfigure the face of religion, lending it a new meaning and a higher beauty.

Religion is not easy to define. Its essence escapes us, however painfully we may try to compress it in a form of words. But it may be certainly described as implying the possession of an ideal. 'To do good' is my religion, said a great evangelist. That was a practical ideal, but it does not sum up the matter, even though doing good implies being good. There is a religion which does not set about to do good or to be good, but which, being an inspiration from the very centre of the spirit, radiates goodness, sun-

like, in every expression of the lives which it animates. They have 'seen the vision,' these happy souls, for they are happy—many waters cannot quite quench their joy. The fear of death has gone, and all the other fears, the black litter of Ignorance, have vanished in its train. That unrest which comes from the pursuit of pleasure on the one hand and the effort (usually vain) to avoid trouble, on the other, has no part in their lives. A large serenity fills their minds, but it is tempered, as it always must be in this world, by the conditions of mortal life. They can be very serious when the occasion demands it; subdued when the stress of living bears hardly upon them, and sorrowful over the misfortunes of friends. But at the centre is a deep tranquillity—'behind the clouds is the sun still shining.'

We meet such men and women in many conditions of life and amongst people of different faiths. In our experience the larger proportion is found amongst Spiritualists, which, indeed, is as it should be, for the true Spiritualist has been able to add sight to faith, the outward and visible sign to the inward and spiritual grace. We class them as religious in the best and deepest sense. They have become 'rooted in the Universe'; they grow with it, responding to every pulsation of its life, every upward impulse from its directing Intelligence. Not long ago reference was made in our pages to the large part played by fear in the misdirection of life. It might almost take the place of 'total depravity' as an explanation of evil. It is at the back of greed, of cruelty and of much that passes as 'religion'—fear of poverty, or of getting an inadequate share of the banquet of life, fear of rivals, of real or supposed enemies, fear of death and of the powers beyond. The truly religious soul has put fear under its feet. It acknowledges the mystery of life, but is not cowed by it, for it knows that at the heart of the mystery is a great Beneficence. It does not strain and pant after righteousness—it grows and glides towards it harmoniously with the growth and movement of the Universe. It reposes on its interior conviction that the Universe, being spiritual, is the repository of infinite riches, so that every blank will at last be filled, every empty treasury of the soul replenished every loss made good. It is full of radiant energy, having attached itself to the Source of all true power. Yet it can rest. It possesses what Emerson called the 'rich mind' that 'lies in the sun and sleeps and is Nature.' We call this and that by the name of 'Religion,' just as some of us attach the names 'Spiritualism' or 'Nature' to a variety of windlestraws, smoke wisps and smoulderings, missing many times the real thing. But we always know it—dimly it may be, at the heart of us—when its presence is truly manifested. The old Greeks held that, with all his powers, no god could ever disguise himself effectually from another god. Spirit knows spirit when they meet. There is a mystic radiation, an appeal that wins recognition, although it may not rise always into outward expression. Deep answers to deep.

We are the photometers, we the irritable gold leaf and tinfoil that measure the accumulations of the subtle element. We know the authentic effects of the true fire through every one of its million disguises.

There comes a time in the advancing career of the soul when it ceases to think of religion as something separate or added to the life. It is no longer a question of this religion or that. The idea has expanded. It has become religion, passing all boundaries of creed and rite. It is made one with Life itself, 'one with the blowing clover and the falling rain.' For religion is of the Spirit, and only those to whom the existence of Spirit has become a living reality know how truly the two are akin.

THE SPIRIT AND EFFECT OF MILITANCY.

That Modern Spiritualism, from its inception, has been a Woman's Movement is well known. Most of the early mediums were girls or women. The names of Emma Hardinge Britten, Mrs. Richmond, the Fox Sisters, Lizzie Doten, Mrs. H. T. Brigham, Mrs. Marshall, Mrs. Corner, Mrs. Guppy, Mrs. Wallis, and many others, will for ever be historical in the records of the rise and progress of this spirit-guided reform. The teachings which have been given to the world from the other side have been in favour of the education, emancipation and enfranchisement of woman, so that she may be in very truth the companion and helpmate of man. We have many times during the past forty years given expression to our sympathy with the aspirations of our sisters, and have done our best to influence public opinion in the direction of fraternity, co-operation and spiritual progress. We cannot, therefore, be accused of being antagonistic to the Women's cause.

While, however, we sympathise with the spirit and desire of those who are longing for liberty, who feel that the true interests of humanity demand, and can alone be secured by, the enlightened and united action of men and women for high and noble ends, we are saddened by the methods of those women who, protesting against coercion, themselves set out to endeavour to coerce and terrorise those whom they have come to regard as their foes.

It seems to us that the spirit which they display is not the highest, and that the methods which they adopt are not only mistaken but injurious to the women themselves, as well as calculated to harden the hearts of men, and alienate the sympathy and support without which the desired objects can never be attained.

The following extracts from a letter by 'Sister Sita,' in 'The Commonwealth' for May, giving the Quaker view, seem to us to be spiritually true and irrefutable. The writer, who is 'a keen suffragist,' says:—

I am not a militant, for reasons that could all be summed up by my belief in unseen force. The same is now as when in olden times one of the prophets proclaimed 'not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.' In the spirit lay the true strength that would conquer, that would win the battle though the odds were terribly against them. In modern language the power of thought is put before the public, the strength of mind over matter, and still greater is the spirit.

In what way do the militants spend this valuable power of thought to gain their object? Often now in side issues in which it is wasted. Concentrated efforts of thought from some of the best of women are brought to bear on planning what to destroy, break down, or harm, and when that is accomplished, the accumulative power is gone, finished—with the result of destruction. If that same amount of thought-power was put into the gain of what is wished, it would be ever increasing and building up till the force became so great that no just being could help acknowledging it or stand against it. But much of what is being done now is not only weakening the power of the brave fighters, but setting up the powerful vibrations of antagonistic thought, sometimes from even those who wish also the same object. For, with reason may it be said, 'who are we to destroy even buildings that have taken the time, thought and the conscientious labour of, in some cases, hundreds of our fellow beings?'

We have only to look back on history to see what has been accomplished by the Society of Friends and others of similar mind, through faith in their creeds, towards righting the wrong, and small body as our society is, I venture to think that if our belief were now as strong and simple, we could gain what we wish. So it might be wise for the militants to pause and consider whether their courage, time, and thought are not being used in a somewhat mistaken way, and collect all their forces together towards the greater power that might be brought to bear on their object, in ways less seen, though surer, always holding fast to the knowledge that 'right is might.'

It can never be permissible to do evil that good may come—sincerity of motive cannot condone or atone for wrong-doing. The power of love, allied to righteousness, can alone win victories worth the winning.

THE GENEVA CONGRESS.

The following summaries of addresses delivered at the Universal Spiritualist Congress at Geneva were crowded out from our last issue. It will be noticed that the French speakers used the word 'Spiritism' for that which the English-speaking representatives designated 'Spiritualism.'

M. PILLAUT, of Douai, contended that three factors were necessary for the successful exercise of mediumship—*viz.*, man, spirit, and a state of psychosis or sensitiveness. As a medium was a person whose mediumistic faculties were used by spirits, he was not master over them, since those faculties could only be employed when he was in a sensitive state, and no manifestation could take place if the spirits did not do their part. Sitters could, and should, help mediums as much as possible, and remember that they might be 'under influence' even at times when such influence was not apparent. All 'gifts' were due to, or depended on, states of psychosis, or psychical conditions, and this was as true of painters, poets, sculptors, orators, and others as of mediums. Men in this world were under the direction or control of the unseen. Regarding the question of invoking protective legislation for mediums, the speaker was of opinion that the difficulty would best be met by removing from existing laws all that made for the suppression of freedom.

M. GABRIEL DELANNE claimed that animals and plants had attained a high state of evolution before the appearance of man on this earth, and that evolution was the result of the out-working of the laws of God. He denied that men were machines. They suffered and manifested intelligence in altering or out-growing the conditions which caused them pain. Neither were they the slaves of psychical beings. If they were the slaves of invisible powers, God would be a devil. The development of mediums was of the utmost importance, as they were needed to obtain phenomena which would be of value to science and convincing to scientists. He favoured schools for mediums and for the discovery of new methods of developing and utilising their powers.

M. PILLAUT, in reply, urged that mediums belonged to the world of spirits, and that spirit people would develop and direct their energies.

M. LEON DENIS concluded the discussion with an impassioned protest against determinism, which, he said, destroyed not only Spiritism, but abrogated human dignity. Man was not a slave, but an intelligent, volitional agent and a co-worker with all the progressive forces of the universe.

M. BEZIAT, speaking with reference to the Spiritualist press, was in favour of weekly papers, but put in a good word for monthly magazines, which, he said, fulfilled a very useful function.

M. PHILIPPE said that he believed a good understanding would soon be reached as to the relation of Spiritism to other religions. Before speaking of religion it was necessary to define what we meant by 'God,' for a conception of Deity was essential to a clear presentation of the relationship between the two. Voltaire had said, if God did not exist, we must invent one. Each one had his own conception of God. Camille Flammarion said that if oxen could conceive a God, that divinity would be a great ox. So man conceived a God who was a superman. The only path to agreement was to recognise that God was the supreme force of the universe—intelligent and self-conscious. All religions depended upon an inspired individual, as Moses or Jesus, or Mahomed. Allan Kardec was the inspired founder of Spiritism in France. From one point of view of teaching, Spiritism prescribed no rites; it demonstrated the immortality of the soul, it gave news from the beyond. All forms of worship were created by man, but Spiritism had no right to be considered a religion; it was a science.

M. LEON DENIS pointed out that there had always been religious wars owing to the different opinions which were entertained on the great questions involved. Spiritism, however, was larger than any one religious system. The first rudiments of religion were found in the worship of the dead and of spirits. As a result of the study of the history of humanity from the beginning, it had been found that religion began in ancestor worship. Above the family hearth were found the tombs of

the dead, with all their relics. There were seers in those early days who saw the spirits of the departed, and wherever the remains of human habitations were found, there, too, were the proofs of these statements. Everywhere there were evidences of a knowledge of Spiritism, the worship of guardian angels and of the dead. Spiritism was, therefore, the earliest religion in the world. Religion and Spiritism grew up together in the mind of primitive man. So much evidence of that fact existed that it was impossible to separate one from the other. It was the same with Christianity. Christ in the garden said to Mary, "Touch me not," because his appearance was only the beginning of a materialisation; but he invited Thomas to put his fingers into the wounds because he was then completely materialised. The Pentecostal descent and the vision of St. Paul were other proofs of the same kind. Christianity had no other foundation than the phenomena of Spiritism. Mahomedanism had the same basis, so had all other religious systems. The reaction was inevitable, hence the superstitions of the Middle Ages, and the fact that to-day religious observance was perishing. Spiritism alone could unite science and religion, and provide a lofty and true philosophy of life. This was its mission. Religion could only survive by returning to its ancient source and studying Spiritism. The two were identical.

THE REV. THOMAS GRIMSHAW, as the representative of the National Spiritualists' Association of the United States of America, gave their cordial greetings to the assembly and stated that his society was in hearty accord with the purposes for which the Congress had been convened. He said that he was happy to report that Spiritualism was making splendid progress in America. He thought that he was well within the bounds of truth when he said that there were there at least one million avowed Spiritualists—Spiritualists because of experiences which had convinced them that the dead, so-called, were very much alive, and under certain favourable conditions could manifest to their mortal friends. Spiritualism was not a matter of belief, but of evidence, which each one must receive for himself since no amount of evidence, furnished to another, could fully answer his needs. Each investigator appropriated from Spiritualism what he, or she, was capable of taking up; some observed a few phenomenal manifestations, and imagined that that was really all there was in it; others, who went a little deeper, found in Spiritualism a great Philosophy of Life; while others found in it a religion—not a religion of forms and ceremonies, creeds and dogmas, but a religion which brought them more closely into at-one-ment with the good, the beautiful and the divine; a religion which blossomed out in kindly deeds and loving services to humanity. The Spiritualists of America being of these three classes, it was exceedingly difficult to harmonise them sufficiently to get them to work together earnestly for the advancement of the cause. But in spite of these difficulties the organised movement was progressing, and this progress had aroused much bitter opposition. At one time the opponents tried to ridicule Spiritualism out of existence, now they had changed their tactics, and were trying to influence legislation. Bills were being introduced into the different State Legislatures, aiming to suppress the practice of mediumship, and too frequently it was found that the authors or promoters of those Bills were the clergy of the orthodox Christian churches. This opposition was due to the fact that Spiritualism was making inroads into the membership of the churches, as the people were no longer satisfied with the dry husks of theology. Spiritualism had come to stay. Active, wide-awake men and women were on the firing line. As these Bills came up they were being fought, and almost invariably victoriously. Said Mr. Grimshaw: "Let us be optimistic. Strengthened by the aid of a vast army of spirits, we shall win the fight and bring the world to recognise the great truths which Spiritualism represents."

MRS. M. E. CADWALLADER affirmed that there was no slavery like that of ignorance, and declared that we owed it to those who would follow us to leave them an inheritance superior to that bequeathed to us, and this answered the question, "Why take so much pains to investigate the philosophy of life?" Man was a spirit, and by reason of his own peculiar mental organisation he was conscious of his own personal identity. He possessed powers which were radically affected in this primary school of

existence in which experience was his teacher. While some seemed consigned to the treadmill of existence, others were enabled to reach to spiritual heights. Yet each one should strive to cultivate spiritual power, to leave the world better for having lived, and be careful to leave no influences which would be detrimental to posterity. Proceeding to relate her personal experiences, the speaker said that she early learned she could pass into a condition in which she could converse with spirits, and sometimes with those who had not left the mortal form. To attune herself to the spirit world, she became passive, and dismissed thoughts of material things. Although still conscious of what was taking place around her, she realised that she could converse with psychical instructors upon matters of absorbing interest. Having asked to be shown the process of magnetic healing, her spirit teacher replied that in some cases, when a powerfully magnetic person came in contact with a sick person, the healing power came directly from the healer; but in other cases the medium was the instrument of a band of spirits, who developed in him a condition of receptivity whereby they were able to transmit the healing power through him to the sufferer. In a condition of health the body was illuminated, or seemed surrounded, by magnetic rays. In illness the light became subdued. At the moment that the spirit severed its connection with the physical body, the light was withdrawn. The magnetic healer could be compared to an engineer who came in time to keep the fire from going out. When the vitality was low, the body appeared to spirits as if bathed in a subdued light. The light or aura assumed different colours according to the individual. A primary requisite to success in healing was the adaptation of the aura of the healer to the patient.

The spirit teacher then took Mrs. Cadwallader to a hospital, and she saw the patients in all degrees of illumination. At other times she witnessed the recalling of the spirit to the body, as well as the transition of the spirit.

"Could you see a so-called death-bed as I have seen it," said the speaker, "you would never retard through selfishness the departure of the spirit, by holding it in earthly bondage when the time is ripe for its progress to other planes of life experience. 'The time will come,' said my spirit teacher, 'when men and women will realise the importance of this study. Then they will understand that it is detrimental to live in a state of inharmony which is really disease. When they learn that jealousy and hatred will generate disease, then they will strive to overcome all such conditions.' 'There is so much to learn,' I said, 'and so little accomplished.' 'Do your share,' he replied. 'You are a part of this great universe. Each individual can be compared to a note upon a musical instrument, and all are necessary to complete the whole.'"

MR. HANSON G. HEY pointed out that Spiritualism was neither a science alone, nor a philosophy alone, nor a religion alone, but it was a blend of all three, and to be rightly understood it must be considered in all three aspects. Most persons, however, approached the study from one or other of these three viewpoints; hence their opinions differed as to what Spiritualism really was. He did not agree with those who regarded it solely as a scientific subject, and asked if they imagined that the spirit people had nothing better to do than come promenading about this earth to be photographed or perform other phenomenal feats merely to satisfy their curiosity. He had found that they came to bring us the highest philosophy and the purest religious teaching to help us in our daily lives, and he thought that those who did not use the revelations from the other side for the purpose of human betterment failed to catch the true purport of Spiritualism. "We must begin by spiritualising ourselves, so that we may become magnets that will draw to us corresponding spiritual influences that will help us to assist others to a higher plane."

MR. E. W. WALLIS said that Spiritualism was the only system before the world that demonstrated human survival of bodily death. Someone had said that man was a thinking animal; he was more than that, he was a self-conscious spirit intelligence, expressing himself through the physical body. Therefore that body should be cared for and preserved that it might be a fit instrument for the spirit's use. Spirit was positive—the body-building power which expressed itself in all organised

forms. In human beings it manifested purpose and exerted a determining, constructive influence. As an intelligent being, man was accountable to himself for the use he made of his powers and opportunities, and to others for the influence he exerted by his example and the psychic power which emanated from him. Spiritualism was the result of the efforts of spirit people to reach, convince and comfort their friends on earth. Those spirits were not angels or devils, they were human beings; consequently, whatever they might do should be carefully examined and their teaching should only be accepted or acted upon when it commended itself to the reason, judgment and conscience of the recipient. No amount of inspiration could make a falsehood true, and the value of all revelations should be estimated according to their truth and usefulness. We were all on the upward path; the world was never so enlightened and progressive as now, and the interest in spiritual matters was never so deep and widespread as it was to-day; therefore there was accorded to Spiritualists an unprecedented opportunity to help to guide the thought of humanity in the right direction and give to earnest truthseekers the evidence they needed of the sequential nature of the life beyond death. Spiritualists needed to realise this fact and accept the responsibility of forwarding this educational and religious service.

CONGRESS NOTES.

A kindly thought was happily carried into effect at the Geneva Congress, when a cablegram was sent to Dr. Peebles, regretting his absence through illness, wishing him a speedy recovery, and intimating to him that he had been elected an honorary president.

As guide, philosopher and friend, Mr. Hanson Hey was to the fore, not only on the journey but during the Congress. By his helpful and efficient services, which were in frequent requisition, he smoothed the way on many occasions and contributed largely to the success of the proceedings and the comfort of the English-speaking visitors.

At the meeting after the banquet on the Sunday evening, the chairman read a cordial letter of greeting and goodwill from Mr. J. J. Morse, editor of 'The Two Worlds.' It was received with acclamation.

There joined the English visitors at Basle, two earnest Spiritualists, M. and Madame Rossat. These friends also arranged an interview with Madame Hélène Smith, so that we might see her striking paintings, and gave all the information in their power regarding the way in which the medium worked when producing them.

It was generally regretted that Professor Flournoy was not present at any of the meetings. He would have had a warm and appreciative welcome if he had looked in. We are informed that his absence was due to other important engagements.

A visit to the famous castle of Chillon, with its dungeon cells and knife-encircled tower, was a forcible reminder of the fact that environment does not count for much unless the spirit be rightly attuned, and of the further fact that we have made progress since the bad old days when, with perfectly fiendish ingenuity, men devised horrible methods of torturing their fellow-men. The world *does* move, and there are still better days to come.

Our grateful thanks are due to Miss F. R. Scatcherd for her kind assistance, with translations and notes, in the compilation of our report of the proceedings at the Congress.

The 'Spiritualist Messenger' representative concludes his interesting impressions of the Congress, in the June issue, with the following paragraph: 'The Americans—Mrs. Cadwallader, Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Fixen, and Mr. Grimshaw—gave of their best. They were in complete harmony with the English, and were an asset to the Conference and a credit to the United States. It was good to see how these English-speaking people of different countries fraternised with each other. Their fraternity gave weight to their representation, and they did much towards making the Conference a success.'

With regard to the Spiritualist Press the prevailing opinion was that the movement was well served by existing journals but that great efforts should be made to extend their usefulness, by increasing their circulation and thus extending their influence.

We have just received a kindly note from our esteemed Geneva correspondent, M. Louis Gardy, hon. president of the Congress, in which, after complimenting us on our account of the proceedings, he mentions that Madame Rosen Dufaure, whose age we gave as eighty-five years, was, as a matter of fact, born on January 6th, 1824, so that she is, as he states, 'very near the age of the valiant Dr. Peebles.' M. Gardy himself is eighty-five.

ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

The following is a digest of the paper prepared by Dr. J. M. Peebles for the Universal Spiritualist Congress at Geneva, and read there on Sunday, May 11th, by Mr. E. W. Wallis, at the special request of Dr. Peebles.

After pointing out that earth's thronging millions are ever passing in serried hosts into the vast etheric realm of the invisible, Dr. Peebles quoted the epitaph which Professor Clifford is reported to have written for himself: 'I was not and was conceived, I lived and did a little work, I am not and I grieve not,' and remarked that this implied the transference of living substance, or something, into non-conscious nothingness. The bare statement of such a theory was its own refutation.

In times of mourning, priests and pastors quoted these words from the Bible: 'They sleep with their father. . . The dead know not anything. . . The memory of them is forgotten. . . That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; and man hath no pre-eminence over the beast; all go unto one place.'

The most that intelligent clergymen could say was, 'Cherish hope and have faith in a future reunion.' Bereaved hearts demanded something more. Their cry was: 'Tell us, oh preachers, what you really know of the future life? Does death end all? If mortals live in another state of existence, what do you know of its location, its laws, its conditions or the employments of its inhabitants?' But the preachers were either silent as Egypt's Sphinx, or talked of a pathetic faith based upon a collection of disputed, revised and re-revised books, musty with age, and labelled 'holy.' And so the heart-rending inquiry, 'Does death end all?' still persisted and remained unanswered save by Spiritualism. If religionists and scientists had been as wise as Socrates, they would long since have become believers in communion with spirits. Phædrus makes Simmias say, when discussing immortality:—

'I daresay you, Socrates, feel as I do, how very hard, or almost impossible is the attainment of certainty as pertains to such questions as the present life. And yet I should deem him a coward who did not prove what is said about them, to the uttermost, or whose heart failed him before he had examined them on every side. For he should discover the truth about them or, if that is impossible, I would have him take the best and most irrefragable of human arguments and let this be the raft with which he sails through life.'

That advice justified to any conscientious man the inquiry into the truth of Spiritualism.

All along the life-lines of a dim antiquity there were intuitions, intimations, prophecies, visions, trances—in brief, rifts in the clouds. But these phenomena were considered special providences, weird mysteries or astounding miracles. They did not reach up to the lofty altitudes of future-life demonstrations. The fundamental appeal upon all subjects was to the Church, rather than to science or reason. And yet God was neither dead nor absent from this mighty measureless universe of suns and stars, all afire with celestial activities. Heaven's witnesses were awaiting the evolutionary uplift—the proper morning-time on earth for scientifically and practically establishing a direct intercourse between the worlds, visible and invisible—awaiting some propitious incoming era when heaven's messengers would not be mercilessly pilloried or murdered as were the mediumistic so-called wizards and witches of the past.

Dr. Peebles claimed that modern Spiritualism originated in 1837 in New York State, U.S.A., with some religionists who called themselves 'Believers' (referring to the words of Jesus, 'These signs shall follow them that believe'), but who were popularly called 'Shakers' in derision, because they shook when under spirit influence. They had visions, trances, clairvoyance, levitation, rappings and hearing of heavenly music in the air. These phenomena passed through all their societies ten years before the rappings at Hydesville, and similar manifestations occurred among them to-day. Finally, the influencing spirits announced that they would soon go out into the wide world, producing the most marvellous phenomena. This they had literally done. A. J. Davis, in his 'Revelations,' in 1846, made a similar prediction.

Referring to the 'rappings' in 1848, at the home of the Fox Sisters, and their discovery of the now familiar method of receiving responses to questions, Dr. Peebles said that at that time he was a preacher in a popular church, and on hearing of the rappings, exclaimed, with a sort of priestly arrogance, 'They have raised another ghost.' Being urged by a member of his congregation to investigate, he at first not only refused, but pronounced the phenomena impossible and unbiblical. Ultimately, however, he consented to visit a lady medium. He says:—

'As we sat at her table, the rappings were very distinct, echoing from the table, from the ceiling, and finally from my coat

collar. The vibrations thrilled me to the depth of my whole being. And what added to my torment, the communicating intelligence spelled out that I was an inspirational medium. "Horror!" I exclaimed; "all visions and inspirations ceased with John's Revelation upon the Isle of Patmos." Returning to my library, I struggled to shake off the very thought of spirits. It was impossible. True, I had preached in burning eloquence of a future immortal life, but now, when these spirits came and proved my preaching true, I was angry about it; for they were undoing my creedal theology.

Some months later the Davenport Brothers visited the city. The manifestations at their séances (held in the drawing-room of one of my parishioners) revealed a most tremendous physical force. The furniture trembled, even the room itself was literally shaken. The vibrations alarmed some present and seemed to be produced in response to my boasting challenge that the spirits could not affect me. Afterwards as I was meditating in my bedroom, half lighted by a full moon, on the relation of these phenomena to those recorded in the Scriptures, the cover was violently stripped from my bed and I was seized by unseen powers and thrown upon the floor. It was enough, I gave it up. The proper conditions being given, there seems to be no limit to spirit power. Providentially in this experience I fared better than the Old Testament Jacob, who in a wrestle with the invisibles had his thigh put out of joint. At a séance at a little later period I was made to dance under the influence of American Indian spirits. For the time this was a liberal obsession, which, while it humbled my ministerial pride, also had the effect of curing me of a lingering tuberculosis lesion.

My mediumistic experiences gradually changed into clair-sentience, inspirations, and the faculty of leaving the body during sleep to visit other spheres of existence. Not a day now passes that I do not consciously cognise the presence of spirit intelligences; and hence to me the sacredness of mediumship and the sweet holiness of angel ministries. During my several pilgrimages around the world in the interests of a rational, religious Spiritualism, I have seen or had psychic sittings with some three thousand mediums in various countries, yet never saw two precisely alike in manner or potency of manifestations. The mountain adepts of India excel in spiritual exaltation and self-poise, and they thus excel because they practically live the principles they teach. The range of mediumship, like rainbow hues, is a multiplex, radiating diversity in unity. And heavenly intelligences are just as much the wisest judges, touching the conditions for spiritual manifestations, as are photographic artists for the production of their pictures. Matter at best is but the shadow of substance, and spirit is the only reality. . . . Facing the sunset days of a long, laborious life in the interests of Spiritualism, these are my happiest days, and rightly understood all things seem to me good. Here is the Christ-conscious soul's rest. Here is a sweet peace that a gold-grasping world cannot take away. Why this trust, this peace, this uplifting soul-joyousness? It may be summed up in the word "Spiritualism," a colossal, all-inclusive Spiritualism which, in its fulness, may be traced direct to God, who is Spirit, immanent and absolute. Man, evolved, being in the image of God, is necessarily a spiritual being, and it is just as natural for spiritual beings, whether vested in the mortal or the immortal, to converse and respond to each other as it is for music to respond to music in the same key.

The recent chemical demonstration by Professor Wesserman proves the marked differences between the blood substance of man and that of insects and animals. As a Spiritualist I trace man's origin, not from the amoeba, up through shaggy-haired orang outangs to aspirational, regal-souled man, but rather through a spiritual descent from God. The physical body is only the ore that encircles and imprisons the gold. Death kindly melts away the dross that the spirit, the real "I am," the mighty magnet, may rigidly hold to itself the etheric attributes of consciousness, memory, and the strong individual characteristics of this life, enabling it to make its identity clear when returning earthward. One of the greatest falsehoods of history is that there is a bourne from whence no traveller returns.

Let me press the point of the innate nobility, the inherent immortality of man, not as an aggregate of atomic essences, not as a composition of subtle substances, nor as a manufactured make-up from Nature's non-conscious elements and forces, whatever they may be (for whatever has been mechanically put together may, by a mightier force, be unmade, disintegrated, dissipated), but as a conscious aspiring spirit that feels itself akin to God, that can sense the friendly touch of God, and cognize Him as the Infinite and the Holy One. Evidently the spirit is a pure, invisible, uncompounded, unparticled entity, existing in God, beginningless and endless. This is the philosophy of India's most enlightened sages: and the present-day teachings of exalted spirits and angels. It is ennobling to feel that as spirits, existing in God, we descended by His will from the regions of light, to be held for a time in a physical body, a soul

body, and a celestial body, the Ego or the divine self being thus on its way through diverse experiences to the love realms of ecstatic blessedness.

The question "Is Spiritualism true?" is no longer asked by any intelligent, candid, conscientious and unprejudiced investigator in America, whether originally materialist, Christian, or pagan. It is an established truth, a mighty truth based upon clear, demonstrated facts and the immutability of law, and yet sadly abused by multitudes from mercenary motives.

Spiritualism in its purity came from the celestial heavens, came with heavenly messages, from our loved ones. It unlocks the mysteries of all past ages, for it was the vitalising soul of all the old religions. Real Spiritualists, therefore, are reverential. They are religious. Their life is a prayer and their mission is to encourage and help and bless others. And when genuine Spiritualism, which harmonises with the Christianity of the Christ, prevails, when nominal Spiritualists become more Christlike, actualising in their lives the Christ spirit of toleration, love, charity and purity, then the long-prophesied millennium in all its transcendent radiance will have dawned upon and illumined our waiting world.

GRAPES FROM 'THE VINEYARD.'

It is always a pleasure to wander through 'The Vineyard,' though not all of its fruit is sweet. In the May number (Fifield, 13, Clifford's Inn) the Editor, Maude Egerton King, under the heading 'Rag-time and Ring-time,' gives her impressions of one of the Rag-time shows running in London, and compares it—much to its disadvantage—with some dances 'full of delicious graces and splendid vigour,' which she has seen given by the Folk Dance Society. She says: 'The rag-time dancing was indecent, not from voluptuous excess—for voluptuousness there was none—but in its cynical inversion of all normal feeling for love, beauty, or pleasure. The movements of the choruses, with one exception, were all alike, and might be safely practised by partially-paralysed imbeciles or foolish persons wishing to dance in the earlier stages of drunkenness. The style of the solo dancing was like nothing human, nor like anything, even in the ape-world, beastly. Put a pair of compasses in a hobble skirt, and spread its points as wide apart as the hobble will allow; let it suddenly develop knees, and, without drawing in its points, bend the knees as far as possible; and so squatting, so straddling, jerk itself from one steel point to another, without diminishing the distance between them, all about a given space—the stage.' To leave the music-hall did not mean immediate escape. All the joys, beauties, passions, reverences of life seemed to be 'going downhill to ragtime.' The other contents include one of Anna Bunston de Bary's racy 'Letters of a Schoolma'am'; the continuation of 'Lilicrona's Home,' a charming story of Swedish country life; some practical instructions in weaving, by Mrs. Godfrey Blount; and a description by Peter Rosegger of the beautiful Styrian custom of blessing a newly-built house. Allen Clarke adds to his indictment of the factory system by comparing the awful infant mortality in factory towns in Lancashire, which ranges from 153 per 1,000 in Rochdale to 203 in Preston, with that for the rural districts in the same county, where the highest is 99 in Birkdale, and the lowest 41 at Grange (Morecambe Bay). He declares that 'amongst the majority of factory mothers the birth of a child is not looked forward to with the longing love of pure maternity, but regarded as a disagreeable necessity.' Some lovely little poems are scattered through the number.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

'The Presence of the Kindly Patriarch.' By RAYMOND TAUNTON. Cloth, 2s. net. A. C. Fifield, 13, Clifford's Inn, E.C.

'Peeps Here and Beyond.' By JESSIE TODD. Paper cover, 6d. Sentinel Press Office, Peterhead.

'Homely Thoughts on the Parables of the Tree of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life.' By JOHN COUTTS. Paper cover, 2d. G. Lyal, 36, Hardy-terrace, High-road, Wood Green, N.

'Spiritualists' National Union Hymn Book.' Fifth edition, revised and corrected. Cloth, 1s. net. 'The Two Worlds' Publishing Co., Ltd., 18, Corporation-street, Manchester.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

At the Congress at Geneva the subject of mediumship was well discussed and earnest appeals were made for fraternity among mediums. While recognising the difficulty of securing suitable conditions, it was pointed out that each one could do something well, and should endeavour to find out what that something was, and develop that power. Mediums should exercise their will-power and learn how to be positive to those below but negative to those above. Spiritualists should encourage mediums to realise their responsibilities to develop intellectually and morally, and try to render themselves fit instruments for true and trustworthy inspirers. As regarded physical phenomena, it was necessary that mediums should be well surrounded and protected, while at the same time, to secure indisputable proof of spirit action, it was felt that rigid control over the sensitive was indispensable.

'The International Psychic Gazette' for May contains the portraits of Dr. J. M. Peebles and Mr. J. J. Morse, also an article on 'The Hands of Dr. Peebles,' by Mr. C. W. Child, and a phrenological delineation of 'The Editor of "The Two Worlds"' (Mr. Morse), by Mr. J. Millott Severn. The Horoscope of Miss Lind-a-Hageby is delineated by Mr. George Wilde, and Miss F. R. Scatterd writes about 'More Authentic Mahatmas.' These features, with a report of an address by Abdul Baha on 'Universal Peace,' and a letter by Dr. Peebles on 'Theosophy, Reincarnation and Karma,' go to make up a more than usually interesting number. Dr. Peebles draws attention to the fact that in a recently issued work on 'Man: Whence, How and Whither,' by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater, it is stated that about six thousand years ago 'Mr. Leadbeater was a portly, robust mother of ten children; whilst the father and husband, now Mrs. Besant, functioned as Herakles'!

The eleventh annual general meeting of the Spiritualists' National Union, Ltd., will be held in the Midland Institute, Birmingham, on Saturday, July 5th, 1913, at 2 p.m., and a consultative Conference will be held in the Town Hall on July 6th, at 10.45 a.m., when Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn will read a paper on 'Man and his Possibilities,' and at 2.30 p.m., when Mrs. H. L. Batie will read a paper on 'Spiritualism,' to be followed by a Mass Meeting at 6.30, under the presidency of Mr. G. T. Gwinn, when addresses will be delivered by prominent workers. It is expected that these meetings will be the largest ever held in the Midlands.

A somewhat sensational report has appeared in the newspapers respecting the receipt by the vicar of St. Catherine's Church, Hatcham, of a communication from a Paris 'astrologer,' which, in the light of the subsequent burning of his church, he now regards as a prediction of that event. The 'test' statement of the writer was hardly such as an astrologer would make. It appears to us to be much more of the nature of a psychic impression. Many students of psychometry, and of 'occult science' so-called, have received equally definite tests of which no public notice has been taken, but as the recipient in this instance happens to be a clergyman, the incident is made much of in the papers.

Holiday-makers who want a little light reading, with some admixture of the psychic element, might easily do worse than take with them, on their next 'outing,' 'The Mind-Reader: Some Pages from the Strange Life of Dr. Xavier Wycherley,' by Max Rittenberg (illustrated, cloth, 6s., D. Appleton and Co., New York and London). Dr. Wycherley, a mysterious hypnotist and mental healer, has the power of sensing the mental as well as the physical condition of the people with whom he comes into contact, and thus reading something of their life-story. Fortunately, being a man of benevolent nature as well as of much native shrewdness, he uses this power, with his other exceptional gifts, natural and acquired, for the best of ends. So we find him in a series of extraordinary adventures, acting the part of a good genius, thwarting evil plots, resolving mysteries, smoothing out all sorts of tangles and healing all sorts of troubles. The various characters introduced are stated to be drawn from life, and the fact that the thrilling incidents narrated are based on actualities in mental science invests them with an added interest.

His stay with kind friends at Brighton has been very beneficial to Dr. Peebles, who is now regaining his wonted vigour of body and buoyancy of spirits. On Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m., he hopes to fulfil an engagement to speak at the new Congregational Church, Parson's Hill, Woolwich, near the Dockyard Station.

FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

Under this heading we propose to devote space to brief letters of inquiry and replies thereto from our readers.

'The Riddle of the Universe.'

SIR,—In reference to the request of Mr. Arthur L. Howard for information as to writings which criticise adversely the materialistic position of Professor E. Haeckel, I recommend to him 'A Treatise on Electrical Theory and the Problem of the Universe,' by S. W. de Tunzelmann (Ch. Griffin & Co., Ltd., Exeter-street, Strand, London). The book is a masterly survey and presentation of modern ideas of the physical universe and the philosophical deductions to be drawn therefrom. The chapter on 'The Place of Mind in the Universe' is intelligible without special scientific and mathematical knowledge, and contains a closely-reasoned destructive criticism of the fallacies of Haeckel.—Yours, &c.,

SCOBISH.

SIR,—Mr. Arthur L. Howard may find what he requires in 'The Old Riddle and the Newest Answer,' by John Gerard, S.J., F.L.S., published at 6d., by Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., of London and New York. It certainly 'deals with Haeckel's theories and arguments *seriatim*,' but whether or not it 'shatters them,' I must leave him to decide. The author belongs to the Church of Rome, but, as far as I remember, this fact is nowhere evident in the book, which is the work of one scientist dealing with the views and theories of others. (Permit me, while alluding to the Church of Rome, to thank you, sir, for the splendid article, 'Behind the Times,' in 'LIGHT' of the 17th inst.)

The author of 'Supernatural Religion' quotes (on page 10) Archbishop Trench as saying: 'The miracle must witness for itself, and the doctrine must witness for itself, and then, and then only, the first is capable of witnessing for the second,' and again (on the same page): 'This fact, that the kingdom of lies has its wonders no less than the kingdom of truth, is itself sufficient evidence that miracles cannot be appealed to absolutely and finally, in proof of the doctrine which the worker of them proclaims.' These quotations surely show to what straits clever men are reduced when starting to justify their own form of faith as against all others.

Spiritualism, which has no need to drag in the supernatural, affords a simple *modus vivendi*. 'All are but parts of one stupendous whole, whose body Nature is, and God the soul.' Would that more of our speakers would realise that we do not need to lean towards any special form of religious belief, but that, as was said by Emma Hardinge Britten, 'Spiritualism is not a religion; it is the key which unlocks the door to the meaning of all religions.' (I quote these words from memory, and they may not be exact.)—Yours, &c.,

Meersbrook, Sheffield.

RALPH STEWART.

SIR,—In response to Mr. Arthur L. Howard's inquiry (page 238), I underline M. Bowley's recommendation of Sir Oliver Lodge's 'Life and Matter, a Criticism of Professor Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe,"' which, of course, deals with the question in the masterly fashion one has learned to expect from Sir Oliver Lodge. I think, however, Mr. Howard would find Rudolf Steiner's book, 'Haeckel und seine Gegner' ('Haeckel and his Opponents') well worth perusal. I quote below from Edouard Schure's lecture on the personality of Rudolf Steiner, which serves as introduction to Steiner's book, entitled 'The Way of Initiation':—

'This is how Dr. Steiner himself describes the famous German naturalist—

"Haeckel's personality is captivating. It is the most complete contrast to the tone of his writings. If Haeckel had but made a slight study of the philosophy of which he speaks, not even as a dilettante, but like a child, he would have drawn the most lofty spiritual conclusions from his phylogenetic studies. Haeckel's doctrine is grand, but Haeckel himself is the worst of commentators on his doctrine. It is not by showing our contemporaries the weak points in Haeckel's doctrine that we can promote intellectual progress, but by pointing out to them the grandeur of his phylogenetic thought."

'Rudolf Steiner's meeting with the celebrated naturalist, Ernst Haeckel, marks a most important phase in the development of his thought. Haeckel was his most formidable adversary. Steiner's desire to understand this man and to do him justice as to all that was great in him, to fathom his theory as it was logical and plausible, was only the more intense. . . . The materialistic conclusions of Haeckel could have no influence on his own ideas, which came to him from a different science. . . . Steiner began then to study eagerly the "History of Natural Creation." In it Haeckel gives a fascinating picture of the

evolution of species from the amoeba to man. In it he shows the successive growth of organs, and the physiological process by which living beings have raised themselves to organisms more and more complex, and more and more perfect. But in this stupendous transformation which implies millions and millions of years, he never explains the initial force of this universal ascent, nor the series of special impulses which cause beings to rise step by step. To these primordial questions Haeckel has never been able to reply except by admitting spontaneous generation, which is tantamount to a miracle as great as the creation of man by God from a clod of earth. . . . It was in vain that the great naturalist would deny the divine Author of the universal scheme; he proved it in spite of himself, in so well describing His work.'

I trust these quotations will prove helpful to Mr. Arthur Howard in his study of Haeckel's most fascinating but fundamentally false theories.—Yours, &c.,

BEATRICE O'CONNOR.

The Murder of Beckett.

SIR,—In connection with this crime (referred to on page 215), 'Omnia Vincit Amor' would be interested in one of the stories in 'The Light Invisible,' by Monsignor R. H. Benson, written when he was an Anglican clergyman, dealing with the ghostly confession of one of Beckett's murderers. I believe these psychic stories are all based on real experiences.—Yours, &c.,
Chamounix. T. VESEL.

'Personality—Individuality.'

SIR,—The distinction which I generally draw between personality and individuality is that the personality is the entourage of the individuality's beinghood: viz., all the differently characterised minutiae which go to make up the ego's self-hood; or as the temple of architectural effects by which the ego manifests its own peculiar type of mind and consciousness at different stages of its growth in this ever moving drama of life. The following might serve as a very inadequate simile.

The ego is the silkworm, the personality is the cocoon of silk which it weaves about its own hidden but potent and controlling initiative. In this case, however, the personality completely hides and buries its king, whereas in the human it reveals him or her—though possibly, on the earth-plane of things, very imperfectly so. The individual is the eternal and enduring, the personality is the passing and changing; and the changes are wrought by the growth, activity, and further awakening of the individual consciousness.—Yours, &c.,
F. H.

A Curious Incident.

SIR,—The following incident goes to show that spirit friends know at times what goes on around us, even down to very trifling events:—

Last night before retiring to bed I tried automatic writing for a few minutes, but could only get the word 'pen' written several times, and then an illegible scrawl. I thought it meant that I ought to hold a pen for automatic writing instead of a pencil, so I used a pen only, but still the word 'pen' was written, and not being able to make anything of it I ceased trying and went to bed. To-day, when sitting at my writing-table, it occurred to me to ask what was meant by the word 'pen' being written so often the night before. The reply at once written was, 'Your pen is gone.' I then understood that it referred to a rather valuable fountain pen which I much prized (being a present). I had not used this pen for a week, having exhausted the supply of ink, and had laid it aside until I could get some more ink. I had not, therefore, noticed it for several days. Very incredulous, I at once turned to the place where the pen was kept, and found to my astonishment and chagrin that it was not there. I searched everywhere for it, looking in every imaginable place, but was unable to find it, and I fear it has been stolen, as that is the only way it could have gone. I have not carried it on my person since I laid it aside, so it could not have been lost out of doors.

The old phenomenon of the electric lights being turned on and off occurred here a few evenings ago when I was at dinner, and greatly astonished the few persons present. In the hall outside and the salon adjoining, the lights remained stationary, proving that there was some abnormal agency operating on the lights in the dining-room, as no one was anywhere near the switch knobs and could not have touched them. It is strange that this phenomenon only occurs at (and near) Mentone. In four different houses here it has now happened, and only when I am present.—Yours, &c.,

REGINALD E. SPAN.

Mentone, S. France.
May 10th.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, MAY 25th, &c.

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

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—*Shearn's Restaurant, 231, Tottenham Court-road, W.*—Mrs. Imison gave successful descriptions and helpful messages.—15, *Mortimer-street, W.*—19th, Mr. Horace Leaf gave interesting clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided. Sunday next, see advertisement on front page.—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, *Pembroke Place, Baywater, W.*—Morning, Mr. Percy E. Beard gave an address on 'The Gate of Death'; evening, Mr. E. W. Beard spoke on 'The Fashion of this World Passeth Away,' and the Misses Haywood sang a duet. For next week's services see front page.

BRISTON.—8, *MAYALL-ROAD.*—Mr. Sarfas gave an address and descriptions. Sunday next, 11 a.m., healing; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7, Mrs. Webster, address and descriptions. Circles: Monday, 7.30, ladies'; Tuesday, 8.15, members only.—E. K.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, *ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.*—Mr. Horace Leaf's powerful address on 'Religion and the Soul' and well-recognised descriptions were much appreciated. Sunday next, 11 a.m., service; 7 p.m., Mr. G. R. Symons.

CLAPHAM.—HOWARD-STREET, *NEW-ROAD.*—Mrs. Webster gave an address and descriptions. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., open circle; 7 p.m., Mr. Hope Johnson. Monday, at 3, ladies' circle. Thursday, at 8.15, address and psychometry.—F. C.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mr. J. G. Nicholson gave a helpful address. Sunday next, Mr. Robert King, address on 'Dreams.' Questions on the subject will be answered.—J. W. H.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, *LAUSANNE-ROAD.*—Morning, extremely interesting life experiences of Mr. H. Mann; evening, address by Mrs. E. de Bathe on 'Psychometry.' Sunday next, morning, Mr. G. Brown, address; Mr. Moncur, spirit messages; afternoon, Lyceum; evening, Mrs. Mary Davies. June 5th, at 8.15, Mrs. E. Neville. June 7th, at 8, Sunday, at 11.30 and 7, and Monday, at 3, Mrs. Butterworth. Tuesday, at 8.15, healing.

HACKNEY.—240A, *AMHURST-ROAD, N.*—Mr. Otto Kottnitz spoke on 'Has Man a Spirit?' and ably answered questions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. Dougall, on 'Auric Colours'; 7 p.m., Mr. A. J. Neville. Monday, 8 p.m., circle. Thursday, 7.30, healing, Mr. H. Bell and Mr. Buchard; 8.15 p.m., circle.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Morning, spirit teachings, questions answered; evening, fine controlled address by Mr. W. E. Long. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., W. E. Long, 'Personal Messages'; at 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Beaurepaire, address and clairvoyant descriptions.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, *ROMFORD-ROAD, E.*—Mrs. E. Neville, under influence, gave an interesting address on 'Experiences in the Spirit World,' and well-recognised descriptions. Mr. George F. Tilby presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. A. Keightley, address and clairvoyance.—W. H. S.

SEVEN KINGS.—45, *THE PROMENADE.*—Madame Beaumont named a baby, spoke on 'The Path of Progression,' and gave descriptions. May 20th, Mr. A. H. Sarfas gave an address on 'Bible Truths' and psychometric readings. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Miles Ord. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., Mr. H. Wright. 8th, Mr. Thompson. 10th, Mr. Tayler Gwinn.—C. E. S.

BRISTOL.—144, *GROSVENOR-ROAD.*—Mrs. Baxter spoke on 'Where does Spiritualism Place the Christ?' 'Every Man must Work out his own Salvation,' and 'The Evolution of Spirit,' and answered questions profitably. Sunday next, 6.30, public service. Monday, developing. Wednesday, service. Friday, public circle; all at 8 p.m.—J. S. B.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, *FOREST-LANE.*—Morning, Mr. J. Wrench, psychometry. Evening, good address on 'Procrastination' by Mr. Hayward; well-recognised descriptions by Mrs. Hayward. May 22nd, Mrs. Harrod, address and descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.45 a.m., Mr. J. Cattanaich on 'Consciousness'; 7 p.m., Mr. W. E. Walker, clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Mary Davies. 8th, Mr. Horace Leaf.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—The Rev. Thomas Grimshaw's inspirational addresses, morning and evening, were very highly appreciated. A crowded audience assembled on the 19th, to welcome Dr. J. M. Peebles, who gave a short inspirational address. Mr. Gambier Bolton also gave a fine paper upon 'Materialisations.' Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. F. Clarke, trance addresses; Tuesday, at 3, private interviews; at 8, also Wednesday, at 3 p.m., circles.—H. J. E.

BRIGHTON.—HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, *BRUNSWICK-STREET, WEST.*—Mrs. G. C. Curry gave descriptions, and Mr. T. O. Todd an excellent lecture on 'The Prophets in the Temple.' Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. John Gambriel Nicholson. Tuesdays, 3 and 8, also Wednesdays at 3 Mrs. Curry, clairvoyante. Thursdays, at 8.15, public circle.

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—Mr. P. R. Street gave addresses; his evening subject being 'The Spell Binder.' Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis. On the 19th Mr. Street gave an address and answered questions.—MCL.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—Mrs. M. Gordon's services were much appreciated. Mr. Dimmick kindly presided. Twenty-four Lyceum children attended the demonstration at King's Hall. Our sincere thanks are due to Mrs. Percy Smyth, through whose kindly interest all their expenses were paid, including the white frocks worn by the girls. Sunday next, at 7, Mr. Hough and Mrs. Boddington.

HOLLOWAY.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning, Mrs. S. Fielder gave psychic readings; evening, Mrs. Alice Jamrach spoke on 'The Mission of Spiritualism' and gave well-recognised descriptions. 21st, Mr. E. Alcock Rush gave his Canadian experiences, with song accompaniment. Sunday next, 11.15 and 7, Mr. Alfred Vout Peters; subjects, 'Hell' and 'The Bible'; at 3, Lyceum; Wednesday, Mrs. S. Fielder.—J. F.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STONE-ROAD.—Morning, healing; evening, Mr. W. F. Smith spoke on 'Truth versus Illusion,' and Mrs. Smith gave descriptions. 21st, Mr. E. W. Wallis gave an instructive address on 'A Soul's Trust, a Message from the Spirit World.' 22nd, Mrs. Mary Davies spoke on 'The Great Séance' and gave descriptions. A monthly healing class will commence on June 4th, under the conductorship of Mr. G. F. Tilby. June 8th, Mrs. Effie de Bathe; subject, 'The Hope of Heaven.'—A. L. M.

NOTTINGHAM.—MECHANICS' LECTURE HALL.—Mr. J. J. Morse gave addresses, morning and evening.—H. E.

SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—Fifth anniversary, Mrs. Letheren gave splendid addresses and descriptions.—J. W. M.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—Address by Mr. Lethbridge and descriptions by Mrs. Trueman. 21st, Mr. Clavis gave an address and Mrs. Short descriptions.—E. F.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHEAD HALL.—Addresses by Mrs. Scholes on 'What has Spiritualism to Teach?' and 'What is Man that Thou art so mindful of Him?'; also descriptions.

SOUTHAMPTON.—CAVENDISH GROVE.—Mr. R. Boddington spoke well on 'Looking Backwards' and 'Spiritualism, Scientific and Religious.'—G. M.

BIRMINGHAM.—CAMDEN-STREET SCHOOLS.—Mr. Gratton gave addresses and descriptions, and conducted a circle on Monday afternoon.—F. M. C.

SOUTHEND.—CROWSTONE GYMNASIUM, NORTHVIEW DRIVE, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.—Miss Violet Burton spoke on 'Seeking Sanctuary,' and the president gave descriptions.—S. E. W.

TOTTENHAM.—684, HIGH ROAD.—An address on 'Mount Pisgah' by Mrs. Roberts and several descriptions by Mr. Roberts.—N. D.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.—Addresses and descriptions were given by Mr. F. T. Blake, and on May 22nd by Mr. and Mrs. Taylor.

EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.—Services conducted by Mr. H. E. Williams, of Torquay. Descriptions were given after each address.—E. F.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES'-CRESCENT, N.W.—Mrs. Mary Davies gave an address on 'Spirit Power' and descriptions to a large audience.—J. A. P.

PORTSMOUTH TEMPLE.—VICTORIA-ROAD SOUTH.—Mr. Howard Mundy gave addresses and psychic readings. 21st, address by Mr. Lamaley and descriptions by Miss Hilda Jerome.

STONEHOUSE, PLYMOUTH.—UNITY HALL, EDGECUMBE-STREET.—Address by Mr. Blamey, 'The Open Door,' descriptions by Mr. Joachim Dennis, solo by Mrs. Hoskyn, duet by Master Tabb and Mrs. J. Dennis, the latter also giving descriptions.—E. D.

PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL, WATERLOO-STREET.—Mr. George Tayler Gwinn spoke on 'Two Wings' and 'Faint Not.' Mrs. Harvey gave descriptions. 21st, Mrs. Rex Luckier gave an address and descriptions.—P.

EXETER.—MARKET HALL.—Anniversary services. Morning, address by Mr. George West, descriptions by Mrs. Vincent; evening, address by Mrs. W. S. Williams, of Boston, Mass., descriptions by Mrs. M. A. Grainger.—H. L.

CHATHAM.—553, CANTERBURY-STREET, GILLINGHAM.—Address by Mr. A. J. Barton, 'Does Spiritualism Justify its Existence?' 21st, a successful social gathering. 22nd, paper by E. Willmore, A.C.P., on 'Spiritualism and Environment.'

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD.—Mrs. A. Boddington delivered an eloquent address on 'The Gospel of Spiritualism.' 21st, Mrs. Webster gave an address and descriptions.—C. D.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Miss F. Morse gave addresses on 'Spiritualism and its Relation to Earth Life' and 'The Future Life,' followed by descriptions. Vocal and violin solos by Miss Coldicott and Mr. Hasted respectively. Thoroughly enjoyable services.—C. A. B.

THE Spiritualist National Union, Ltd., has sent us quite a batch of 'Propaganda Publications.' Here is the list: No. VI., 'All-Inclusive Spiritualism,' by Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond; 'Spiritualism in Germany,' by H. Brinkman; 'Methods of Propaganda,' by Geo. W. Kates. No. VII., 'Progress and Purpose of Spiritualism,' by Dr. J. M. Peebles; 'The Actual Position of Spiritualism,' by Gabriel Delanne; 'Spiritualism in New Zealand,' by W. C. Nation. No. VIII., 'Formation of Typological Mediums,' by Chevalier Le Clément de St. Marcq; 'Physical Phenomena as a Basis for a Spiritual Religion,' by J. J. Morse; 'Progressive Spiritualism,' by Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader; No. IX., 'The Spiritualism of the Zulu,' by C. H. Bull; 'The Application of Spiritualism,' by E. W. Wallis. No. X., 'Was It a Thought-Form?' by Dr. M. T. Falcomer; 'Spiritualism, Ethics, Morality, and Religion,' by Geo. P. Young. No. XI., 'A Course of Theology,' by Chevalier Le Clément de St. Marcq. No. XII., 'Startling Facts about Our Bible,' by Gambier Bolton. Our readers will recognise the titles of the contents of the first five pamphlets as those of addresses delivered at the Spiritualist International Congress at Liverpool last year, and most of which they probably perused in 'LIGHT' shortly afterwards; but they will find them, as well as the last two, excellent for the purpose for which they are intended, viz., for distribution among inquirers and possible converts. They are issued at 2d. each, and can be obtained from the Union's offices, 30, Glen-terrace, Clover Hill, Halifax.

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