

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—*Goethe*.

"WHATEVER BOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—*Paul*.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The bomb-shell thrown by Professor Huxley into the phalanx of orthodox contentment has not a little startled the components of that feeble phalanx. It is interesting and not a little amusing to note how the cheap sneer so often levelled against Spiritualism is at once levelled against Mr. Huxley himself as soon as he advocates something which is not on the safe lines of pure worldliness. This is how the "Times" speaks of the Romanes lecturer:—

Matthew Arnold used to dwell upon the ineradicable Hebraism of Englishmen, and other critics have been unkind enough to say that what time we spare from our shopkeeping we spend in preaching. This Romanes lecture lends some colour to these criticisms. The theologians have been the pet aversion of Mr. Huxley and have often laid themselves open to his attacks by showing undue and superfluous anxiety to reconcile science with dogma, instead of leaving the whole business to the cosmic process. But now we have Mr. Huxley theologising with the best of them. Nothing will satisfy him but to show that he, too, is among the prophets, that no amount of physics can eradicate the love of metaphysics, and that he, too, must try to run science and dogma in double harness. The evolution he talks of is an abstraction, and he has not even been careful to use the word in one sense and one only. At one moment it means a vague conception of the unknown order and necessity of things upon the great scale, at another it means only the historical phases of speculation upon subjects of which our actual knowledge is insusceptible of extension, and at a third it means the development of knowledge upon subjects open to unlimited investigation.

How are the mighty fallen! Professor Huxley careless! Where, we should like to know, has he tried to run "science and dogma in double harness"? Yes; again we have the undertone of fear—fear that there may be something after all beyond the Stock Exchange and the Imperial Institute:—

Practical ethics, the rules by which men actually carry on their daily business, have never followed the speculative changes upon which Mr. Huxley lays so much stress. On the contrary, we should find, were the necessary records not so utterly fragmentary, that the conditions of the workaday world chiefly determined the historical course of speculation. Men and nations do not behave in a given way because given theories are for the moment in vogue among philosophers and theologians, any more than they speak a given language because grammarians have made out its rules. Their working theories of life are drawn from the necessities and the practice of life, hence the ethical standard is always adjusting itself to that redoubtable cosmic process.

Scarcely consistent is it, surely, to condemn Mr. Huxley for vagueness, and then to found a whole theory of the foundation of ethics on statements which are "utterly fragmentary." Materialism does not like the idea of spirituality of any sort or kind, hence its dislike of even the faintest adumbration of a belief in the Unseen.

The "Pall Mall Gazette" is more really philosophical:—

But this Oxford lecture is more significant from another point of contemplation. The triumphant note of "progress" has so long sounded in our ears that the spectacle of this modern resignation, this modern despair, is particularly striking. Mr. Huxley disdained the charge of pessimism; he was not an optimist or a pessimist. But, as we have said, he had the air of submission, if not of hopelessness. The evolutionary theory once startled the world into a faith in a golden age, not past but future; but the fires of enthusiasm have sunk low, and one of the foremost advocates of the new philosophy warns us to have "no millennial anticipations." "The summit will be reached and the downward route will be commenced."

What a commentary on the "progress" which brought forth paeans of exultation in 1887!

The "Westminster Gazette" does not accept Mr. Huxley's theories, but makes the following admissions:—

Those who have read Professor Huxley's Romanes address at Oxford yesterday will be struck once again by the curious turn which thought appears to be taking at the close of the century. There is a general rounding upon progress. Mr. Pearson has damped us with a theory of life which, if not exactly pessimism, is at least quite drab and grey, and now comes Professor Huxley to tell us that the fine thing we have called evolution is in absolute conflict with our aspirations towards a new heaven and a new earth. This is a very remarkable reaction from the prevailing tendency of thought some fifty years ago, when the new scientific ideas were working their way into politics, religion, and theories of life. In those days there was a rather premature and perhaps fallacious clearness of thought. Men thought they discerned the drift of things, and looked forward to some certain goal. There were sharp, definite formulas for everything, rules of Government, laws of political economy, codes and theories of ethics, explanations of life which seemed luminous and simple. But at this period the world seems to be passing through a stage which is common enough with individuals. It is growing out of its early clearness. Factors which were omitted insist upon consideration, new discoveries decline to square with early theories, predictions have not been verified. And so there is general melting down, prior, no doubt, to a new casting. But for the moment the metal is hot and seething, the shape that is to be has not emerged, and the material is in flux. Mathematicians come forward to tell us that the three angles of a triangle are after all not equal to two right angles; and men of science come forward to assure us that we were quite wrong about progress, evolution, and all that. This is not necessarily an unwholesome state of things. It stimulates thought, and it is after all a fair *rêve à deux* for the precocious theorising which the century indulged in when it was yet youthful.

The old order is indeed changing. What will be the new?

For some time past the haste to get rich has been the moral disease of Australia. The whole colony has been one huge Monte Carlo, and now that this evil has brought about its natural and quite proper result, the fetish which such people worship and call their God is to be invoked. According to a telegram:—

Special services will be held in the Melbourne Town Hall and the churches throughout the diocese of Melbourne, pursuant

to the invitation issued by the Right Rev. Dr. Field Flowers Goo to the clergy, to observe the 17th inst. as a day of humiliation, in view of the financial troubles which have overtaken the colony.

It will be interesting to know what these pleasant sinners are humiliating themselves about. If it is that they are repenting of their spell of greed some good may come, but if it is that they are only going to promise to do better if business improves, the less we hear about this humiliation the better. A rampant materialism gets into a materialistic fix, and then humiliates itself. The negroes of the West Coast of Africa do similar things.

Our correspondent, who uses the signature "Libra," has taken the trouble to compare the weather forecasts for April as given in Raphael and Zadkiel's almanacks, respectively. The discrepancies are very remarkable, and, as "Libra" remarks, "A comparison of these two authorities with each other, and with the actual weather, is instructive. Who will apologise on behalf of astrology?"

GHOSTS IN THE "DAILY NEWS."

The amusing and but feebly disguised leader-writer on the staff of the "Daily News," who treats of occult matters now and again in that journal has been exercised about Mr. Thomas Jay Hudson's book on "The Law of Psychic Phenomena" (Putnam's Sons). The critic of Mr. Hudson will not have the "subjective," as explanatory of everything, and rather unexpectedly makes some implied admissions:—

This accomplished agent can also move objects, and make itself heard by rapping, and so on. Thus, the disturbances in the Wesleys' house ; at Tedworth earlier ; at Mrs. Ricketts's house ; and in the story of Orthon, so amusingly told by Froissart, are due to the subjective mind of somebody. In the case of the Wesleys nobody was conscious of being so subjective as all that, nor in the case of Mrs. Ricketts. She was a sister of the first Lord St. Vincent, and Scott expresses a wish that we had his evidence. We have it, and it has recently been printed. As for ghosts, they are only "intensified telepathetic visions." "The power to create phantasms resides in the subjective mind of man," especially "at the hour of death." But when the phantasm is that of a person long dead how are we to account for it ? Mr. Hudson more or less says that it is the embodiment of one idea, ghosts being very apt to show a most limited intelligence. When it has conveyed its one idea it dwindles out ; but this is mere random assertion. Ghosts are not always "rehearsing tragedies"; as a general rule they are merely loafing about. Nor are ghosts always those of people who have died by violence, or in violent emotion ; very far from it, indeed. In all this deeply interesting part of his subject Mr. Hudson shows superstition and even ignorance. Let us take a haunted house. The occupant is smoking his pipe alone. His dog begins to growl, cower, and exhibit every sign of alarm. The door opens, a face looks in, the face of the usual spectre. What has the subjective mind to do with that ? Why does everyone see the same face ? Why is the dog the first to know what is coming before it comes ? Dogs, as we gather, have no subjective mind. The case may, indeed, be disputed, or even regarded as nonsense, but we, like the subjective self, are arguing from given premises. The ghost is "the embodied thought of a dying man," or woman, Mr. Hudson says, but (granting the phenomenon) we prefer to hold that "a ghast's a ghast for a' that." He may not be very intelligent, but he walks, "solvitur ambulando": a thought does not walk about. Nor does he walk for such a very short time. A ghost in golden armour haunted a barrow near Mold. The barrow was therefore opened, and the gold cuirass found there is in the Gold Room of the British Museum. That ghost had been walking for two thousand three hundred years, or thereabouts. Mr. Hudson needs better information than he seems to possess about the natural history of ghosts, which is full of facts not disposed of by his theory ; facts for him, of course, though perhaps less solid in the opinion of other people.

THOUGHT is the first faculty of man ; to express it is one of his first desires ; to spread it, his dearest privilege.—RAYNAL.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CRIMINALS.

Those who get away from matter, and realise that man is only a presentment of spirit, will find the observations of Dr. Lombroso exceedingly suggestive. He has been writing about certain recent trials and those implicated in the trials. Dr. Lombroso is treating of a modern form of swindling, that of the company promoter and thief. We are indebted to the "Literary Digest" for a summary of Dr. Lombroso's views. He is speaking of the Panama trouble, and the affair of the Roman banks :—

I observe, then, in these leaders, phenomena contrary to those presented by born political criminals (the anarchists, for example), that is, an absence of criminal type, for their physiognomy is very nearly the same as that of honest people.

In Italy, Jesuitism, which plays too great a part in the Government, tries to hide the wound of corruption, and mask the scandal from the public.

Yet it is none the less visible, and more shameful, than that of France, for it has not the pretext of trying to accomplish a great idea, or a great illusion, as was the case with the Panama scandal.

In Italy, out of seven personages who are implicated in the affair of the banks of issue three have some criminal characteristics.

What may be said of the physical type of the corruptors of whom I have been speaking, can be said even more positively of their intelligence and sensibilities.

In place of being muddle-headed and having a low degree of intellect, in place of cynicism and an absence of all ethical and easily touched feelings, which form the characteristics of born criminals, even of the highest class—even of political criminals, like anarchists and regicides—we have here well-poised and clear minds, men who have sometimes had the destinies of their country in their hands without deserving blame, who, instead of remaining insensible and cynical in the presence of accusation, have been deeply moved and affected to such a degree that, in Italy at least, they succeed almost in making people forget that the money which they filched or wasted was truly taken from very poor persons.

All confess their crime and weep, except Herz and Arton, who are furthest removed from the type of honest people, and Cuciniello, who loudly denies the accusations made against him, and who has, moreover, characteristics of the criminal type, manifesting apathy, the cynicism of the true criminal ; and, still further, the lewdness which is frequently found among poisoners. Cuciniello is besides completely indifferent as to his dishonour, so much so that, immediately after his arrest, he played a genuine comedy, feigned suicide, and then, half an hour afterwards, offered cigars to his keepers, and smoked some himself. Shortly after reaching his prison he ate with a good appetite, cracking jokes about the dishes and the cells of the gaol. He asked for obscene books to read, and declared that he meant to pull down other guilty persons with him, which is one of the delights of genuine criminals.

On the contrary, the other prisoners are truly ill; they weep, and eat nothing ; they ask for serious books only.

To explain the criminal characteristics, even in those of the accused who are certainly guilty, is not difficult.

The fact is that the wasting of other people's property and abuse of confidence are crimes which can be committed by sympathetic persons alone, who do not awaken repulsion and defiance by characteristics of degeneracy, like other criminals. These sympathetic persons exercise a sort of fascination over those who, if they were influenced by reasoning only, would not become the victims of the fraudsters.

Fraud, abuse of confidence, are a transformed evolution from crime which has lost its cruelty. For the cruelty is substituted that greed for money and habit of lying, which, unfortunately, is becoming a general thing.

If we pass from the country to the city, from the city to the small town, we find in trade, great and small, a development of lying.

In associations of the highest rank, under the form of banks with shareholders, we often see fraud permanently in office to the damage of dupes, and an artificial guarantee given by putting forward most honourable names.

This explains why he who wastes or appropriates the funds of others is generally only what may be called a "criminaloid,"

something resembling a criminal, who has the characteristics of an honest man, and who, if opportunity had not offered, would never have been guilty. The cleverness, the knavish tricks of some ringleaders like Herz, Arton, Reinach, with whom deceit and bad faith were increased by an ethnic cause, brought about the failure of the canal scheme. These, especially the first two, have all the marks of the criminal type. Their complete cynicism, coming much nearer to the born criminal than the "criminaloid," turned out a nucleus around which collected, little by little like small crystals, the deputies and journalists who were drawn on by their thirst for gold.

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY.

In the "Arena" for May, Kate Breffington Davis discourses on this subject. The morality herein taught is very pure, but in what does it differ from all the pure religions of the world, ere yet they have been overlaid by the impure and misleading tinsel which hides their beauty?

Theosophy is practical in loosing from man's mind the shackles of fear. It makes plain the universality of law, that suffering and sin are the results of ignorance; and that man need fear only the darkness of his own limitations. The order of God is towards perfectness and fearlessness in the seeking of truth, and the living the truth is the pathway up to God. Knowledge of truth is the light on the path, but the living of the measure of righteousness we know is the progress. Intellectual perception, like a sign post, points the way, but we must travel the path, no matter how rugged, if we would find the kingdom.

This is Theosophy, certainly, but is it Theosophy only?

To be a practical Theosophist is to know every claim made, through need or suffering, upon us has a right to relief we can render; that we are here to serve one another, and to grow through serving. Theosophy points the unity of humanity, and emphasises the sympathy and service we owe every fellow-creature, as our life lines cross.

Surely other philosophies have taught all this.

On its material side Theosophy is eminently practical, giving those who seek, and who are morally qualified to be the custodians of such great powers, a knowledge of the resources of nature which, through comparison, renders the wisdom of our Western science mere child's play.

Yes, and this is a real claim, but is there a single European Theosophist living who will dare to attempt any single display of these great powers? Let them put the powers into practice. The Spiritualistic phenomena produced through the mediumship of Madame Blavatsky of course do not count.

Practical Theosophy affects every hour of life; it is not sufficient to control actions only; we must stand guard constantly over thought; to think purely, to know no evil, is to progress spiritually.

Exactly so, but why is this more "Theosophic" than anything else?

The ready recognition of another's faults and failings indicates a correspondence in our own soul to like error. Knowledge is relative, and "to the pure all things are pure." Whosoever criticises another or attributes a sin to fellow-man is only revealing to the wise the dark places within the soul of the accuser.

But how does this differ from Christianity?

A Theosophic saying is, "A wicked man is the one whom the law puts to more severe tests than myself. When I see one who commits great wrongs, I hear in my heart that mediæval cry, 'Make way for the justice of God.' To be unjust is in itself the greatest punishment. When the law passes judgment upon man, its justice is injustice avenging itself upon its creator."

Excellent, but again, why "Theosophic," except as to that "wisdom of God" knowledge which is not the peculiar property of Esoteric Buddhism?

No truth has been established without martyrs, save those taught by Euclid. One persuades by one's sufferings: St. Paul said, "Believe me, for I am often in prison."—PAUL LOUIS COURIER.

THE MILAN EXPERIMENTS.

V.

We continue the account of the experiments which were carried on in the dark.

(c) Appearance of hands on a feebly lighted background. We placed upon the table a piece of cardboard washed in calcic sulphate (a phosphorescent substance); we also placed other such pieces on the chairs in different parts of the room. Under these conditions we saw quite clearly the outline of a hand which was placed on the cardboard on the table, and on the background made by the other pieces of cardboard we saw the shadow of the hand pass and repass about us.

On the evening of September 21st one of us saw several times, not only one, but *two hands at once*, projected on the faint light through the window, to which there were no shutters, for it was night outside, though the darkness was not absolute. These hands were rapidly agitated, but not too rapidly for one to see their outline. They were perfectly opaque, and were projected on the window in quite black shadows. It was impossible for the observer to form any opinion as to the arms to which these hands belonged, because a very small portion only of the arms—the part near the wrist—was interposed before the feeble light of the window, in the position possible for observation.

These phenomena of the simultaneous appearance of two hands are *very significant*, because they cannot be explained by any hypothesis of fraud on the part of the medium, who could in no way have freed more than one of her hands, thanks to the watchfulness of her neighbours. The same conclusion applies to the striking of the *two hands*, one against the other, which striking was heard in the air many times during the course of our experiments.

[With reference to this experiment M. Aksakov adds in a footnote:—

At the séance of September 23rd, during the darkness, M. Schiaparelli was holding the left hand of the medium, and I her right hand in my own left hand. In this same hand I held a watch which had just been placed there by the mysterious hand; soon this hand came to take it away again; I would not give it up; *a curious struggle then went on* between my fingers, those holding the watch, and the fingers of the mysterious hand, which were small and strong, and in which I thought I recognised (as far as it was possible under the conditions) the double of the medium's hand; an impression which seemed to me to be verified and confirmed by the appearance of the mysterious hand in the light at the séance of October 6th. Whilst this struggle was going on, and it twice began over again, I asked M. Schiaparelli several times to make sure that he had the hand of the medium in his. I make mention of this here in order to state that during this struggle—at this time it was myself who was seated in front of the window—I saw on the feebly illuminated background of this window, on two separate occasions, lowering itself down towards the table, and coming from the side of the medium, something like an arm, and immediately afterwards something large and round, like a head, and the medium, on her side, said each time, "Do you see?" But the curious thing is, that *this something was not black and opaque*, as in the observations of Mr. Schiaparelli, but half transparent, vapourous, or in Spiritist language, fluidic, and of feebly defined outline.]

(d) Lifting the medium on to the table.

We place this lifting, which occurred twice, on September 23rd and October 3rd, among the most important and significant. The medium, seated at one end of the table, sighing heavily, was raised with her chair and placed with it upon the table, being seated in the same position, her two hands still being held and accompanied by her neighbours'.

On the evening of September 28th the medium, whilst her two hands were being held by MM. Richet and Lombroso, complained of hands which were seizing her under the arms; then in a state of trance, she said in that pained voice which is common to her in that state, "Now, I am carrying my medium on to the table." At the end of two or three seconds, the chair, with the medium seated on it, was not thrown, but raised at the first effort, and deposited on the table, whilst MM. Richet and Lombroso are sure of having in no way aided in the movement by any movement of their own. After having spoken, always in the trance state, the medium said she was

about to descend, and M. Finzi having been substituted for M. Lombroso, the medium was deposited on the floor with equal safety and precision, whilst MM. Finzi and Richet accompanied, without in any way helping, the movements of her hands and body, whilst at each instant they asked each other as to the position of the hands.

Besides this, during the descent, both of them several times felt a hand which touched them lightly on the head. On the evening of October 3rd the same phenomena again took place under exactly similar circumstances, MM. du Prel and Finzi being at the sides of the medium.

(e) Touchings.

Some of these deserve to be particularly noted, because of certain circumstances which in some way may give a clue to their possible origin; and first we must speak of those touchings which were felt by persons out of the reach of the medium. On the evening, then, of October 6th, M. Gerosa, who was three places off the medium (about 1 metre, 20 centimetres, the medium being at the shorter side of the table and M. Gerosa at one of the angles of the other shorter side), having raised his hand so that it might be touched, felt a hand strike his own down several times, and, as he persisted in keeping it raised, he was struck with a trumpet, which a short time previously had been giving sounds in the air.

Next we must notice such "touchings" as consist of delicate operations, and which cannot be made in the dark with the precision we have noticed. Twice (September 16th, and 21st) M. Schiaparelli had his spectacles removed and placed before another person on the table. These spectacles are fixed over his ears by a pair of springs, and a certain amount of attention is necessary for their removal, even when it is done in full light. Nevertheless they were removed in complete darkness, with so much delicacy and promptitude that the experimenter only noticed their absence by missing the habitual contact of the glasses with his nose, temples, and ears, and he was obliged to feel with his hands to make sure that they were not in their accustomed place.

Analogous effects were produced by many other touchings, executed with amazing delicacy, as, for example, when one of those present felt his hair and beard being stroked. In all the innumerable performances executed by these mysterious hands, we had never to make note of a blunder or a slip, things which are generally inevitable when one is working in the dark. The darkness was in most cases (exceptions have already been mentioned) as complete as possible, and it was impossible for the medium or anyone else to see, even vaguely and confusedly, the outlines of the persons seated round the table.

Besides this, heavy and large-sized bodies, as chairs and vessels full of sand, were placed upon the table, without any of these objects meeting one of the numerous hands resting on the table, and this was all the more difficult as the chairs from their size filled a great part of the table. A chair was turned over on its front side and placed lengthwise on the table, so that it nearly filled it, without anybody being hurt.

(f) Contact with a human form.

One of us having expressed a desire to be kissed, felt before his own mouth the rapid noise of a kiss, but unaccompanied by contact with the lips. This happened twice, September 21st, and October 1st. On three separate occasions one of our number touched a human form having hair and a beard; the feel of the skin was exactly that of the face of a living man, the hair was much coarser and bristling than that of the medium, while the beard on the contrary seemed very fine. (October 1st, 5th, and 6th.)

(g) Trumpet sounds.

On the evening of October 6, we had placed a trumpet behind the medium, and behind the curtains. Suddenly we heard it sound several notes behind our heads. Those who were by the side of the medium were certain that the sound certainly did not come in her direction. The trumpet was found to have been placed on the table, on the side farthest from the medium.

The committee then tried the Zöllner experiments, namely:—

1. The interlocking of two solid rings, previously separate.
2. The formation of an ordinary knot in an endless cord.
3. The carriage of a solid object from the outside to the inside of a closed box, the key being in safe custody.

None of these experiments succeeded; nevertheless, the following curious thing did occur, but "unfortunately," say the committee, without notice having been given, so that the ordinary watchfulness had been relaxed. It was on September 21st:—

One of us, at the beginning of the séance, having placed his overcoat on a chair, out of the reach of the medium, we saw at the end of the séance, on a phosphorescent piece of cardboard placed on the table, various objects which the owner of the overcoat soon recognised as coming from an inside pocket of the coat; then the medium began to cry out, complaining that something had been put round her which was strangling her.

As soon as the light reappeared we found the overcoat was no longer in its former place, and on looking at the medium, who was sleepy and in a bad humour, we noticed that she had on her back the overcoat in question, and her two arms were inside the two sleeves. During the séance the hands and the feet of the medium remained under the control of her neighbours, as usual.

There hardly seems to the ordinary observer any lack of vigilance here, and the following remarks therefore appear a little strange.—

It will be well understood how on this occasion, more than any other, confidence in the production of so remarkable a phenomenon reposes entirely on the certainty as well as the continuity of control over the medium's hands: so, as the phenomenon was quite unexpected, the attention of the medium's neighbours could not have concentrated itself continually on the necessary watching. The two experimenters had to declare that *they did not think* they had let go the hands of the medium, but on account of the distraction of their attention caused by the phenomena themselves, they not having kept their attention always and solely fixed on this matter, they had to admit that it was possible, though not probable, that they had for a moment left the medium free without noticing it.

In a footnote to this, M. Aksakov justly says:—

It must also be supposed that the two hands of the medium were let go by her neighbours at the same instant, and that the medium also had got out of her chair to fetch the coat, which was on a chair some distance off. All which is more than improbable.

And one feels that M. Aksakov is right.

MR. MARION CRAWFORD AND THE OCCULT.

In the "Bookman" for May there is an account of Mr. Marion Crawford's belief in occultism. Here is Mr. Crawford's experience of his views on these subjects:—

All religions are merely the efforts of man to know his own soul. All religions are more or less perfect forms of self-hypnotism. It is when a man is in the self-hypnotic trance as produced by the wise men of India and Japan, that he sees his real soul best. This real soul is called the dominant self, and lies latent, a prisoner, as it were, in every human being. It is an exceedingly dangerous thing for a man uninstructed in the processes and precautions of the East to attempt to see his dominant self. It is like letting one of the genii in the "Arabian Nights" out of its copper kettle; you have no means of knowing whether it will prove to be a good or an evil spirit. None of this is said in jest; the subject is far too serious.

In the hypnotic trance, Mr. Crawford maintains that the adept not only contemplates his dominant self in the present, but also in the past, and, to a limited degree, in the future. "They can see the ripples a little ahead." But the words past, present, and future should not be used, as in a trance state both time and space disappear.

An adept in a trance state can read the thoughts of another person like a printed page, even though he does not understand that person's language. He can also transfer his thoughts at will, regardless of distance.—"Review of Reviews."

EVEN were the immortality of the soul a fiction, I should be sorry not to believe in it. I confess that I am not so humble as the atheists. I do not follow their thoughts; but, for myself, would not barter the idea of my immortality for the happiness of to-day. I delight to deem myself immortal as God Himself. Independently of revelation, metaphysical teaching gives me a confident hope of eternal happiness, which I would not willingly abandon.—MONTESQUIEU.

POST-MORTEM COMMUNICATIONS.

Mrs. Besant concludes her articles in "Lucifer" on "Death—and After?" with a classification of the modes in which post-mortem communications are given. They may come from the Ethereal Double or Linga Sharira, from the soul in Kâma Loka, or from the soul in Devachan, and they may also come in the following different ways. But where is the proof of it all?—

(a) **FROM SHELLS.**—These, while but the last cast-off garment of the liberated Soul, retain for some time the impress of their late inhabitant, and reproduce automatically his habits of thought and expression, just as a physical Body will automatically repeat habitual gestures. Reflex action is as possible to the Desire Body as to the physical, but all reflex action is marked by its character of repetition, and absence of all power to initiate movement. It answers to a stimulus with an appearance of purposive action, but it initiates nothing. When people "sit for development," or when at a séance they anxiously hope and wait for messages from departed friends, they supply just the stimulus needed, and obtain the signs of recognition for which they expectantly watch.

(b) **FROM ELEMENTARIES.**—These, possessing the lower capacities of the mind, i.e., all the intellectual faculties that found their expression through the physical brain during life, may produce communications of a highly intellectual character. These, however, are rare, as may be seen from a survey of the messages published as received from "departed spirits."

(c) **FROM ELEMENTALS.**—These semi-conscious centres of force play a great part at séances, and are mostly the agents who are active in producing physical phenomena. They throw about or carry objects, make noises, ring bells, &c., &c. Sometimes they play pranks with Shells, animating them and representing them to be the spirits of great personalities who have lived on earth, but who have sadly degenerated in the "spirit-world," judging by their effusions. Sometimes, in materialising séances, they busy themselves in throwing pictures from the Astral Light on the fluidic forms produced, so causing them to assume likenesses of various persons. There are also Elementals of a very high type who occasionally communicate with very gifted mediums, "Shining Ones" from other spheres.

(d) **FROM NIRMANAKAYAS.**—For these communications, as for the two classes next mentioned, the medium must be of a very pure and lofty nature. The Nirmânakâya is a perfected man, who has cast aside his physical body but retains his other lower principles, and remains in the earth-sphere for the sake of helping forward the evolution of mankind. Nirmânakayas

Have, out of pity for mankind and those they left on earth, renounced the Nirvânic state. Such an Adept, or Saint, or whatever you may call him, believing it a selfish act to rest in bliss while mankind groans under the burden of misery produced by ignorance, renounces Nirvâna and determines to remain invisible in spirit on this earth. They have no material body, as they have left it behind; but otherwise they remain with all their principles even in astral life in our sphere. And such can and do communicate with a few elect ones, only surely not with ordinary mediums.

(e) **FROM ADEPTS NOW LIVING ON EARTH.**—These often communicate with their Disciples, without using the ordinary methods of communication, and when any tie exists, perchance from some past incarnation, between an Adept and a medium, constituting that medium a disciple, a message from the Adept might readily be mistaken for a message from a "spirit." The receipt of such messages by precipitated writing or spoken words is within the knowledge of some.

(f) **FROM THE MEDIUM'S HIGHER EGO.**—Where a pure and earnest man or woman is striving after the light, this upward striving is met by a downward reaching of the higher nature, and light from the higher streams downward, illuminating the lower consciousness. Then the lower mind is, for the time, united with its parent, and transmits as much of its knowledge as it is able to retain.

To complete the statement it may be added that what the average Soul can do when it has passed through the gateway of Death, it can do on this side, and communications may be as readily obtained by writing, in trance, and by the other means of receiving messages, from embodied as from disembodied Souls. If each developed within himself the powers of his own Soul, instead of drifting about aimlessly, or ignorantly plunging into dangerous experiments, knowledge might be safely accumulated and the evolution of the Soul might be accelerated.

This one thing is sure: Man is to-day a living Soul, over whom Death has no power, and the key of the prison-house of the Body is in his own hands, so that he may learn its uses if he will. It is because his true Self, while blinded by the Body, has lost touch with other Selves, that Death has been a gulf instead of a gateway between embodied and disembodied Souls.

PHYSICAL VITALITY AFTER DEATH.

The following is from the "Boston Herald" of Sunday, April 23rd:—

The conclusions reached in an article in a recent number of the French scientific periodical, "Annales de Chimie et de Physique," suggest some curious speculations, both physical and psychical. A formidable array of facts is produced to show that bodily vitality does not cease with the death of the being, as such; that a certain form of life persists; that upon the death of the animal as a whole, each cell then lives on its own account, continuing to perform its functions and exhausting by a species of residual or fermentative life the reserves at its disposal, vegetating after the fashion of yeast, and being able, like that, to pass from a life fed by the air to a life in which air is unnecessary to it. There is shown to be strong evidence for the view that the stoppage of the life of the individual does not stop the cellular life of the tissues.

Among the proofs of the persistence of life in the tissues after death and their performance of their functions is the fact that muscle, after it is taken from the animal, continues for some time to absorb oxygen, to give out carbonic acid, and to respond to electric stimulation. It has been demonstrated that the tail of a rat, more than ten days after it has been cut off, can be grafted on the back of an animal of the same species, the only condition being that the part cut off be kept in a low temperature; the cold diminishing, and almost annulling, the exchanges that suffice to maintain its life.

These facts raise some interesting queries concerning conscious life. It is held by many thinkers, and apparently with reason, that wherever there is life there must also be consciousness of some kind. A sensitiveness to impressions from the environment of an organism, that is what appears to lie at the basis of consciousness. Researches in hypnotism have recently thrown much light upon the phenomena of consciousness, and it has been proven that in states that have commonly been called states of unconsciousness the keenest consciousness really exists, although entirely separate from our normal consciousness. Thence there is reason for supposing that a person is always conscious in some way, whether sleeping or waking.

The persistence of bodily vitality after death of the individual indicates an accompaniment of some sort of consciousness. Since the reserves of the tissues are sooner or later exhausted and every cell finally dies, this argument in itself would not seem to give material support from physical data for belief in immortality except to hint that life, and hence consciousness, may attach to forms of matter too imponderable for the perception of our senses and which may have formed parts of our bodies and, as the vehicles of life, persisted intact after the death of the grosser parts. While this, of course, is mere speculation, it is worth bearing in mind that scientific methods, proceeding upon hypothetical lines, have led to the establishment of facts equally strange.

Material and psychical science in their lines of advance nowadays seem to keep pace with each other in a remarkable way, one lending its support to the other. It is a curious fact that the evidences of vitality in the tissues after the death of the individual, presented by the French writer, seem to agree in a striking manner with the strange idea upon which the weird and mystical work of an American author was based, Captain Huntington's story, "Dreams of the Dead," in which a persistence of consciousness in the brain cells after death causes all sorts of uncanny dreams until complete disintegration is accomplished. It is a noteworthy circumstance that a fundamental idea of this queer story should so soon find a partial support in the speculations of science. It is said that everything can be found in Shakespeare, and so it may be queried if all this was not anticipated in Hamlet's soliloquy, to which a new significance may thus attach!

TILL Life is coming back, our death we do not feel;
Light must be coming in, our darkness to reveal.

—TRENCH.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
ADELPHI, LONDON, W.C.

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Light:

EDITED BY "M.A., LOND."

SATURDAY, MAY 27th, 1893.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

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MR. HUXLEY.

We live in an age of surprises. What is now to-day is old to-morrow. What a man thinks to-night he unthinks in the morning. That Mr. Huxley should be among the prophets is perhaps not so startling to those who have followed his work of late years, but it will be a wondrous revelation to the unthinking Philistine that his supposed guide, philosopher, and friend is not what he thought him to be, that even Professor Huxley finds that all is not for the best in this best of all possible worlds. The small mockery of the unregenerate leader-writer is already at work, for the holy of holies of the Stock Exchange is shocked.

Professor Huxley gave the Romanes lecture at Oxford on Thursday, May 17th, on "Evolution and Ethics." Those who expected to learn once more that ethics must be the outcome of evolution, to hear over again the dismal story of how morals grew out of necessity, to grow drowsy through the monotonous chant of agnostic mediocrity, were indeed disappointed, for the lecturer argued that cosmic evolution and ethical development are utterly opposed to each other. In other words, though he, perhaps, would not acknowledge it, Mr. Huxley preached the doctrine of spiritual ethics as opposed to a material necessity. He would not have anything to do with "Practical Ethics, the rules by which men actually carry on their daily business," but he would have something which should mould those practical ethics. Mr. Huxley must, however, be quoted. To hear him discoursing on Gautama and speaking of Nirvana is pleasant:

Early ethics did not take much note of the animus of the violator of the rules. But civilisation could not advance far, without the establishment of a capital distinction between the case of involuntary and that of wilful misdeed; between a merely wrong action and a guilty one. The idea of justice thus underwent a gradual sublimation from punishment and reward according to acts, to punishment and reward according to desert; or, in other words, according to motive. Righteousness—that is, action from right motive—not only became synonymous with justice, but the positive constituent of innocence and the very heart of goodness. Now, when the ancient sage, whether Indian or Greek, who had attained to this conception of goodness, looked the world, and especially human life, in the face, he found it as hard as we do to bring the course of evolution into harmony with even the elementary requirements of the ethical ideal of the just and the good. Greek and Semite and Indian are agreed upon this subject. The Book of Job is at one with the "Works and Days" and the Buddhist

Sutras; the Poet-mist and the Preacher of Israel, with the teachers of Greece. The earlier forms of Indian philosophy agree with those prevalent in our own times, in supposing the existence of a permanent reality, or "substance," beneath the shifting series of phenomena, whether of matter or of mind. The substance of the cosmos was "Brahma," that of the individual man "Atman"; and the latter was separated from the former only, if I may so speak, by its phenomenal envelope, by the casing of sensations, thoughts, and desire, pleasure and pains, which make up the illusive phantasmagoria of life. This the ignorant take for reality; their "Atman" therefore remains eternally in prisoned in delusions, bound by the fictions of desire and scourged by the whip of misery.

The founder of Buddhism accepted the chief postulates demanded by his predecessors. But he was not satisfied with the practical annihilation involved in merging the individual existence in the unconditioned—the Atman in Brahma. It would seem that the admission of the existence of any substance whatever—even of the tenuity of that which has neither quality nor energy and of which no predicate whatever can be asserted—appeared to him to be a danger and a snare. Though reduced to hypostatized negation, Brahma was not to be trusted; so long as entity was there, it might conceivably resume the weary round of evolution, with all its train of immeasurable miseries. Gautama got rid of even that shade of a shadow of permanent existence by a metaphysical *tour de force* of great interest to the student of philosophy, seeing that it supplies the wanting half of Bishop Berkeley's well-known idealist argument. Granting the premises, I am not aware of any escape from Berkeley's conclusion, that the "substance" of matter is a metaphysical unknown quantity, of the existence of which there is no proof. What Berkeley does not seem to have so clearly perceived is that the non-existence of a substance of mind is equally arguable; and that the result of the impartial application of his reasonings is the reduction of the All to co-existences and sequences of phenomena, beneath and beyond which there is nothing cognoscible. It is a remarkable indication of the subtlety of Indian speculation that Gautama should have seen deeper than the greatest of modern idealists; though it must be admitted that, if some of Berkeley's reasonings respecting the nature of spirit are pushed home, they reach pretty much the same conclusion. Gautama proceeded to eliminate substance altogether, and to reduce the cosmos to a mere flow of sensations, emotions, volitions, and thoughts, devoid of any substratum. However this may be, Gautama doubtless had a better guarantee for the abolition of transmigration, when no wrack of substance, either of Atman or of Brahma, was left behind; when, in short, a man had but to dream that he willed not to dream, to put an end to all dreaming. This end of life's dream is Nirvana. What Nirvana is the learned do not agree. But, since the best original authorities tell us there is neither desire, nor activity, nor any possibility of phenomenal reappearance for the sage who has entered Nirvana, it may be safely said of this acme of Buddhistic philosophy—the rest is silence.

Mr. Huxley then refers to the Stoics, and, speaking of their state of perfection in Apatheia, says:—

I find it difficult to discover any very great difference between Apatheia and Nirvana, except that stoical speculation agrees with pre-Buddhistic philosophy, rather than with the teachings of Gautama, in so far as it postulates a permanent substance equivalent to "Brahma" and "Atman"; and that in stoical practice the adoption of the life of the mendicant cynic was held to be more a counsel of perfection than an indispensable condition of the higher life. Thus the extremes touch. Greek thought and Indian thought set out from ground common to both, diverge widely, develop under very different physical and moral conditions, and finally converge to practically the same end. The Vedas and the Homeric epos set before us a world of rich and vigorous life, full of joyous fighting men

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine

and who were ready to brave the very gods themselves when their blood was up. A few centuries pass away and, under the influence of civilisation, the descendants of these men are "sicklied o'er with the pale east of thought"—frank pessimists, or, at best, make-believe optimists. The courage of the warlike stock may be as hardly tried as before, perhaps more hardly, but the enemy is self. The hero has become a monk. The man of action is replaced by the quietist, whose highest aspiration is to be the passive instrument of the Divine Reason.

By the Tiber, as by the Ganges, ethical man admits that the cosmos is too strong for him ; and, destroying every bond which ties him to it by ascetic discipline, he seeks salvation in absolute renunciation.

Then, as the lecturer passes on to our modern pessimism and optimism, we get a proper view of the expression, "survival of the fittest." Mr. Huxley points out that the word "fittest" is too generally confounded with the word "best," and so the whole thing is misunderstood. The "fittest" in the evolution theory are those who fight their way ruthlessly to the front :—

As I have already urged, the practice of that which is ethically best—what we call goodness or virtue—involves a course of conduct which, in all respects, is opposed to that which leads to success in the cosmic struggle for existence. In place of ruthless self-assertion it demands self-restraint ; in place of thrusting aside, or treading down, all competitors, it requires that the individual shall not merely respect, but shall help, his fellows : its influence is directed, not so much to the survival of the fittest, as to the fitting of as many as possible to survive. It repudiates the gladiatorial theory of existence. It demands that each man who enters into the enjoyment of the advantages of a polity shall be mindful of his debt to those who have laboriously constructed it ; and shall take heed that no act of his weakens the fabric in which he has been permitted to live.

The concluding paragraph of this remarkable lecture, as remarkable for its clear teaching and limpid eloquence as for the sentiments enunciated, is so excellent that it must be quoted in full :—

Let us understand, once for all, that the ethical progress of society depends, not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it. In every family, in every polity that has been established, the cosmic process in man has been restrained and otherwise modified by law and custom ; in surrounding nature it has been similarly influenced by the art of the shepherd, the agriculturist, the artisan. As civilization has advanced, so has the extent of this interference increased, until the organised and highly-developed sciences and arts of the present day have endowed man with a command over the course of non-human nature greater than that once attributed to the magicians. The most impressive, I might say startling, of these changes have been brought about in the course of the last two centuries, while a right comprehension of the process of life and of the means of influencing its manifestations is only just dawning upon us. We do not yet see our way beyond generalities, and we are befogged by the obtrusion of false analogies and crude anticipations. But astronomy, physics, chemistry, have all had to pass through similar phases before they reached the stage at which their influence became an important factor in human affairs. Physiology, psychology, ethics, political science must submit to the same ordeal. Yet it seems to me irrational to doubt that, at no distant period, they will work as great a revolution in the sphere of practice. The theory of evolution encourages no millennial anticipations. If, for millions of years, our globe has taken the upward road, yet, sometime, the summit will be reached and the downward route will be commenced. The most daring imagination will hardly venture upon the suggestion that the power and the intelligence of man can ever arrest the procession of the great year. Moreover, the cosmic nature born with us and, to a large extent, necessary for our maintenance, is the outcome of millions of years of severe training, and it would be folly to imagine that a few centuries will suffice to subdue its masterfulness to purely ethical ends. Ethical nature may count upon having to reckon with a tenacious and powerful enemy as long as the world lasts. But, on the other hand, I see no limit to the extent to which intelligence and will, guided by sound principles of investigation and organised in common effort, may modify the conditions of existence for a period longer than that now covered by history. And much may be done to change the nature of man himself. The intelligence which has converted the brother of the wolf into the faithful guardian of the flock ought to be able to do something towards curbing the instincts of savagery in men. But if we may permit ourselves a larger hope of abatement of the essential evil of the world than was possible to those who, in the infancy of exact knowledge, faced the problems of existence more than a score of centuries ago, I deem it an essential condition of the realisation of that hope that we should cast aside the notion that the escape from

pain and sorrow is the proper object of life. We have long since emerged from the heroic childhood of our race, when good and evil could be met with the same "frolic welcome"; the attempts to escape from evil, whether Indian or Greek, have ended in flight from the battle-field ; it remains to us to throw aside the youthful over-confidence and the no less youthful discouragement of nonage. We are grown men, and must play the man—

strong in will.

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield,

cherishing the good that falls in our way and bearing the evil, in and around us, with stout hearts set on diminishing it. So far, we all may strive in one faith towards one hope :—

It may be that the gulfs will wash us down,

It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,

But something ere the end,

Some work of noble note may yet be done.

There is pessimism in this certainly, but there is still behind it all the "may be," and that not entirely the "may be" of the materialist, but the larger hope of those to whom spirit is the "substance" that underlies all things.

SPIRIT AND MATTER.

Mr. J. J. Morse has a short but good article in "The Two Worlds" on "Natural Law in Relation to the Existence of a Spiritual Universe." The whole is worth careful reading ; the last two paragraphs are given here. The views expressed are very clearly allied to those frequently urged in the columns of "LIGHT":—

Three points occur here. From the primal elements have come chemical substance, organic substance—vegetable and animal, consciousness, sensation, instinct, and intelligence. Are all these modes of force ? If so, force is potentially possessed of these several things that it, force, thus actualises in the conditioning of itself ! This "conditioning" represents what is described as matter, or the material world. There need be no grave objection raised. There seems to be some potential *sub-stance*, which, working along one line of operation, ultimates in the condition called matter. Is this *sub-stance* capable of operation upon any other line ? Is it wise to argue the eternal persistence of a *material* universe ? May not "death," either in minerals, trees, or men, be but a devolution of forces—that such parts as are fit may be, as it were, lifted up—else how account for the ascent of conditioning—from the imparticled to the particled, from the inorganic to the organic ? If we look upon the earth as a mode, or condition, which had a commencement, may it not end ? And if natural law has a universal application, may not commencements and endings—not of force or of the *sub-stance* of being—but of modes and conditions, as represented in earths, suns, and systems—follow as a natural result ? And as the *sub-stance* is indestructible, it may vary in its modes, and create, consequently, new or other conditions and phenomenal manifestations, as real in their order as any known to us in our order. In which case a "spirit" world and a "matter" world are but differing modes—conditionings—of the one underlying persistent *sub-stance*. The "spirit" world is succeedant to the "matter" world, and, possibly, carrying forward the results of this conditioning to a further unfolding of the potentialities contained in them. In conclusion, my case is, the spiritual world of the Spiritualists rests upon the indestructibility of the *sub-stances* of the universe, of which it is a mode or conditioning, and is, therefore, in complete harmony with natural law, upon which it rests, and by which it is only possible. In no sense has it anything in common with mystical transcendentalism, or ignorant supernaturalism. Matter and spirit can thus be described as *terms*, defining variant manifestations of the one *sub-stance* on differing planes of conditioning.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A Conversazione of the Members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held on Thursday evening next in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, Regent street, when Mr. J. J. Morse will give an address on "Spiritualists; their Privileges and their Responsibilities." No ticket will admit more than one person, whether Member or Visitor ; and in the case of Visitors the ticket must bear the name of the person using it, and also the name of the Member by whom he is introduced.

A SECRET OF BEAUTY.

Under this heading Mr. W. A. Cram writes in the "Relgio-Philosophical Journal" for May 13th. We do not endorse all the writer's philosophy, but the possibility, nay the probability, of a state whose physics are the morals of this state must have commended itself to most, so we gladly quote Mr. Cram :—

Now while our bodies of this world are mainly fixed in form, feature, colour, &c., our embryonic spiritual bodies are plastic, fluent to every emotion, thought, love, aspiration, and striving of our lives, much as the visible bodies we wear to-day were plastic and fluent when in embryo to the mother's emotions, loves, and strivings that flowed through them.

Here, then, is where we discern the secret, or science and art, of growing beautiful that most concerns us, namely, in the spiritual and ethereal bodies we shall wear and live through when in what we call dying we put off our present working garb of flesh. Our question is more properly this perhaps, how to be born handsome in the next life ?

This is only material in appearance—and what comes next as to this life is quite true :—

There is a fact, however, that concerns this life also in a very vital way, namely, a beautiful and graceful spiritual body, growing within and about the shell or skeleton of this world's matter, shines through and illumines in a wonderful way even the homely face and ungainly limbs which men and women have often to wear through this earth-life as their inheritance. Every one has seen and known this. The world's truest, noblest, and most beautiful men and women are generally handsome by this inward spiritual illumination.

The writer has not gone into a discussion of beauty as such, but he might well have indulged in a discourse on the types of beauty, both male and female, in vogue to-day as compared with those which were paramount even as lately as twenty years ago. And what is the cause of the change ? Surely a difference in the presentation of the underlying spirit, if not a higher development of that spirit. But hear Mr. Cram :—

This, then, appears the secret or law of growing beautiful. Every beautiful emotion, love, thought, or noble striving, images and paints itself out in the beauty and grace of our spiritual bodies, now in their embryonic development in this world's womb of matter. This is the growing beauty with which we may be born in the upper world. Moreover, this inward beauty of the growing spiritual body is transmitted and reflected even through our bodies of this earth, be they in youth or decay, be they homely or handsome.

Quite so ;—and this will perhaps explain the attractive personalities of some people irrespective of age, outside charm, or grace. Somehow, nevertheless, there is always the "outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." Though we may not be able to trace it always in its more remote results and refinements, nevertheless the effects of a gross and sensual life are apparent even here, over and beyond the fatal markings of incurred disease, and it is easy to suppose that the soul is equally spoiled and scarified. Again to quote Mr. Cram :—

All noble and beautiful thoughts, loves, and strivings of our lives mould and colour our growing spiritual bodies into the form and grace of their own heavenly beauty. "Gross and obscure natures," says Emerson, "however decorated, seem impure shambles ; but character gives splendour to youth and awe to wrinkled skin and grey hairs." Look at the world through the light of this inward spiritual reality of things and life. Here is a woman of wonderful beauty and grace of face and form, that were her rich inheritance, but for twenty or forty years she has cherished in the main, little, vain, base desires, thoughts, and loves. What is the result ? Why around and through her beautiful body of this world's matter she was born into, for one or two score years she has been weaving and growing a poor, distorted, homely spiritual form to carry forward through death into the vast unseen ; Nature's law appears inviolable, slowly but surely the soul weaves and moulds her body into the image and likeness of her own thoughts, loves, and aspirations.

Again there is a woman poor, hard featured, angular and rough handed. Such was her inheritance in this world's flesh and bones. What can she do save wear it to the end ? Nature works no miracles. But the soul of that woman is working more than miracle, for through twoscore years she has lived an inward life of beauty and grace, in noble love, in lofty thought and holy aspirations and kindly deeds, and this soul—grace and beauty has grown and moulded around and through the homely, ungainly body of this world's flesh, a spiritual form of face and hands and limbs, far transcending in loveliness any that young or maiden ever wears here. Is not this the secret of immortal beauty ? Is not this Nature's way of giving birth to handsome men and women in the upper kingdoms of life ?

And this is not confined to the higher life ; for as that higher life impinges on and overlaps this so does the progress of the soul show itself in this our material presentment. Our novelists guess at it, though they make woeful blunders in the application of the fact. And Mr. Cram concludes in this way :—

The soul through nature works wonderful metamorphoses. Doubtless death will present strange and marvellous revelations.

We are so limited by, and subject to, our common seeing of the grosser ruder husks and shells we wear, 'tis hard for us to conceive of the more inward and permanent part of our bodies. If we could behold people about us by the spiritual or second-sight we should doubtless reverse many of our present judgments of beauty and homeliness of grace, and ungainliness.

How could Jesus, the pure-thoughted, noble-loving, sit at home with the despised, the fishermen and outcast, while he shunned the honoured and titled ; those the world revered and admired as little worthy as greater criminals ? Was he blind and ignorant of crimes and pollution ? Rather did he discern more clearly the immortal realities of life ?

He saw through the crimes and pollution of this world's coarser garb to the more inward growing beauty and strength of the soul's longings, loves, and strivings in the growing spiritual form. He saw how they loved much, longed for the higher, and he sat at home with this inner life of publicans and harlots, fearing, knowing no ill or taint from ignorance or the uncleanliness of mere outward conditions, while the vanity, selfishness and greed of priests and rulers, though covered with the world's reverenced sanctity and honoured fame, were the worst pollution and degradation of life. His words, "Publicans and harlots shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven before you," may seem of blindness and injustice. Yet if we could read the faith and love of his diviner moments we might hear his words still further : "O, priests and rulers, though slower and later, ye shall cast off the outer vanities and corruptions of the world and be born into the grace and loveliness of the spirit's most inward and immortal being which these publicans and harlots are finding before you, yet shall you attain it even as they, though it may be at times and in ways, sitting at their feet and learning of them in the new and higher Jerusalem."

EVOLUTION OF THE SPIRITUAL.

The following words are from Mr. Savage's work "Psychic Facts and Theories." People often ask why, if there is anything in these so-called manifestations, they have waited all these ages and have not appeared before. There are stories of similar happenings as marking every age of history : but as reported, they have been only occasional, and they have not attracted any serious study. Let us note the stages of evolution as having a possible bearing on this point. First, muscle ruled the world. Then came cunning, the lower form of brain power. Next, the intellect became recognised as king. After that, the moral ideal showed itself mightier than muscle or brain. To-day it is the strongest force on earth. No king dares go to war without claiming, at least, that his cause is a righteous one. Now it is not meant that either of these has ruled the world alone, for they have overlapped each other, as have the advancing forms of life. And as heralding the advent of each new stage of progress, there have been tentative and sporadic manifestations of the next higher, while still the lower was dominant. Is it not then in line with all that has gone before that the next step should be a larger and higher manifestation of the spiritual ? And in this case, are not the tentative and sporadic manifestations reported from the past just what might have been expected ? "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." "That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; and afterward that which is spiritual." "Relgio-Philosophical Journal."

JACQUES INAUDI.

We shall probably hear a good deal about this calculator during the next few weeks. Meanwhile, the following from the "Evening News and Post" for May 17th may be found interesting:—

The first thing to be understood about Inaudi's performance is that it is a perfectly straightforward and genuine exhibition of skill. In Paris the lightning calculator has been before the public for years past. He has displayed his art before the most critical audiences, and has so keenly interested men of science that a commission of the Académie des Sciences was last year appointed to examine him and report upon his abnormal faculty of calculation. The celebrated Dr. Charcot was a member of this commission, and compiled its learned report, from which we gather that Inaudi's cranium is actually plagiocephalic, with a projection of the left parietal bump, and a longitudinal crest at the back of the inter-parietal suture. These little peculiarities, however, are not put forward as explanatory of the calculator's gifts. The scientists find that his speciality is a highly-developed partial or local memory, which is abnormal in its capacity for figures only. He does not remember colours, forms, events, places, or musical airs better than anyone else; he has no capacity for feats like that of playing blindfold chess. But for figures he has the most loving recollection, and not alone performs difficult calculations with them, but can at the end of a long series of experiments repeat all the figures used in all the problems submitted to him, his record for this precise enumeration standing as high as four hundred figures.

As to Inaudi's method of calculation, Dr. Charcot concludes that, unlike most of the famous mental gymnasts in figures who have gone before him, he "has not recourse to visual memory for his mental operation, but avails himself concurrently of auditory images and motive images of articulation." In plainer English, he does not make a mental picture of the figures as written down, but retains the memory of them by the ear. He does not remember the figures so well, in fact, when communicated to him by writing as when spoken aloud for him, and the sight of written figures actually embarrasses him and retards his calculation. A supplementary report by one of Dr. Charcot's colleagues reveals the curious fact that he begins the process of addition or subtraction from the left, as the Hindoos do, instead of from the right. He has never been taught by expert mathematicians, as previous "lightning calculators" have been, but has invented all his processes of calculation himself.

So much for the French men of science, whom we quote as unimpeachable witnesses of the genuineness of Inaudi's performance. As to what he actually does people interested in the subject will soon have an opportunity of seeing for themselves. At a private performance given in the Hotel Victoria yesterday afternoon he went through a few of his most striking feats. One was the addition of two rows of figures, twenty-four in each row, which carries us well up into the strange country of quintillions and sextillions, or millions of millions of millions. Another and more marvellous performance, which occupied five minutes and seven seconds, was a combination of five different exercises in the simpler rules of arithmetic, each of them easy enough to work out with paper and pencil, but every one difficult to follow mentally. He added together five rows of figures, with five figures in each row; subtracted twelve figures from twelve figures; divided six figures by five figures; squared a number of five figures; and extracted the square root of a number of six figures. The simultaneous solving of the five problems involved his dealing with over a hundred different figures, and when he had successfully finished the task he recited the original terms of the problem all over again without a mistake. A few fancy feats were thrown in, such as telling on what day of the week a given date many years back had fallen; these seemed to be only amusement to the calculator, who rattled out his answers almost in the moment of hearing the problems, and in one or two cases set the propounder of the query right when the latter had gone astray in his memory. There can be no question as to the extraordinary nature of M. Inaudi's gift, and his public performances will doubtless create keen interest amongst all those interested in a scientific curiosity or an arithmetical phenomenon.

"ROOM FOR THE SOUL OF MAN."

The Editor of the "Arena," Mr. B. O. Flower, speaks admirably as follows:—

Some poets insist that art must not be made the servant of utility. They tell us that poetry, when it descends to plead for the oppressed, the poor, and the miserable, becomes intolerable—mark the word "descends." Art for art's sake, and above all, poetry for art alone; such is their creed. Some of these singers dwell in the shadows of Niobe, chanting sad, sweet strains; others flit in joy-lit, love-laden sunbeams, making the heart glad, as swallow-like they skim the surface of human emotion. Others there are with profounder genius, who sound the depths of the soul and stir our inmost being. Still all unite in the clamor of art for art's sake. Why should the muse soil her robes with the mud of the slums? Why should the music in her voice carry the heart cry of the starving? Why should the fate of the girl struggling for virtue in the face of starvation, or the man striving for work that his loved ones may not die, concern her? Is she not patrician? Is not her votive shrine unsullied marble? Ah, they tell us that when art descends—mark the word—to the commonplace details of life, poetry takes wings. These champions of art for art's sake sneer at the prophet poets, whose trumpet tones arouse the sleeping conscience. They scorn the poets of the people, who voice living wrongs, and who unmask injustice endured by the poor. "Sing if you will," they say, "of the wrongs of other ages—the horrors of classic Greece, the shame of ancient Rome; this is legitimate. But do not draggle the stainless robe of poetry in the mud of the present-day misery." This contention is not new. It is the old cry of the *dilettante* against the utilitarian. It is an echo of the vanished past, which conservatism treasures as a melody divine. It is the cry of a waning power. After the gladiator's brawn came the supremacy of brain. Now room for the soul. Art must be rescued from the bondage of ages brutalised by the supremacy of selfishness. As long as there remains a starving soul, brain, or body, as long as there remains a tear undried or a wrong unrighted, the highest mission of poetry and song will be in the domain of utility.

The age of brawn failed to give man peace and happiness. The age of intellectual supremacy has likewise failed to satisfy the craving of the human soul. The next step will be into the broad domain of ethics, where justice, freedom, and fraternity will be taken in their broadest significance; where the horizon will not be limited by prejudice nor fettered by ancient thought; where the chains of dogma will fall from the shackled mind, and the broad spirit of love will pervade all society. In the ushering in of this new order, we must summon all that makes for beauty, nobility, and unfoldment, in art, music, and song. They must be rallied under the banner of utilitarianism. The highest voicings of the soul must permeate every recess of the brain of the morrow. The ideal enunciated by Jesus, the sublime truths which haunted the brain of the ancient Stoics of Greece and Rome, the vision which was ever with Confucius, the lofty craving of Gautama, and the evangel sung by the noblest singers of the nineteenth century, must be realised—the soul must blossom with the brain. I repeat, in the service of the higher civilisation, now persistently forcing itself upon the conscience of millions of thoughtful people, all lives imbued with the thought of the age, all brains made luminous with love, must place their chaplets on the altar of utility. The poet and the singer must touch the heart of the people. The orator, the minister, and the essayist of the new time must sink self, sink the dogmatism of the bloody past, sink the prejudice and bigotry of the night of the ages, and, facing the dawn with spirit brave, fearless, and loving, demand justice for all men. The philosopher and the philanthropist must also allow their vision to extend. The present demands palliative measures. Do not despise them, O philosopher; commend, aid, and assist all work for the amelioration of human misery, pointing out, however, that they are, in the nature of things, only temporary. Great fundamental economic changes must be brought about, O philanthropist; and the sooner you realise this the better for the generation of to-day, and the generations yet unborn. You cannot cure the patient by palliatives. Injustice is at the root of the disease. Therefore, while pushing forward thy noble labour for palliation, strike hands with the philosopher in this new crusade, and let all who love humanity swell the anthem of progress.

SORCERY.

Spiritualism is by the uninformed but too often confounded with sorcery, which is an evil thing. One would gladly believe that there never was, and there is not now, such a thing as the black art—unhappily one is forced to believe in its existence. Mr. W. R. Old is contributing a series of papers to the "Theosophist" on "Sorcery: Mediæval and Modern." Some of his stories are almost too terrible for repetition. The following extracts represent the milder portions of Mr. Old's paper:—

"Blood," says Eliphas Levi, "is the first incarnation of the universal fluid; it is the materialised vital light. Its birth is the most marvellous of all Nature's marvels; it lives only by perpetually transforming itself, for it is the Universal Proteus. . . . Blood is the great arcanum of life." Need we then wonder that this subtle fluid has been wrested by the Adepts of the black art to their use in every department of their hellish craft? The blood-evocation and other forms of sorcery are said to be still common among the Yakuts of Siberia, as among the inhabitants of certain parts of Bulgaria and Moldavia and the mountainous districts of Asiatic Turkey. Everyone has heard of the Voodoos of Hayti, with their terrible forms of initiation and other bloody rites, and I need not add further to your mental torture by their recitation. A curious form of the blood-sacrifice, mild enough to suffer citation in this place, is prevalent among the Mussulman and Christian women of Bulgaria. On the eve of Ascension Day a feast is held by the tombs of the dead, tapers are lighted, the tombs are drenched with wine, and pots of incense placed upon tripods. The feast ended, one of the party approaches the tomb and calls the dead by name. After fervent prayers, repeated face downwards upon the grave-mound, some drops of blood are drawn from near the left breast and allowed to trickle upon the tomb. By means of the medium thus afforded the departed soul presently assumes a visible form, and gives instructions to the person who has evoked it.

The Obeah practices of the negroes of the West Indian Colonies, against which such severe laws were enacted, have been frequently mentioned in works upon the subject of sorcery. The Obeah is held to be a potent and irresistible spell, sapping the vital energies, inflicting indescribable tortures and strong sensations, filling the mind with nameless terrors, withering and paralysing body and soul. Mr. Long, who made a report of the Obeah practices in Jamaica to the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council, gives the following description of the contents of the house of an Obeah woman, and it may be remarked that the Obi rites are performed as much by women as by men.

The whole inside of the roof (which was of thatch) and every crevice of the walls were stuck with the implements of her trade, consisting of rags, feathers, bones of cats, and a thousand other articles. Examining further, a large earthen pot or jar, closely covered, contained a prodigious quantity of round balls of earth or clay, of various dimensions, large and small, whitened on the outside, and variously compounded, some with hair and rags, or feathers of all sorts, and strongly bound with twine; others blended with the upper section of the skulls of cats, or set round with cat's teeth and claws, or with human or dogs' teeth, and were glass beads of different colours. There was also a great many egg-shells filled with a viscous or gummy substance, the qualities of which were neglected to be examined; and many little bags, filled with a variety of articles, the particulars of which cannot, at this distance of time, be reenacted.

Of the same nature as the Obi are the "Greegrees" of the Mandingo-men of Africa.

In these cases, we see that the agents used by the sorcerers for the purpose of conveying the fatal influence to a victim are of various kinds, and from the reports we have of the methods employed it would seem that in some way they are identified in the imagination of the operator with the person to be affected, and being acted upon by the magnetic power of the sorcerer the effect is produced in the mind and body of the distant person. The process is illustrated in the magnetic attraction of bodies removed from one another, such as that of a magnet upon the needle, and although the line of connection cannot be seen by us it nevertheless exists. It is thus only required that the imagination of the operator should be powerful enough to construct a line of connection between the agent and the subject, and sympathetic attraction is at once instituted, when, the agent being acted upon by the will of the sorcerer, it

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reacts upon the passive subject. Since one of the two must answer to the attraction set up in obedience to the powerful will persuading, the inanimate agent, not being of the nature to be affected in the manner disposed, and being identified with the victim, reacts upon the latter, or, as it were, transmitting the magnetic and death-dealing impress of the poisoned and hateful will of the sorcerer.

"Yea, it is hate—that shapeless fiendly thing
Of many names, all evil, some divine—
Whose self-contempt arms with a mortal sting."

OF CONCENTRATION.

The following is from an article on the "Hindu Theory of Vibrations," &c., in the "Theosophist" for May.—

Man being a miniature of the universe, all the forces in the latter are latent in the former. It is these forces, or principles, that are called gods, &c., in Hindu and other mythologies. The corresponding forces in man are his spiritual, psychic, mental, and moral faculties. When these faculties tend downwards, they are said to be evil, and when upwards, good. The vibrations of the former are made in the lower astral light, and those of the latter in the higher. It is these reflections, or images, that are considered in mythology as the forms of gods, &c. But these forms may vary according to the mental and moral peculiarities of nations or individuals, so that the same cosmic force, with its corresponding human power, may be pictured differently on the said light. Hence seems to be the variety in the forms of the same principles in the mythologies of different nations. By the forms referred to above, I do not mean the actual doubles of men projected by them consciously or unconsciously. The astral forms of the lower manas are projected unconsciously by mediums, sensitives, and others. The higher forms belonging to the Higher Manas are projected by the will-power of Adepts. They may assume any form willed by the Adept. An Adept may appear astrally like another human being or an animal. Their will-powers are infinite, as said above by Ramalingam. The chief manasic powers, according to the Hindus, are of three classes, viz., *Gnidas' akti* (knowing power), *Itchis' akti* (will-power) and *Kriyis' akti* (phenomenal power of thought). The last is the "mysterious power of thought which enables it to produce external, perceptible, and phenomenal results by its own inherent energy. The ancients held that any idea will manifest itself externally, if one's attention is deeply concentrated upon it. Similarly an intense volition will be followed by the desired result."

The ancient magicians and Yogis of India, who knew full well the occult laws of the external manifestation of ideas and the accomplishment of volitions by intense concentration, instructed their disciples in the same. The Vedas, Agamas, and Tantras, which embody the truths of occult sciences, are said to be the exoteric works intended to be as texts for the imparting of instruction by initiated Gurus who possess the key for their interpretation. There are secret brotherhoods in the Cis-Himalayan and Trans-Himalayan parts, who are said to be in possession of such a key. The works referred to are, however, useful in explaining the theory of occult laws for the knowledge of the uninitiated. According to the said works, there are particular Devatis to be invoked or projected for the accomplishment of particular ends and purposes, as already said. The procedure laid down in them is briefly as follows:—

(1) Intense concentration upon the image of a Devi symbolising the idea or desire at heart, so that it (the image) may take an astral form and appear to the devotee.

(2) The utterance of mantras and bijas (characters or letters) corresponding to the Devata.

(3) Concentration of attention upon the figure or yantra corresponding to the Devata.

(4) Materialising the mental image by the five tattwas—akâs, viyu, agni, apas, and prithvi respectively, by ringing bells &c., burning incense, &c., lighting camphor or oil, offering water, vegetables, or food.

DR. PURDON.

Dr. John E. Purdon has been requested by the Executive Committee of the Psychical Science Congress to prepare an address to be delivered before that body at its meeting in August, upon "Nervous Attractions as demonstrated by the Sphygmograph." Dr. Purdon is certain that he can establish his claim to the entire originality and priority of this discovery, as it is now twelve years since he first called attention to it in print. His research was undertaken in the first instance to my and put some physiological interpretations upon the Beattie Photographs, a set of which he received direct from Mr. Beattie in 1872.

OF SOME PREJUDICES.

The "Harbinger of Light" (Melbourne) is to hand, and its chief article contains the following pertinent observations :—

We have from time to time called attention to good things in "The Theosophist," and given items of news therefrom which might be interesting to our readers ; it is, therefore, with regret that we have to call attention to a *bad* thing that appears in the February number of that journal, bearing the signature of J. D. Buck, M.D., F.T.S. The declared objects of the Society and their ethical basis, as they appear in print, are very pretty reading ; the precepts are excellent, but the practice, unfortunately, falls lamentably short of them. We can make allowances for those attracted by the easy solution of all the mysteries of nature afforded by the Occult school of Theosophists, and ambitious to suffix the mystic F.T.S. to their autograph who accept the programme, enrol their names, and immediately realising the dignity of their position, feel themselves competent to enlighten the world. We can pass by with good humour the silly things they often say and do, but when an old Theosophist of Dr. Buck's standing, in an article laudatory of Theosophy, makes an uncalled-for attack on Spiritualism and Spiritualists in which he introduces absolute untruths which are a libel on both the living and the dead, it is incumbent on us to protest and call attention to the difference between precept and practice on the part of Theosophists. We have no objection to the laudation of Theosophy, and have nothing to say in disparagement of it so long as its advocates present it on its merits ; these, however, should be sufficient for it to stand upon, and no amount of abuse or misstatements with regard to other systems can add to them.

The title of Dr. Buck's article (which is dated "Cincinnati, November 18th, 1892"), is "Occident and Orient," and the following extract is from p. 290 :—

Even Spiritualism, which seemed at first a check to the crass materialism, became the most glaringly materialistic of all. One prominent Spiritualist declared that he expected to meet his two favourite horses in the "Summer Land," haul lumber, and build a house just as he had done on earth : while asserting "progression through the spheres"—whatever that may mean—the average Spiritualist and the great mass of them to-day simply transfer the conglomerate diabolism called earth-life to the invisible realm, and talk about curing evils there, and of "endless progression in spirit-life" for those who had yielded to a thousand temptations or committed nameless crimes here. Many a prominent Spiritualist medium, like Randolph and Foster, committed suicide. Even as I write, Slade, whom our H. P. B. sent to Russia as one of the best of his class of mediums, and of whom Professor Zöllner wrote so much, goes to an insane asylum a "hopeless wreck from dissipation."

The caricatures of Spiritualists' belief in the above, we may let pass for what they are worth ; it is the concluding paragraph, beginning "Many a prominent Spiritualist," &c., to which we take serious objection. Paschal Beverley Randolph did commit suicide, but he was an erratic genius, and those who knew him best were not surprised at the act ; he might have been a Baptist or a Revivalist, or even a Theosophist, and finished his career in the same way, without any necessary reflection on the religious body under whose banner he sailed ; but Charles Foster died a natural death, at his birthplace, Salem, Massachusetts, December 16th, 1885 ; and yet Dr. Buck, not content with making Spiritualism responsible for poor Randolph's sad end, throws Foster into the scale to bring it down heavy. We had the pleasure of Charles Foster's acquaintance during his sojourn in Melbourne and knew him to be a kindly, genial man, reverencing his helpers on the spirit side, and desirous to facilitate their objects. Physical and test mediumship, however, if pursued for lengthened periods, are like persistent literary or other intense mental work, exhausting ; and, unless adequate intervals are allowed for recuperation, the system yields to the strain. It was so in Charles Foster's case ; he had an attack of brain fever, after which, by his physician's advice, he was placed for a time in the Danver's Insane Asylum, and subsequently resided with his aunt at Salem, where, about four years after the attack of brain fever, he passed peacefully on to the spirit world.

THE True—that is the Soul's natural state. The false is the abnormal monstrous state. We feel it by the infinite sweetness, the expanding of our whole being, when surrounded with persons who are true and straightforward. We feel it by the dreadful discomfort which we experience through the contact of liars.—MADAME QUINET.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Mrs. Green at Marylebone.

SIR,—It will interest some of your readers if I give a short account of the recent visit (the second) of Mrs. E. Green, of Heywood, to the Marylebone Society on the 14th and 21st inst. She spoke to crowded audiences ; I say "she," but in reality Mrs. Green was totally oblivious to all external things, not even knowing a word that was uttered. The addresses were of a highly spiritual character, delivered to a deeply interested audience, as was evinced by the breathless attention to every sentence that came from her lips. Then followed clairvoyant descriptions of those who had left this world who come within the range of her spiritual vision. She not only gave a minute description of their features, the colour of their eyes, and hair, and how it was usually worn, and also the colour and style of the clothes they wore, but (and this was very remarkable) she so fully and graphically described and located the particular disease by which they were removed from this state, that the friends had no difficulty in recognising who they were from the descriptions she gave. Clairvoyance with Mrs. Green is as natural as her normal sight ; hence she has seen in the spiritual world a great variety of beautiful scenery as well as living forms. If we bear in mind that the past and also the future can be brought into the present in the spiritual world, it will help to explain many difficulties as to what the clairvoyant sees in that world.

I can only look upon the latter part of the Sunday evening services as séances upon a large scale, and as calculated, if properly conducted, to do untold good. Many were the tears of joy shed when the friends realised the fact that their loved and lost were still living and ever near them.

Hendon.

T. EVERITT.

Haunted Houses in Newcastle-on-Tyne.

SIR,—Allow me to give you some particulars of haunted houses of Newcastle, in different parts of the city, one of which has been visited by the writer, two friends, and a medium under the following circumstances :—On Monday, May 18th, a professional gentleman called on me wishing a private interview, which was granted. I had known the same gentleman for some years, and proved him to be determinedly infidel on matters of spiritual phenomena. He said : "My house is haunted. For seven weeks strange noises and sights have disturbed us which we have borne till now, but cannot any longer. There is no rest for any of us." I suggested a séance, which was held on Thursday, May 20th. The medium I introduced (test and clairvoyant) influenced a servant of the gentleman, who became deeply entranced (*and had not heard of Spiritualism before*). In this condition she made known her being, apparently, confronted by the disturbing spirit ; that a certain member of the family who had broken up her home and was going to America was *not to do so*, as it would be *disastrous* to her future *happiness, if not life*. The evidence was so conclusive to all members of the family that it was the spirit of a deceased father (whose remains were interred two years ago) that the lady who was going out, notwithstanding the preparations she had made, even fixing the time and selecting the ship, has abandoned the whole thing, and *will not cross the Atlantic*, hearing which the father spirit was satisfied, and said he should not disturb them again.

BEVAN HARRIS.

"Imperator."

SIR,—To one who remembers the interesting details at the time, personal to himself, which caused the conversion to Spiritualism of the late lamented Stainton Moses, and to one who has been familiar with his writings since that period, certain assumptions in No. 46 of "Records of Private Séances, by Mrs. S.," contained in "LIGHT" of May 13th, appear of import.

Few who have read the works of "M.A.(Oxon.)" can, I think, fail to have been endued with respect, to say no more, for the teachings of his ethereal friend, "Imperator" ; not least when they touched on disputed subjects ; and, in the Record in "LIGHT" of May 13th, we find "Imperator" enunciating a doctrine familiar to us in the writings of "M.A. (Oxon.)" with regard to the pre-existence of the soul, a doctrine which, by itself, renders all men, in that respect, of the same nature as the Christ. And as some of us always felt : we know "M.A. (Oxon.)'s" opinion so

far; and whether we be Re-incarnationists or not, we know that he went with us thus far, as regards the soul's pre-existence, which is the maxim of primal importance; the questions of Re-incarnation or not, here or elsewhere, being but side issues. The expression, however, of "Imperator" in this forty-sixth Record is this: "A spirit leaving its body was no now occurrence, as it dated back from the incarnation of souls into our world." "Leaving its body." Then it had a body before it left it to be incarnated in our world. What sort of a body? To my mind, the spiritual or astral bodies were nothing more nor less than the souls that were incarnated into our world. What other sort of body, then, was it? Had souls been previously incarnated in it in this world or in another world? or was it "a false creation proceeding from the heat oppressed brain"? And this leads me to turn to another very remarkable "Record" so kindly given us by Mrs. S., viz., the twenty-eighth, which paper, "Light" informed us, "was arranged by Mr. Stanton Moses' own hand, and was, indeed, almost a last Note by the Way."

Now, in this Record, No. 28, we find the following passage: "Imperator spoke on the subject of Re-incarnation, but unfortunately no notes were taken." Certainly unfortunately, I cannot but think, for all those who have respect for the opinion of "Imperator." The simple question seems, however, to be still only this: Did "Imperator" speak in favour of Re-incarnation, either here or in other worlds, or did he not? It seems to me that Mrs. S. might still be able kindly to answer that simple but significant question, to add to our great indebtedness to her already.

T. W.

"Charles Strange."

Six.—In your comments in the current issue of "Light" on my letter you say: "If the teachers, orthodox or agnostic, had been able to show this unhappy person that he would not necessarily be happier 'there' than 'here,' that he must 'dree his own weird,' and that his schooling was important for him, it would have been well." I quite agree with you that it would have been well, provided that there is a state of consciousness into which we pass after death, and in which the individuality of the "self" is continued.

You mention agnostic teachers. I wonder why, for they claim that we have no knowledge of such a state. "It may be or it may not be, we have no evidence." Such is their position, and such would be my answer were I questioned on the subject. Therefore, how could an agnostic be fitted to show this man one side or the other of the question? For their answer would be that you must decide for yourself, our saying yea or nay will not alter facts. Evidently this man did decide for himself, and, what is more, from what he had written he had apparently succeeded in justifying himself to himself.

The paragraph of my letter that you quote, as it appears apart from the rest, is not warranted by the "Note" in question, but is apparently more intimately associated with the "Editorial Comments on Freethought" (p. 196).

Further, you say that the "problem of atheism always seems to be one of low spiritual meaning." From the fact of your having used the word "spiritual," I may presume that you attach a certain meaning to it. If so, I should very much like to know it, for this same word is a term that I have often been asked with, but which I have never succeeded hitherto in having explained satisfactorily to me. The utmost I have been able to gather from the torrent of eloquence which has overwhelmed me was rhapsody and platitudes. Therefore, until I know the value that you attach to the word "spiritual" I am not in a position to say what the "spiritual meaning" of atheism may be or if it has one.

Again, in reference to atheism being "a sort of quarrel over idols," I should say that it is no more a quarrel than the difference of opinion exhibited by Spiritualists and Theosophists in the explanation of the phenomena that take place or are alleged to take place at a séance, the idols in this case being spirits versus spooks, shells, &c.

CHARLES STRANGE.

[Agnostic teachers were mentioned because they should let their pupils know that there may be a beyond, and failing that that it is best for the sake of the general good that suicide should not take place; but agnosticism is a very invertebrate thing. That the problem of atheism is one of low spiritual meaning we hold to be true. That the so-called atheist does not necessarily realise that there are spiritual forces and existences outside himself has nothing to do with the case, so we hold that those who quarrel over their idols as to whether they shall be gods themselves or acknowledge some other form of anthropomorphic deity are struggling in a very debased spiritual atmosphere. It does not follow that Mr. Strange has no spiritual attributes because he is not aware of their possession.—ED. "LIGHT."]

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible, and by appending their signatures to their communications. Intention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

SPiritUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., meeting; at 7 p.m., lecture. June 4th, Mr. J. J. Morris.—C. L. H.

16, MELROSE-TERRACE, SHEPHERD'S BUSH-ROAD.—A Spiritual meeting is held on Thursdays, at 3 p.m. prompt, Mr. J. M. Dale presiding, in connection with the "Busy Bees."

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN-HALL, WEST-HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings each Sunday at 7 p.m. Speaker for Sunday, May 28th, Mrs. Stanley.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S. E.—On Sunday, at 11 a.m., circle; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. Long will be with us. At 8.30 p.m. on Wednesday for inquirers. Next Sunday, too at 5 p.m. sharp; tickets 9d. each. On Sunday last Mr. Butcher gave an able lecture on "Redemption Universal."—J. PERRY, Assist. Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—At our last Sunday's service Mrs. Mason's guides gave us an interesting account of spirit life and also used their healing power with success. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Treadwell—Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason. On Saturday, at 5, Tavistock-crescent, Westbourne Park, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

PECKHAM RYE.—On Sunday Mr. R. J. Lees delivered his last discourse of the series entitled "The Teachings of Christ." The particular theme of the address was "Christ's Idea of Revelation." Mr. Lees from Biblical sources gave ample evidence that Christ recognised that revelation would in no way cease with His departure, but that to all seeking and earnest souls the influx of Divine Inspiration would be given, which would be to them a revelation of Divine Will. He followed up his idea with references from the testimony of history, showing how, through the centuries, apostles and saints had continually testified to their spiritual communion, and in these latter days the Spiritualistic movement in its highest phase was a continuation of the same divine revelation. The audience was a most attentive one, and at the conclusion of the address one not unfriendly critic produced some numbers of "Light," and asked Mr. Lees to explain some seeming contradictions in the communications by "Imperator" as given in "Records of Private Séances." Mr. Lees read the extracts aloud and explained the difficulties, his remarks being received with apparent assent. One not insignificant feature was the intense stillness and earnest interest with which the reading of the extracts and the explanation was listened to. Mr. Lees will next Sunday take up some other branch of the subject.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. R. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. J. Webster, 5, Peckville-street, North, Melbourne; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabotais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlochauer, 1, Monbijou-place, Berlin, N.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middelaan, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, R. Fortenson, Ade, Christiania; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or, W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—The Manor Park branch will hold the following meeting at 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park:—The last Sunday in each month at 7 p.m. Reception for inquirers. Also each Friday, at 8 p.m. prompt, for Spiritualists only, the study of Spiritualism. And at 1, Winifred-road, Manor Park, the first Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J. A.

THE "Civiltà Cattolica" for April 1st, in a very outspoken article, strenuously denounces Spiritualistic séances, the possible evils of which the writer sums up under various headings: danger of loss of faith; of becoming possessed, or at best of being compelled to act under the suggestion of some evil spirit; danger of falling a victim to some mental disease, hysteria, madness, or even suicide, owing to the unnatural strain on the nerves produced by spirit-intercourse; and finally, danger to morality from the evil suggestions of many of the spirits. The Jesuit author quotes numerous statistics, and the statements of both mad-doctors and Spiritualists themselves, in support of his contentions; he fully admits the possibility of all mediumistic communications, but condemns *in toto* the calling up of spirits as contrary to Christianity.—"Review of Reviews."