

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The Psychological Science Congress of Chicago will soon be at work, and we hope much good will come of it. The "Religio-Philosophical Journal" gives some further information about the meetings. It says:—

During the several sessions of this Congress, there will be papers read and discussions by some of the most distinguished scientific men of the world. Professor Oliver J. Lodge, of the British Scientific Association, and F. W. H. Myers, one of the most brilliant of English essayists, who has given to psychical research as much patient observation and study as any man living, have been secured, and they will be present at the meetings. Among the distinguished Americans who will be present and present their views on some branch of psychical research, we will only mention now Professor E. D. Cope, the eminent biologist and anthropologist, and Dr. Edmund Montgomery, also a biologist, and besides a philosophical writer of world-wide reputation. In the near future we shall give a full list of the names of those who will participate in the exercises, together with their special subjects of discussion—in fact, the entire programme of the Congress. Meanwhile, let all who are interested in this profoundly important subject arrange, if possible, to be present and hear a series of discussions which will be among the ablest of any of the congresses held or to be held in this city. The Psychological Science Congress, as Dr. Coues says, "bids fair to accomplish results of greater magnitude and importance than have hitherto been achieved in this branch of scientific investigation."

Doubtless our American friends will rectify the description of Professor Lodge. The "British Scientific Association" is not quite right. It should be the "British Association for the Advancement of Science," and Dr. Lodge holds the Chair of Physics in University College, Liverpool, hence his professorship. Professor Lodge is a physicist of eminence who dares to think for himself, even on such subjects as "dynamics," a thing requiring almost as much courage as that of meddling with the new psychology.

One beneficent piece of work we hope may be done by the Congress, namely, that of instructing the world generally on the subject of lunacy. That a much more humane and scientific treatment is adopted now in all civilised countries is true enough, but the psychic side of the question has yet to be brought home to the "mad" doctors. A pamphlet comes to us from Liverpool, in which a Dr. Williams advocates the casting out of the obsessing spirits which he believes to be the cause of madness in many cases. That this is the case can hardly be doubted, and no curative agency which does not recognise this as a fact can be expected to be of much avail. We trust, then, that the Congress will give much and serious attention to this, especially as insanity seems to be increasing with some rapidity in the United States.

The "Pall Mall Gazette" has gone through many phases since it was written "by gentlemen for gentlemen." Now it is very interesting and amusing, a vein of light banter permeating its every column. This playfulness it naturally uses when speaking of the occult, and so it delivers itself in this way concerning M. Louis Figuier's new book:—

Can it be true? Alas, no; it must be all a fancy sketch. M. Louis Figuier, of scientific fame, gave us his notion some time ago of "What Death leads to; or, The Morrow of Death." He now completes it with "Happiness beyond the Tomb." His text is, Nothing dies in nature, but everything is transformed. The human corpse is simply the larva whence arises as a butterfly the super human being. This butterfly wanders in the ether separating the planets, for why should ether be uninhabited? There are endless varieties of these flying beings whose evolution is continued until they gravitate to the sun, which absorbs them. What our sun does millions of suns are doing. So many suns, so many gods or demi-gods. Of the central sun we hear nothing. In support of his assertion that we are more than organised matter, M. Louis Figuier points to hypnotism, suggestion, dreamland, the dualism of the human person, and much else that comes within the region of borderland. He protests against the notion that memory altogether dies with the body, and hugs the belief that he will rejoin old friends when he rises as a butterfly to the ethereal realm. There he hopes to work out the dream of his life, the scientific drama (théâtre scientifique). He, like all the other beings of this realm, will be liberated from the tyranny of matter, though subject to its laws, and will enjoy a pure and noble life. The mind will be no longer cramped by the problems of what to eat, to drink, and how to pay rent, taxes, and weekly bills, but bloom out and undergo refining influences. It will rise to understand what is truly just and true; but nothing being perfect under the sun, the beatific vision and independence of sensuous joys will not cure the inhabitants of ether of the vanity which often tormented them here below. Thus we may expect Columbus to owe a grudge to Amerigo Vespucci, and Gutenberg to Johannes Fust. If one is unable to take M. Figuier's last book as gospel, one must own it to be specious, bright and interesting. It is clear that he does not hold a candle to Lady Caithness, inasmuch as he inveighs against the Neo-Buddhists of Europe, who seem to him a parcel of fools led by a few humbugs. The fact of there being 40,000 of them in Paris does not stay his hand.

This is certainly an improvement on the older ways, which would have simply dubbed M. Louis Figuier "fool," and there left him. But does it mean half belief, or what does it mean?

The following is going the round of the press. "Vanity Fair" is originally responsible for it:—

A very curious story reaches me; which seems so well authenticated as to be entitled to notice in this place. Apparitions at the time of death are now no new thing, as many who have first heard of such an appearance as a projection of the astral body may suppose; and it seems that there is now one more very striking instance of such an apparition to be added to the list. I am told that at Lady Tryon's party, given on the evening of the fatal collision between the *Victoria* and the *Camperdown*, a well-known lady saw the figure of Sir George Tryon on the stairs, and watched it pass down into the refreshment-room. Lady—was surprised, and coming across a friend told her what she had seen, adding: "I must go and tell Lady Tryon what a pleasant surprise she has given us all;

and I must find Sir George to speak to him." Upon this the second lady, who is also well-known in society, said: "Do not say anything to Lady Tryon. I saw Sir George, too; and I spoke to her, and she seemed annoyed. She says that Sir George is not here! He is with his ship."

There is, of course, no inherent impossibility as to the thing having happened: under the circumstances of Sir George Tryon's death there is, indeed, much probability that it did happen. Nevertheless, we hope either full verification or emphatic denial will be speedily forthcoming. We do not want manufactured evidence.

A somewhat confused discussion which grew out of a letter by "Y.Z." has been going on in "LIGHT" for the last two or three weeks on the esoteric meaning of the teaching and symbolisation of the Roman Catholic Church. It is scarcely to be supposed that an elaborate ritual like that of the Church of Rome should be meaningless; and if we could trace it all back, possibly to its beginnings in Old Egypt, we might get at the signification of some of it. Also, too, there may be some priests who possess certain of the traditions which, though necessarily modified, have not been entirely lost. But even if there are such, they must rather be reckoned among the general body of occultists than as persons having this knowledge in virtue of their priesthood. "Y.Z." appears to have confounded the mystic exaltation which some persons experience in religious services,—an exaltation certainly not to be contemned— with the hidden meaning of the ritual itself; for all such things as names and so forth are part of the ritual. Now it would be quite possible to know the esoteric significance without experiencing the exaltation, and equally possible to experience the exaltation without possessing the esoteric significance.

EXORCISM IN FRANCE.

The village of Gif, in the diocese of Versailles, has, with the permission of the Bishop, been the scene of an unusual ceremony. The village priest and the superior of the great seminary of Versailles went to the house of a poor girl supposed to be possessed of an evil spirit, and proceeded to cast it out. Questioned by the representative of the *Temps* concerning this revival of the Middle Ages, Monsignor Goux, Bishop of Versailles, said that in giving the authorisation for the ceremony and in sending the superior of the seminary to officiate in it, he was simply acting in conformity with the spirit of the Roman Catholic Church. He added that the ceremony was conducted in the most simple manner. The two priests arrived together at the house of the young woman, who had been unable to leave her bed for a long time past, and, if it had not been for the fact that one of the priests put on a surplice ornamented with a star, anyone might have imagined they were paying a simple visit to a sick person. The prayers were, of course, in Latin, but Monsignor Goux says that to the questions put to her in that tongue the young woman replied in French "with a precision which showed she had perfectly understood them." The Bishop informed the representative of the *Temps* that the young woman, who is nineteen years of age, has now so far recovered as to be able to go about her usual work.—"St. James's Gazette."

How poor our Heaven is! How little it draws us! How little there is in the death of those whom we love! We put away our children in death as one would hold his children out of a castle window at night, and let them drop, we know not where, on what rocks, or into what raging wave they fall. When our children die, we drop them into the unknown, shuddering with fear. We know that they go out from us, and we stand and pity and wonder. If we received news that a hundred dollars had been left them by someone dying, we should be thrown into an ecstasy of rejoicing; but when they have gone to God, we stand and mourn and pine, and wonder at "the mystery of Providence." The mystery of Providence to me is that anybody is born. The mystery of Providence to me is that when we are born, if God loves us, as He does through Jesus Christ, He lets us stay away from Him so long. Dying is more desirable than living to Christian faith.—H. W. BEECHER.

MATERIAL OR PSYCHICAL? OR NEITHER?

The "Twentieth Century" of New York publishes the following from the pen of B. F. Underwood. We make no apology for its insertion; as it has evidently been sent to us for that purpose. Much has been said in "LIGHT" of the same nature, and it is pleasant to find that on the other side of the Atlantic such ways of thinking are becoming prevalent:—

It is a philosophical truth that things are not what they seem; the mind that has been able to penetrate beyond the illusions of sense, and to get beneath the surface of things, knows that matter is an appearance, a symbolical representation of an underlying reality. What we see are phenomena, appearances, the effects upon our consciousness of a reality that manifests itself to us under the form of matter; what we do not see is the ultimate reality underlying phenomena.

We know matter by its qualities, or to speak more accurately, we know it only as qualities—a congeries of qualities. We speak of the roundness, yellowness, and sweetness of the orange, the hardness of steel, the heaviness of lead, the blueness of the sky, &c. What do we know of matter apart from, or except as these and other qualities and properties? Nothing. Of the essence of matter, the eighteenth-century materialists, like Holbach, declared that nothing was or could be known. Now, what we speak of as the qualities of matter are psychical in their character. Certainly this will not be disputed by anybody competent to understand the subject, at least, in regard to the so-called secondary qualities of matter.

Colour is a sensation or a state of consciousness dependent for its existence upon a sensitive retina and ethereal vibrations. No instructed mind now regards colour as existing objectively. It is the same with sound. The aerial waves touch the auditory nerve and excite the sensations called sound, which, outside of consciousness, has no existence. The sweetness of an orange and the sourness of vinegar are the conscious states which these objects produce in us. Sweetness and sourness are sensations—not the qualities of inanimate things. The orange tastes sweet. In other words, there is something that appears round and yellow called an orange, which, affecting us through the sense of taste, causes a sensation of sweetness.

So the hardness of a piece of steel is, when carefully considered, seen to be mental and not material. It produces in us the sensation of resistance, and therefore we say it feels hard. We change this word which describes a feeling, a conscious state, from an adjective to abstract noun, from hard to hardness, and in our simplicity imagine that the word describes the piece of steel instead of seeing that it describes only the state of consciousness which the steel produces in us. The illusion is the same as in the case of heat. The heat is not in the stove, but in us. Heat is a sensation and not anything objective. When it is said "heat is a mode of motion," it is true only of the objective factor—of that with which physics has to deal—just the same as when it is said "sound travels" the statement is true only of the objective factor of sound, viz., aerial vibrations.

The question is not here raised as to what these objective factors are in their last analysis, or into what they are resolvable, the only object being to indicate that what materialism assumes is external to us, and the cause of mind—the so-called qualities of matter—are in fact, primary states of consciousness, and that there is nothing material about them.

What is the ultimate reality that man has invested with his own sensations, with his own states of consciousness? Is it material? We have analysed the qualities which at first appear to be the qualities of inanimate substances, and have found that they are psychical and not material at all; and having been forced by logic to divest the objective reality of material qualities, we cannot regard it as matter without re-investing it with the qualities which were just shown to belong to consciousness, and without disregarding the elementary facts of modern psychology. The ultimate reality is not, therefore, material, and materialism has no scientific basis, unless, indeed, the word matter be regarded as essentially transcendental in its nature.

Herbert Spencer argues from the relativity of knowledge that the reality underlying phenomena, of which matter is a symbol, is in its nature unknown and inscrutable. This thinker has often been called a materialist and his philosophy materialism. This is inexcusable when the eminent thinker has dealt materialism the heaviest blows from a philosophical standpoint which it has ever received. He declares that it is "hopelessly

condemned." It is much more rational, he says in substance, to regard the absolute cause of phenomena as psychical than to assume that it is material; and he holds that the same power which is manifested objectively in what is called the material world is manifested subjectively in our mental being; that the power displayed in the motion of the stars "wells up in consciousness."

In regard to man, Mr. Spencer holds that states of consciousness imply a subject "ego," and he speaks of the "substance of mind," and by profound and ingenious reasoning he attempts to show that we can know mind only as states of consciousness (as we can know the world) and that therefore we do not know what it is that underlies the phenomena of consciousness, emotion and thought.

The question whether the ultimate reality is matter, and whether it is inscrutable, having been stated and briefly considered, another question arises:

Is the cause of all phenomena psychical in its nature? We must choose between this view and the view that the absolute reality is inscrutable. But if it be regarded as psychical, it is not necessary to hold that it is a personality—a being having an existence distinct from everything else, located in space, limited in time, receiving knowledge through the senses, and subject to the influence of environment. Such a being would be a product of nature, and, as a cause or permeating influence, incommensurate with the infinity of being. But since man with his intelligence and his moral and religious nature is the outcome of millions of years of change, is the flower of evolution, may we not infer that the energising and controlling force of the universe is somewhat akin to the highest that has appeared, even though we cannot conceive it under the limitations of sense and form? Since matter, which at first sight seems the one enduring, everlasting existence, is by science shown to be but an appearance of an invisible reality, and since this reality is demonstrably psychical in its effects, may we not confidently say that the controlling power of the universe, revealed to us in consciousness, is psychical in its nature?

That this power has any resemblance to our finite, sense-imprisoned intelligence, that we can comprehend it, or define it, or describe it in words, which fail even to describe accurately ourselves or the simplest objects, is not claimed; but is it not in consonance with reason, the highest faculty of man, to hold that in some way, which our limitations do not allow us to grasp, the noblest and best that evolution has produced give the most correct idea of the nature of the power in which we move and live? Inscrutable in the strict sense of the word is the ultimate reality, for it is eternal and infinite, and by attempts to explain or define it by analogies and comparisons which relate to limited, finite forms and faculties, we involve ourselves in confusion.

Intelligence, as known to us, has a genesis and growth; it implies an environment, it is built up by personal experience; personality we know as something circumscribed; associated with form; an evolution; a growth, possessing intellect and will and the power to act upon its surroundings. These words cannot, without a perversion of language, be applied to that which is without limit in space or time, that which is not growth but the cause of all growth; that which has no environment, but of which all forms and conditions, revealed in consciousness, are manifestations. It is probably most correct to say unknown and unknowable is the ultimate cause or basis of the noumena.

If, however, these words convey no adequate or correct idea of the eternal energy, it does not follow that it is less than these words imply. Indeed, intelligence and personality have been evolved by the power back of evolution, and it is a conclusion warranted by good logic and sound philosophy that this power is greater than its products and therefore greater than what we know as human intelligence and personality. Matthew Arnold spoke of it as "the power not ourselves that makes for righteousness."

Certainly, the tendency and trend of things have been towards the better and the higher through all the millions of years of this world's existence. This process of development was going on when there was no human eye to see, no human heart to feel on the globe, nay, when there were none of the lower creatures through which man ascended, on land or sea; when there was not so much as a fern or a lichen on all the earth, when, indeed, the conditions of life had not yet appeared and could not for a period inconceivable by the human mind.

RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES.

FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.

No. LVI.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

February 17th, 1878.—Homo circle met as usual. Very soon we perceived delicious scent, which rained on us most freely. G. then manifested, playing by request, and making good notes through which he answered questions. Odorafa made his melancholy wailing sounds. Rector shook the room. Catharine by request rapped at different parts of the table and room. Baron Guldenstamme stalked about the room with a walking-stick, and answered by rapping with it on the floor.

The "fairy bells" played for a long time and by request gave us many different scales and chords. All these musical sounds were made independently of any instrument. We were told they were caused by will power, and were imitations of the sounds of spirit instruments. Kabbila through the alphabet rapped "Can do no more, change room for ten minutes."

We returned, hoping for a control. Mr. S. M. described spirit-hands; he was able this evening to hear the musical sounds, not being under strong influence. When under influence the séance was often a blank to him. The room was full of spirit-light, and though there were much rapping and scent round the medium, no control could be established.

February 24th.—We met this evening alone. Mr. S. M. was feeling ill. The Prophet's flashing light came very soon and answered our questions, giving three flashes for "yes," and one for "no." Other lights then appeared and one flew about very rapidly. Another large one was held in a materialised hand. This light was covered with perfumed drapery. At our request it brushed over our hands and faces many times. Mr. S. M. felt it over his head and face, and the hand that held it was placed on his head also. The room was full of spirits, and luminous vapour. Catharine, Mentor, Kabbila, and a spirit known by the name of the "Great Master" all manifested. The latter made a very peculiar sound, heard by us for the first time. Mr. S. M. saw him and described him as a grand-looking spirit. Mentor then controlled and answered many questions. Doctor followed and said: "The Chief cannot come. The medium's state prevents it; his illness is spiritual. A malign influence has caused it." He then alluded to an occurrence that had happened recently, saying the experiment had been attended with danger. The medium had mesmerised a gentleman and had experienced great difficulty in recalling the spirit. Had the spirit not returned, another might have entered in, and taken possession of the body, or death might have ensued. This would have been bad for the spirit, as it would have been prematurely introduced into the spheres before it was sufficiently developed, like the premature birth of a child into your world. It was better that the fruit should be gathered when ripe. Doctor then told us that he had been connected with our earth many times since he had left it. He had been much here in the days of our Reformation; his work had been to train and instruct the minds of those he influenced. He had been much with this medium of late. He found this age more impressionable than any preceding one, and although luxury and the lust of gold were rife, the people thought more, and were more intellectual. He added that the intellectual man could be made spiritual, but the physical and animal man never could be altered into the spiritual, also that Materialists and Christians, so-called, were their worst opponents. On our remarking that we had not known the Great Master had ever been in our circle before this evening, Doctor answered, "Many times, but your eyes are holden." "How can we become clairvoyant?" we asked. "By simplicity, and purity of life, with high aims and aspirations." After conversing for some time he left, saying, "May the blessing of the All-Wise rest upon and remain with you."

We then felt breezes of perfumed air, and Mr. S. M. awoke, remarking that he saw the "Great Master" standing by his side.

March 24th.—The usual circle met, and the physical manifestations occurred as usual. Direct spirit writing was produced. Imperator controlled and spoke on the subject of earth-bound spirits, saying, "The rapport established by the approach of a medium often draws back to particular objects the spirit that had been connected with them during its earth life. Spirits are often unconscious of the links that bind them to the earth."

but the bond is not severed until they have entirely left the earth plane. There are men who, though on a low plane of development intellectually, have done their duty to the best of their ability, and these rise quickly through the spheres; while those who may be very intellectual, but of a low moral type, sink into states into which we cannot follow them—whether they are annihilated or not we cannot say.

"The Theosophists say much that is true and right for men to know; the wise man is he who takes the good and refuses the evil. There is no monopoly of truth, yet the more men learn the more dogmatic they often become. One thing we have learned through seeing your world in many of its phases, which is that a man is wise in proportion as he can throw himself into the position of others, not only in his own times, but in those of the past, and can estimate the motives, and make due allowance for the failures."

April 14th.—This evening the circle met. Much scent was quickly manifested. Pearls were brought. Many raps were heard, and spirit lights came clothed in drapery. A stone was brought and placed on the table before Mr. S. M. It was taken from his great coat pocket, out of a pocket-book; the coat was hanging in the outer hall, and the stone was brought through the closed door.

Imperator controlled and said: "The gems and stones the spirits bring to you are the best vehicles for spirit influence, and they contain healing power; not only can spirits heal, but they can also cure diseases that cannot be cured by human means, for they have methods that human skill has not fathomed, especially in cases like your medium's. Were it not for our influence he could not go through all the labour he has to perform. We palliate, but we can also effect cures, provided the proper conditions are present. Some spirits are very successful healers. The influence of spirits is very subtle, and often peculiarities of character may be referred to the different action of spirits. Spirits who communicate through physical mediums are always in an abnormal state."

May 12th.—The next day being my birthday we celebrated it to-day, being Sunday, when we generally hold a séance in the evening. After dinner a ruby was placed near my plate, and a large stone by Charlton's. We were both sitting some distance from the medium. In the evening we held a séance. Mr. Percival and Miss B. were present. Much delicious scent was wafted over the circle, and Mentor spoke in the direct voice. Imperator controlled, speaking of spirits on and near the earth. He said a progressed spirit usually acts as director of those who are producing manifestations, and in this way beneficent spirits, by attracting helpers to earth-bound spirits, enabled them to work out their salvation, and by degrees to rise.

"You must regard the spirit world as one vast school for education. The lower spirits often work without knowing the ends to which their labours tend. Genius is merely the power of receiving spiritual ideas, and working them out to perfection. Everyone is born fitted for some particular work, and yet, instead of finding out the bent of each person, you persist in trying to make everyone do everything. Some men are originaive, some executive, and some adaptive. Malign spirits are ever trying to thwart mankind on their course towards excellence, as they love to check progress in all its forms. They are not altogether evil, yet they do grievous harm, and they never can improve until they realise the fact of their wrong-doing. They assume that their view of truth is the right one, and that all others must be wrong. You must bear in mind that there is always around your earth a dense ring of spirits on a low plane, who have no desire for progress, and who have a complacent belief in the fitness of things as they are. They are very terrible, and they eat around you a pall of darkness. They are not vicious or alarming, but simply obstructive; yet they are a very real and serious barrier to aspiring souls. The legitimate career of the spirit is progress, and anything that interferes with that must do it grievous harm. You do not sufficiently estimate the nature of this opposition, which we would characterise as a dead weight. Resting in any state of existence is dangerous; be, therefore, on your guard against it, for you are in the midst of foes; bodily dangers, resist them all; spiritual dangers, resist them also. Cultivate the power of the will, and discernment, in order that you may get a clear insight what to do and what not to do."

Since the generality of persons act from impulse, and not from reason, men are neither so good, nor so bad, as we are apt to imagine them.—"Guesses at Truth."

NATURE IN MUSIC.

The "Literary Digest" for July 1st contains a condensed article by Dr. Karl Müller, which has appeared in "Die Natur Halle." The overlapping of the so-called spiritual on to the so-called material is well brought out. The physical conditions of music are first treated of, and then the article continues:—

After these physical observations it can scarcely astonish one to learn that an octave of tones is an infinite world of itself, varying with the source of the tones. String and wind instruments, and also keyed instruments, deal fundamentally with the same tones, but how differently do the same tones strike on the ear from different instruments! This is so familiar that we think no more about it. It is very simple; nevertheless the experimenter comes to recognise it as something wonderful, when, for example, he is momentarily forced to regard the sympathetically vibrating sounding-board from the molecular point of view. Here we get an explanation of the fact that a good violin is soon spoiled in the hands of a bad player. A good player by producing only harmonious vibrations in the wood leaves its molecular structure undisturbed, while a beginner produces confusion in the molecular arrangement. The same is true of wind instruments. Apart from the molecular theory these facts would be inexplicable.

But the limitations of our knowledge in this department of science are very narrow. We know that the structure, the form, of an instrument has a most decisive influence on tone and sound, but there is no one who could give a scientific reason for the cause in every individual case. It is only in the matter of the human voice that it has been found approximately possible to explain the facts scientifically. The organ of speech, a tongued instrument, like a clarinet, a hautboy, or an organ-pipe, but much more perfect than any of these, gives us a little insight into the causes which determine the *timbre* of a tone. This, as is generally known, depends on the glottis, which, being alternately opened and closed, reduces to tone the compressed air flowing from the lungs. That this is really the case may be demonstrated by any primitive straw pipe, such as children cut out of green rye straw. These give, of course, only one tone, but different tones may be produced by varying the width of the slots in several pipes. In the human voice the quality of the tone depends primarily on the condition of the walls of the glottis, but the cavities of mouth and chest play the part of two distinct sounding-boards, and may materially influence the *timbre*.

And precisely as there are light rays beyond the violet in the solar spectrum to which our ocular nerves are not sensitive, so also there are tones both above and below our power of hearing. Our organs of hearing are designed to appreciate only a prescribed number of sound vibrations; if these rise above or fall below the prescribed limitations, we are insensible to them. How sounds produce mental sensations we do not know; all we do know is that molecular changes in the substance of the brain accompany the communication of sound vibrations to it. We may say further, simply, that the influence of music is due to a stimulus of our nerves, precisely as our whole life is a matter of stimuli. But how is it that the same music affects different people differently; that tones which attract one will repel another? Is it a matter of elective affinity such as we observe in chemistry? How is it, again, that different musical instruments affect us so differently; and why do we experience the same thing with regard to human voices in speech and song? Is there really scientific ground for voices impressing us as sympathetic or unsympathetic? We see as a final result that there is an established relation between our spiritual life and the phenomena of sound. Music, which is nothing but an orderly succession of wave-vibrations, is, in spite of its plebeian, mechanical origin, capable of raising us to the heights or plunging us in profoundest melancholy. The skilful composer, too, may so arrange his tones as not only to affect our moods, but to open out new vistas of thought to the unthinking soul! That is the glory of music; it excites simultaneously thought and feeling so that the hearer is transported into a world of harmony in which he, too, is in harmony with all his surroundings. That there is an art capable of combining isolated tones by means of harmony and rhythm into a melody for which our organ of hearing was primarily designed gives point to the words of Richard Wagner, "Music is the heart of humanity." It is the art which ennobles the joys of

sense, and humanises spiritual thought. Hence the tone which a great artist brings out of his instrument is distinctly individual, because his soul lies in it; and this it is which lends it the stamp that stirs the depth of our hearts. Tone in its highest perfection is the artist himself.

"LIFE."

There is a striking paper on "Prana"—why do Theosophists use Indian words when there are English equivalents?—or "Life," in "Theosophical Siftings." Herbert Coryn is the author. Taking for his text the fact of the Universal Oneness of life, he traces its changes of phase throughout the human development, naturally according to Theosophic theory, but still in a way of great interest to those who are not Theosophists:—

Life is meta-everything, meta-physical and meta-spiritual. The crystal has life, for it grows; the plant has life, for it grows, moves, and feels; the animal has life, for it does all these and has conscious desires; mind has life, for it thinks; spirit has life, for it creates. Each of the seven principles of man has life, for each works according to its fashion. Life is comparable to one moon falling upon a thousand ripples, and creating thereon a semblance of a thousand moons. But really the Universe is only one infinite life, and it seems multitudinous during its active periods because of the multitudinous creatures that have it. Some, because they are low, exhibit it in its low aspects, such as physical force; and the highest god in Cosmos, because he is high, exhibits it in its highest aspect. But it is greater in its as yet unmanifested aspects and potencies than any of the creatures who live in it, reflect it, and assimilate ever more and more of it. Greater than all lives and behind them stands life, the life because of which they live. Here is the secret of evolution, because it is this life, infinite in its unrevealed possibilities, infinite in surface and depth, that is always consciously struggling to make its creatures reveal it more fully, to make the stone arise into vegetation, to make the vegetable consciously desire, to make the animal think, to raise man into spirituality; all the way up it is trying to make its creatures exhibit more and more of it, to realise itself in them. In its infinity it can never be known, but if we take a line from the stone to ourselves, and from ourselves to Those whom we know as Masters, and note how from step to step ever greater powers and functions come into play, and how consciousness grows ever wider and deeper, and then try and shoot the line onwards to infinity, the attempt will help us into a kind of awe; for unless we can conceive the infinite, *the life* is beyond all ken, although we *are* it on every plane of our being. Evolution is the gradual dissolving of the limits that bind the life, for though we give up physical life, the life of longing remains; though we give up longing, thought remains; though we suspend thought, egoism remains; though we transcend egoism, there is consciousness greater than and freed from that, for egoism is limitation. Philosophically and theoretically we can go one step higher, for even consciousness in any form in which we know it is limited, and we are trying to feel after the unlimited.

Without going into the exact divisions by which Mr. Coryn marks out the various stages of development, we may state that, according to him, as man ascends the steps of being, life is to be regarded as manifesting grades of consciousness, just as in the lower stages force rather than consciousness is the form of its manifestation:—

Supra-conscious life on the highest plane, it becomes self-conscious life on the next, human individual self-consciousness on the next, rational mind on the next, desire in matter on the next, physical life on the next, and force on the last.

As to the practical bearing of these assumptions, we get this:—

Before evolution began, and before men and worlds were in being, one soul breathed in the emptiness, and it was this soul which moved into evolution according to a plan of its own. And in pursuit of that plan it shot itself out in the rays we call men, a duality in consciousness of the material and the spiritual. All men follow diverse paths and go through diverse pains and rough places, that this soul *in them* may perfect itself in all experiences. And since all men were once lost in the unity of that soul which together they composed (for it is not a thing distinct

from them), all men, like the members of a committee, are alike responsible for the doings of the whole. The doings and plan of the whole comprise the fractionation of the whole into units, and for each of these the whole or the collectivity of all is responsible. And in the same way as the American said he had rheumatism in his brother, we can truly say we have sin in our brother and misery. It is this unconscious knowledge that it is we who are miserable in him that leads us to relieve his misery. I relieve misery to relieve *my* misery at seeing it. I am miserable at seeing want, because I in that other man am in want. There is no other explanation of charity, and there are few who have not at one time or another time done a charity. Some would reduce it all to selfishness, saying that we only relieve pain to relieve our own pain at seeing it. Precisely true. We have widened our interests till they include others. We are in pain at the pain of another. To that extent we do not distinguish between ourselves and him, because at bottom there is no such distinction. Humanity is one Self. At the beginning it was one; it now seems many, but at the end when the minds of men are tuned together (a process already indicated by the growing sensitivity of many to the unspoken thoughts and feelings of others) humanity will be one vast organism in perfect harmony, and every unit, still thinking itself a unit, will yet feel with every other, giving, nevertheless, its individual colour to all it takes into its consciousness.

Incidentally there are some remarks about the ordinary methods of science which are also well worth quoting:—

In passing, one may note that materialism is constantly, almost habitually, employed in assuming as true that which is absolutely opposed to experience, and demanding of its opponents that they shall prove the opposite. We can well afford to decline to be thus cornered. It is a common and empty aphorism of materialistic schools that no thought can occur where there is no brain. Now, in declining to prove the opposite, we are entitled to demand proof of the assertion. Brain action is vivid in proportion to the quantity of blood in the skull, provided its flow is healthy. But in sleep, when the blood-flow is at its minimum, thought and imagination are often marvellous in their vividity. This thought and imagery are not transacted by the brain, and often barely reach the brain-memory at all. Under some anaesthetics, the whole personality, thinking and observing, is sometimes absolutely outside the body, and has the body as an object beside it. These experiences of sleep and anaesthesia are sufficient to afford *à priori* ground for holding that thought *can* go on without a brain, and who says the opposite should prove it. Brain does *not* vary with mind. The brain of a new-born infant compared with that of an adult has not the ratio of development which obtains between that of an infant and that of an adult. They grow quite out of ratio. At the other end of life it is the same. An aged body, rigid and calcified arteries and deadened senses, may go with a brilliant and stately intellect as mobile as that of a man of forty. In other words, the brain has a cycle of growth and death that has only a limited correspondence with that of mind. To students of occultism the problem ceases altogether, for they *know* that mind properly trained may be made absolutely independent of brain. It may be granted that in the usual case a thought is accompanied by a physical change of molecular configuration and a passage of a nerve-current from cells to cells, but what molecular or cellular configuration can be regarded as accompanying the sense of self-identity that is at the back of every conscious state? To say that such configuration is conceivable, as an accompaniment of the sense of self-identity, of the ideas of time and space, or of any abstract idea, is to use words that are entirely innocent of meaning.

Not a sound has ever ceased to vibrate through space; not a ripple has ever been lost upon the ocean. Much more is it true that not a true thought, nor a pure resolve, nor a loving act, has ever gone forth in vain.—ROBERTSON.

HAPPY is the man who has that in his soul which acts upon the dejected as April airs upon violet roots. Gifts from the hand are silver and gold; but the heart gives that which neither silver nor gold can buy. To be full of goodness, full of cheerfulness, full of sympathy, full of helpful hope, causes a man to carry blessings of which he is himself unconscious as a lamp of its own shining. Such an one moves on human life as stars move on dark seas to bewildered mariners; as the sun wheels, bringing all the seasons with him, from the south.—H. W. BEECHER.

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A SPIRITUAL SENSE.

At a séance where Eglinton was the medium, a few years ago, a not very successful séance certainly, for the influences in some way were adverse, there came from between the curtains behind which Eglinton was sitting what appeared to be the undulating form of some person, though there was no head developed, and the thing was very ethereal. Now, this figure was seen by only two or three of the circle, while the others did not see it, the circumstances being equally favourable for all. The question arises naturally, Why was this?

But before proceeding to attempt the discovery of an answer, certain other well-known facts deserve consideration. We believe it will be acknowledged that there are plenty of people who would accept the phenomena of Spiritualism without hesitation if they ever were able to witness those phenomena in any way which was personal to themselves; but whatever they see, or whatever they are told of, as long as the facts do not appeal to them personally, they reject the spiritual hypothesis. And it is needless to say those personal manifestations never come to them.

Is there, then, a "spiritual sense," wanting to a large part of mankind, and developed very variously even among those who possess it? In the case given at the beginning of this article, the spiritual sense must have been developed certainly in at least one of those who did not see the figure, so that if there be a spiritual sense it was probably an instance of a different degree of development. And, on the same supposition, the spiritual blindness of the majority of people may be attributed to the more or less complete absence of the same sense.

The existence of the five senses, and of no more than five, has become so much one of the "facts" of our daily life, that to add to them would not be acceptable to most; nevertheless, the old belief has been receiving more shocks lately in the well-ascertained occasional overlapping of the senses of hearing and sight. And the necessity of such terms as "colour-sense" shows that the "sense" of sight does not of itself cover the whole area of what is meant by "seeing."

Moreover, that part of the theory of evolution which teaches how organs may become extinct, or when remaining become useless through disuse, comes in helpfully in this connection. Our commercial civilisation is essentially a material civilisation, and the use of the spiritual sense has been weakened, if not generally destroyed, by its in-

fluence. Spiritual atrophy has been the natural consequence of its want of exercise. And that this is so is borne out by the fact that so-called uncivilised peoples, and people who though civilised have yet not been thoroughly tainted by the corrupting influences of our modern civilisation, do not variably recognise the spiritual agencies about them, and are amenable to, and believe in, the impact of the Unseen. It is also worthy of notice that the revivification of the spiritual sense has been almost exactly coincident with the doubts which men have begun to show as to the value of the materialistic civilisation which has for so many centuries been their boast.

Let it be understood, nevertheless, that the possession of such a sense does not necessarily involve the presence of either moral or intellectual superiority on the part of the possessor, though it does involve great responsibility. The sense may, however, be cultivated, but it would seem that the more it is cultivated, the less it is affected by material things, it being gradually intromitted into the consciousness of higher intelligences, with intuition as the result. From this there arises some difficulty. One sometimes wonders whether by any means whatever a man born blind could be made to realise what is meant by sight. The thing is apparently impossible. So it is with intuitional knowledge. It is very difficult, it is indeed not possible, to explain to those not having the spiritual sense what is meant by intuitional knowledge. And yet a man may have that kind of knowledge without being either a vain man or a fool.

SUPERSTITION CONCERNING PLANTS.

We take this from the "Religio-Philosophical Journal":—

Byron D. Halsted writing in "The Chatauquan" for May in regard to "Folk Lore and Superstitions Concerning Plants," says that in the middle ages the poor people sought relief from their ills at the hands of monks and nuns, but after the Reformation the healing art was relegated to charitable women who mastered the mysteries of simpling; that out of this grew up the profession of the herbalist, combining all the self-assertion of the quack doctor with the ignorance of the ancient crows. Such people became the dread of their neighbourhoods. One of the superstitions taught by these ignorant herbalists was the belief that disease could be transferred from human beings to trees. Ash trees were held open by wedges while sick children were passed through, with the absurd notion that restoration would follow. The child was passed through head foremost and handed back to the left, each time going in the direction of the sun. If the tree grew together after the wedges were removed, the child was, it was believed, certain to recover. These old herbalists combined mixtures which they called love powders, for despondent swains and heartick maidens. If the potion failed to bring the desired result various juices of roots and herbs were mingled in a potion and sold as the love philtre. The writer says: "Perhaps as a lingering remnant of this absurdity there is a current notion in some parts of the world to-day that a whole mince pie eaten at midnight will cause the reappearance of long departed friends, not to mention the family physician and the more interested members of the household." We doubt whether the notion in regard to the mince pie eaten at midnight is a lingering remnant of the idea handed down by the old herbalists. It is more likely that the notion is the frequent effect of that article in producing dreams of which such reappearances are a part.

These "superstitions" are not quite so dead as the writer imagines. The ash-tree cure is, we believe, still secretly practised in some parts of England. It is also very much a question whether the origin of these customs is as simple as Byron D. Halsted thinks. The "intelligence" of the vegetable kingdom is becoming a consideration for the near future, and there may have been some remote revelation of this in these quaint practices.

We can never see this world in its true light unless we consider our life in it as a state of discipline—which we are passing to prepare for another.—J. W. ALEXANDER

THE ANALOGIES OF RE-INCARNATION.

I welcome Mr. Donaldson's letter in "LIGHT," July 29th, because it raises distinctly objections which I knew might occur on a superficial view, but which could not be conveniently answered, fully and explicitly, by anticipation, I say "on a superficial view," because I cannot admit them to be consistent with that "pondering" of the analogies which Mr. Donaldson claims to have been a past mental process with "most thoughtful Spiritualists." For the most part these objections betray a failure to apprehend the true point of the analogy. We are told, for instance, that the analogy between the life of man and that of vegetation breaks down because "human beings" (unlike plants) "are born all the year round,"* and again because man "does not rest in the winter as plants do here." These objections confound periodicity with period. Man is not under the law of the year as a particular period; the suggestion is that the law of the year is the type of a periodicity to which he conforms in his own proper cycle. In considering a law, either of material form or temporal process, we have to abstract from the mere scale of representation, to which the formal virtue of nature is indifferent. The year presents to us the type of periodical alternation; but different orders of life realise that type in very different periods, and it is another law that determines what the duration of the cycle, and of its alternations (which may be proportionally different), shall be for each order. The contention is, that the uniformity of nature requires that the law of its process shall be universal, not, of course, that the law shall be represented always on the same scale.

[Having myself pointed out, and made it part of my argument, that the "rest" of nature is not absolute (which is really only to say that it is not death), but is the quiescence of certain functions of vital manifestation, whereas certain other, non-apparent, functions are then especially active, I find Mr. Donaldson nevertheless adducing this fact, that the sleep of vegetative nature is not an absolute rest from all functional activity, that growth goes on at the roots, and even above ground in tropical climates, or under artificial conditions, as against the analogy. Assimilation of nutrition, and therefore growth and modification of tissue, are certainly, perhaps especially, vegetative functions of winter and of night, and the Re-incarnationist may see in them the analogy to subjective processes by which the true vital experiences of an objective life-time are spiritually worked up into the soul-substance (spirit *natured*), which manifests them as character-results under the stimulations of an ensuing incarnation. But the great processes of manifestation in tree-life are the putting forth of new shoots, new leafage, flowering, fruitage, formation of seed, and these are of regular and periodical, not unintermittent, occurrence. It is the broad fact of periodicity as a general law of nature, and as exemplified in individual organic products of nature, to which we have to look; because if any fact of otherwise unexplained import can receive its interpretation by being brought under a known law, and nothing that is known is inconsistent with so considering it, we should not be repelled from the consequent presumption by the circumstance that we must thereby conceive the law as having a range and comprehension hitherto unsuspected by us. Rather should we admire the larger view of nature thus obtained.

But, in truth, our reluctance arises from no scruple of thought, but from a mere absence of scientific curiosity. Comparatively few, even among those who recognise a psychological individuality which physical death cannot reach, have come to see how urgently consequent upon that conviction is the question: What, then, for such an individuality, is the natural explanation or significance of the temporary physical embodiment and death? These things are so much a matter of course to us that we are slow to see the necessity of connecting them with the spiritual life by the bond of natural law. The interesting fact (when realised, and not merely accepted as a pious tradition) to most of us is that of a psychological individuality independent of physical embodiment, not that of a physical embodiment dependent upon an individuality which is psychological. Or rather, comparatively few

* It is added, "and more often during the night than during the day." As concerns the present argument, I should not care if it were so; but having, long ago (for an astrological purpose), examined the proportion of night to day births (of course with reference to the total number of night and day hours) in scores of cases, I was unable to discover any excess of either over the numerical average. I should like to know Mr. Donaldson's authority for his statement.

have as yet attained the perception that the relation of dependence, as first conceived, is not to be merely given up, but reversed. With most, the only progress made is in intellectually discarding the sense-appearance of the dependence of the psychical on the physical. The two are not yet synthesised: they are held in an unrelated juxtaposition. The further logical step has yet to be taken. For that is the order of truth; here, as in the great instances of the Copernican Astronomy and of the Kantian Aesthetic, truth is found in a reversal of the apparent relation of things. Sooner or later, our "thoughtful Spiritualist" has got to take that step. As soon as he sees that his connection with this physical world is a thing needing explanation, he cannot long put up by way of explanation with conceptions of a wholly unscientific character, conceptions which make that connection casual in origin, and casually determinable, recognising no natural law or reason why anyone should belong to this world rather than to any other in or out of space, or why, so belonging, the relation should altogether, and finally, cease when he happens physically to die, perhaps before his life in this world can have answered any imaginable purpose. Least of all can he continue to accept as a sufficient reason for such absolute and final withdrawal, a merely physical cause, thus either negating all relation of life here to psychical or spiritual progress, or making that relation defeasible by an agency inferior to its own law and causation. But death can only lose this disorderly significance if its power to deflect the destiny of man from its natural course is denied, if we acknowledge that the same power which incarnated can re-incarnate. This is an immediate consequence of the dependence of the physical on the psychical, of the organism on that which it subserves. But a further consequence is that physical embodiment must be conceived in a certain normal relation to the total life of the individual, not as an exceptional or capricious incident in it. And the question is, can we find in the known course and order of nature the type of that normality? We ought to expect to find in physical nature the type of a law or process which is not of merely and exclusively physical operation. For the physical is not the limit of nature, but only a mode of manifestation, and, therefore, we should seek in that mode the modal operation of a law in itself universal. But as this idea is vital to the analogical argument, some attempt must here be made to bring it more clearly into view.

Analogy is resemblance *sub modo*. Thus in the resemblances which we find throughout organic nature in the parts to the whole, and in the dependent to the superior, the same general type of formation or process is observable, but under the conditions and limitations of the partial or the dependent. If the limitations are merely of scale, we may find a delineation which is immediately obvious, as in the articulation of a leaf the structure of a tree is unmistakably represented. The same process which formed the tree has obviously formed the leaf on the smaller scale. So in the phenomena of time and motion, the analogy between the results of the greater and the lesser revolutions of the earth—the annual and the diurnal—are quite patent and unquestionable in regard to light, though we have to go to the Pole for the completer darkness of night on the larger scale of the year. The difficulty of discernment begins when the repeating process is impressed on a modal difference either of kind or discrete degree. I have already adverted to Spencer's application of the formula of biological evolution to sociology. But a much simpler instance may be taken—the representation of objects in three dimensions upon the plane of two dimensions, an ordinary "picture." The picture is not an image, but an analogy. The eye is so quickly trained to relate the second to the third dimension that the truth is not immediately obvious to us that it is the same training which the eye of intellect requires to detect identity of law in things or orders of things specifically unlike.

Now, if we wish to know something definitely of the law of psychological individuality, we must, of course, first have a firm scientific conviction that it has a law—a conviction which I rather doubt if many of us have attained to. But pre-supposing that, we shall certainly conclude that its law, whatever it may be, is not without a modal representation in the world around us. We already recognise in physical embodiment an organism of manifestation and use in a particular order of nature. We also know that after a normal period (liable to abbreviation) this organism drops away from us. We at once find these two facts paralleled in physical nature. But now we have to distinguish. In our own case

we make the assumption of an enduring individuality which does not perish in or with its present organic expression. Therefore when we seek in physical nature for a modal representation of a law applicable to such a being, we must select in that order existences resembling ourselves in this primary respect, that they exhibit an enduring individuality relatively to the phase of it analogous to our own organic manifestation. And this condition, be it remarked by the way, at once disposes of Mr. Donaldson's instance of the cauliflower, which, as a plant which does not survive a single season of organic manifestation and action, he would certainly not have adduced had he "pondered" the question of analogy so far as to see what is implied in the conception. The universality of the law of periodicity is not represented in the cauliflower individually, but generically, whereas we are now inquiring as to the operation of that law in the case of things which can individually exhibit it.

We find such a thing in one of the most widely disseminated products of nature—the tree of many seasons. But now, let us put out of view for the moment our knowledge of its seasons. Let us first behold the tree in its spring and summer bloom, then in its deciduous phase in autumn, and then as it stands bare, dry, and apparently lifeless, in the winter. Let us know nothing of its past winters or future springs, and let us moralise at the foot of the seemingly dead thing, whose decomposition we may anticipate as only less rapid than that of our dead bodies. "This tree," we shall say, "in its own order and degree has resembled my own life in this world; it has grown, and put forth organs of life and manifestation, rejoiced in the productivity and exuberance of its spring and prime, has lived for a while in peaceful repose after its life-work was over, and now it is dead, as I shall corporeally die. But it teaches me nothing about myself which I do not know already. Above all, it tells me nothing of a law connecting the larger life which I know that I possess, with the ephemeral season of physical existence which I experience in common with itself." Suppose that I have said all this to myself explicitly before I knew the truth about the tree, that I have sought nature's teaching but not yet found it. Should I then see no significance for myself in the tree's renewal of organic vitality and manifestation in the following spring? Should I not rather exclaim, "Yes! this is the explanation of the mystery; here is the law of my individuality: this thing in its own order and to the extent of its own capacity—*sub modo*—represents it. It has a larger life than the single season of that life's manifestation reveals, a life *totally* within, the physical order, it is true, whereas my physical life is itself but a phase of my manifestation; but not the less on that account does it exhibit the relation of manifestation to life generally as one of recurrence, of periodicity." Can I doubt the application of this law to my own case, or prefer to this natural truth the unanswered question of the fly in amber?

When we have learnt some lesson from a definitely concrete instance, it usually happens that we see it to be also legible in a more general experience, had the open mind been there to read it. And so here, if we have been taught of the tree, we can forthwith see that the general periodicity of nature is really all along telling us the same thing, if we understand that it is indifferent to her law whether the substratum of manifestation is an individual or a species. We shall not then so misconceive the matter as to ask if a cauliflower re-incarnates, but we shall see that the annual succession of cauliflowers is fundamentally the same fact as the re-foliation of an oak, or the re-incarnation of a man. But concerning this identification of reproduction with re-incarnation, something must be added to obviate a very probable misunderstanding.

Until the consciousness of nature appears as self-consciousness in psychical individuality, the life of the species is all in all, and seeks only re-manifestation in successive individuals which represent the specific identity, having only a spacial and temporal differentiation of their own. Now the physical life basis of human manifestation in this world being animal, and not in itself truly individual, the reproductive instinct is at root merely the specific tendency, however elevated and directed by the individual psychical influence. It can thus only provide another basis for psychical manifestation, and the animal product is a re-incarnation of the human-animal species, but not of the individual. (Psychical influence is, however, so far potent in this reproduction that the new animal basis is deeply tinged with such quality as can be imparted to the animal principle, having been in fact imparted to that principle by psychical action on the parental organisms. The animal principle cannot in this way

be truly individualised, or made psychical; it has only been trained to respond with automatic spontaneity to certain conditions, given the necessary nerve apparatus. It has only initiative. The quality, therefore, is not the essential quality of the individual newly manifesting, but is offered to the latter as it were from without, for adoption. It is quickly modified, and often later on extruded from the character, as that modified in organic manifestation its own inherent dispositions. So, on the point of heredity, the phenomena of which are better explained by the affinities attracting re-incarnating individuals, than by preference to certain human parentages.)

We have thus, in the first place, to distinguish between the re-incarnation of the species—which is called reproduction—and that of the true individual. The latter reproduction, indeed, is the true *individual* reproduction (re-manifestation only the species (with the quasi-modifications just referred to, which amount only to "variations") being re-manifested) propagation. But the connection between the facts of species or generic re-incarnation, and individual re-incarnation, calls for some attempt at explanation.

The former is a perpetual *naturing*, the nature-spirit being only able to maintain its differentiations by transmitting them successively from one product to another. The law of periodicity (which is really the great law of in-and-out-breathing, chief end is transmission), being, however, also apparent in the case of the tree, in regular occultations of the life of the product, within the term of the product's own existence. In such case the nature-spirit brings the whole law of periodicity subordinately into one of the moments, or phases; and the product, which is just the moment of manifestation, represents again both moments within that.

Psychical individuality, on the other hand, has taken the animal nature-spirit up into itself, so that the human animal generic difference has now an individual difference, and can thus find its period or moment of latency, not in mere perishing of the product, but in the period of *true* manifestation of the psychical humanity, which is a relatively spiritual state. For the psychical humanity, the manifestation of the animal is in fact the moment of occultation. Now the whole phenomenon of periodicity represents essentially the strife of two principles, the higher seeking to maintain the conversion of the lower to its own form, the lower striving to reclaim the product of the higher from that form. In the merely physical life, this strife is between the organic and the elementary; in the psycho-physical life it is between the psychical and the physical organic principles. At re-incarnation, the animal principle, which has become associated with, and individualised in, the physical, has its turn of apparent victory. On the other hand, in its period of oppression or occultation every principle is self-urged to freedom or re-manifestation: that period is so far from being one of inaction of the higher principle, that it is then the effort resulting in its growth and consequent greater glory is made. For it cannot free itself by a simple return; the condition of its liberation is a *conversion* to itself of its captor and apparent conqueror, and it is in this conversion that its own growth, or progress, consists.*

It is possible that some readers will have been struck by an apparent force in Mr. Donaldson's observations concerning the diminished degrees of "rest" observable in the rise from "the undemonstrative mineral kingdom" up to the psychical, and again within the latter, from infancy to maturity of human life (though by a strange reversal of notorious fact, he makes the need of rest in "the old man or woman least of all"). But those facts are so far from being truly at variance with the analogy here urged, that they belong essentially to the conception of it. For it is in the *conflict* of principles that the law of periodicity, as the alternately preponderating manifestation of each, is seen. The mineral principle exhibits the law as soon as it comes into vital contact with the vegetative. But what Mr. Donaldson calls the "rest" of the mineral is its *manifestation*. The mineral principle has its period of occultation when its form is subjected in an organic process. The elementary manifesta-

* It is only in the case of life-principles of equal value that liberation can consist in mere separation. Thus, in human race-history, the test of the superiority of a conquering people is its ability to convert the conquered to its own spirit, laws, and national unity. That is the true conquest, and in the ethics of historical philosophy is the justification of the provisional force-process: for if such conversion does not result, all foreign domination over a living spirit of nationality is and remains everlastingly unjust—a crime against race-energy and character which should develop independently their own variety in the family of national forms.

tion is resumed when the organism decomposes. Mr. Donaldson throughout neglects the *relativity* of the term "rest," on which I insisted. Thus he speaks of a "thousand years of passivity"! This Devachanic "passivity" is, of course, just the period when the spiritual life of the individual is at its fruition and manifestation. It is in one sense the "rest" of that principle, in that the latter is not then striving to emerge from the psycho-animal principle, which is in its period of occultation. This lower principle has its re-manifestation in the comparatively brief psycho-physical life on earth, and is then of course at its greatest energy and is least subject to the subordinate daily relapses (sleeps) in the maturity of that life. In the working out of the analogy with due understanding of the difference of the principles concerned, these things are consequences, not inconsistencies. When the individual has completely overcome and converted the animal principle attaching to him, thereby raising nature to himself, and appropriating its powers (for that which converts understands the converted through and through, and makes it its agent), he will be exempt from re-incarnation, because that principle will be and remain in a perfect subjection to him, and his spiritualised psychical individuality will suffer no further occultation through that principle. The "attachment" to this world will have ceased for him. It only ceases temporarily with the partial results of each objective life-time. I must add, however, that I do not postulate those Devachanic periods (as regards their duration) maintained by our friends the Theosophists. I am here concerned only with the principle of Re-incarnation, and that upon a ground of analogy which converted me to the doctrine before it was so prominently associated with the Theosophical Society as now it is.

It remains to advert, though but briefly, to the objection introduced by the not unimportant proviso, "If we have learned anything from spirit-communion." To say the truth, I do not think we have learned anything from that communion in the overt sense of "Modern Spiritualism," beyond at most the fact that prematurely deceased persons can communicate with us overtly, but very imperfectly, under certain conditions; but the objection of their ignorance of what, *ex hypothesi*, they could not know does not seem to require an elaborate answer.

Mr. Donaldson explains belief in Re-incarnation as a weakness of "the conservative mind." The imputation of conservative-mindedness is rather pleasant, once in a way, as making one feel less out of harmony with one's surroundings, at a time when Radicalism such as mine is accounted almost a social offence.

The length to which this article has run obliges me to postpone till next week my reply to "Chercheur," whose requirement I will endeavour to meet to the best of my ability.

C. C. M.

AN ESSAY ON CONSCIENCE.

The following is from the "Agnostic Journal," over the initials "S. H.":—

The God within the mind" is a Platonic definition of conscience. Conscience is not primary, but secondary. Conscience never precedes, but always follows. Conscience is not the cause, but the effect. Conscience is not innate, but artificial, or, rather, what human education has made it.

Having stated what conscience is *not*, I will now explain how we come to possess it. The foundation or cause of conscience is the standard or premises set up, taught, and believed in. A high standard, acted up to, conscience would approve; if *not* acted up to, it would condemn; but if the standard set up was wrong, conscience would equally approve of doing wrong. A low standard, a low conscience. No standard, no conscience. The standard is the guide; conscience is simply an appendage tacked on, and is purely automatic. There is nothing in its nature that can be classed as divine, as it proceeds from a solely human source, and varies in every individual according to the teaching each has received. Conscience is never blunted or scared "with a hot iron," as is commonly reported, for it always faithfully records how near you have approached or fallen short of what you have been taught to believe was right. It is quite true that, if there were no standard, there would be no conscience; but, on the other hand, as everyone is undergoing or receiving some kind of teaching from the cradle to the grave, there cannot be anyone without one. If you were taught that theft and arson were right and proper, and believed the teaching

true, your conscience would condemn you if you did not act or practise accordingly—the actions of the Anarchists and other extreme parties fully prove this.

If the above remarks be true, how important it is that our aim in life should be high; that we should endeavour, as far as possible, to be surrounded and influenced by all that is lofty, noble, and good, and to shun all the influences that would lead us in a downward course. We are creatures of circumstance, and should, therefore, try as far as possible to trim our sails to take advantage of every favourable opportunity that presents itself. We live under an inexorable law; we may alter, but the law remains the same. The mind is as much under law as is matter. We may, by investigation, know more of the working of that law, but it remains the same and alters not.

This is a curious essay. The "foundation or cause of conscience is the standard or premises set up, taught, and believed in." And then we are introduced to high and low standards. One would like to know what are high and what low standards? What is the ultimate determinant of "highness" and "lowness"? Of course it cannot be conscience, for that is only a result, not a cause. It can hardly be the greatest happiness of the greatest number, for, from the standpoint of this "essay," if robbery and arson were found to give joy to a greater number than they do—for they undoubtedly do give satisfaction to many—to a number which should be the majority then robbery and arson would fall into the category of hedonistic customs. But we find these things characterised somehow as being low in themselves. Does not "S.H." after all fall back on the spiritual essence in man?

And we live under "an inexorable law." What does this mean? "We may alter, but the law remains the same." Who are the we? and who made the law?—When will this confusion about the meaning of "law" cease? Natural law is not civil law; Nature's laws cannot be disobeyed, the disobedience itself is according to law. How interesting it always is to note the way in which idols are set up! Having got rid of the spiritual, there is set up a material law, which cannot change, and which is as much a fetish as the anthropomorphic God of the orthodox.

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.]

An Occult Lexicon.

SIR,—In reply to Mr. J. Hawkins Simpson's inquiry for an Occult Lexicon, he may, perhaps, be glad to know that such a book as he describes was compiled by H. P. Blavatsky, and published after her death under the title of "Theosophical Glossary." It may be had of the Theosophical Publishing Company, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi. E. KISLINGBURY.

The Perfect Man (according to Theosophy).

SIR,—Permit me to call your attention and that of your readers to a statement made by Mrs. Besant (as reported in the "Daily Chronicle," concerning the debate between Mrs. Macdonald and herself on June 30th) regarding her (and, I presume, that of "Theosophists" in general) ideal of a "perfect man." This ideal, it seems, according to the claims of Theosophy, is actually attained by some now living in earthly conditions who are the alleged prime movers in the outworking of the "Wisdom Religion" established, or attempted so to be, by the late Madame Blavatsky, and as a system of thought embodied in the published works of that lady, who claimed to be the mouthpiece of veritable "Mahatmas." The weakness of the claim consists in its unsubstantiality, that is, it is utterly devoid of proof and rests on nothing stronger than the mere assertion of the above-mentioned lady and her successor, with their followers.

Mrs. Besant says: "A Mahatma was a man who placed before himself the ideal of gaining knowledge in order that he might dedicate it to the service of humanity (but Mahatmas do

not possess the monopoly of this aspiration"), and he first had to make his own life perfect. By constant struggle, by killing the brute within him, he at last vindicated the existence of the soul."

If the "existence of the soul" can only be vindicated by such a method, it were a libel on those efforts of wise and good people of the past and present which are directed towards—not only the amelioration of the ills which human beings are heir to, but also the bringing into action of the good qualities which pertain, in ordinary parlance, to the soul. How, otherwise, can we account for the vast number of charitable, philanthropic, and especially churchmanic and religious institutions? These latter are essentially engaged in the work of "vindicated the existence of the soul." If Mrs. Besant is correctly reported, her statement is not very lucid, and she might, and in fact ought, to have added a definition of what she meant by the "soul." Allowing it to be an unguarded expression, vague as it is, I pass it over, to notice the *modus operandi* which she propounds as necessary for gaining the knowledge of the Soul's existence, and this being gained, to notice further what results therefrom, namely, the exhibition of a living perfect man in embodied conditions, such as the Theosophical Adepts, or Mahatmas, are claimed to be by their votaries. These "Adepts are now living on earth," we are informed; but Mrs. Besant tells us (see "Borderland," p. 55) that there are others called *Nirmātakāyas*, that is, perfected men, "who have cast aside their physical bodies, but retain their other lower principles, and remain in the earth sphere for the sake of helping forward the evolution of mankind." These have renounced Nirvāna and "determined to remain invisible" in spirit on this earth. "They have no material body, but otherwise they remain with all their principles even in astral life in our sphere."

The question that remains, and which must be met with something more substantial than theory and assumption, is, Can a man be perfect "minus" the animal principle?

What is this animal, or brute, as Mrs. Besant calls it, in man that is so abhorrent to the ideal perfect man that nothing less than its destruction will suffice for the attainment of knowledge concerning the soul and its existence? To destroy, or attempt to destroy, any "principle of life"—which cannot be done in actuality is to call in question the wisdom of the Great Creator, who, in Biblical terms, made man in His own image and likeness. It is this very principle in man-woman that is the connecting link between all forms of life below, animal, vegetable, and mineral; and all forms of self-conscious beings above, even to the angel and the God. If these so-called "perfected men" knew anything of the laws which pertain to the influx and efflux of life—vitality—they would not be teachers of such a doctrine and practice. Theosophy professes to explain the constitution of man, and makes him-her a composite being, built up of some seven principles, which are disrupted and the lowest of them after death are dissociated and sent no one knows where, until they are—like the animal principle in their ideal perfect man—killed, or destroyed. But if such teaching proceeds from these unknown Himalayan Adepts, in all seriousness they are not "perfect" but very "imperfect" men, and instead of claiming to be teachers of truth they have need to re-commence the study of the laws of life as they are, and not as they fancy them to be or should be.

Such fallacious conceptions are not new, for in long past ages they have been tried by men, and women as well, who thought by killing the animal within them they would become more "perfect," and at least that they would become "saints," if not Adepts. What the result has been, and is, history only too well and truly attests.

No dictum or teaching can be true and good unless it is of universal application, for if it is right, good, and wise, for an "Adept" to kill his own animal principle, it would be so for all to do the same; and if carried out universally we know what would follow. I will not now speak of the abuse of this principle by man; but until it can be demonstrated that the possession of the so-called animal principle by human beings is a disgrace instead of an honour and glorious prerogative, I hold humbly and reverently that the carrying out into practice of such an order of teaching would make the present confusion of tongues, as well as of thought and life, a thousandfold more confounded than it is.

Your limited space forbids my enlarging on what is involved and included in the animal within man, but I should have no difficulty in proving, from teachings derived from other sources

than Theosophical Mahatmas—if such there really be—that the animal principle is in the most perfect order, and that it is not only indestructible but that in the passage from the material to the angel and God it becomes glorified; for, according to these lights, the angel is the only true perfect man-woman.

Higher Broughton, Manchester.

WILLIAM OXLEY.

A Curious Colour Effect.

Sir,—Is it possible that some of the readers of "LIGHT" may be able to suggest explanations of the curious fact that the letters of the alphabet and words in print or in the imagination are to some people endued with colour? I myself see that the letter A is very highly coloured, and I know one or two people who experience the same sensation. For instance, A to me is pink; B, brown; C, yellow; D, mauve; E, pale pink; F, brown; G, blue; H, black, and so on. The word "Soul" is an entirely red word, and "Steel," white. An ordinary epistle in black writing appears to me always highly coloured throughout.

EVELYN RIDGEWAY.

An Inclusive System.

SIR,—On p. 330 of "LIGHT" it is said, "Theosophy is of the earth, earthy." If the writer had said, "Theosophy is of the spirit, spiritual," it would have been more accurate.

Again, "It (Theosophy) seems incapable of expanding itself so as to take into purview anything outside of this earth, and the system of which this earth is a part. It is full of long words and prodigious numbers, but yet it is narrow and small and naturally depends upon authority." With these remarks I do not agree entirely. Theosophy embraces all that appertains to Man in his present, past, or future states, as anyone who studies it may easily perceive; as for authority, we are distinctly told not to accept anything on authority unless it commends itself to reason.

We are also informed by the same writer, that the full dedication of Madame Blavatsky does not seem very far off. This is nonsense. Admiration is one thing, deification another.

R. C., F.T.S.

[Admiration certainly is one thing and deification is another, but the assertion of trite observations does not alter facts. I say that Theosophy embraces all that appertains to Man in his present, past, or future state, is to say very much indeed, so much that it would require a good deal of argument to prove it. As to whether Theosophy is of the spirit, spiritual, we leave to our readers. It was, perhaps, going somewhat too far to say it was of the earth, earthy, but its mundane character is very conspicuous.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

Divergence versus At-one-ment.

SIR,—Will you allow me to reply to Mrs. Boole that the consideration of propositions, whether of Mr. Maitland's or of Mrs. Besant's, or of other schools, involves an appeal to the inner "ground-basis," or revealer, the denial of which she considers to be involved by their teachings. All such propositions must be presented to our consciousness, which formulates our judgment of them; and our interpretation is presumably according to the plane or zone of our Being to which we can ascend and where the revelation she refers to occurs, from within. Some of us can only ascend to the sphere of the mind, where we disport in intellectual vain-glory; to others it is given to receive illumination from the Soul. But in both it is equally a question of the functioning of consciousness, the difference being as to the belt or zone, in the unity of our being, in which we temporarily are focussed.

Revelation may come in the form of the "voice of the silence" from within; or it may assume the shape of an angel—or it may come externally, in the shape of a spirit guide. In the first case the revelation is purely subjective, from within, from the ground of Being, individualised within ourselves, our Highest Self. As regards the second case, there is a probability that such an angelic presence may be a higher, or inner, part or aspect of ourselves. I appeal to some authorities to give us light on this question.

In the third case there would appear to be an intermediately-delegated to assist in our development. Yet our assimilation of such revelation from without, is regulated by the sphere of our being in which our consciousness is focussed.

It was with the desire to which Mrs. Boole refers, to witness a co-operative effort towards a synthetic formulation of occult or psychic (Soulie, not astral) teachings, that I suggested the idea of a Symposium, leaving the initiation of the form which it should take to other hands. We are however still condemned to

explore the various coloured paths and grope our ways separately, in our efforts to approach the one central source.

Permit me to express my gratitude for the assistance presented in your journal by such articles as those by Mr. Maitland, "C.C.M.," "Sapere Aude," and your recent article on Development. QUÆSTOR LUCIS.

The Church and the Gnosis.

SIR,—I propose to sum up the discussion now going on in your columns as briefly and succinctly as may be.

The divergences between the participants show that, notwithstanding its boasted unity, the Catholic Church comprises within its pale opinions as diverse as those without, even its highest officials differing on the fundamental question of the existence of an esoteric doctrine. For while one side—as represented by Cardinal Newman—holds that there is a Spirit as well as a Letter, that "Nature is a parable and Scripture an allegory," and Church doctrine is "but a symbol of the heavenly facts which fill eternity," the other side—as represented by Cardinal Vaughan—declares in effect that there is no Spirit, but the Letter is all. And there are those who—like "Y.Z."—assert the existence of an esoteric sense only to deprecate the disclosure of it, and who do not scruple to justify such concealment by the example of Jesus Himself, even to claiming him as disallowing the appeal to the understanding, and this in the face of utterances such as the following:—

"Perceive ye not yet, neither understand? Have ye your hearts yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not; and having ears, hear ye not; and do ye not remember? How is it that ye do not understand?" "Woe unto you lawyers (Ecclesiastics)! For ye have taken away the key of knowledge (the Gnosis); ye have entered not in yourselves, and those who would have entered in, ye have hindered."

To deny an esoteric sense in Catholicism is to deny it in the Bible, and vice versa. It is essential, therefore, to show what the Bible itself has to say on the subject. The following are but a few of the passages which, if they do not imply an esoteric sense in Scripture, are altogether devoid of meaning:—

"Thou shalt see my back parts" (the parchments used for the material of books and the outer coverings of the Sanctuary) "but my face thou shalt not see." Moses is here informed that the external sense only, and not the true sense, of the Word should be recognised in his time; for the reason subsequently given—the "hardness of men's hearts."

"Moses gave you not that bread from heaven" (the food of the understanding, which alone can nourish).

"Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their hearts. Nevertheless . . . it shall be taken away."

"He taketh away the first that he may establish the second."

"And they read, in the book, in the law of God, with an interpretation, and caused them (the people) to understand the reading." Neh. viii. 8, R.V. Margin.

"And the faithful heart (Caleb) said, he that smiteth the city (or system) of the letter (Kirjath-Sepher) and taketh it, to him will I give the Rending-of-the-Veil (Achsah), my daughter, for wife.

"And the strong man of God (Othniel) took it, and he gave him the Rending-of-the-Veil, his daughter, to wife."

And she brought him for dowry "the upper and nether springs," or satisfaction of all spiritual needs.

"And that which before was called the city, or system, of the Letter was thenceforth called the Word (Debir)." Josh. xv. 15-19.

"Which things are an allegory; for there are two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar" (the stranger which must be discarded as foreign to the true sense).

"What saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond-woman (the literal sense) and her son" (the falsity engendered of that sense).

"But this I (Paul) confess unto thee, that after the way which they"—my orthodox accusers—"call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are according to the law and are written in the prophets." (R.V.)

"Art thou a Master of Israel, and knowest not these things?"

"Mystery; Babylon the great; the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." This is a denunciation by Jesus, speaking by his "angel" through "John the Divine," of the Ecclesiasticism of the Church of the future, for denying to man a faculty of understanding, by insisting on authority as the criterion of truth, and making mystery consist in something which transcends and contradicts reason, instead of only requiring the application of reason to a higher, because spiritual

and interior, region of the consciousness. In which latter sense Paul uses the term when he says: "We speak Theosophy (theosophia) in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom (of God.)"

The Bible contains also scores of passages insisting on the necessity of having a "spirit of understanding;" as will be found by referring to the Concordance under the words "wisdom," "knowledge," and "understanding;" all of which imply an esoteric sense as the true and divinely intended sense of Scripture and religion. And it follows from the nature of the case that it must be so, since the appeal of religion is not to the senses, but to the soul.

The concluding sentence in Mr. Burry's letter strikes the true keynote of what I have to say in conclusion. He admits the existence of the Gnosis, or esoteric doctrine, and says that the Church has ever been its bitterest opponent and persecutor.

It is so, but none the less has she preserved it in her very symbols and dogmas, just as the Puritans preserved the sacred images and decorations which offended them by covering them with plaster to hide them. But the time has come for the plaster to be removed, for the veil to be withdrawn. For the "Fig-tree"—the symbol of the inward understanding—is no longer barren, but has blossomed and budded and borne fruit; and the "abomination of desolation standing in the holy place" of the Spirit is now plainly revealed, as well as "that wicked one" who put it there. All this is according to promise: "When ye shall see . . . then is the end near" of that "adulterous," because idolatrous, "generation" which, from the time of the Fall until now, has preferred the letter to the Spirit, the symbol to the verity, the person to the principle illustrated by the person, the material vehicle to the spiritual content—in short, the exoteric to the esoteric—and has accordingly opposed, and persecuted, and denied, and suppressed the Gnosis, which is the esoteric sense.

There are now, therefore, two presentations of its religion for Christendom to choose between; and they are definable as follows:—

"One of them is the system purely spiritual, founded in the nature of being, and representing the inner and divinely intended sense of the Bible insisted on in the Bible itself. Originally communicated by the Church celestial to the Church terrestrial, this religion was lost through the corruption of the latter—called in the Bible the Fall—and supplanted by its opposite, and after being continually reaffirmed by the prophets—its original recipients—was by Christ demonstrated in His own person at the cost of His life. Still failing to obtain recognition, its restoration was promised in numerous prophecies as to take place at the end of the age, to the coming of the kingdom of God with power, and the downfall of its supplanter, the inspiring spirit of which would then be 'bound for a thousand years.'

"The other and opposed presentation is the system, wholly idolatrous and resting in the letter, which, being constructed by priests under instigation declared in the Bible to be that of the powers of evil, was at once the cause and the consequence of the Church's fall. As shown in the Bible, it was persistently denounced by the prophets, whom, therefore, it slew, and was guilty of the murder of the Christ and of the perversion of His doctrine. And hence is it responsible—as declared in advance by Jesus Himself in the Apocalypse—for the failure of Christianity and for the world's present condition of alienation from religion by reason of the grievous defects, intellectual, moral, and spiritual, of its presentation of Christianity."*

This indictment is not directed against any particular Church or section of the Church, but against that spirit of ecclesiasticism which has been the bane of every Church from the beginning. For the "abomination which makes desolate" is always materiality, as implying the negation of the spiritual consciousness by which alone is the perception of divine things. This is the faculty the possession of which in plenitude makes the prophet, and the lack of which makes the materialising and idolatrous priest, who understands the things of sense where the things of the spirit are alone implied. For, to quote the recovered Gnosis, "idolatry is materialism, the common and original sin of men, which replaces spirit by appearance, substance by illusion, and leads both the moral and intellectual being into error, so that they substitute the nether for the upper, and the depth for the height. It is that false fruit which attracts the outer senses, the bait of the serpent in the beginning of the world. Until the mystic man and woman

* From "The Appeal of the Esoteric Christian Union to the Churches and People of Christendom."

had eaten of the fruit, they knew only the things of the spirit, and found their culture. But after their fall they began to apprehend matter also, and gave it the preference, making themselves materialists. And their sin, and the taint begotten of that false fruit, have corrupted the blood of the whole race of man, from which corruption the sons of God would have redeemed them."

And thus the "sons of God," the prophets who, as sons also of the "woman" Incarnation, are called by Jesus his brethren, have not yet accomplished their deliverance is because "the dragon and his angels" of the fallen priesthoods have been in possession, and the "Jerusalem" of a materialistic ecclesiasticism has "killed the prophets" who came to protest against their rule, and to restore the doctrine of the Church unaltered, even the Gnostics whose fundamental tenet is the divinity of Substance as the feminine element in Deity, and the divine potentiality of man belonging to him in virtue of the Father-Motherhood of God.

This is the doctrine the recognition and application of which will be the practical promulgation of the Church's crowning dogma, the Assumption of the R.V.M. By all of which it is evident that the "Masters of Israel," in these days, know no more of the realities of their own religion than did those of the days of Jesus.

EDWARD M. JILLAND.

The Divine Feminine.

Sex.—I wish to explain that when I spoke of the esoteric doctrine of the Church which "anyone" could see in her books and ritual, I meant any initiate. And by this I do not imply or assert that there is a recognised esoteric circle in the Church into which men are formally and officially initiated, but I do mean that there is and always has been an esoteric circle, and esoteric doctrine which initiates only can discover, and by the very fact of discovery they are proved to be initiates—those who have wrested the keys do thereby prove their claim to the title, be they mechanics, priests, or laymen. I would remind the Church authorities (whether they have the keys or have lost them) of the saying of St. John: "He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son." Now, to deny the Mother is to deny the Father and the Son, for without the Mother there can be neither fatherhood nor sonship. These words are as "apples of gold in baskets of silver." I ask Mr. Barry to take them to Cardinal Vaughan and ask whether the Church denies the strict logical sequence of the words of St. John? I venture to say he will not.

Will "Y. Z." tell me what is his authority for the assertion that "the Duality was upheld by a large party in the Council of Nicaea"? There is no trace of such a thing in any history that ever I read.

A CATHOLIC PARSON.

[It seems necessary to remark here, that though the columns of "LIGHT" are open for discussion as to matters Catholic, Protestant, or Agnostic, as those matters bear upon the Cause or Cause, yet we must beg our correspondents not to stray into the uninteresting but dangerous regions of religious controversy. It is very easy to do so.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

Esoteric and Esoteric Catholicism.

Sex.—In my answer to "Vera" I made no assertion that any "hidden method of initiation into mysteries" exists in the Roman Church, still less that there is any "prohibitory line drawn by authority." I believe that in the Roman Church each individual may rise, and has immense opportunities given him for rising, to the utmost limit of his powers of both spirit and soul. All I have asserted is that there is an esoteric side to the Catholic faith, fully known to the few only. I perfectly grant that all is made known that can be safely given. "Feeds rush in where angels fear to tread," and to scatter all the treasures of knowledge broadcast over Christendom, as we are at present, would end in its speedy and easy destruction. No doubt to individuals it is given as they can receive it, though the appeal of Christianity as Christianity must be to the heart and not to the head. Does "Vera" really imagine that all the information of every kind possessed by the Vatican is thrown open to all and sundry in the ingenuous manner described? The monasteries and convents alone are full of seers and prophets, whose gifts are cultivated as only the Church that has inherited the knowledge of the ages has power to train the inner sight. Are all their revelations thrown open to the public? I do not gather from Romanists that they wish to pry into what is above them. "All is known at the Vatican," said one, with infinite satisfaction, to me the other day.

* "The Perfect Way," App. I.

Again, "Vera" says: "The Church proclaims that God's ideal of human Motherhood, and, therefore, the term 'representative.'" This is just what I mean by the term "representative." It is also certain that all good and beautiful in any creature exists primarily in the ing tenderness of a mother." Add to this that in the of Lourdes we find the Blessed Virgin addressed by the ing titles among many others: "Seat of Wisdom," "the Covenant," "Health of the Sick," "Gate of Heaven," "Morning Star," "Refuge of Sinners," and I think a little discernment to see in "The Mirror of Justice" reflector of the Divine.

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. No notices received later than the first post on Tuesday are of admission.]

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKINGMEN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings each Sunday at 7 p.m. Speaker for next Sunday, Mr. J. A. Barber, RAINBOW, HOR. SEC.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE, W.—Our esteemed friend and co-worker, Mrs. Treadwell, gave our platform on Sunday evening, her guide taking for subject "Progression of the Soul." There was a good audience. Next Sunday Mr. J. J. Morse on "Diabolism in the Light of Spiritualism." Inquirers specially invited.—H. R.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 311, CANNON-ROAD, NEW-ROAD, S. E.—On Sunday evening last, special reference was made at our meeting to the passing on of a member, Spiritualist, who, on her dying bed, gave a glowing testimony to the efficacy of the knowledge of Spiritualism in overcoming the fear of death. Wednesday, Inquirers' meeting at 8 p.m.; Sunday, séance at 11.30 a.m.; meeting at 7 p.m.—C. U. PATER, SEC.

14, OUTHARD-ROAD, ASEND-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—We had a good meeting on Sunday last, several inquirers being present. Mrs. Mason's guides gave us a very instructive address upon the "Power of Spirit over Matter," followed by descriptions of spirit friends present. Mr. Mason officiated at the organ. Sunday next, 7 p.m., open circle; Tuesday, 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; August 13th, Mr. J. Humphreys.—J. H. B., HOR. SEC.

FOREST HILL, 23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Humphreys gave a very instructive address on "The Spiritual Gifts," and a most enjoyable evening was spent. On Sunday, August 13th, Mrs. Bliss will give a trance address in clairvoyance. At the close a members' meeting will be held when all members are earnestly requested to be present. Sunday next at 7 p.m., Mr. Lucas, address. Tuesday, 8 p.m., Mrs. Bliss, Clairvoyance. Admission by ticket only.—J. B., Secretary.

PECKHAM RYE.—By special request Mr. R. J. Lees has been dealing with the question of religious teaching in the Board Schools, during the last few Sundays. On Sunday afternoon last he laid down his programme for his next lectures by a brief review of Church history, with a view to deal with it in detail, and take up the disestablishment question. The audience was a large one, and there were evident signs that the discussions will be warmly met by both sections, for and against disestablishing the Church and dealing with the same.—J. C.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE 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 Committees:—America, Mrs. M. R. Palmer, 3101, North 3rd street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. H. Junor Brown, "The Crown Hotel," Melbourne, Victoria; France, P. G. Lermans, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlochau, 1, Monbijou-platz, Berlin, N.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Netherlands, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Secunderabad, New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, Mrs. Fortenson, Adelaide, Christiania; Russia, Erienne Gelspit, Grand Belozerski, No. 7, Lod. 6, St. Petersburg; England, J. A. Barber, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or, W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 106, Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace, at 7 p.m., except on the following dates:—The last Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Friday, at 8 p.m., for Spiritualists only, the study of Spiritualism. And at 11, White Post-lane, 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.