

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 808 — VOL. XVI

[Registered as]

SATURDAY, JULY 4, 1896.

[a Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

The following is taken from what is commonly called 'a religious newspaper,' and one claiming to be an 'Inquirer':—

There is considerable excitement just now in a wood near Calle, in France, to see the Virgin Mary and Child, who is said to have appeared to a girl of fifteen. Some declare they can see her in the elm tree, with the child in her arms; others declare they can see nothing at all. The point most amusing to us is the child Jesus, that grew up to manhood and passed on to heaven. The story of those delusions, of the Virgin and Child being seen here and there, reminds us of a fraud and its defence. A fellow exhibited what he called the skull of Oliver Cromwell. Being told that Cromwell's skull was much larger than this, he replied, 'It was his skull when a boy.' It is a marvel to us that any class of people can entertain the idea of Christ being now seen as a child.

It is really a pity, for their own sakes, that the editors and other writers who touch this subject do not go through an elementary—a very elementary—course of reading upon it. Poor George Cruikshank and many others would have avoided the discredit of their really silly gibes about the immortality of old clothes (in which spirits are said to appear) if they had known that spirit appearances are really spirit-pictures; and that, for purposes of identification, a brooch, for instance—or a wooden leg—can be shown, and then, like some 'insubstantial pageant faded, leave not a rack behind.'

'Spirit Laws and Influences,' a discourse by Henry Kiddle (Boston: Banner of Light Publishing Co.), is a small pamphlet containing the essence of many thoughts and experiences. Written in a thoughtful tone, its reverence and spirituality make it very suitable for circulation among serious-minded people who might be repelled by more militant publications. The following extract illustrates what we mean:—

Nothing can be more certain than the truth—a truth pregnant with meaning—that to build for spiritual life, we must build from within; and he who neglects so to build may erect for himself, in this material life, the most sumptuous palace that the pride of man can plan, or his art construct; but, ere long, he will be obliged to quit it and take up his abode in perhaps the meanest hovel in the spirit world. He may here revel in costly furniture, treading on luxurious carpets, lounging on silken cushions, and sleeping on a bed of down; but if amid that earthly splendour he has nourished toads and vipers in his spirit, he will find them, in the next life, crawling around him.

That is the way in which this life is related to the next. Truly do we reap what we sow, and nothing else. We may sow to the flesh, and, as the apostle said, 'we shall reap corruption'; we may sow to self, and we shall reap leanness and barrenness of spirit. We may labour for the intellect exclusively, and we shall construct for ourselves perhaps a sphere as glittering as the purest crystal, but it will be as cold as an iceberg; and there we may abide in solitary splendour, surrounded with the creations of our own thought, but shivering for the want of human sympathy and love.

On the other hand, we may sow to the spirit, and we shall reap the fruits of the spirit in love, joy, and peace, the memory of kind and loving deeds, charitable thoughts, and gentle words. These are far better materials of which to construct our spirit houses than all the fine spun theories and subtle reasonings

which have ever emanated from the loftiest intellects that emblazon the history of the race. It has been truly said that 'a person may know but little, but yet may approach much nearer the Divine than one who has more brain furniture with less of heart.'

We have read with much interest a poem, by Julia Keely-Finch, in 'The Metaphysical Magazine,' on 'Life after Death.' The following four verses are as thoughtful as they are simple, and as poetic as they are thoughtful:—

And is *this* what the wise men of earth
Call 'death'?

This limitless space, and this light
That my trembling spirit upbore?

Why, *this* is the primeval birth—

This breath,

And that wondrous and fathomless flight
From yon dark and shadowy shore!

As raiment, that misuse hath soiled,
Is cast

Aside, in some half-forgot place—
So that body which served me well,
Which laboured and suffered and toiled,
At last

Lies in Earth's most kindly embrace;
And its future no man may tell.

It is *this*, this ethereal thing—

This *me*—

That holds the essence of being;
That visions a future as far

And free,

As high beyond earthly seeing
As flashes of light from yon star.

Come! I fain would be winging my way
To heights

Still vaster and spaces more broad!

I would see this Maker of all,

Would feel the beneficent ray

That lights

Up the face of Creation's Lord:

For am I not here at His call?

We have received 'The Review of Reviews,' chatty, informing, and bright as usual; 'The Metaphysical Magazine,' full of hard but fruitful reading; 'The Herald of the Golden Age,' and many other journals. We should be glad if those who send publications would mark the portions that may specially interest us.

Mr. Jos. M. Wade (Boston, U.S.) has sent us 'An Essay from the Spirit-World,' on 'Reciprocity,' by James G. Blaine, a once celebrated American politician. Mr. Wade informs the reader that the Essay was 'dictated from the spirit world and written on the Yost typewriter, independent of all human contact or human presence near the machine. He also states that it was given under the supervision of G. W. N. Yost, inventor of the Yost typewriter, on one of his own machines. We are then told that 'the operator was Captain George W. Stevens.' This is difficult to understand. If the machine was used 'independent of all human contact or human presence near the machine,' how could Captain Stevens be 'the operator'? But perhaps Captain Stevens is the spirit-operator.

The Essay is a lament that certain democratic and brotherly proposals of his, in earth life, were not accepted

and carried out; and a prophecy of coming struggles and upheavals which will bring in their train the downfall of monarchies, financial crashes, and ethical revolutions, to be followed by something answering to 'a new heaven and a new earth.'

Mr. Wade asserts that Madame Blavatsky is in constant communion with him, preparing red-hot shots for people who are named. But there are strong traces of egoism throughout this publication, fairly indicated in the concluding paragraph of a Postscript:—

The fact of a typewriter running itself, as it were, in darkness will be a marvellous revelation to mortals, and yet this has been made possible by myself delving into the realms of the invisible for a lifetime, ignoring society and false teachings and every form of pleasure, seeking both night and day for the real 'God' and 'devil' back of the myths we were taught to believe real. I found both, and I see them in every act of man. Cause is visible to me, and I can foretell effect, for these things are clearly visible in me. I am not a medium, not a spiritist, and never attended a meeting of spiritists. The knowledge is not mine; it is inspiration, pure and simple.

We have been requested to print the following, copied from 'The Two Worlds':—

As I write this notice, our esteemed friend E. W. Wallis is in the midst of the grand mountain and lake scenery of that other 'land of the free,' beautiful Switzerland. Some months ago the kindly Editor of 'LIGHT,' in a letter referring to Mr. Wallis's work for Spiritualism and his failing health, suggested this tour, and asked me if I thought there were twenty-six Spiritualists who would each contribute £1 towards the cost of a month's holiday. Well I knew there were many more than twenty-six who would gladly give for such an object, and so I at once wrote to those I knew, and they have responded so readily that I was able to hand in £32 13s. 6d., made up as below. The collecting and the giving have been a pleasure all round, and there will be many who, hearing of this now for the first time, will regret that they had not the chance of adding to the fund.

J. FRASER HEWES.

Mr. Walter Appleyard £1 1s., Dr. Roe £1 1s., A. W. O. £1 1s., Mr. E. Dawson Rogers £1, Mr. J. Fraser Hewes £1, Mrs. Morgan £1, Mr. G. E. Abbridge £1, Mr. F. Tomlinson £1, Mrs. W. P. Browne £1, Mr. E. Allen £1, Mr. J. Chapman £1, Mr. J. McW. £1, Mr. H. Withall £1, Mr. H. Lucas £1, Col. Taylor £1, Miss Florence Marryat £1, Mrs. Swanston £1, Mr. W. J. Lacking £1, W. A. G. £1, Mr. J. Venables £1, Mr. S. S. Chiswell £1, Mr. and Mrs. E. G. Sadler £1, Mr. John Lamont £1, Mr. A. J. Smythe £1, Mr. Tubbs £1, Mr. Bevan Harris £1, Mr. James Robertson £1, Mr. Alfred Smedley £1, Mrs. Catlow £1, Mr. Eli Davidson 10s. 6d., Mr. W. H. Robinson 10s., Rev. J. Page Hopps 10s., Mr. and Mrs. Miles 10s., Mr. E. Adams 5s., Mr. and Mrs. Brearley 5s., Mr. Scott 5s., Mr. T. O. Todd 5s., Miss Woodman 5s., Mr. Blower 2s. 6d., Mr. J. Slater 2s. 6d.

We have just heard of the passing on of an old Spiritualist, and a constant subscriber to 'LIGHT,' Mr. Thomas Sherratt, of Stepney, much respected by many fellow-inquirers and friends.

We have received letters for and against Mrs. Warren of Sunderland. At the present moment, and as matters stand, we prefer to let the subject alone.

THE W. H. HARRISON FUND APPEAL.

	£	s.	d.
Previously acknowledged	93	5	0
R. T. Mallet, Esq., M.R.I.	1	1	0
J. Tennant, Esq., M.R.I.	0	10	0
	£94	16	0

Further contributions will be thankfully acknowledged by Frederick H. Varley, 82, Newington Green-road, London, N. Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed London and Provincial Bank, Limited, Newington Green Branch.

THE ETHEREALISATION OF THE BODY.

On June 23rd, at Woking, the body of Mrs. Dunn was cremated. Mrs. Dunn was a member of Mr. Page Hopps' congregation and an accomplished singer. In the chapel at Woking a devout service was conducted by her minister and friend, who gave the following Address:—

For the sake of those who need it, I feel impelled to offer a justification for what we are doing this day; for what we are doing will give distress to some whom we would rather shield than pain. Alas! how utterly are we the creatures of habit; I am persuaded that if custom had used us to the liberation of the body by the purifying fire, it would have shocked us to have it proposed that we should put the body in a grave to slowly rot.

In truth, our flowers and our memorial stones have gradually made us the victims of a strangely thin illusion concerning the grave. We say the dear ones are sweetly sleeping and peacefully resting beneath, and we cover the dreadful reality with our little veil of turf or flowers, and never really face the truth, for, all the while, that is happening which, if seen in all its horror, might drive us mad.

We are told that respect for the dead urges to burial as against cremation, but many are now very keenly feeling the reverse of this. They can bring the mind to bear the liberation of the body by one swift act of disintegration and purifying, but cannot overcome the shrinking from subjecting it to the foul and lingering processes of the grave—or perchance to the horror of recovering consciousness in the grave.

Respect for the living, too, is an urgent motive. The highest authorities tell us that the air we breathe and the water we drink are often contaminated by the emanations of graves. It cannot be right that London, for instance, with all its inevitable impurities, should add to its foulnesses that of trying to live in company with thousands upon thousands of decaying bodies in its very midst.

Respect for the beautiful earth, too, is a motive. As far as possible the pure rivers and the wholesome soil should be kept free from pollution. That is a sacred duty, and one which it is dangerous as well as wicked to neglect.

If reason guided here, there could be no doubt about the result. We are only misled by habit and associations. Burial is defilement; this is purification. Burial is the degradation of the body; this is its sublimation. Burial cannot be followed out, in imagination; it is too dreadful. This is lovelier the further we follow it, and the longer we think of it—a few moments of pure and blessed searching; and then all is beautiful. For what is more beautiful than that the poor dead body, purified, should be dismissed into the sunshine? and beautiful and fitting beyond all things is it to-day, that what remains to earth of the sweet singer should be sent, not into the defiling grave, but into the bright summer air—to the blue sky and the birds, itself, presently, as uncontaminated as they.

But I would deal tenderly with those who think differently. At present people cling to the visible grave. They love the fond delusion that the beloved one is there. They inscribe on memorial stones such loving untruths as that they here 'rest' or 'sleep in peace.' Yes, let us deal tenderly with that, but let us tell the truth about it; and the truth is that it is earthly, sensuous, and not a little heathenish. The dead body is no more the person than the clothing that will be wanted, or than the instruments that will be used, no more.

Tenderly but firmly I would discourage the nursing of sorrow at the grave, and the prolonged association of a rotting body with the being we love. Let the dust go; let it go. Both in life and in death it is too much responsible for these earthly clingings. In the very surrender of the body for perfect dispersal we shall find the blessing, in being driven to the unseen to find the spirit's present and only home.

'Are there to be no memorials, then, no places associated with our dead?' Would that this could be! The only fitting shrine is the loving spirit. If that has gone, the outward record on the stone is a pathetic impertinence; if it never existed, it is a lie.

And now, fully facing this mode of disposing of the poor deserted body, I am convinced that very much of the shrinking from it proceeds from our associating pain with fire. But that will not bear a moment's consideration. To the body, a bath of heat is as painless as a bath of the fragrance of summer roses would be. Anyone who will steadfastly think it out will see on what a sheer delusion this shrinking depends.

And now, with such sorrow as is inevitable, but with such hope and quiet joy as a rational and spiritual faith gives us, we make this surrender. The air and the sunshine claim the body; God and His angels will care for the spirit. We do not look for some resurrection day, far off in the dim future; our resurrection day is now; our sweet singer already knows something of the music of the spheres, and is already too far advanced to ever need the body any more.

DOES THE BRAIN THINK ?

In my previous communication ('LIGHT,' June 13th) I called attention to the generally accepted theory that the brain is the organ of the mind, and that the size of the brain is regarded as the index of mental power; or, in other words, the brain thinks, and the size of the brain is the measure of mental capacity. This view suggests many difficulties. If it be true that the brain is the sole organ of thought, does the thinker die when the brain dies? If the thinker survives, does it not seem natural to conclude that the brain is not the thinker?

The new edition of Dr. Wallace's 'Miracles and Modern Spiritualism' is only a part of a very extensive and growing literature, testifying to the widespread and ever-deepening conviction that the thinker survives the death of the body. I name Dr. Wallace's book because it seems to me to give a just and comprehensive view of the evidence on which our certitude rests.

But is the size of the brain an index of the mental capacity? I think not. In stating my views, however, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I write as a student and not as an expert. Dr. Wallace, in his work on 'Natural Selection' (p. 191), contrasts well-trained mathematicians, on the one hand, and members of savage tribes, who can only count to 3 or 5, and cannot comprehend the addition of 2 and 3, on the other hand, and then adds: 'Yet we know that the mass of brain might be nearly the same in both, or might not differ in a greater proportion than as 5 to 6; whence we may fairly infer that the savage possesses a brain capable, if cultivated and developed, of performing work of a kind and degree far beyond what he ever requires to do.'

But how does this harmonise with the law of Heredity? If we are to regard the brain as an inherited development of structure caused by *ancestral functions*, and fitted to discharge similar functions in offspring, then we naturally ask what function was discharged by the brain of savage ancestors? One feels obliged to answer, not reasoning, not purely intellectual functions, for the untutored races are not distinguished as reasoners; their mental attainments are low. If, however, we assume that the brain is *not* the organ of thought, but the battery, &c., and that its function is the adjustment or co-ordination of the manifold movements and sensibilities of a physical organism, developed by ancestral experiences and transmitted to offspring, we need not be surprised to find a full-sized brain with scant intellectual power. It seems reasonable to infer that ancestral experiences transmitted in the organism of offspring may be of such a nature as to affect the brain and nervous system and other organs as means of perception, feeling, &c., but not of reason. Children whose ancestors possessed and exercised large constructive faculties would probably inherit a quicker insight and greater capacity for constructive work than children of parents not gifted in the same way. Our hereditary outfit, as I take it, consists of an apparatus, or set of instruments, by means of which we may perceive and feel and acquire knowledge, and be able to adjust ourselves to our environment; but the power of reason has to be acquired in this life from the teaching and example of others and by personal culture.

There is another point which I wish to notice briefly. Mr. John Fiske, in 'Cosmic Philosophy' (Vol. II.), refers to a 'New Theory of Brain Action.' Some pages are devoted to the subject. I can only quote enough to suggest. He says (p. 141), 'To sum up this whole preliminary argument:—the cerebrum and cerebellum are organs whose function is *ideation*, or the generation of ideal feelings and thoughts. They are organs made up of a tissue in which chemical changes occur with unparalleled rapidity.' 'Microscopic and chemical examination of this tissue shows that these chemical changes must consist in a perpetual transfer of energy from one cell to another, along transit-lines composed of nerve-threads.' 'Now since the cerebrum and cerebellum are, subjectively speaking, places

where *ideation* is continually going on; and since they are, objectively speaking, places where nerve-cells are continually sending undulations back and forth along transit lines; the inference seems forced upon us that the transfer of an undulation from one cell to another is the objective accompaniment of each subjective unit of feeling of which thoughts and emotions are made up. And if this be so, it becomes a mere truism to say that the formation of a new association involves the establishment of a new transit-line, or set of transit-lines, while the revival of an old association involves merely the recurrence of motion along old transit-lines.' (The italics are mine.)

It is not easy to attach the true value to thought-symbols used by another thinker, who sees the same things from another point of view and in a different light. Mr. Fiske's language seems to me to be a re-statement in other terms of the theory that the brain thinks—or that the brain is the mind. The conviction that the thinker survives the death of the brain is widespread and grounded in reason. This fact is not taken into account by Mr. Fiske. The evidence of survival is so strong—so massive—that it compels one to pause before accepting the theory that the physical brain is the thinker. It seems to me that Mr. Fiske mistakes the nature of the tissue-changes in the brain. What he regards as ideation and the generation of ideal feelings and thoughts may be nothing more than the concomitant changes of organic activity. If the *genesis* of thought be in the brain, to what is its initiation due? I see no clear answer on Mr. Fiske's theory. It seems all clear if the spirit is the thinker.

SCRIBA.

MR. JOHN SLATER IN ENGLAND.

Since the paragraph appearing in this paper announcing Mr. Slater's arrival, he has been kept exceedingly busy, all his time being professionally occupied. There seems to be not the slightest abatement in the demand that there was last year for his services. Soon after his arrival we hear that a select séance was held in the drawing-rooms of Morse's Library, 26, Osnaburgh-street, Regent's Park, N.W., for the purpose of witnessing some manifestations through his remarkable mediumship. Each person present was requested to write a short sentence or question, on a slip of paper, signing it with initials, *nom-de-plume*, or real name if preferred. Mr. Slater during the evening dealt with all the questions asked, coming, by handling the slips of paper, into rapport with the writers and their spiritual surroundings. For nearly an hour and a-half he literally poured forth a flood of communications and tests, some being positively startling in their vivid directness. The various recipients declared upon their honour that it was positively impossible for Mr. Slater by any ordinary human means to have known anything about the matters he mentioned. We understand that he will be at the conference in Liverpool on the 5th, at Manchester on the 9th, and at Birmingham on the 13th.—B. B.

On Tuesday evening, the 30th inst., an excellent and highly respectable audience assembled at Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street, to assist at one of Mr. John Slater's public séances, when after a vocal solo, 'Angel Land,' by Miss Morse, Mr. Slater, during one hour and a-half, gave nearly fifty tests, every one being acknowledged correct. Space preventing, I refrain from describing the many remarkable (one might say marvellous) narrations of facts and incidents pertaining to the living and the departed.

Mr. H. Rumford, who is managing Mr. Slater's trip North, managed the meeting, and every credit is due to him for the pleasant accommodation afforded to all visitors, no reserved seats being provided; Spiritualist and inquirer had the same opportunity.

Mr. Slater, in his closing remarks, said that Spiritualism was for all classes. Spiritualism belonged to no class or country. He was glad to be in this country again. He felt there was more work for him here; that was why he had come again. Spiritualism was an ever-increasing study; it was a fact, and had a beautiful philosophy; it would overpower all barriers and conquer eventually. What was wanted was more mediums—honest, trustworthy mediums for phenomena. If arrangements can be satisfactorily made, Mr. Slater will again be at Cavendish Rooms on July 21st. I am requested to state that all communications must be made to Morse's Library, 26, Osnaburgh-street, London, N.W.—B. B.

SOME THEOSOPHICAL MONTHLIES.

In 'Lucifer,' for June, Mrs. Besant is jubilant over 'the signs of steady progress that are visible on every side'; and Mr. Alexander Fullerton declares that Theosophy is fully in harmony with the 'Spirit of the Age.' An article by the late Madame Blavatsky, on 'Spirits of Various Kinds,' is interesting, but her present opinions on that subject would be considerably more so. She tells us what 'true Spiritualism is.' It seems that the Hindus believe that the 'Pitris,' or aboriginal ancestors of man, went to the moon when they died, and from there still influence their descendants for good or evil; and this notion Madame Blavatsky accepted:—

'A "soma-drinker" attains the power of placing himself in direct rapport with the bright side of the moon, and thus of deriving inspiration from the concentrated intellectual energy of the blessed ancestors. . . . The sorcerer, or dugpa, who always performs his hellish rites on the day of the new moon—when the benignant influence of the Pitris is at its lowest ebb—crystallises some of the Satanic energy of his predecessors in evil, and turns it to his own vile uses; while the Brahmana, on the other hand, pursues a corresponding but benevolent course with the energy bequeathed to him by the Pitris. This is true Spiritualism, of which the heart and soul have been entirely missed by the modern Spiritualists.'

Mr. Leadbeater brings to a close his series of articles on 'Devachan: or, the Theosophical Heaven.' We learn that when we reach the 'arupa levels,' the highest heaven, where for a season we will be 'formless,' our egos will nevertheless 'be represented' by ovoid eggs of aura, brilliantly lit up from within. Mrs. Besant also ends her eloquent articles on 'Man and His Bodies.' Mrs. Besant, like all system-makers, relies almost wholly on assertion; but her system is exceedingly ingenious and very suggestive.

The monthly instalment of 'Old Diary Leaves' in the June 'Theosophist' is devoted to a description of Colonel Olcott's early theosophical junketings in Ceylon. These were royal junketings, indeed. But Theosophy cannot live on processions alone, it needs subscriptions, and the paucity of these, even in those days of enthusiasm, occasions Colonel Olcott many, no doubt heartfelt, expressions of sorrow. He tells us that Madame Blavatsky did not approve of this expedition to Ceylon, and threatened him with the signal anger of the Mahatmas if he went; but on his triumphant return she showered on him the blessings of those same Mahatmas. Colonel Olcott says that this gave him a severe shock—as well it might; but he seems to have recovered from it very quickly.

'A Rajput Wedding' is a very interesting description by Colonel Olcott of the wedding of Princess Kusumavati, the daughter, aged sixteen, of his old friend Prince Harisinhji Rupsinhji, to Prince Harbamji Rawaji, a Cambridge graduate, and now Prime Minister of an important Rajput State. Colonel Olcott travelled in the blazing heat all the way from Madras to Kathiawar, a journey of 1,300 miles, to attend the wedding. Some idea of the scale of the festivities may be gained from the fact that there were over six hundred relatives of the happy couple and 3,663 other guests to be entertained for a week or two. The bridal presents were on an equally magnificent scale—hundreds of silken and gold-embroidered robes for the bride, and tables covered with gold and jewels.

'The Theosophical Isis,' the Judgeite organ, is filled with family reading for good Judgeite Theosophists. We learn from it that a 'crusade' is about to start from New York for Europe, to last till March, 1897, in order to carry out the wishes of 'the Rajah and H. P. B.' Who is the Rajah? We have not heard of that gentleman before. At all events 'Avenue Road' will, we imagine, have now to 'look out for squalls.'

'Mercury' is another Theosophical monthly, some numbers of which have reached us. It is published in Chicago, in the interests of the old original Theosophical Society, and seems to us less amateurish and sectarian than 'The Theosophical Isis'; but it also is of the 'trade journal' order—not of special interest to outsiders.

'The Light of the East' is a Hindu monthly magazine published at Calcutta and edited by Mr. S. C. Mukhopadhyaya. It contains some erudite articles on recondite points in Hindu theology, and some articles carping against 'modern science,' the bugbear, apparently, of the pious Hindu. Its most readable articles, from our point of view, are reprints from 'The Open Court' and 'The Arena.'

SPIRITUALISM AND THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY.

When first we heard that the Swâmi Vivekânanda was coming to London to expound the Vedanta Philosophy, we were hopeful that his teaching would not only confirm the faith of Spiritualists, but might also add to their number. We hoped this, because the very essence of the Hindu Philosophy is that man *is* a spirit, and *has* a body, and not that man *is* a body, and *may* have a spirit also; which is as far as many a Western mind can reach. This essential difference finds expression in our common phraseology, for when, in the East, a man dies, it is said of him that he 'has given up his body'; while, in the West, we say, 'he has given up his ghost—or spirit.'

It has been the glorious privilege of our modern Spiritualism to prove by actual demonstration the existence of spirit apart from flesh, and it would, therefore, seem reasonable to look for co-operation on the part of the exponents of the Vedanta Philosophy and the supporters of Spiritualism. We are not quite certain, however, that this desirable consummation can be attained, for observations made very recently by the Swâmi are calculated only to divide the two sects. The Vedanta Philosophy sets before the student an ideal aim! Nothing less, in fact, than the unfolding of the God within him, and nothing could well be more impressive and inspiring than the presentation of this idea by a speaker of the force and eloquence of the Swâmi. We could only respect and admire, until modern Spiritualism was alluded to, and that in a manner which left upon us the impression that the Swâmi condemned without reservation all sitting for phenomena. He admitted having sat for observation with professional mediums, and held that one and all had practised fraud. 'Spirit voices,' according to the Swâmi, are *never* heard to clash! As 'the sepulchral dies away the small child's voice rises up,' intimating thus that ventriloquism was invariably responsible for the sounds. 'Spirit messages,' he remarked, 'were quite worthless, for they never rose above the level of "I am well and happy," or "Give John a piece of cake."' This assertion could, of course, only be made in ignorance of the contents of 'Spirit Teachings,' a book which, we think, can well stand comparison even with the exalted teaching of the Swâmi Vivekânanda. The process of making up sham materialisations and working the figure on the end of a wire was also described in detail.

We were present again the following evening, when a paper of questions bearing upon the adverse criticism of the Swâmi was read out to the meeting. Some thirty minutes were then passed in qualifying and explaining his remarks of the night before, and, to our deep satisfaction, the Swâmi not only confessed his belief in the possibility of spirits communicating with mortals, but even expressed his conviction that at times spirits of a high grade visited earth in order to assist mankind. It is, however, we conceive, no part of the Vedanta Philosophy to recommend the seeking of such intercourse, on account of its possible 'dangers.' It is commonly held that the undeveloped spirits can most easily communicate with man, consequently the Swâmi uttered his word of warning and withheld any word of encouragement. We approve of warning, but not of warning off; and we value above all other the advice given in 'Spirit Teachings.' We there read:—

'It is well to teach, but better still to learn; nor is it impossible to do both. Only remember that learning must precede teaching; and be sure that the truth is one that man needs.'

'To this end you must learn who and what are those who do communicate with man. You must know how and under what conditions truth can be had: and how error and deceit, and frivolity and folly may be warded off. All this man must know if he is safely to meddle with our world; and when he has learned this, he must see, too, that on himself depends most or all of the success. Let him crush self, purify his inmost spirit, driving out impurity as a plague, and elevating his aims to their highest possible: let him love truth as his deity, to which all else shall bow; let him follow it as his sole aim, careless whither the quest may lead him, and round him shall circle the messengers of the Most High, and in his inmost soul he shall see light.'

To gain the summit of a mountain without climbing might be desirable if possible, but who can do it?

We venture to think that the people who will best appreciate the teaching of the Swâmi, will be just those whose minds have been influenced by the study of Spiritualism. Of what avail is it to instruct a man as to the development of soul power,

if he has not yet attained to any belief in the soul? It may be replied that the message of the Swâmi is not for such, and we agree, but shall we despise any means by which these doubters may be assured of their immortal nature? And of what significance is this perpetual cry of fraud and delusion, in face of the possibility of teaching and demonstrating so momentous a fact? The very evils of Spiritualism have their value, and are doubtless an inevitable and useful accompaniment at this stage of our journey. Fraud teaches the necessity of careful and accurate observation, and tends to secure the same; delusion may lead to discovery, and contact with evil to the recognition that death is no transformation scene, but 'he that is filthy is filthy still.' Sin and its consequences can never be wiped out by creeds. It will persist in the individual until eradicated by the individual. We intend to learn all we can from the Swâmi. We recognise his ability, his earnestness, and his high purpose, but we claim for ourselves such tribute and recognition as we yield to others.

ANIMALS IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.

(Continued from page 305.)

As a contribution to the sum of information upon this most interesting question, I have thought that your readers might be interested in the following account of incidents which have happened in my experience with a medium (Mrs. Haughton) with whose development in psychic powers I have been associated. In the very early time of her acquaintance with Spiritualism she was awakened one night out of her sleep, quite suddenly, by some unknown cause, and was excessively surprised to see standing by her bedside a large Newfoundland dog. He was a very noble animal, apparently possessing more than average intelligence. He appeared to her quite substantial, and looked at her as though expecting his presence to be understood and welcomed. He remained with her until she fell asleep again. This incident came upon the medium as a complete novelty, for she had never previously heard of, or thought about, the possibility of animals living in the spirit world. When she was next controlled by her guide, 'Rupert,' I questioned him upon the subject, and he told me that the dog which the medium had seen was the one that he had been much attached to when he had lived upon the earth. During his last illness the dog, having been an almost constant companion, pined so much that he was allowed, at his master's request, to be at times in the sick chamber. Upon the master's death he was inconsolable, and speedily followed him beyond the veil, where, continued the spirit, 'I was waiting to receive him; and he has been a faithful friend and companion ever since, and has, in my journeyings into some of the dangerous places in the lower spheres, frequently saved me, by his watchfulness and sagacity, from danger.'

Upon another occasion, this time at mid-day, I was engaged in conversation with the medium, when she felt the clairvoyant condition come upon her. While in this state, although her voice can still be used to describe what she sees, she loses consciousness of material locality, and her sensation is that of being in another place or state. She described a rapid transit over a vast extent of country, very beautiful to gaze upon, but she was not permitted to linger until she found herself in the midst of a magnificent park, apparently of great size. There were paths in various directions, but she was taken to a seat upon which she could rest and look around her at leisure. The prevailing feeling was one of intense and peaceful pleasure. The mere act of breathing was delightful. A striking peculiarity of the place was the universal sense of intense life. The very matter of which the paths were made did not appear to be inert and dead, but participated in the general pulsation of life and sweet energy. She looked around her and saw the sun shining through the trees with genial warmth, casting glimmering shadows of leaves and branches upon the grass beneath. There was no sign of wild and tangled undergrowth, of rank vegetation, or sense of annoyance from troublesome insects, or any of the minor inconveniences that detract from the pleasures of the best of earthly scenes. The birds were singing joyously in the branches overhead, and in the distance she could see and hear a party of merry-making human spirits of both sexes enjoying an *al fresco* repast in the woods; their voices came to her joyously upon the balmy breeze and caused a thrill of responsive pleasure to course through her veins.

She was told that this was a scene in one of the spheres wherein harmony reigned supreme; a place in which missionary spirits, after their labours amongst the miserable beings in the lower states, or upon the earth, may obtain rest and recreation to strengthen them for their labours amongst the erring children of men.

To give one vision:—Recently a friend of the medium's and my own had the unpleasant duty of sending a favourite dog to be destroyed, owing to some disorder. To the medium and myself this was but a passing incident. But the same evening, while taking a walk together, she was, quite suddenly and unobtrusively, controlled by her guide, 'Rupert,' before referred to. He told me that he had found it easy at that moment to control the medium, and had taken advantage of that circumstance because he wished me to tell Mr. B. (the owner of the dog) that he ('Rupert') had taken charge of it on its entrance to the spiritual state, and would, as a small act of friendliness to Mr. B., undertake to see that it was properly cared for.

A few days later Mr. and Mrs. B., with another friend, were at my house, and we were talking over this incident and upon the subject of animal life in the spirit world generally, when the medium was again taken upon one of her psychic journeys. The description of what she saw was given partially by a controlling spirit whom we call Ariel, a very great favourite amongst our friends. She was caused to behold a wide expanse of country scenery—woodland and meadow; a very lovely view to gaze upon. Presently she became aware of moving objects, in the extreme distance, gradually approaching her. As they advanced she could see that they were a party mounted upon magnificent horses. As they came nearer she saw that the horsemen were dressed as foresters, and accompanying them were a number of dogs. The whole scene was strikingly full of life and animation; men, horses, and dogs, all seemed to have entered with joyous exhilaration into the rapid exercise they had just undergone. Every horse and dog manifested evidence of human care and attention, and the beauty and symmetry of their forms were delightful to behold. But near to these splendid animals she saw the pathetic figure of Mr. B.'s dog, just as he appeared when upon earth. He was evidently a stranger just arrived amongst his present company, and was uncertain how to act in his unfamiliar and aristocratic surroundings.

Ariel, who was controlling, told us that in the spirit world there were places where animals were cared for and loved as they were upon the earth, the means at the disposal of spirits for giving joy to their animal friends being much greater than those possessed down here. Many spirits who naturally loved animals and had been accustomed to associate with them in their earth life found a delight in ministering to their happiness. 'How incomplete,' said the spirit, 'would be our world were the beauties of the animal creation absent!' What more beautiful object exists in nature than the noble and majestic horse? Poor, indeed, is any conception of the beauties of advanced life that does not include the marvellous loveliness of the animal world, particularly the matchless horse, and the agility and faithfulness of the intelligent and noble dog.

WM. HAUGHTON.

SUPERNATURAL GENERATION.*

This monograph, we are told, is compiled principally for friends, from the prohibitively priced and now almost inaccessible works of that erudite scholar, the late Thomas Inman, M.D. It is intended to be an appropriate supplement to 'The Count of Gabalis.' The fifty-eight pages of small quarto, of which this monograph consists, are devoted to the discussion of the heathen myths and legends of the birth of children, one of whose parents was a supernatural or Divine being. The writer or 'editor' ('Invictus') does not believe in the possibility of any such thing; but he does not touch upon the side of the question which has sometimes presented itself as a matter for discussion to those who are familiar with the phenomenon of materialisation. Only one hundred copies of the work have been printed, and the few remaining copies may be had through Mr. R. H. Fryer, 2, Prospect-terrace, Bath.

SUSTENTATION FUND FOR 'LIGHT.'—We have the pleasure to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of £1 from Rev. Maxwell H. Close.

* 'Supernatural Generation.' Privately printed for the Editor. 1896.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT, 2, DUKE STREET ADELPHI,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, JULY 4th, 1896.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed '— & Co.'

'Light' may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria Lane, London, and all Booksellers.

SPIRITUAL UNIVERSALISM.

Still the question persists, and we think and hope that for many years it will persist,—Is Spiritualism a Religion? And still, we also think and hope, the response will be, not a reply, but a question, 'And what do you mean by "a Religion"?' If you mean, Does Spiritualism add, or seek to add, another to the theological systems of the world? our reply is ready in the form of an emphatic *No*. If you mean, Does it summon from the Churches its adherents, for enclosure in some different fold? Again we answer *No*. Even if you only mean, Does it take a side in the controversies of the sects, as a theological disputant? we still can only answer *No*.

Is Spiritualism, then, neutral? Has it no light to hold up, no guidance to offer? Still we answer *No*. What then is it in relation to the Religions of the world and to the sects of Christendom, if it *has* a light to uphold and guidance to offer, and yet has no theological systems of its own and no fold for its devotees? The reply is perfectly clear and strong. Spiritualism takes cognisance of Religion only in so far as it relates to the development and march on of the human spirit. Paul finely said, 'In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.' So say we, Neither Buddhism nor Catholicism, neither Mohammedanism nor Judaism, neither Trinitarianism nor Unitarianism availeth anything, but the outreaching of the soul after God, the spirit's longing for the higher life, the heart's hunger and thirst after righteousness. True Spiritualism is not conscious of any barriers represented by nationalities, specific theisms, so-called paganisms, or the manifold forms of Christianity: and the true Spiritualist is a genuine universalist. The variations of expression make no difference to him. He listens for the aspirations of the seeking self. That one expresses his longing under the guidance of the Koran, and another with the help of the New Testament, is no more to him than that one speaks Arabic and another English. The spirit is everything. He sees that two Christians who stand side by side and repeat the same prayers may be spiritually further from one another than a devout Christian in an English village and an equally devout Buddhist in the wilds of India: for the spirit is everything to a Spiritualist.

In truth, it is from India that we get one of the clearest and most comprehensive expressions of the universalism of our Spiritual philosophy or outlook upon the human race. In the sixteenth century, the great Emperor, Akbar, so far rose above the clashing creeds and systems of his day as to penetrate to the true meaning of Eclecticism or Universalism. He ruled over Buddhists and Brahmans, Christians and Mohammedans, and perhaps this helped him to see the elements of truth in all, or rather, to see the rock of spiritual longing in all. So, for a temple in Kashmir, he caused the following memorable inscription to be written:—

O God, in every temple I see people that see thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise thee.

Polytheism and Islám feel after thee.

Each religion says, 'Thou art one, without equal.'

If it be a mosque, people murmur the holy prayer; and if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to thee. Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque.

But it is thou whom I seek from temple to temple.

Thy elect have no dealings with heresy or with orthodoxy; for neither of them stands behind the screen of thy truth.

Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox.

But the dust of the rose petal belongs to the heart of the perfume-seller.

Since then, the world has gone farther and fared worse; and more than three hundred years of bitter and laborious struggle have not served to convert the most civilised nation of the world to this. What Bishop in our House of Lords will stand in line with this glorious old 'Pagan'? How many influential religious leaders in London will now say, 'In every temple I see people that see thee'? How many 'church and chapel people' have even a glimmering of the truth that Polytheists and Mohammedans are their fellow-worshippers? In whose published Christian sermons shall we find it taught that prayers in the mosque and the Christian temple mean the same thing? I go from mosque to cloister, said this splendid old universalist; I visit temple after temple and church after church; but everywhere I seek the one God of all: I know nothing of orthodoxy or heterodoxy; I recognise neither, for both stand outside in the porch, both are only seeking, both are only guessing what there is beyond, for neither stands behind the screen of infinite truth. What are symbols, names, rituals, sacraments, creeds? All, at best, but picture-signs, habitual modes of expressing the unknown through the known: but white rose or red rose, and through all the namings of them, the fragrance of the perfume clings to him who has the rose.

If this is not pure Spiritualism, we have yet to learn it. But, if it is, what a treasure, what a pearl of great price, is ours!

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

- 'The Mystical World,' for July. London: H. A. Copley, Canning Town, E. Price 1½d.
- 'The English Mechanic and World of Science,' for July. London: 332, Strand, W.C. Price 1½d.
- 'The Lyceum Banner,' for July. Published by Thomas Olman Todd, 7, Winifred-terrace, Sunderland. Price 1d.
- 'The Problems connected with Homœopathy Solved. A Chapter in Arborivital Medicine.' By ROBERT T. COOPER, M.A., M.D.
- 'Arborivital Medicine.' Second Paper. 'The Chronic Diseases of the Ear.' By ROBERT T. COOPER, M.A., M.D. London: John Bale & Sons, 85, Great Titchfield-street, W.
- 'The Savoy,' for July. A high class illustrated monthly. Will be issued in monthly parts in future instead of quarterly. London: Leonard Smithers, Arundel street, Strand, W.C. Price 2s.
- 'Proceedings of the Incorporated Society for Psychical Research,' Part XXX., for June, 1896. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., Limited, Charing Cross-road, W.C. Price 2s. 6d.
- 'Voxometric Revelation.' The Problem surrounding the production of the Human Voice finally discovered. The source and origin of the voice of mankind revealed for the first time. Also, a true and complete theory for the production and training of every character of voice, both in song and speech, to the highest development of the individual upon one grand basis. Written and compiled by JUSTUS ANNER, for the author, ALFRED AUGUSTUS NORTH. London: Authors and Printers' Joint Interest Publishing Co., 3, Arundel street, Strand, W.C. Price 10s. 6d. net.

THE Theosophical Publishing Society and office of 'Lucifer' have removed to more commodious premises at 26, Charing Cross, S.W.

A GENTLEMAN at Nunhead would like to meet other inquirers into Spiritualism residing in that neighbourhood, with a view to forming a developing circle. Address, A. M., 195, Ivydale-road, Nunhead, S.E.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CROWDS.*

An English translation of M. Le Bon's work 'The Crowd' is a welcome addition to our rather meagre literature of an obscure but extremely interesting branch of Psychology. We hear much about 'Collectivism' to-day, and it is a matter of no small importance to learn what kind of thing is the 'popular mind' to which, in the near future, everyone will have to bow; for 'the age we are about to enter will, in truth, be the Era of Crowds.' All the old pillars of society are tottering to their fall; the power and prestige of the masses—of 'crowds'—alone are on the increase. 'The divine right of the masses is about to replace the divine right of kings.'

The 'Crowds' of which our author treats are not mere collections of human beings; a crowd for him means a 'psychological crowd'—a crowd acted upon by some general influence which turns it into a mental unit:—

'The most striking peculiarity presented by a psychological crowd is the following: Whoever be the individuals that compose it, however like or unlike their mode of life, their occupations, their character, or their intelligence, the fact that they have been transformed into a crowd puts them in possession of a sort of collective mind which makes them feel, think, and act in a manner quite different from that in which each individual of them would feel, think, and act were he in a state of isolation.

. . . The psychological crowd is a provisional being formed of heterogeneous elements, which for a moment are combined, exactly as the cells which constitute a living body form by their reunion a new being which displays characteristics very different from those possessed by each of the cells singly.'

As one of the component atoms of a crowd, the individual loses all sense of responsibility. Worse still, he loses both his self-control and his faculty of judgment:—

'The decisions affecting matters of general interest come to by an assembly of men of distinction, but specialists in different walks of life, are not sensibly superior to the decisions that would be adopted by a gathering of imbeciles.'

It seems that in a crowd the parts of the mind peculiar to the individual, that is to say, the intellect and the will, become paralysed, and the parts which all the components of the crowd have in common alone act, namely, the instincts and emotions. The consequence is that the individual in a crowd reverts very much to the condition of a child, or of a barbarian; and he becomes the plaything of suggestion or contagion. The instincts and emotions form for each of us an 'unconscious personality' which, in the isolated individual, is hidden and controlled by the 'conscious personality,' the product of the intellect and the will, and it is this unconscious and instinctive personality that manifests *collectively*. When anyone has been immersed in a crowd for a short time he gets into a peculiar condition which resembles the state of 'fascination' in hypnotism—'he is no longer himself, but has become an automaton who has ceased to be guided by his will.' Crowds do not reason; they accept or reject ideas as a whole; they tolerate neither discussion nor contradiction; the suggestions brought to bear on them invade the whole field of their understanding, and tend at once to transform themselves into acts. Crowds, when suitably influenced, are ready to sacrifice themselves for the ideal with which they have been inspired; they entertain only violent and extreme sentiments; their sympathies quickly become adoration, their antipathies are easily transformed into hatred.

The sentiment at the bottom of these characteristics, the author, for want of a better term, calls 'the religious sentiment':—

'This sentiment has very simple characteristics, such as worship of a being supposed superior, fear of the power with which the being is credited, blind submission to its commands, inability to discuss its dogmas, the desire to spread them, and a tendency to consider as enemies all by whom they are not accepted. Whether such a sentiment apply to an invisible God, to a wooden or stone idol, to a hero, or to a political conception, provided that it presents the preceding characteristics, its essence always remains religious.'

Although one may take exception to some minor points in M. Le Bon's argument—such as the name 'religious' in this connection—there can be no doubt that he has drawn attention to a truly 'occult' phenomenon in human life. Students of

* 'The Crowd'; a Study of the Popular Mind. By GUSTAVE LE BON. London: T. Fisher Unwin; 1896. Price 6s.

Occultism will at once recognise therein a 'teaching' common to both 'white' and 'black' magic, namely, that when a 'band' or society of individuals is formed there arises in consequence, and as a result of the combined personalities of the members, a distinct, common, or composite 'individual' of a very mysterious and superior kind. The common or collective consciousness of crowds is, however, according to M. Le Bon, distinctly inferior to the consciousness of the component atoms; but we must remember that the occultist deals with very superior materials, for the individualities that compose the common person in his case are all supposed to be selected specimens of the race. This conception of a common personality, formed by what our author calls a kind of 'chemical combination' of the composing atoms, is an extremely important one, which has, we venture to think, been badly overlooked in modern occult investigation. We have traces of its recognition in Theosophy although the general trend of theosophic teaching seems to be to accentuate the individual consciousness at the expense of the collective; and if M. Le Bon's theory can be substantiated in Spiritualism, it might account for many of the puzzling facts in spirit intercourse. If it be not too venturesome to say so, there is no apparent reason why a 'crowd' of spirits should not be affected by this same influence—call it 'hypnotic' or what you like; and in the case of a spirit 'band' it is easy to conceive that the 'communicating' or common intelligence should differ in a striking manner from the intelligence that we would naturally anticipate in any particular component spirit—a superior intelligence which may very well be possessed by that spirit, but for the moment inhibited through the conditions obtaining during the manifestation of the composite personality of the 'band' which is 'in control.'

In giving expression to these conjectures we are not reading into M. Le Bon's interesting work a meaning entirely foreign either to the subject or to our author's treatment thereof. M. Le Bon finds traces of unknown forces, possibly of unknown entities, which apparently exist and function beyond the limits to which he so boldly advances, but at which he stops short. The field of operation of those obscure but seemingly all-powerful forces, he perceives to be above, or below, our limit or 'threshold' of consciousness; for he tells us that 'the part played by the unconscious in all our acts is immense, and that played by reason very small. The unconscious acts like a force still unknown.' Such sentiments as the following, again, are imbued with the true spirit of Occultism:—

'Every conclusion drawn from our observation is, as a rule, premature, for behind the phenomena which we see clearly are other phenomena that we see indistinctly, and perhaps, behind these latter, yet others which we do not see at all.'

'It seems at times as if nations were submitted to secret forces analogous to those which compel the acorn to transform itself into an oak, or a comet to follow its orbit.'

'The Crowd,' however, is not an occult treatise, but an eminently scientific work, in so far that its thesis is clearly and logically worked out, without any building upon hypothesis or conjecture; and the very fact that the author resists the temptation to *guess* when he no longer *perceives*, makes his book an exceedingly suggestive one—for it leaves the reader to do the guessing for himself—and quite as interesting from a practical as from a theoretical point of view. We, therefore, leave it to our readers to study 'The Mind of Crowds,' 'The Opinions and Beliefs of Crowds,' and 'The Classification and Description of the Different Kinds of Crowds,' in M. Le Bon's own pages, feeling sure that when they have done so they will thank us for the recommendation.

The following appeared in the 'Daily Chronicle' of June 29th:—

Mr. Richard Harte writes: 'As your excellent notice of M. Le Bon's remarkable book, "The Crowd," will doubtless add many to the number of its readers, will you allow me to correct an error into which that able writer has fallen? He states on p. 27 (of the English translation) that a Mr. Davy succeeded in bamboozling a number of educated Englishmen by simulating mediumship and imitating spiritualistic phenomena, and that all those present signed a declaration that the phenomena were genuine, Dr. A. Russel Wallace being one of the attestants. In this matter M. Le Bon has been misinformed. Dr. Wallace writes to me: "I never met Mr. Davy in my life, so the

reference to me is *absolutely false*, like so many others in connection with spiritualistic phenomena."

The facts in regard to Mr. Davey are well known to many Spiritualists. They are simply these: Mr. Davey thought that he had become a medium; but some friends told him that they had imposed upon him in his own house, and he dropped that idea and began practising conjuring, and soon became very clever at it. He then professed to perform all the spiritualistic phenomena, and did so to the satisfaction of his friends and of their friends, who gave their testimony to his wonderful powers. But he carefully avoided showing any of his tricks to experienced investigators of Spiritualism, although several wished to see them. All his tricks were performed in his own house, where all needful arrangements were made beforehand. A long report of them, and some criticisms by Spiritualists, are given in the "Journal of the Society for Psychical Research."

PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM IN BLACKPOOL.

The Blackpool Gazette and News contains the following interesting report of the foundation stones laying of a Spiritualist Church:—

The progress of Spiritualism in this locality has not been of a tremendous character. But it is obvious, even to outsiders, that there has been a perceptible advancement in the Blackpool Spiritualist Society, particularly in point of numbers; and a development also, by way of enthusiasm, has been quite as noticeable. Materially its growth has been variously impeded, and though the present votaries of this form of religion find some satisfaction in having obtained a fair measure of popularity, the derisive raps and gibes which have been repeatedly directed against them are by no means fully allayed. They make no reserve, however, of communicating by public and private speech their assurance of becoming a greater and more telling organisation in the physical, mental, and spiritual progress of Blackpool, as time goes on. The history of this mysterious 'ism' in this town is quite modern. A little more than three years ago about sixteen persons, desirous of spiritual communion, joined themselves together, since when, through repeated psychical investigations, combined with a sheer determination to overcome all difficulties, they have raised themselves from a state of obscurity to one approaching public prominence. As a matter of fact, they have given us indisputable evidence of their progress, inasmuch as their numbers have increased to such proportions as to necessitate an enlarged building of their own, of which four foundation stones were ceremoniously laid on Saturday afternoon.

The new church is situated in Albert-road, and when completed will be capable of seating about two hundred worshippers. It will be a plain and unassuming edifice, having a front elevation of Yorkshire stone. The other walls will be constructed entirely of brick, the inside being ornamented with a moulded layer of pitch pine, suitably varnished. The building will consist of two rooms, a lower one for school purposes, and an upper one to be used as the church. At the main entrance there will be a small gallery, with two vestries underneath. The estimated cost, to be defrayed by collections and private subscriptions, is £1,200. The opening ceremony will probably take place on September 1st.

Considerable interest was manifested in the proceeding on Saturday, when the usual observances were added to the foundation stones by Mrs. G. Butterfield, Mrs. S. Butterworth, Mrs. Coupe, and Mr. J. Heyworth (secretary) respectively. Mr. Howes presided, and the proceedings were attended by a fairly large number of people, many of whom were representatives of spiritualistic churches of Blackburn, Darwen, Accrington, and Rochdale. The weather was beautiful.

Following the opening hymn and prayer, the Chairman expressed a feeling, common among the Blackpool Spiritualists, of being tired of lodgings, so to speak, and they had consequently made up their minds to have a building of their own. The place which they were now building might not be as grand as many of the religious temples in the town, but what they lacked in the beauty of the temple they would strive to make up in the beauty of spiritual philosophy.

Professor Victor Wyldes, the psychometrist, remarked that, realising, as he did, the benefits of modern Spiritualism, he felt that every spiritualistic society should have a temporal home of its own. Their worthy chairman had said that nothing was im-

possible to hope and win. That hope, founded on the realisation of spiritual communion, had impelled them to push onward the car of spiritual progress. Many of their friendly critics might think that they were but another antagonistic fraternity whose object was to upset other religious sects. That was a great mistake. Spiritualism, properly understood, was an exposition of the fundamental principles of all religions. Was not religion founded on the intrinsic principles of spiritual communion? Was not religion in its theological aspects the recognition of the existence of the one Infinite Spirit? This God the Spiritualists worshiped, and it was to this God that their little earthly temple was being raised.

Whilst laying the first stone, Mrs. Butterfield said that Spiritualism had come to Blackpool; not on a day trip, or a week-end excursion, but to stop. They believed in one God, not three; no devil (thank goodness for that) and in paying twenty shillings in the £. (Hear, hear, and laughter.)

The other stones were then laid, and Mr. Leader also spoke.

The same paper contains an interesting report of an interview with Mr. Victor Wyldes on the subject of Psychometry. We quote the concluding paragraph:—

'As to the spiritual importance of this art, innumerable experiments have proved that it is possible to sense, from the magnetic atmosphere of a person, the thoughts, the words, and the deeds of his past life, thus proving that there is a book of judgment written by the finger of man's own spirit, and that its record is indestructible. The Spiritualist believes that the state of spiritual consciousness created by the words, thoughts, and deeds of a human being not only constitute a source of his relative degree of happiness or misery here, but also that this condition will constitute a source of happiness or misery after the death of the body.'

'That does away with the hell-fire and lake of brimstone theory, then?'

'Oh, yes. It suggests that man is the builder of his own temple in the heavens, or the delver of his own cavern of despair, in the regions beyond the realm of time. Thus the loftier conception of psychometric science suggests a noble incentive to a virtuous life.'

'Is it possible for each person to exercise this psychometric influence?'

'Man is a spirit, therefore it follows that every man possesses latent spiritual perceptions. Further, I affirm that every man and woman, irrespective of creed or nationality, is a psychometrist to the exact extent of his or her degree of impressibility. In other words, every human being possesses a degree of intuition.'

'What is this influence? Is it of the soul, or what?'

'Of course I shall clash a little, now, with my Spiritualist friends, but I will state my opinion. I am perfectly aware that many Spiritualists attribute the exercise of psychometry to the direct action of a disembodied spirit upon the mental faculties of a medium, thus imparting to him information which he could not otherwise obtain. While I know from practical experience, which harmonises with the Scriptures of all nations and religions, that our angel guardians, the ambassadors of the All-wise and Supreme Father, can and do frequently impress, help, and guard us, and that in the exercise of psychometric perception, as in the use of any other natural gift, our spirit friends can and do impress us, yet I do not feel warranted in placing psychometric science upon a supernatural basis; nor can I endorse the theory that the perception of the physical, mental, and moral traits of a person, as discerned by a psychometrist, is necessarily the product of a disembodied spirit. Nevertheless, I am fully convinced that in special emergencies, under Divine providence, such helpful guidance is frequently imparted. Where the development of this power will end, no psychometrist can presume to say. It may be that when psychometry has passed through its modern experimental stage, and has become, as I fully believe it will, a recognised auxiliary to the practice of the physician, and the exhortations of the preacher, that the indisputable theory, as to the source and scope of this mysterious power, will be a rational theory, mid-way between the miraculous notion of the superstitionist and the ultra-physical conception of the materialist; and that this spiritual, yet at the same time, natural force—for spiritual forces are substantial forces, and are the results in this, as in other directions, of human agency—may, in process of time, be formulated into a science as divine and as helpful as the science of physiology, of anatomy, or of chemistry.'

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.]

The Question of Lucifer.

SIR,—It is a little difficult to keep pace with Palladian developments and the criticisms connected with and arising therefrom. I respect and appreciate the remarks of 'C.C.M.' on the subject of my article in 'LIGHT' of the 6th ult. The terminology of Palladian Masonry must undoubtedly seem bizarre and inaccurate to the Mason who is not a Palladian, but that is no presumption against it. Nor, by the hypothesis, is the denial of the ordinary Mason of any value; it is made in good faith, but also in ignorance of the facts. On the other hand, also by the hypothesis, the perfect initiate, who does know, will presumably deny all the same, at least until he is converted. If we assume the existence of the Palladium, this line of thought is accurate; but if we are dealing with the invention of several unscrupulous persons, it is obviously an ingenious mode of placing criticism in a dilemma. Any association along the same lines of reasoning could be accused of anything, and would have great difficulty in justifying itself. I might advance, for example, that the power behind the Latin Church is in reality the occult Order of the Rosicrucians, but the vast majority of priests and a considerable proportion of prelates do not know it, while those who do have good reason to contradict it, if challenged. In such a case, the burden of proof lies with those who advance the proposition, and then everything depends upon the quality of evidence produced. Hence, in the question of Lucifer, I think it will be agreed on all sides that our best course is to go on testing the witnesses. In this connection I have a curious result to offer, which will help us further to appreciate Miss Diana Vaughan.

I may say at once, and quite frankly, that my inquiries concerning Signor Solutore Aventure Zola—who is, I hear, an Italian—do not favour the view to which I personally incline, namely, that the Palladian revelation is largely, though possibly not exclusively, an imposture founded on an unrecognised claim of the Ancient and Accepted Scotch Rite. I must explain that Masonry in Egypt was originally wholly Memphis in Ninety-sixth Degree, as is also Roumania, but in 1864 a Supreme Grand Council of the Thirty-third Degree of the Scottish Rite was founded, and these two bodies, together with the Craft Grand Lodge, executed between themselves a triple concordat, which still continues in force. The supremacy under this system belongs to Memphis, and Zola was Grand Hierophant, Ninety-second Degree, Supreme Grand Commander, Thirty-third Degree, and Grand Master, Third Degree, until 1883, when he resigned all his powers to Professor F. F. Oddi, of Cairo. My instruction assures me that Zola was undoubtedly a well-informed Mason, and that Egyptian Masonry owes much to his efforts. He is said to be a civil engineer by profession, and the explanation of his changed views is that 'the priests have got hold of him.' That is not a profound explanation, and the fact remains that a Mason who once occupied some of the highest positions in the Order has now left it, and has published his belief that it is a paganising and Satanic institution. It does not follow that this is to be understood in a Palladian sense, and I am inclined to class the accusation under the imputed Satanism mentioned in the third chapter of my book. Some attempt should, however, be made to obtain a more explicit statement from Signor Zola.

My next point is concerned with the case of Rear-Admiral Markham, who is affirmed by Miss Vaughan to be an Elect Magus of the Palladium, a Delegate-in-Chief of the Grand Central Directory of Naples for Europe, an Hon. Grand Master of a 'Perfect Triangle' at Malta, acquainted with the existence and powers of an infernal talisman possessed by that Triangle, and familiar with the minutes of a meeting at which Miss Vaughan was received as a visitor, and at which Lucifer appeared in her honour. Miss Vaughan defies contradiction on the part of Admiral Markham. I have now to inform your readers that he contradicts her explicitly. Having drawn his attention to the statements, he has sent me the following reply: 'I beg to acquaint you that I have no knowledge whatever of the lady styling herself Diana Vaughan, nor is there the slightest foundation for my alleged connection with the Orders alluded to in your letter. The charges are so preposterous that they are undeserving of notice.' This denial may, I think, be left to enforce

its own conclusions as to the credibility of the Malta incidents in the 'Memoirs of an ex-Palladist,' the manifestation of Lucifer, and the evocation of Philalethes.

Referring now to the observations of Mr. Arthur Lillie in your impression of the 13th ult., I regret that I have disappointed him by failing to supply 'a sober and full English account of the Baphomet rites.' The reference, I presume, is to those said to be now in practice. Well, it is humiliating to confess it, but a distressing absence of materials has alone hindered me; outside the 'cock-and-bull stories' to which Mr. Lillie alludes, I know of no source of information, for I must disown the soft impeachment that I have any personal acquaintance with Baphomet. In this connection Mr. Lillie offers me a distinct challenge, and flatters me by adding that he will believe what I say in reply to it, which I should have regarded as antecedently improbable when I recall his suggestions of 'word-fencing' in the case of M. Papus, and of 'dim religious light' in my own. Moreover, I do not know that I am prepared to accept implicitly, in its absence, Mr. Lillie's, or any, definition of 'sober English.' I can, however, truthfully state that the occult society with which I am connected makes no mention of Baphomet, nor does it use either his head or his tail in its symbolism. Further, no goat's head and no reversed pentagram have ever been seen therein. I may also say that Eliphas Lévi, though he did belong to this society, was never its chief, so that in this respect Mr. Lillie is quite wrongly informed. Lévi reached half-way up the grades, and was then discarded and excluded because his books were found to contain so much matter borrowed from the society's MSS. Finally, Eliphas Lévi did not refer to this society when he said that there might still be initiates of occult science who adore Baphomet. As Mr. Lillie misquoted the passage in question in the first instance, so he misapplies it now.

The next step which requires to be taken in the question of Lucifer has been well indicated by 'C.C.M.' It is to transfer the inquiry to Louisville as regards Miss Diana Vaughan. The existence of Sophia Walder is another point, and, lastly, there is Signor Margiotta. One thing has been wanting till recently to assist investigators, and that is for the witnesses of Lucifer to fall out among themselves. This has begun in earnest, and one of the persons concerned is precisely that witness about whom we most want information—the author of 'Adriano Lemmi,' otherwise Domenico Margiotta. Meanwhile, in view of its complexities, I think that the question of Lucifer would afford a sound argument for the endowment of research.

Lastly, I have read with the greatest interest, and mainly with sincere concurrence, the long notice of my book which appears in the current issue of 'LIGHT.' I recognise clearly enough the hand which wrote that criticism. If I were inclined to take exception to anything, I should, perhaps, give expression to a feeling that I am a little too seriously handled for some infelicitous observations on the limits of possibility in transcendental phenomena, by which at most I intended to enforce a strong personal opinion that the alleged phenomena were invented narratives. It is so desirable, however, not to confuse the issues, and I have, moreover, approached the question, as I trust, so little in a partisan spirit, that I will at once and willingly give way in this and in any similar instance, so that the question of the evidences, and that only, may remain clearly before us.

ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE.

P.S.—The above letter was already in type when that of Mr. Lillie appeared in 'LIGHT' of June 27th, under the title of the 'Resurrection of Miss Diana Vaughan.' There has been no such resurrection, and the muddled metaphor is entirely wanting in point. I must protest against the misrepresentations of your correspondent. My book does not question Diana's existence. Among the many speculations concerning her is the possibility that her name is a mask assumed by Leo Taxil; but I purposely omitted all reference to this subject, because no evidence was or is forthcoming. Neither have I represented Miss Vaughan as a puppet of Margiotta's, and so far from the recent quarrel between the witnesses of Lucifer affecting my position, it does nothing but strengthen it, and I only wish that my work had been delayed to include the incident. Should Miss Vaughan's existence ever be demonstrated, it will scarcely be a resurrection of that lady. As to Masonic lodges of the French Revolution, I have neither painted nor whitewashed these; I have written as a critic and historian, preferring evidence to imagination. Mr. Lillie may colour them to his liking, but such methods usually make a charge upon truth which is not

warranted by the value of the colouring matter. Finally, to ask why Eliphas Lévi wrote about the cultus of Baphomet is about as reasonable as to ask why Mr. Lillie has written upon 'Modern Mystics.'

SIR,—I think it is time to give some decisive (I hope) information on the too much talked of topic of 'Devil Worship in France.' Many occultists in Paris know, as I do, that this *soi-disant* worship is only the invention of Dr. Bataille and Leo Taxil (whose *nom de plume* is either Jordan or Vaughan). There were some bits of truth collected, *par ci par là*, and used by them, but the bulk of the writings is purely imaginative. I am very sorry for the English writers who spent so much ink on this topic, but I suppose they must be advised.

The work on Lemmi, published at Grenoble, is generally dubious; the one of Jean Kostka (*a nom de plume*) is apocryphal.

'Diana Vaughan's Memoirs' is one of the best farces conducted by Leo Taxil and his brother.

The publisher of those memoirs does not know Miss Vaughan, has never seen her, and does not care if she exists or not, for it pays—that is sufficient.

When Colonel Olcott came to Paris (coming from America) he was asked if he knew Miss Vaughan; he did not, and he was certainly in a position to be informed on this point.

A very cunning and private inquiry has been made by some occultists concerning that evanescent Miss. At St. Sulpice and at Rome the clergy do not know anything about Miss Vaughan, and in no convent is there anybody of that name. If Miss Diana Vaughan had been really a convert to the Catholic Church, this always well-informed Church should have been very proud to point out this new conversion and victory over the so-called Satan.

Most probably, at the end of this year, the 'Mémoires' will be discontinued, for the best farces are the shortest ones, as we say in France. Mr. A. Lillie assures us seriously that there are in Paris four temples where Lucifer is worshiped. They must be in the Catacombs (as said to me jocosely by a Spiritualist), for nobody knows them. Moreover, the French police, which is so well informed, could not ignore those temples, and should not tolerate them. Perhaps some lot of fools or insane people may gather secretly in some private house to worship Satan or Lucifer; but, of course, if the police hears of them it considers the thing as concerning Charenton (the Bedlam of France).

One other mistake of Mr. A. Lillie is to say that M. Papus was initiated by Eliphas Lévi. When the Abbé de Constant (Eliphas Lévi) died, Papus was a boy, and could not have been initiated. As to Eliphas Lévi himself, it is very dubious whether he has been initiated by St. Martin. As I have been told, he was rather an occultist by study and imagination than by real initiation; but he was obviously a very eminent occultist.

Fabre d'Olivet has been one of the last real initiates, with St. Germain and others; but during and after the great Revolution those initiates have disappeared or kept apart. If M. Pajius says that the Black Mass was invented by Huysmans, it is not exact, for everybody may read in Dr. Legue's book, 'Médecins et Empoisonneurs au XVII. Siècle' (Librairie Charpentier), two chapters on 'La Messe Noire,' founded on historical proofs and documents. There may be seen the curious and disgusting ceremony of the Messe Noire, *dite* on the belly of the naked body of Madame de Montespan, the celebrated favourite of Louis XIV.

'Le Palladium Régénéré et Libre' is another invention coming from the same prolific and productive pens which got up the building of Miss Vaughan, &c. As for Mrs. Alice Bodington, who gives us such astonishing revelations as to what is going on in France and in Paris, I think that it is rather comical for a Parisian to read such information coming from someone living so far from Paris and France. I advise Mrs. Bodington to sing 'Hail (British) Columbia,' rather than to try to enlighten us in England and France upon the dark secrets of Satanists, and the sayings and doings of Lucifer.

Concerning Freemasonry, I know very little about their doings, real or not, and do not care about them. But perhaps it may interest some readers of 'LIGHT' to know this news:—M. Ernest Nathan, le nouveau grand-maître de la franc-maçonnerie italienne, vient d'adresser une longue lettre aux loges maçonniques. Il indique un nouveau programme

maçonnique, s'inspirant des idées de patrie, de moralité, de fraternité, de liberté, et de l'assistance mutuelle publique. Il estime que la maçonnerie n'est pas contraire aux religions et reste ouverte à tous les partis et à toutes les écoles politiques.'

To have the end of this boring question, I agree with what was said to 'Quæstor Vitæ' by a senior of an English Hermetic Society (p. 231): 'There have been for centuries, here and there, small groups of Devil-worshippers; but I do not believe there has ever been any central lodge or authority.' The whole case is sheer nonsense—mere clap-trap sensationalism.

Paris.

AN OLD OCCULTIST.

Exit 'Dr. Bataille.'

SIR,—We must all thank your correspondent 'Q. V.' for his final exposure of the farcical impostor, 'Dr. Bataille.' A word now, however, on my own part in introducing the latter to 'LIGHT.' I have no apology to offer, for from the first I pointed out the questionable character of this book, and confined my quotations from it to its relation to Miss Diana Vaughan, whose existence, connection with Palladism and conversion were vouched for by more respectable authorities; and she had not then given occasion for suspicion on her own account. The apparently minute and exact acquaintance with the constitution and history of Palladism certainly impressed me, for I was not then aware of the extent to which the literature of the subject had already run, nor of the public sources from which Dr. Hacks ('Bataille') could draw. Obviously, that earlier and independent testimony cannot be discredited by the mere fact that a romance has been founded upon it. It must stand or fall by a criticism which ignores Dr. Hacks altogether.

Another thing which contributed to give 'Dr. Bataille' a certain credibility in my view is now first explicable by the light of his revelations to 'Q. V.' It is the letter purporting to be from that other mysterious personage, Sophia Walder, published in the 'Revue Catholique de Coutances,' February 10th, 1893, which, while denouncing 'Dr. Bataille' as a spy, and declaring that there was an admixture of falsehood in his statements, admitted the writer's acquaintance with him, and his professional services to her. This letter was followed by another, a much longer one, by Sophia, which is a good imitation, at least, of genuine Palladian ferocity against 'clericals.' 'Dr. Bataille's' reply is printed at length in the same paper. We can now, of course, easily see the origin of these letters in the 'band' of speculative journalists to whom it appears 'Le Diable au XIX^{me} Siècle' is due. Canon Mustel, the editor of the 'La Revue Catholique de Coutances,' was presumably imposed upon by fictitious correspondents.

It may not be without significance that the eleventh (May) number of 'Mémoires d'une Ex-Palladiste' is not yet published. Miss Vaughan (?) excused herself to her subscribers, by special memorandum, for the delay of the tenth number, on the ground of urgency in the preparation of her forthcoming book, 'Le XXXIII^e Crispi.' But neither has that book yet seen the light. I wish 'Q. V.' would keep an eye on the French Catholic papers which have advertised Miss Diana, and would inform us of anything said on the subject of her *versus* Margiotta, and especially send us any public communication by the latter. At present we are, here in England, dependent on what the 'Mémoires' choose to tell us. C. C. M.

[We can insert no more letters on this subject.]

The Parish Councils and Premature Burial.

SIR,—The letter from a 'Chairman of a Parish Council' in 'LIGHT' is one that deserves the attention not only of every parish council, district council, and other governing bodies, but of every thoughtful reader. Cases reported in the Press from time to time show that the danger of being buried alive is real. In his treatise on 'Suspended Animation,' Dr. Moore Russell Fletcher, forty-six years Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and an able scientific observer, remarks: 'Persons are often found in their beds, in the field, or elsewhere in a comatose or inanimate condition; they are examined for breathing and pulsation, and, finding neither, the family physician is called. He makes an examination for pulse or evidence of feeble action of the heart, and quietly remarks to the friends, "died probably of disease of the heart," "apoplexy," or "paralysis," according to the age, habits, and manner of living of the person whose body lies before him, and leaves for the family to arrange for the burial. Frequently the doctor and friends remark in wonder the next day, "How warm and life-like the

body is, how flexible the arms are, and how fresh and florid the face is." The undertaker quietly observes, for the information of his clients, that this life-like appearance of corpses is far from uncommon in the experience of the members of his profession, which opinion is confirmed by others; the dread suspensions of the relatives are removed, there is no attempt at resuscitation, and burial follows. The victim of catalepsy, trance, syncope, or other death-counterfeits has, it need hardly be said, only the very faintest chance of recovery after his doom has been thus pronounced by a hasty and perfunctory death certification. The only unequivocal sign of death, as shown by the patient researches of authorities too numerous to mention, is putrefaction, and in the great majority of cases this is not waited for. A reform in our treatment of the so-called dead is, in the interest of humanity at large, urgently needed.

42, Stibington-street, N.W. JAMES R. WILLIAMSON.
June 24th, 1896.

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent, 'W.', in 'LIGHT,' of May 30th, under caption 'Burying Alive,' p. 262, I would say about twenty-five years ago, and several times since, I visited at the City Cemetery at Munich, Bavaria, a mortuary chamber containing on each occasion a score or more of 'corpses' laid out and awaiting the final order for interment. Of course all ages were represented, from the first days of babyhood to the octogenarian, and all styles of dress and 'lay out,' from the severest simplicity of the humble poor to the sumptuous display of pride and wealth, friends being allowed much latitude. The chamber was well lighted, had glass doors, admitting full view to passers by, an attendant at call, decorations appropriate and pleasing, tasteful and artistic. My impression is there never was a resuscitation. The English Consul or pastor could easily answer all 'W.'s' queries.

W. H. YOUNG (late United States Consul at Carlsruhe).
883, East Main-street, Columbus, Ohio.
June 11th, 1896.

Why Don't Spiritualists Abolish the Cabinet?

SIR,—Considering recent impostures unearthed by Spiritualists themselves, and the painful Press comments in various English towns, will you allow me to ask if the period is not ripe for newer methods of inquiry? From a number of inquiries I have been at the trouble to post to well-known investigators, inquiring opinion, I am happy to state that the weight of reply is decidedly against the 'cabinet,' and in some cases such would have reached the columns of our spiritual journals, as per my request; but too often a characteristic modesty deprecates public avowals. I will here state that, without judging the motives of any medium or inquirer, public caterers for such exploration, especially when monetary arrangements are involved, are in duty bound to devise experiments superior to the public conjurer. I have now in my possession a very earthly 'spirit robe' retained by an investigator, which was removed from a well-known materialiser some nights ago. It is a deftly-fitting robe of mull-muslin, neckbanded by Paisley thread and calico, the same secured by a 'safe' pin. Upon the light being turned up, certain accomplices were determined darkness should prevail; but in this case the medium-snatcher proved a Samson, and one more imposture was laid bare. It would be a foolish argument in such a case to charge some evilly-disposed sinner with having introduced the captured garment, and equally vain to explain that some predatory elementary had enforced a temporary purloinment from some adjacent drapery dépôt—but logic occasionally is constructed upon such far-fetched assumptions, and in many ways it can be seen that such statements are but an extension of the chain of evil consequences. But now, why not use common sense? First examine mediums; expose them, say, in a subdued light, to the assembled circle; say, in an aperture minus a front cover, or, in default of such arrangements, why not adopt the 'wire cage' constructed by Mr. Robert Blacklock, of Sunderland? Much better to have results *nil* than 'doubtful shapes,' which breed so much suspicion and unpleasant recrimination. These are my views, and I justly claim the right to state them, leaving every other investigator, of course, their individuality in the matter. Perhaps, also, later on, I may have something to add ament the moral policy of such evocations by Spiritualists. For pertinent reasons, such shall be withheld for the present. With respect to all and malice to none, I remain faithfully,

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

W. H. ROBINSON.

Legal Status.

SIR,—Various communications *pro* and *con* have appeared upon this subject in 'LIGHT' and the 'Two Worlds,' but I have sought in vain for any solid argument against the scheme which has been suggestively drafted by Mr. T. O. Todd on behalf of the National Federation, the objectors appearing to be carried away either by their fears or their prejudices. It is well, indeed *necessary*, in order to arrive at a reliable basis, that all possible objections should be stated, since they serve as signals to show which way danger lies, and doubtless a review of these may not be without service in view of the approaching Conference at Liverpool. In order to be as brief as the importance of the subject admits, I will endeavour to treat them collectively. 'LIGHT' prefers to maintain a watching attitude and remain a 'free-lance,' and of course it has a perfect right to do so. The main consideration in regard thereto is that either organisation and procuring legal status are desirable or they are not. If desirable (and I think I shall be able to show that they are), then one is forced to feel that far more practical and successful work can be done by being in accord with a representative and capable Central Council than as an isolated, unattached 'free-lance.'

Too close a construction is, I think, placed upon what Mr. Todd says as to the need of the proposed scheme 'in order to *save* the movement,' since an urgent need certainly exists for elevating it and placing it upon a more solid basis for propaganda purposes.

Again, exception is taken to the statement that 'we have no authority over . . . our adherents . . . platform, and other workers,' but is it not a self-evident fact that some kind of *salutary control* is much needed? as, for instance, that the conditions of membership, while not being vexatious, shall still be such as to directly *foster* the personal fitness of our *adherents*; also that some mode of more discreet control be exercised, whereby only those who are fitted to *creditably* present either the phenomena or the philosophy of Spiritualism shall engage in its public propaganda.

'But,' says 'LIGHT,' 'if a Society wishes to have A or B, why not? Why wait for a pass?' The proposal to submit names to District Councils, &c., is, I take it, only made *suggestively*, and it will probably be found quite feasible and effective, while still retaining perfect freedom for Societies, to adopt such proposals as shall make it increasingly incumbent upon *leaders* of Societies to exercise proper discretion in this matter, and with whom the responsibility for the admission of local workers would then, and rightly, rest. Then after local workers have been thus tested, if they desire a wider field of labour, as an introduction thereto, their names could be submitted to District or Central Councils.

It is further urged that the proposal to control the opening of new Societies, admission of members, &c., 'would create a *sect* . . . the nearest approach to which would be the Methodist Conference with its cast iron rule.' But control as to the creation of new Societies does not mean opposition thereto where existing Societies are sufficiently established or local conditions are such as to render it *desirable* to open up other societies. This parental control could only tend to strengthen the movement and foster its healthy growth. Moreover, the distinctive features of a *sect* are in its doctrinal *beliefs*, and not in its *mode of government*.* The 'cast iron rule' of the Methodist Conference receives complete justification at the hands of Mr. Lord. He says, in reference to the Rev. Mr. Ashcroft, that 'he *posed* as a man who had the support of a great religious body of Christians,' but owing 'to the pressure brought upon him by the Conference,' he subsided. Mr. Lord goes on to say that Mr. Todd is formulating a scheme of government 'which would *place shackles of a like character* upon every occupant of a platform,' &c.; but, since the Conference proved itself capable of controlling Mr. Ashcroft and guarding its own interests, the said '*shackles*' would appear to be *salutary* in their application, and instead of framing an argument against the 'Legal Hundred,' Mr. Lord has given one strongly in favour!

The wisest rules, like Nature's own laws, may be as 'cast iron' to the *offender*, but salutary and protective where there is loyal conformity.

Again, says Mr. Lord, 'No change in constitution would be possible or legal,' unless 'approved by an order of the Court of Chancery.' But if sufficient latitude be retained in 'the deed' to allow of modifications to suit local needs and conditions—and

* Here, as elsewhere, Mr. Adams is inexact.

this surely should be an easy matter—then this objection stands for nothing.

He also says that 'buildings, properties, and creeds of societies would have to be guarded by the 'Legal Hundred,' and that 'these comparatively new converts . . . are very sanguine if they imagine that the earnest inquirers amongst us are prepared so soon after freeing themselves from old shackles, to put themselves into new ones.' Does not a very real need exist for some trustworthy legal guardianship of buildings, properties, bequests, &c., on behalf of the movement? Have not halls been already alienated and lost to the cause, and bequests withheld simply for lack thereof? And will not this need increase in urgency as our propaganda proceeds?

As to the guardianship of creeds (!), since none are being formulated for the necessary statutory declaration, which will only affirm basic principles upon which all may unite, whatever variations of opinion may be entertained as to non-essentials, this also looks like a random shot. With the keenest appreciation of the horror of the 'old shackles' evinced by Mr. Lord, we must not forget that their grievousness consists in fettering man's spirit and intellect down to the prisonage of creeds and dogmas, matters of belief alone, and not so much as regards their association with modes of government. The various methods adopted by different bodies for propaganda purposes cannot truly be called 'shackles'; let us rather call them the harness of the car of progress. For surely no successful organisation the world has ever seen, religious, social, or national, could have made its progress without a well-found equipment, an efficient central control over all its sub-divisions, and a 'plan of campaign' capable of general co-operation.

We are further told that 'the laws of intercourse between spirits in the flesh and spirits incarnate are not yet sufficiently understood.' Does this mean that Mr. Lord is not yet convinced that such intercourse is proven? but this is what we as Spiritualists are called upon to affirm; and here our ground is solid enough, in all conscience, for, as Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace says, 'the phenomena of Spiritualism in their entirety do not require further confirmation.' It is utopian to expect—this side of 'the veil'—to understand all about the laws which underlie the phenomena, but the suggestion that the Court of Chancery is to be appealed to 'for powers to interfere with investigators into their operation,' is as absurd as it is misleading; while methinks that our ignorance 'of laws governing the two sides of existence' is not quite so dense as Mr. Lord appears to assume.

By all means let us 'go slow,' 'steady ahead,' 'ware rocks,' as 'A Sailor' says; and the more effectually to avoid rocks, let us carefully formulate our 'steering regulations.' Knowing the dangerous localities, our course can be framed where safety lies. If in the promulgation of this scheme the National Federation abdicates, or 'signs its own death-warrant,' it will be to rise Phoenix-like into more vigorous life, with enhanced powers for accomplishing more and better work than has hitherto been possible.

If, owing to the nature of legal requirements, such declarations were called for as would inevitably lead to fossilisation and creed-making, then would we have none of it; but this is not so, and surely the intelligence of our representatives can be trusted to secure perfect liberty for our acceptance of whatever new truths may be revealed by future research.

In conclusion, no stronger plea for organisation, if one be needed, can be urged than that it is a direct and practical step towards the initiation of that Brotherhood which we are striving to make mankind more fully realise. However much good service the 'free-lance' may accomplish, he works from a purely individual base; is apt to become exclusive and dogmatic as to methods, and is far more in danger of becoming fossilised than if, with whole-souled unity of purpose and endeavour, his best energies flow generously out for the establishment of the commonwealth of our glorious Cause; then, instead of the puny results of disunited skirmishers, we shall realise the grander achievements which only follow the operations of the well-governed and disciplined army.

Feeling that the importance of this matter will afford ample justification for this demand upon your valuable space, believe me, dear Editor, yours fraternally,

Cardiff.

E. ADAMS.

P.S.—At a recent well attended meeting of the Cardiff Psychological Society, copies of 'The Appeal' having been distributed in advance for perusal, a unanimous and hearty assent was given to the principle of the scheme, and contributions towards the initial expenses freely subscribed, it being strongly felt that all Spiritualists throughout the country should rally to the support of its promoters, and not let a valuable scheme languish from apathy and lack of intelligent co-operation.

Omnipotence.

'G. B. R.'s question is very sensible and pertinent, and deserves a careful and reasonable answer. By an omnipotent God I mean a Being who creates, rules, and overrules all things. I do not doubt His omnipotent power to re-make Himself as absolute perfection; but I contend that directly He descends to material, objective, and subjective creation, He is bound by necessity to create something which is inferior to Himself, for Necessity seems to me to be as much part of God's nature as any attribute He possesses. I therefore infer that, under this law of Necessity, creation is bound to be a product manifesting good and evil.

NEWTON CROSLAND.

SOCIETY WORK.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA IN BATTERSEA PARK.—On Sunday, July 12th, meetings at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., near the band stand.—A. M. R.

EDMONTON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, BEECH HALL, HYDE-LANE.—On Sunday last Mrs. Yeeles gave an able discourse upon 'Where are our Dead?' followed by clairvoyance. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Banyard.—A. WALKER.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mr. Veitch gave a discourse to a good audience. Next Sunday, 'Evangel'; and Mr. Ronald Brailey every Thursday, at 8 p.m. Our excursion will take place on Saturday, August 22nd, to Epping Forest. Tickets 2s. 6d., and 1s. 6d. for children.—PHOS. MCCALLUM.

SPIRITUAL ATHENÆUM, 113, EDGWARE-ROAD, N.W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Horatio Hunt lectured on 'The Philosophy of Materialisation.' On July 7th, at 8 p.m., Mr. A. F. Tindall will give the second of three trance discourses on 'Occultism, Spiritual Religion, and Mystical Christianity.' Tickets free on application.—A. F. TINDALL.

DAWN OF DAY SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, 85 (LATE 81), FORTES-ROAD, KENTISH TOWN, N.W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Bingham, reading, recitation, and experiences. Mrs. Spring gave an inspirational address, which was followed by clairvoyance. On Sunday next, service, Mrs. Spring, clairvoyance; Mrs. Bingham will give an address on the 'Colours Seen by Clairvoyants.'—M. RORKE, Hon. Sec.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday last we had a good audience. Mr. Boddington briefly addressed the meeting, after which Mr. Brenchley gave an instructive outline of the history of Joan of Arc, emphasising the fact that the same body of people who proclaimed her a witch and caused her death are to-day proclaiming her heroism. Our annual summer excursion to Keston Common by brakes, July 13th. Tickets 3s. 6d., including tea. Next Sunday, 6.30. Thursdays, at 35, Station-road, students' class, 8.30.—A. E. B.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, ISLINGTON, N.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. Jones in the chair, Mr. Ronald Brailey's inspirers gave an address on 'Spirit Communion,' also poems on 'Truth' and 'Happiness.' Mr. A. M. Rodger and Mr. Brockleton also spoke. On Sunday morning last, in Finsbury Park, the meeting was addressed by Messrs. Brooks, Jones, Davis, Emms, and Rodger. A meeting is arranged at Lewisham for next Sunday, conducted by Mr. A. M. Rodger.—T. B.

CARDIFF PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ST. JOHN'S HALL.—At the Town Hall, on Sunday last, very successful meetings were held, when Mrs. Emma H. Britten delivered addresses on 'The Wondrous Story of Spiritual Evolution in All Ages, Renewed only in this Century,' and 'Visions of Scenes and Spiritual Experiences in the Life Hereafter.' Space forbids further reference, but the privilege of listening to the inspirers of our beloved friend is a great one. Next Sunday evening, at St. John's Hall, Mr. Aldridge, of Weston, will give the address.—E. A.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—Mr. W. E. LONG, who was announced to deliver an address on Sunday evening last, was unfortunately, prevented by illness from fulfilling his engagement. In these circumstances, Mr. John Slater, the famous American clairvoyant, who was to have shared the labours of the evening with Mr. Long, very kindly undertook to lengthen his original programme by occupying the whole time with clairvoyance, an arrangement which met with the entire acquiescence of the overflowing audience which was present. On this occasion Mr. Slater's display was of an extremely brilliant kind. According to the usual custom, a number of small articles were handed up (in the absence of Mr. Slater from the hall) by various members of the audience, and these objects were psychometrised, with results that can only be described as remarkable. Mr. T. Everitt, the President, occupied the chair, and improved the occasion by some explanatory remarks in regard to clairvoyance and psychometry, and their place and value as evidence of a psychical realm. Miss Morse, who has repute as an exceptionally pleasing and graceful vocalist, sang 'The Lord's Prayer' and 'The Silver Cord' in excellent style, and Miss Butterworth gave a pianoforte solo ('Cujus Animam'). Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Miss Rowan Vincent will lecture on 'The New Science and the Old Faith,' and give clairvoyance; a programme of sufficient attractiveness, it is hoped, to ensure a large attendance.—D. G.