

Light.

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	277
Telepathy and the Subliminal Self.....	277
Rev. H R Haweis on Hypnotism.....	278
Thomas Lake Harris	281
Is Man God's Failure?	282
Psychic Radiations	283
'Four Great Religions'	285
Dr. Lockhart Robertson and Spiritualism	286
The Process of Evolution	286
Auto-Hypnotism	287
Re-incarnation of H.P.B.	287
Thought Transference.....	287
Mr. Stainton Moses' 'Spirit Teachings'	287
Psychical Science v. Spiritistic Preconceptions	287
The Mystery Name	288

SPECIAL NOTICE.

The Subscribers to 'Light,' and to the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, who have not yet paid their Subscriptions for 1897, which are now much overdue, will oblige by remitting without delay, thus saving trouble in repeatedly sending accounts.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Kegan Paul and Co. have just published an extremely valuable book by Dr. R. Osgood Mason, on 'Telepathy and the Subliminal Self: An Account of Recent Investigations regarding Hypnotism, Automatism, Dreams, Phantasms and Related Phenomena.' It is, in the main, a collection, and a first-rate collection, of Psychical Research cases with the now conventional Psychical Research explanation.

Dr. Mason is a temperate but most persistent advocate of the telepathic and 'subliminal self' explanation of everything, from crystal-gazing to the seeing of phantasms. He is anti-supernatural and, therefore, as he seems to imagine, anti-Spiritualist: and does not appear to be aware that the intelligent Spiritualist is as little of a supernaturalist as the driest Psychicalist.

His facts are very varied, very lucid, and very well arranged. As a cool and careful statement of the case, from the standpoint occupied both by Spiritualists and Psychicalists, we know no better book. There is a maximum of fact and a minimum of inference, with a total absence of the tone and temper of the mere 'argufier.' The evidence is simply overwhelming, but the overwhelmer seems to say: 'You need not be overwhelmed if you object. Take it or leave it. Go or stay. It does not make much difference to me—and the Universe won't mind.' We like the magnitude and strength of that.

We are strongly tempted to quote, but—where to begin, and how to end? Here is a noticeable saying concerning hypnotism:—'It has become to psychology what determining the value of a single character is to reading an ancient inscription in a lost or unknown language—it is a bit of the unknown expressed in terms of the known, and helps to furnish clues to still greater discoveries.' This, we have always strongly held. The man who accepts all the facts of hypnotism is bound to go on—and to go all the way, whether he ends with us in St. Martin's-lane or takes refuge in the Westminster Town Hall.

Mr. W. J. Colville's 'spiritual romance,' 'With One Accord' (Boston: Banner of Light Publishing Co.) is not so much a story as a presentation of occult ideas, experi-

ences and explanations in story form. It is highly probable that many persons would receive and assimilate these in that form who would not look at an Essay. The book is, of course, written with knowledge; and its real value lies in the fact that it naturally reflects the incidents and results of a ripe medium's very varied experiences.

'The Philosophical Journal' has gone completely over to the spiritualistic camp. We miss its old characteristic depth and philosophical thoughtfulness; but, probably, in its new path it will be more generally useful. At the same time, we plead for a bias in favour of strong thinking. It is much more important that we should have a few feet of rock on which to securely stand than a mile of sand covered with fantasticalities. But in saying this, we have no desire to discourage the recording of curious incidents, such as the following:—

A haunted house in Oakland, Cal., is causing some consternation. It was lately rented by the Salvation Army people, and makes them nice and commodious quarters, on 10th and Adaline streets, from which they do not intend to be driven by unseen disturbers of the peace. The San Francisco 'Call' of last Tuesday gives the following about the spirit visitors:—

'Lieutenant Sawyer was awakened in the middle of the night by some mysterious presence, and as soon as his eyes were properly opened he saw an unknown face looking at him. There was no body, but simply features. He at once arose and chased that face until it got to the window, where it went out and disappeared.'

'The screen from the fire-place in one of the rooms has a habit of dancing around the room.'

'Mrs. Staff-Captain Merryweather said last night: "The house has a lively reputation for ghosts, and the longer we are here the more we hear about them, but I do not think there are enough ghosts in all Oakland to drive us out of our snug quarters."

A story like that should be followed up, and Salvation Army people are just the people to work at it.

The following, too, is truly suggestive:—

A Chicago judge refused to let a Spiritualist serve on a murder trial jury, because he said in court that he did not believe a man could be killed, in the common acceptance of the term. So says the San Francisco Daily 'Call.' Murderous courts of law, while they cannot kill, are crowding the lower spheres with spirits who spend all their energies in trying to avenge their untimely exit from the mortal plane, and they are doing more harm by obsessing other mortals than they could have done if allowed to remain in the flesh. Why not try to reform them by restraint and education rather than to place them where they can do infinitely more damage? Revenge seems to be the only thought in such matters—and it is a two-edged sword. It causes a spirit of revenge also in the executed individual.

A thoughtful review, in 'The Dial,' of Mr. Herbert Spencer's last book in particular and of his work in general, very ably discriminates in assigning to this fine thinker his probable place in the great Republic of Letters. The following is particularly well-balanced:—

Profoundly as we may differ from this illustrious author, we all owe him a debt of lasting gratitude. When the errors of his

system have been exposed and corrected, and when the gaps have all been filled in, there will remain the vast framework of a plan consistent as that of Aquinas and only somewhat less comprehensive ; and there will remain also the picture of a broken man toiling away for thirty-six years without surrender, even when almost in despair ; and there will remain the example of a man whose words always expressed the actual state of his mind with perfect transparency and accuracy because he had nothing to conceal. He had no reverence for sham, and many of his most severe attacks on the Church were deserved and will leave the genuine elements of religion more conspicuous for the destruction of masks and counterfeits. He reserved his worship, 'mostly of the silent sort,' for that Power which he called the Unknowable, but to whom his writings have ever, implicitly or explicitly, ascribed the qualities of goodness and justice which are centred in Jesus's ideal of the Heavenly Father.

The following tender and very practical communication is being passed round the globe, from paper to paper. We gladly do our share :—

In a little book of daily readings, 'Bogatzky's Golden Treasury,' I have read to-day, for the twenty-fourth year, a delightfully simple and helpful prayer. Long ago it was copied upon a card and placed in the corner of a glass upon my bureau, and many times I have copied it for my friends, especially for busy mothers, that they also might be helped by its practical thought. I have often intended to send it to some widely-circulated paper, that its sphere of usefulness might be broadened ; and now without further delay I send it to you, knowing of the desire to place before your readers all things that shall be helpfully stimulating :—

'Lord, preserve me calm in my spirit,
Gentle in my commands
And watchful that I speak not unadvisedly with my lips,
Moderate in my purposes,
Yielding in my temper,
And at the same time steadfast in my principles. Amen.'

'The Musical Record' repeats Remenyi's story about Liszt, that when he was seven years old he had already played, like a grown-up master, Bach's preludes and fugues. One day his father, Adam Liszt, who was a good all-round musician, came home unexpectedly, and heard little Liszt playing one of Bach's four-part fugues ; but the fugue was written in another key than the one in which little Liszt was then playing. The father was appalled. He knew too well that his son had no intention whatever of transposing the intensely polyphonic four-part fugue. He knew that it was being done unconsciously. He asked the boy why he did not play it in the right key. The little fellow was astonished, and asked if the fugue was not written in the key he was playing it in. No ; it was written in E flat, and not in G. The musician knows well what it means to transpose a complicated piece to another key ; but for a seven-year-old boy to unconsciously transpose a four-part fugue of Bach to a key a third below ! This is only one of many similar cases which suggest—well, let us say Thought-transference.

MR. CRADDOCK.

Information has reached us that a person, resident in Yorkshire, has been giving currency to a report that Mr. Craddock has recently attempted to purchase apparatus for use in bogus séances. We have a personal knowledge of all the facts connected with the matter referred to, and can assure our readers that they reflect no discredit whatever on Mr. Craddock, but rather the contrary. We propose to give full particulars next week.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We desire to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of several interesting communications, which we are reluctantly obliged to hold over. They will all have attention in due course.

PARIS.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Mons. Leymarie, 12, Rue du Sommerard.

'THE MORALS AND IMMORALS OF HYPNOTISM.'

On Sunday, 30th ult., at St. James's Church, Westmorland street, W., the Rev. H. R. Haweis delivered two sermons on the 'Morals and Immorals of Hypnotism.'

In his morning sermon, Mr. Haweis briefly sketched the history of Mesmerism, or Hypnotism, in its modern developments, and dealt generally with its uses and dangers. In the course of this sermon, he said it was unnecessary, nowadays, to apologise for speaking of the occult side of existence, and of the attempts which were being made to sound the depths of that mysterious being which belonged to all of us, for we were immortal spirits, not clay, nor dust and ashes ; and in these days the depths were being sounded in a number of strange ways. A little time ago it would have been unsafe to publicly mention such things as Spiritualism, Mesmerism, Hypnotism, or any occult and abnormal condition of life and mind ; but now the necessity was the other way—it was necessary to take notice of these things, and the pulpit ignored them at its peril. People were becoming anxious regarding these matters : they could not take up a book or a paper without finding some reference to them ; even in the family circle they were being discussed. People were hungering and thirsting to know what was the law of these things ; they wanted to know what relationship existed between the abnormal and occult events recorded in the Bible and the abnormal and mysterious events which were said to be occurring in this nineteenth century. They wanted to know what to think about Spiritualism, whether it had an evil tendency or a good tendency. People were beginning to feel, too, that it would be of very great use to them if they understood more about these subjects. The pulpit was bound to take notice of these things for this reason—that they came on the plane of right and wrong, they bore on the moral welfare of mankind, and the pulpit could only be silent at its peril. Undoubtedly the question of Mesmerism, or Hypnotism, was such a question, because it was said that hypnotic action was brought about upon the mind which controlled the will, judgment, moral responsibility, and shackled the purpose. Now if there was such a power which could be exercised by one person on another, or by some demon or angel on some person in the flesh, inclining the subject of the influence to do this or abstain from that, then it was a most momentous matter, demanding the most careful consideration and inquiry, and calling for pulpit advice, comment and direction.

Continuing, Mr. Haweis said he would speak first of the reality and facts of hypnotic influence or control ; then he would ask whether it had a good side or a bad side to it, whether it might be put to a good purpose or a bad purpose, according to the will. Then he would ask what was the relation between the hypnotic power and righteousness, whether this power of one mind to work upon another could be used to subserve moral purposes, strengthen the weak will, and help men to do what was right. Then he would consider what effect it had upon our ideas of immortality, whether it would strengthen our faith in the immortality of the soul, and help us to believe in a spirit world.

First, then, it was a mistake to suppose that hypnotism merely referred to an experiment in which one person was put into a state of sleep by another. Hypnotism was all abroad ; it was unconsciously exercised by people in their waking state everywhere ; it was at the root of all social relationships. It explained why one felt attracted by some people and repelled by others. The hypnotic relation, therefore, did not merely consist in putting people to sleep.

It was ignorance and scepticism which laid people open to the dangers and temptations of the hypnotic influence exercised by one mind over another. To be forewarned in these matters was to be forearmed, and as they affected the moral responsibility, the flexibility of the will, and gave a bias to the character, they needed to be brought under the moral laws of right and wrong. It was an encouraging sign of the times that scientific people were beginning to take an interest in this aspect of the question. He (the preacher) had a great respect for scientific people, the greatest respect for religion, but he had the greatest condemnation for scientific bigotry and religious bigotry. Unfortunately, bigotry was not confined to the Church ; it abounded in scientific circles. But it did not belong either to religion or science. It belonged to human nature. Whether in the Church, or the laboratory, or at the Bar, unwillingness to face facts one did not like was

a peculiarity of human nature. Abnormal phenomena, indicating the existence of undiscovered realms of Nature, had been largely tabooed by scientists, because they had not been able to fit them into their pigeon-holes, or to make them square with their preconceived ideas of natural laws and forces. Just in the same way the advanced and liberal views of modern thinkers in regard to religion had been ignored by those theologians who could not reconcile the new ideas with the old dogmas. In either case it was bigotry ; and they needed to be especially on their guard against scientific bigotry, and to remember how the greatest scientific men had been wrong, and might be wrong again. It was very instructive to notice that so great a person as Sir Humphrey Davy scorned the notion that London could ever be lighted by gas ; while Professor Lardner said he would be willing to swallow whole the first steam-ship that succeeded in crossing the Atlantic. They should not forget that Mr. Tyndall openly scoffed at the idea of the phonograph ; but he had to give in. Then Professors Huxley and Faraday abandoned and repudiated the phenomena of Spiritualism after the most cursory and insufficient investigation.

For fifty years at least after the death of Mesmer his name was a byword for scorn and a synonym for charlatanism, and so grossly were the phenomena obtained by him denied and misrepresented, that when the medical faculty began to study them, and the scientific world came round to a recognition of the facts, they had to change the name to hypnotism. So mesmerism was all wrong, and hypnotism was all right. The one was pure delusion, the other scientific fact !

Dealing with the reality and history of Mesmerism and Hypnotism, Mr. Haweis said it was in 1775 that Mesmer discovered that by making passes he could put people into an abnormal condition, and that in that state they became subject to his will. Mesmer believed that the force involved resided in his fingers, but whether it came from his fingers or his brain, the fact remained—people were mesmerised, and in that state became clairvoyant and exhibited other occult powers. In 1843, Braid, a Scotsman, showed that the phenomena could be produced without the waving of the hands. He put shining substances before the eyes of his patients, and the mesmeric state was induced ; and in this state the patients could be made to undergo surgical operations, being rendered insensible to pain. Sometimes, however, the patient awoke to consciousness in the middle of the operation, and then the result was disastrous ; and the discovery of chloroform, the effects of which were more certain and reliable, resulted in checking the use of hypnotism for surgical purposes. However, in 1860, Liébeault came on the scene, and gave a great impetus to hypnotic practice by his discovery that while in the mesmeric state patients were remarkably susceptible to suggestions made by the operator. Further discoveries were made and recorded as the outcome of experiments conducted at the Salpêtrière, in France, and the investigations of Dr. Lloyd Tuckey in England. The general conclusion arrived at, as a result of the experiments made, was that about eighty per cent. of the population, whether ill or well, were subject to the power of hypnotism and could be brought into that state in which the will was abnormally receptive and open to suggestions. Now, if that were the case the most momentous consequences readily followed. Supposing an individual were put into the hypnotic condition, and the suggestion were made that he should commit some crime, say suicide. It was an appalling power for one mind to have over another. But worse remained behind, for not only did the suggestion last while the subject was asleep, but if it were suggested by the operator that the hypnotised person should do a certain thing at a given time after passing out of the hypnotic state, the influence of the suggestion would remain, and all the intelligence and ingenuity of the patient's mind would be employed in carrying out the suggestion made to him while in the mesmeric sleep. Here, then, they came full face with the perils of hypnotism in their more extreme aspect, and these needed to be rigorously guarded against. The doctrine of suasion, or openness to suggestion, entered very largely into the question. It was an illustration of the power of the mind over the body that an individual might even exercise this power of suasion or suggestion upon himself. The mind-cure and the Christian Science cures, the action of the will upon the body, the concentration of the mind in one direction making the individual oblivious to all but the dominant idea, were all examples of the power a person might exercise over himself.

This might be illustrated in various ways. Thus it was possible to induce pain hypnotically, as a trifling experiment would show. If the experimenter held up his finger and concentrated his mind upon it for a few minutes, with the idea that a pain should be induced, the nerves would eventually get into such an excited state that a pain would actually be set up. This principle had been carried much farther in cases of stigmata. They knew how some of the saints of the early Church were accustomed to remain in long contemplation of the Saviour and his wounds, and how, after a time, marks corresponding to the imprint of nails appeared in their hands and feet. This was undoubtedly the outcome of the hypnotic state. Formerly scientific men had scoffed at these stories ; but now they were compelled to admit that it was perfectly possible to induce, by hypnotic influence, lesions, wounds, and the appearance of wounds, on the body. The second stage of hypnotic suasion was the influence of one mind over another. This was seen everywhere, in all conditions of life. It was seen in the fascination exercised by one person towards another ; in the persuasive arts by which speculators of the immoral class induced their fellows to invest in rotten enterprises ; in the control which a man of strong purpose exercised over weaker men. The subjects of such influence were awake, were in the normal state, and yet were not free agents. The third stage was the most extreme. In this stage a person was advisedly put to sleep or into an abnormal state of consciousness, where the suggestion of the operator was almost irresistible, and the suasion was coercive. Well, now here were the three stages or conditions of hypnotic influence : the power of the mind over itself, the power of one mind over another and, still more extreme, the intensified power of the hypnotic operator over his patient, which gave rise to the phenomena of clairvoyance and other abnormal faculties.

Now, what was the right and wrong about hypnotism ? To take first the bad side. It had a tendency to weaken the will. Hypnotic experiments were being carried on in drawing rooms, schoolrooms, and public halls for amusement. People were selected from the audiences for the purposes of the experiments, but often the subjects were wretched creatures employed by the operator. These assistants were often mere puppets, for people who lent themselves readily to suggestion became gradually weakened in will-power. Hypnotism, then, was immoral, first and foremost when it weakened the will. It ought not to be lightly undertaken ; it needed to be restricted by legislation.

Another bad side to hypnotism was the fact that it could be put to immoral and shameful and ignominious uses. Hypnotism, like every other power, might make for righteousness ; but, also like every other power and faculty given to man, might make for hell and damnation. If they read the experiments of the late Professor Charcot they would be appalled at the infamous possibilities of hypnotism. Here Mr. Haweis quoted instances showing the power M. Charcot acquired over his patients. In one case the Professor had suggested to a female subject that, at a certain time after awaking from the mesmeric sleep, she should take a dagger and stab him. The suggestion was acted upon, the Professor, who had narrowly watched the movements of the subject, arresting her hand as it descended in the act of stabbing him. Cases like this had an appalling significance. He (the preacher) knew it had been said that you could not hypnotise a person against his will. That was true ; but if such a person was not forewarned he was not forearmed. Then it had been said that a subject could resist a suggestion made to him while in the hypnotic state. Thank God, that was true ; but supposing the subject did not resist it ? It had been stated, too, that a hypnotised subject did not lose his perception of right and wrong. That also was true, as a number of instances proved. But the fact remained that by continual subjection to the hypnotic influence the moral instinct might be gradually weakened ; or, again, the subject might know that some act suggested by the operator would be wrong, yet the temptation to do it might be irresistible. Let them suppose, for instance, that the victim of an immoral hypnotist was ordered to murder a person against whom, while in his normal state, he bore ill-will. Under the pressure of the hypnotic power his moral sense would be overcome, and he would undoubtedly commit the crime suggested. Hypnotism, then, possessed some frightful possibilities ; indeed, on the Continent crimes had already been traced to its agency. Hypnotic influence had become part of the problem of life

to-day. But he would not say that hypnotism could never make for righteousness. Hypnotic suggestions might be used to strengthen the moral instinct, to reinforce the will, and to confirm the mind in good courses. It might be objected that by such means the moral responsibility was destroyed, the self-reliance undermined. But was it not the foundation of moral culture that one did right because one could not help it; that one did right because it was part of one's nature? He believed that it might be a good thing to be hypnotised into doing right—to be hypnotised into the Kingdom of Heaven, if one could not get there any other way. People might say this was 'tampering with the will.' But he believed they needed to have their will tampered with—if it was the lower and baser will. Was not that what every drunkard did when he voluntarily surrendered his liberty to enter a home for dipsomaniacs, in order that he might be amid surroundings and influences that would aid him to resist the temptations to which he was otherwise subject? In this aspect, hypnotism might be regarded in the same light as a tonic or a narcotic. Just as there were conditions when tonics or narcotics might be necessary to brace and invigorate the overwrought frame, or to soothe the irritated nerves, so there might be conditions when hypnotism could be safely and beneficially used as a mental stimulant or restorative. It was here that the good side of hypnotism came in; and nowadays hypnotic doctors were to be found, and when these men were right-minded and scientific they were able to do a great deal of good. In illustration of this point, Mr. Haweis narrated a case in which a lady who was unable to retain her food, and who, as a consequence, was perishing of inanition, was restored to health by the agency of hypnotic suggestion. Hypnotism was now being employed in relieving and curing the insane. In these directions hypnotic influence was finding a humane, moral, and legitimate use.

Dealing next with hypnotism as an ethod of imparting a right bias to the mind, Mr. Haweis instanced kleptomania, drunkenness, violent and unfounded prejudices, careless and disorderly habits, as examples of mental irregularity for the cure of which hypnotic suggestion might be resorted to. As an illustration of this, Mr. Haweis related a case which had been brought under his personal notice. A lady of his acquaintance had a little son who had an incurable habit of coming into the room with muddy boots. Expostulations were of no avail; it was merely the result of carelessness and forgetfulness on the part of the child, but the habit was inveterate. His mother eventually resolved to try the effect of hypnotic suggestion. She chose a time, however, when the boy was in the natural sleep one night to whisper in his ear a request that he should not again enter the room without changing his boots. Next day the boy was about to enter the room with the usual disregard of the clean carpet. But to his mother's surprise he paused on the threshold, looked round in a hesitating manner, and then removed his boots. Briefly summarising his conclusions, Mr. Haweis said, first, they would have to acknowledge the facts, and the facts were sufficiently strange—the power that one brain had of transferring thought to another brain, of transferring emotion and will-power. Then it was to be remembered that these facts were not to be trifled with in a light spirit, for fear of weakening the will and destroying the moral responsibility. If hypnotism were used at all, it should be employed in the same way as a stimulant, a tonic, anodyne, or narcotic, i.e., to meet exceptional conditions, and not to be habitually resorted to, since the abuse of the power would undoubtedly result in grave dangers.

Referring to the fact that the conditions of ordinary social life were largely governed by these mysterious powers, Mr. Haweis said it was a good thing to seek association with those persons who by their influence could strengthen the will and bias the mind in the direction of what was right. Whether it was a friend who had the power of manipulating one's brain to good purposes, or a teacher who had the gift of making you understand his thought, it was well to take advantage of their powers, for they were as the angels of the Lord.

In the evening sermon Mr. Haweis dealt with hypnotism as one of the evidences for immortality, also recapitulating the various statements made and conclusions arrived at in the morning sermon. Dealing with the marvels of the physical structure of man, he said there were still many extraordinary powers of the body which were not yet understood. Scientific people had lately begun to talk of the exteriorisation of force. It had been found that the body had the power of projecting from itself a force which could act on objects at a distance. But

if the powers of the body were so great, how much more so were those of the mind! They were told of mind acting upon mind across vast spaces, of the molecules in one brain responding to the molecules vibrating in another. They heard of thought passing from mind to mind by a sort of subtle telegraphy; they heard of brain-waves and thought-reading, and how it was possible for human beings to transmit will-power to transmit emotions, warnings and suggestions from mind to mind: and when they came to think of what was actually done in the physical world in this direction—as, for example, in the case of the telephone—it became almost intelligible. Truly marvellous were the laws by which words could be mechanically transmitted along the wires of the telephone. Did not this explain in some way the wonders of brain communicating with brain, by other than the ordinary channels? Did it not throw a new light on the facts of mesmerism, hypnotism, and the transference of thought from the mind of the mesmerist to that of his subject?

Mr. Haweis then continued to summarise the facts and conclusions contained in his morning sermon, laying particular stress, however, on the more interior aspects of hypnotism, the subtle relationship disclosed between the mind of the operator and the mind of the subject; the receptivity of the latter to suggestions, and the new state of consciousness induced by the hypnotic process. The facts of hypnotism proper, he considered, threw light upon three things. The first thing upon which they threw light was the question of sympathy; the second was communion, or interchange of thought and feeling; the third was the mystic constitution of man's nature by which, God having breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, he became an immortal soul. In regard to sympathy, he had already shown how intimately this question of hypnotism was bound up with the attraction or repulsion that existed between one man and another, and with the influence one mind exercised over another in the ordinary affairs of life. Again, there was this mysterious flashing of thought from brain to brain, a phenomenon which, as he had already shown, was closely related to the hypnotic condition. It showed that communication between two souls was not dependent upon words. Words often hindered thought, even concealed it; but there was a communication between mind and mind which was more perfect and more enduring. The best songs were those that had never been sung—the songs that were without sound; the noblest sentiments were those which could never be uttered; the most eloquent sermons those which had never been preached. There were moments when as we listened to music we seemed to understand the mystery of soul-speech; we seemed to understand what the perfect vision meant. How wretchedly insufficient were all spoken words! We might spend half an hour in conveying an idea in words which the soul in its own speech would convey by one single intuitive flash. The most eloquent words failed to convey all that we wished to express. Sometimes when the thinker stood solitary in meditation the spirit would glow in one point of light, and all the thoughts in his mind would shine like stars; and then in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, he had a dream—a hint—of another state of being. The best things were not seen by the eye nor heard by the ear; they belonged to the consciousness of the spirit, and these intimations of a higher life were flashes of something which was the essence of thought and feeling; they were the hints of an immortal existence of which these flimsy and transitory things of time were prophecies and foreshadowings.

The transmission of thought, feeling, and consciousness from mind to mind without any visible medium tended to show that there was something in man which was independent of the body. Even here, in the flesh, man could, so to speak, 'hurl himself beyond himself.' He could project his thought invisibly through space, for thought was immaterial, was spiritual; it did not perish when it was hurled beyond the precincts of the brain.

The sermon closed with an appropriate quotation from Wordsworth's well-known ode on 'Intimations of Immortality.'

RULES FOR THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.—We have reprinted, in the convenient form of a leaflet suitable for enclosure in letters or for distribution at public meetings, 'M.A. (Oxon's) Advice to Inquirers, for the Conduct of Circles.' We shall be pleased to supply copies *free* to all friends who will undertake to make good use of them. The only charge will be for postage—2s., ½d.; 50, 1d.; 100, 2d.; 200, 3d.; 400, 4½d.; 600, 6d., &c.

THOMAS LAKE HARRIS.

By WILLIAM OXLEY.

I am indebted to an unknown donor for a copy of No. V. of a series of pamphlets on the 'Brotherhood of the New Life,' entitled 'The Man, the Seer, the Adept, the Avatar; or, T. L. Harris, the Inspired Messenger of the Cycle.'

The work consists chiefly of testimonials from sympathetic writers, friends, and votaries. To ordinary minds it will appear as terribly overdone, for although the personal, moral character of Mr. Harris may be, and no doubt is, above suspicion, yet that should not debar thoughtful and truth-loving people from criticising and possibly condemning the assumptions contained in his published writings in regard to his position among his fellow mortals. That this should be questioned, and proof demanded, seems to excite the surprise, if not the ire, of his votaries and devotees. It must be admitted that T. L. Harris is a psychic sensitive of a very high order, but, like too many of his compeers with similar gifts, he applies to his own personality what should be applied representatively and universally.

It is the old thing over again, the past brought forward, viz., the effort to establish the 'speciality' at the expense of the liberty of thought and action of the mass of human beings. What is Harris more than any other of the great and increasing number of Messianic pretenders who are putting forth claims of a similar kind? They one and all, without exception, ignore the pretensions of their competitors. This series, of which the above forms one number, is published by a man who hides his personality under a *nom-de-plume*, 'Respiro,' of whom I shall speak presently.

In dealing with attacks (?) on Mr. Harris and the Brotherhood, in a letter written to, and published by, the editor of the 'New Church Independent' (an American Swedenborgian magazine), 1892, Mr. Harris writes: 'From the first the obligation not to reply to any attack has been imposed upon me, and this must continue till events shall demonstrate the order of my work and life. What the world says is to me as nothing.' (But to the 'world' it may be something.) 'The world is dying; I stand by its bed and chronicle the solemn processes of its advancing and impending decease.'

He is silent as to what 'world' is meant; and thus it may mean anything or nothing. It surely cannot refer to the physical world or earth on which we live, and move, and have our being; so that any and every one who peruses these lucubrations must put his own interpretation thereon. He may refer to the world of human mentality, with its manifestation of the underlying principles that actuate its thought and life; I can conceive of no other in its broadest sense and application. But if so, I for one take exception and question his *ipse dixit*—for it is nothing else. That world *cannot die*, for if it could Humanity would cease to be. I, as an evolutionist, regard it as the outworking of Law, which is unerring and immutable, operated by the Great Infinite and ubiquitous Life Power who doeth all things well. Harris seems to be quite ignorant of the grand truths that can alone afford the solutions of the why and wherefore of so-called good and evil, and the part they sustain in the cosmogony of the universe, physical and psychical; for without the one the other could not be, and his notion that evil, sin, or wickedness, or whatever term he may use, is to be destroyed by a crisis or catastrophe, will by better instructed ones be consigned to the legendary oblivion of the past.

In a statement by an old acquaintance and friend, Mr. C. W. Pearce (on p. 10), he says in reference to the memoirs of the Oliphants by their biographer, Mrs. Oliphant (the novelist): 'It is the simple truth, that every charge against him (Harris) has been evolved out of the imagination of the gifted novelist. Not one of them is to be found in any of the letters of the Oliphants quoted by her; all, without exception, are the children of her prolific brain.' It is to be hoped that this will elicit a reply from the authoress, as without some explanation on her part the statement appears incredible; there is no reason to think that she palmed off as historic truth what is mere romance. Mr. Pearce advised action for libel against her in the law courts; but Mr. Harris wisely disconcerted such proceedings.

When we read through the testimonials it is little wonder that Mr. Harris, with his temperament, should regard himself as not like other men. For instance, one of the oldest members

of the central society (p. 18) states: 'When Mr. Harris has laid his hands on us and taken on our diseases, and our very sins—we cannot speak of him as of another man,' &c. Again (p. 20), 'Our dear and loved father, Mr. Harris, is wonderful in his writings; but to me he is more wonderful as a man. I cannot help thinking that there has been (with, of course, the exception of our Lord) none like him since first the sun rose and smiled on the earthly paradise of the first created man.' Can abject flattery go further?

The same authority says, in reference to the Oliphants and other seceders: 'Having disconnected themselves from the central source and fountain of their life, and having denied our father in his two-in-oneness, they have thus opened themselves to the opposite influx of the world's proprium, unbelief, and darkness, so that truth appears to them as error, and error as truth.' If this style of vituperation is not in accord with the 'way of the world,' it is a manifestation of the same spirit that actuates the so-called religious sects from Rome downward. In speaking of the vineyards, &c., planted by the Brotherhood, the question arose: 'Would they survive the great catastrophe impending over the world?' The reply was: 'That their chief use will be after, and not before, the great change; for it is said in the "Holy City," par. 329, by the Divine Mother (whoever or whatever she may be), "that She Herself caused father to plant them for use, not before, but after, the change." It thus appears that some food is to be provided for the elect when the impending doom—according to Harris—has fallen upon an unbelieving—and worse—world. Ordinary people who take the trouble to read all this, and much more of the same character, will be content to hold their souls in patience, and, accepting Harris' own dictum, will wait and let 'events prove the truth or falsity of his life and work.'

I will now deal with 'Respiro,' the author and compiler of the pamphlet, and in doing so refer to a very dark side of the comedy, or tragedy, as the case may be, played by the fraternity, or at least some of the members. On p. 11 is a footnote marked with ink to call my special attention. It is so pronounced that I give it *in extenso*:

In the 'Life of Anna Kingsford,' 1896, Maitland writes: 'In the armoury of the Gods are many weapons, and woe to those who touch their anointed or do their prophets harm.' In 'Lucifer,' 1896, Annie Besant speaks of the very serious effects of hating or suspecting a good and highly advanced man; the thought forms sent against him cannot injure him, and they rebound against their projectors, shattering them mentally, morally, or physically.

Such is the dictum of Annie Besant; and now for 'Respiro's.' He says:

Verily this has been already, and may be yet again, fulfilled upon the enemies of the New Life. (I presume he here refers to Laurence Oliphant and his beautiful wife, whose deaths were credited to T. L. Harris by some of his votaries; of course by occult means.) Every malicious attempt to injure T. L. Harris, or to persecute his representatives, incurs the terrible Nemesis of the arch-natural powers. Just after the first pamphlet of this series was issued a fiendish attempt was made by an occultist to injure me occultly, socially, and professionally, on account of my advocacy of the New Life. I invoked the aid of the arch-natural powers (who and what are they? are they angels or devils?), and was informed that within twelve months the guilty would be punished. After a series of troubles from an occult source had fallen upon the enemy, and even upon those who had allowed themselves to be drawn into the vortex, just within the predicted time the avenging course of the reverse current culminated, and the enemy was occultly crushed; this being followed in a few weeks by a great disaster on the material plane. *Verbum sap.*

Much stronger evidence is required than that adduced by the author in the above paragraph as to the powers said to be possessed by so-called occultists. If it be true that they punish their 'enemies,' even to the death, it amounts to wilful murder, and it becomes a question whether they ought not to be brought to justice. In any case they are 'occultly' subject to condemnation for exercising such nefarious and reprehensible means for injuring such as dare to differ from them, and disbelieve in their pretentious claims. If such is the outcome and manifestation of the 'New Life' in and from the 'Brotherhood,' all right-minded people will give them a wide berth.

I trust, for his own sake, that 'Respiro' does not threaten me with the exercise of 'occult' powers, either his own or those of his so-called 'arch-natural powers,' although it seems to be implied in the hint contained in the last two Latin words of his foot-note (p. 11). If so, I use the same, applying them to himself; and I conclude by reminding him of the old proverb, 'A tree is known by its fruits.'

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IS MAN GOD'S FAILURE?

This somewhat startling question is one for which we are not responsible. Spiritualism sees everywhere the beautiful angels of Evolution and Hope; and it is the old-world theory of the Universe, which it challenges, that suggests this dismal and dreadful inquiry. If that inquiry has in it the ring of the strong Time-spirit, with its note of revolt or defiance, it is not we who need complain. The Time-spirit is the spirit of divine order; and, for the Almighty Creator, it must at times say, with the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews—'In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.'

Strange to say, it is that 'old-world theory of the Universe' which, in attempting to pin us down to antiquated finalities, compels the question at which the advocates of that theory may be shocked. It was Mr. Moody, the great evangelist, who said, 'This world is a wreck and is bound to sink. The most that we can do is to get off as many as possible of her passengers and crew, and let her go.' And that is only a boiling-down of the whole theory of the Universe of which we are thinking; the product of which is the inevitable question, 'Has God, then, failed?'

To that, Spiritualism has one steady and stedfast answer; and the answer is this: We hold fast by an All-wise Spirit-God in whom we and all things live and move and have our being. He has not been disappointed, and He will not fail. By unswerving Law He works, and, step by step, the great process of Evolution moves on for the fulfilment of His purpose, the realisation of His Ideal. The incredible ignorance and weakness of the so-called Fall of man; the failure of Creation, so far as this planet is concerned; and the awful cruelty and infamy of an eternal Hell where the failure will be kept in everlasting and agonised remembrance, we repudiate: and the measure of our repudiation is the measure of our regard for the honour of the All-Holy and All-wise God. So that Spiritualism is both scientific and religious—scientific in adopting absolutely the doctrine of Evolution as the explanation of the process and the end of creation; and religious as making a stand for the righteousness and goodness of God as against the practical heathenisms of past days.

Our leading note is—*No failure!* There are two determining explanations of the creation or the origin of man—that of sudden miracle, and that of development according to natural law; just as there are two views of the result;—that the miracle broke down, and that the process proceeded and proceeds by normal stages to the intended end.

The first theory of creation leads to endless perplexities. It contradicts all we see and know as to Nature's methods. Nowhere do we see any signs of sudden miracle, unrelated to adequate causes. Science (and science is simply knowledge of the thing that is) shows us everywhere innumerable links, with the bonds of cause and effect at every link. Moreover, this theory inevitably leads to the notion that

God has failed, that miracle has broken down, and that man is not responsible. It calls for continued miracle, and, in the absence of it, suggests the awful thought that God has deserted us.

The alternative theory explains nearly everything, and, besides, throws on creation the winsome light of Hope for all. It is in harmony with Nature's workings everywhere. It presents the unseen Creator as continually working through human instrumentality and responsibility. It suggests what Tennyson finely called,

That one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves.

From that point of view—and it is this point of view towards which all the bright spirits of all schools of science and religion are tending—man is the very reverse of God's failure. He is God's child, God's veritable eternal son, 'the image of the invisible God, in whom and for whose sake all things were created, and in whom all things consist.' But this child of the eternal must be produced under earthly limitations, must 'take the form of a servant' and be subject to endless sharp disciplines, from which he could not be saved. He has to come from darkness and be led gradually into the light. He must know every stage of the sorrowful journey, and have in him contributions from every creature 'groaning and travailing in pain together until now.' The mineral must bind him and the wild beast fire him. He must know the forest's hunger and the desert's thirst. The sun must burn him and the storm toughen him. Then awe and fear, and pity and longing, and the sense of the beautiful, and remorse, and the uplifting of the soul must fashion him, and rebels must live for him and Christs must die for him; and on and on he must travel to his true Eden—ever before him, and not behind him. And so the mighty Master creates Man a living soul.

But still, depth upon depth of mystery remains; and millions of truly religious and trustful spirits find it hard to believe in the Ideal and the end, and to overcome the sense of failure in so miserable and sin-sodden a world. And hardest of all to understand is the fate of the spiritually beautiful and the good: for, besides the misery of the world which belongs to the necessities of its life, there is all that sorrow and suffering of which the cross is the symbol: and it is hard to understand.

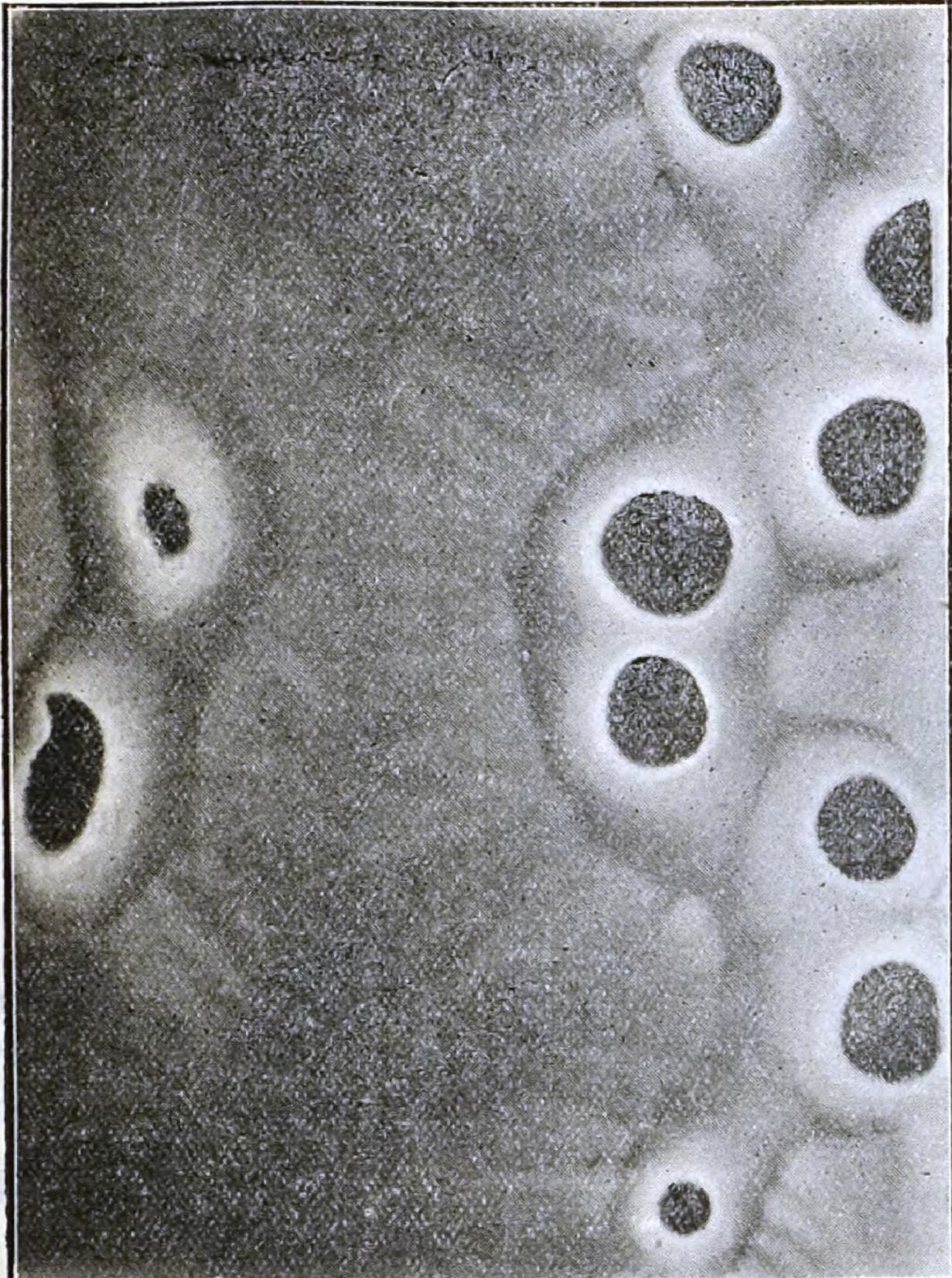
And yet, looking at it all, broadly and bravely, Paul seems to be right: 'Our light affliction which is but for a moment (remember that!) worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory.' One who saw this clearly, taught us the deep but luminous truth when he said: 'You take a tiny seed, and place it in the dirt; and what then? The rain falls and the sun shines on it, and the wonder follows. Out of this dirt come fragrance and beauty, the miracle of a flower. Here is something constructed out of the repulsive material—perfect in fragrance and beauty.'

Ah, yes! and is not that true of human life? Where has the human fragrance come from, the human beauty, reflecting in the human the glory of the divine? Sometimes from the courts of kings, sometimes from the silken lap of delightsomeness: but mostly from miners' huts and fishermen's cottages, from the John the Baptists in the wilderness, from the mangers of the world, from the hiding-places of God's covenanters among the hills, from the upper chambers where the strong and lonely pioneers planned how to go forth and greatly live or bravely die.

And this is the true creation of the world. Are, then, God's failures there—in these poor places—in these scenes of hardship, suffering, heroism? No! no! These are God's successes. And that divine man who died upon the cross, and cried, 'My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?' was the greatest success of all.

NEW PHOTOGRAPHS OF PSYCHIC RADIATIONS.

The Commandant Darget, of Vouziers, has been experimenting in this direction for some time. The 'Revue Scientifique du Spiritisme' of M. Delanne, 5, Rue Manuel, Paris, reproduced two of these photographs, in which it is claimed that a somewhat shadowy image of a bottle had been mentally projected on to a plate. Commandant Darget states that he projected



A.

some images on to plates held close to his forehead, in the dark room of a photographer at Tours, where he had been invited to experiment among strangers. He has produced impressions in several ways; by touching the gelatinised surface of the plate in the developing bath with his fingers; by touching the glass side in similar conditions; by touching the liquid of the bath only, and not the plate; by magnetic passes made over the plate while in the bath, without contact. He has thus obtained over one hundred and fifty images of radiation.

Everybody does not possess the necessary luminous effluvia, says the Commandant, as similarly everybody cannot mesmerise. Some people only radiate under strong emotions. Joy, sadness, anger, radiate different designs. 'The radiations from the brain of a Napoleon during a battle would impress a very different form from that of a St. Vincent de Paul planning a new hospital, or from that of a criminal immediately before his execution.' The halo of saints is not a myth, says the Commandant; the brain throws out rays which penetrate through the skull, even as the X rays do, and photography registers these rays.

One of the photographs produced by the Commandant, by holding his fingers in contact with the gelatinised surface of the plate, while in the bath, is here reproduced (see illustration 'A.') The dark spots show the points where the fingers were in contact with the plate. These are surrounded by fluffy looking processes, produced by the

radiation from the fingers, and from these further striations project. The medium, Madame Agulano, who gave the clairvoyant descriptions of the Choisy-Yvrac astral operator, was present when this impression was produced, and stated that she assisted in its production by projecting a current of her radiation, through the Commandant's arm. The Commandant considers that this is probable, as the image is more pronounced in character than any he has obtained while alone.



B.

The impressions produced resemble those obtained by Dr. Luys, who affirms that they are not the result of the heat of the fingers. He verified that by trying the effect of test tubes filled with hot water, held in contact with the plates.

On another photograph, obtained by Commandant Darget by placing his fingers on the glass side of the plate while in the bath, in the presence of Madame Agulano, the lines produced by the radiations from the fingers of the two hands assume almost the same form as that of the 'field' of a magnet, as shown in the popular experiment of holding a magnet under a sheet of glass on which iron filings have been spread. The filings then arrange themselves in a form which is said to illustrate the 'lines of force' of the magnet. This image, consequently, demonstrates the polarity inherent in psychic radiation.

Dr. M. Adam, of Paris, has also made a series of experiments at the instigation of Dr. Baraduc and on the latter's method, either while under emotion or when concentrating his mind on a given idea. While Dr. Baraduc maintains that the several principles of man, as taught in esoteric schools, impress images differing in character, Dr. Adam does not consider his own experience sufficient to enable him to contravene or confirm that theory. He found that the image oftenest appearing on

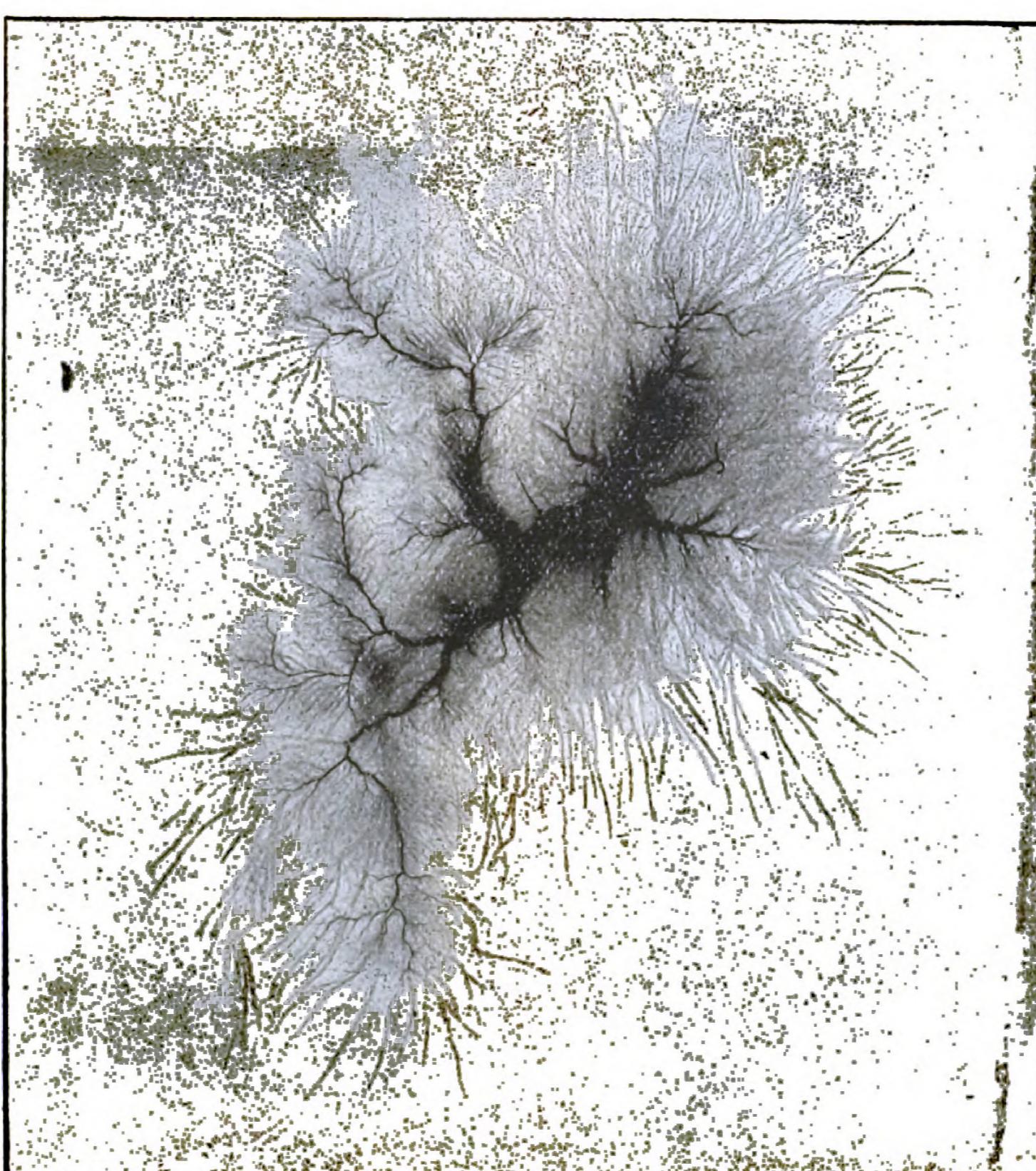


PLATE I.

the plates was of a spiral character such as the one reproduced herewith (see illustration 'B'). He is unable to say whether it represents attracted interiorising cosmic ether, or

exteriorising psychic radiation. These images were produced by holding the fingers above the plates without contact.

Basing himself on Saint-Martin's statement, that the life of the organism is contained in the blood, Dr. Adam made a series of experiments with the blood of recently-killed fowls, ducks, rabbits, &c. The plates were placed over saucers containing the blood, the glass side turned towards the blood, and left thus exposed in the dark room for fifteen minutes. The images thus obtained were identical, in many cases, with those obtained by holding the fingers over the plates without contact. Both gave similar spirals, or whirls, or vortices, from which it is evident that our blood emits similar radiations to the so-called psychic or neuric effluvia radiated from the fingers. In these experiments he found that the blood gave stronger imprints after an hour or so than when still warm; also the blood extracted from the bodies impressed stronger images than those obtained from the severed necks of the headless bodies.

Dr. Adam also found that some portraits taken by him in the ordinary way showed similar striations to those obtained by holding the fingers above the plates, from which it would appear that plates may be unconsciously impressed by the operator's vital radiation while manipulating them in the usual photographic process.

These reproductions of human radiation are of value as demonstrating by mechanical evidence the existence of these effluvia, which constitute the 'nexus,' or connecting link, between the physical and psychical worlds. These effluvia not only constitute the basis of mesmeric and hypnotic action, they are also the basis of the sense-relations accompanying 'suggestion'; they are the basis of all magical action and sorcery; of

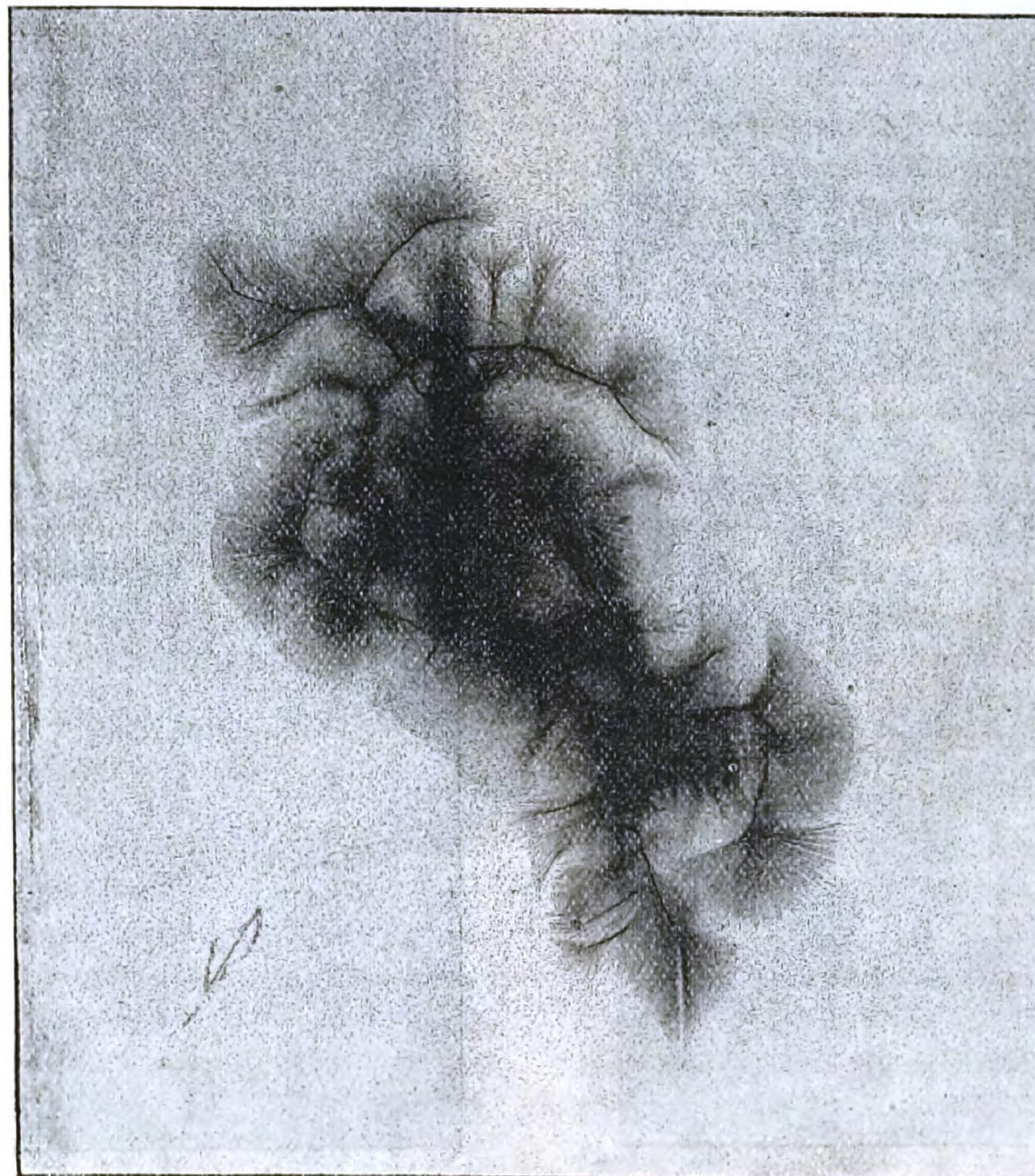


PLATE II.

Dr. Luys calls attention to the balls which are thrown off from the forked radiations, which resemble the fire-balls produced in storms. But a further resemblance may perhaps exist. Human beings present many analogies with electro-magnets, as has already been shown in this journal. These photographs may perhaps also illustrate the analogous process by which the balls of luminous substance used in the development of materialisa-

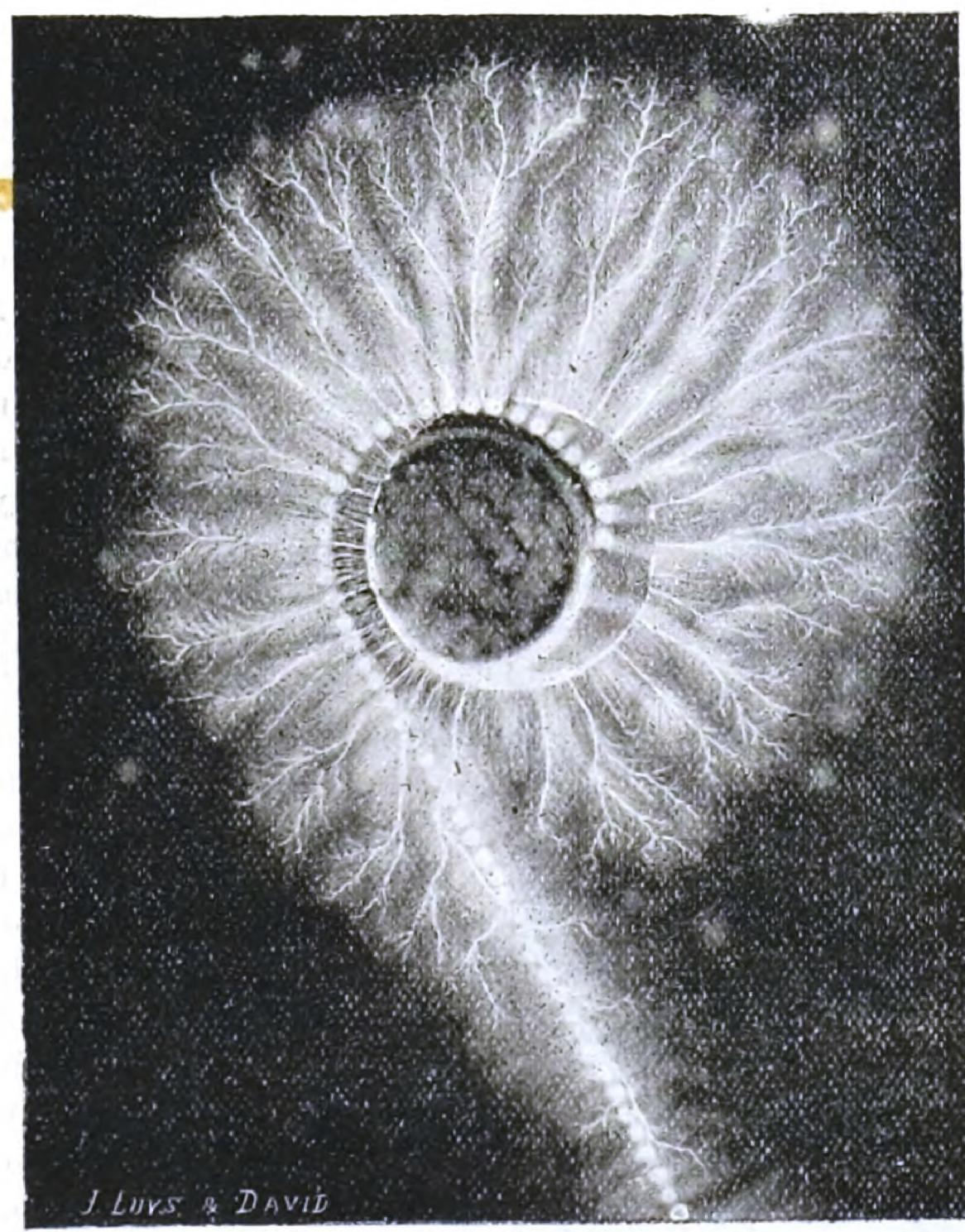


PLATE III.

telepathy, or thought-transference to a distance and traversing solids; they are the connecting link in mediumistic subjective action, and constitute the 'pabulum' used in the production of exteriorised objective phenomena and materialisations, as

was shown by the Choisy-Yvrac clairvoyant's description; they constitute the exteriorised sensibility of Dr. Luys, De Rochas, Professor Boirac, and Dr. Bremaux, and from which the human double has been shown to be concentrated, thus illustrating the process of the production of so-called 'spirit forms,'* projected through mediums. These radiations have been shown to carry polar energy, and constitute the force by which objects are moved without contact by action exerted through mediums, even as human bodies and limbs have been levitated and attracted by mesmerisers, by the use of the same energy. They constitute the luminous aura described by Reichenbach's, De Rochas', and Dr. Luys' sensitives, and the fact of their luminosity is now demonstrated photographically.

In contrast with these illustrations of human psychical radiations, Dr. Luys has kindly communicated some photographs of the images produced by electrical action, which he submitted recently to the Société de Biologie of Paris. Plates I. and II. represent the action of dynamic electricity, drawn from the negative pole of an induction coil. A spark from the positive pole presents a tuft-like or fibrous image.

Plates III. and IV. represent the images produced by static electricity drawn from a Wimhurst machine and passed through a five-franc piece placed on the sensitive plate.

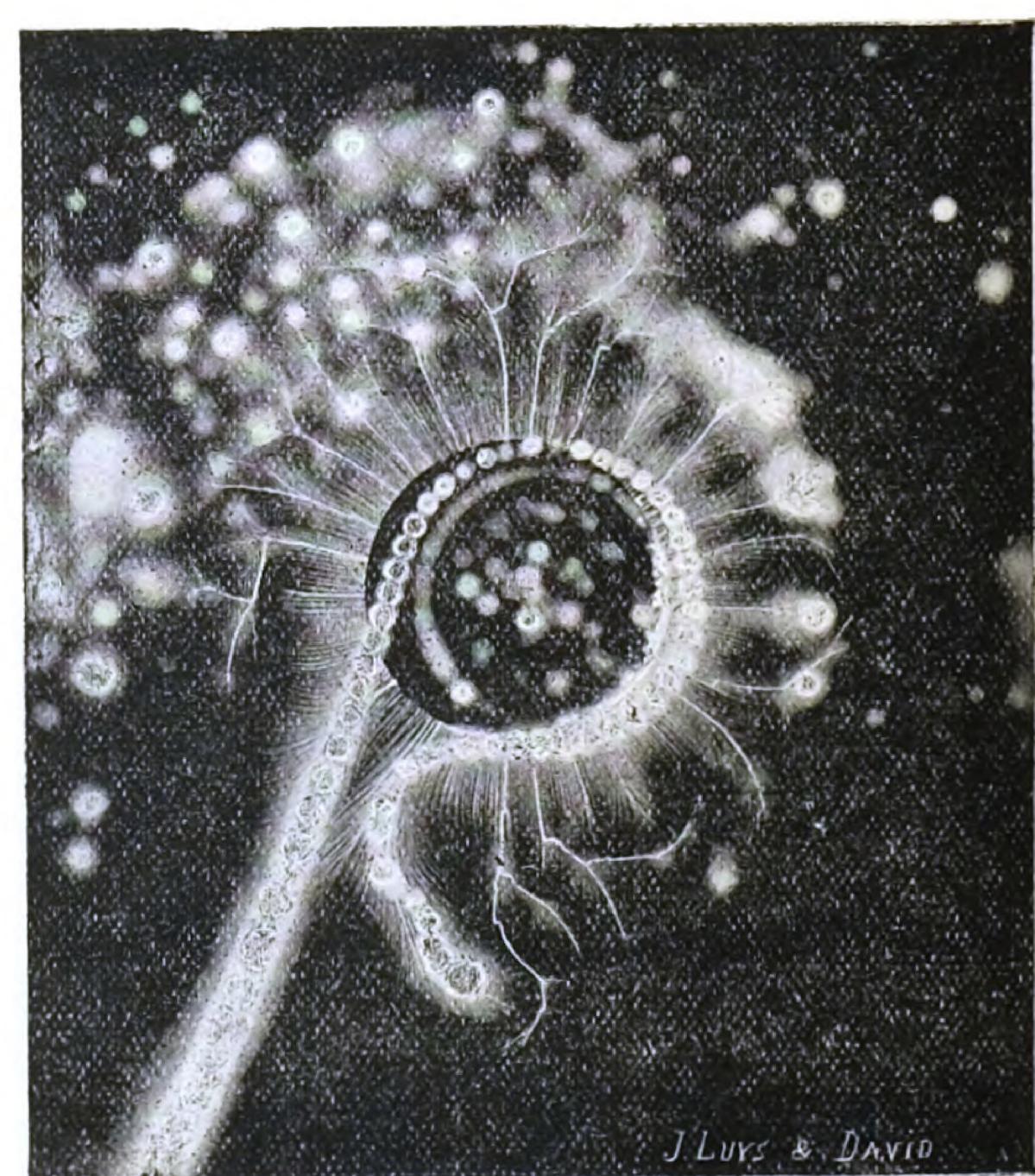


PLATE IV.

tions are thrown off from mediums. It will be remembered that the passing of an electrical current through Eusapia Paladino assisted in the production of these luminous balls. It

* The forms are really psychical; their intelligence being spiritual.

was also observed that the production of these lights was associated with the organs of generation. In other words, they imply the interaction of positive and negative elements.

The images produced by action from positive and negative poles differ, says Dr. Luys, both in dynamic and static electricity. In both the positive action produces a fibrated radiation, while the negative gives a palm-leaf-like image. Another difference is observed by hypnotic sensitives, says Dr. Luys. The radiation from the former pole is seen as red, while that from the negative is seen to be blue. The same distinction applies to the radiation from the poles of magnets, while an induced current appears as yellow. Similar coloured effluvia are seen to be radiated from human beings, of which the accompanying photographs constitute irrefutable demonstration, and in which effluvia we may assume that similar polarity also accompanies the same colours.

'FOUR GREAT RELIGIONS.'*

One day the favourite disciple of Buddha asked him, 'How shall we conduct ourselves, Lord, with regard to woman-kind?' 'Don't see them, Ananda,' replied 'The Light of Asia.' 'But if we should see them, what are we to do?' 'Abstain from speech, Ananda.' 'But if they should speak to us, Lord, what are we to do?' 'Keep wide awake, Ananda.'

In her recently published book, 'Four Great Religions,' Mrs. Besant quotes this rather ungallant anecdote of her adopted Lord and Saviour, and makes this comment on it :—

Keep wide awake; notice what you are doing, guard your thoughts. A long sermon as to the wisdom of guarding himself from being led astray would not have been half as effective as that single sentence, 'Keep wide awake, Ananda.'

Of course, Buddha spoke from the standpoint of all Oriental religions, which postulate the utter inferiority and spiritual uncleanness of women, a notion which, indeed, gives Ananda's question and Buddha's answer their whole point and meaning. In quoting this Oriental 'advice to a young man,' Mrs. Besant of course does not intend it to be understood as proving the 'impurity' and inferiority of her own sex; and if we adopt her larger reading of the Lord Buddha's injunction, we must pay her the compliment of saying that there are very few women in regard to whom, when they speak, it is so necessary to 'keep wide awake' as Mrs. Besant herself. Had Buddha lived in these days, instead of saying 'keep wide awake,' he would have said, 'don't allow yourself to be hypnotised, Ananda.' And Mrs. Besant's eloquence, her powers of logical presentation (when you furnish her with her data), her sweet reasonableness (if you grant her premises), combine to make her a most accomplished and dangerous hypnotist.

In the 'Four Great Religions,' however, the danger in question is minimised by the fact that, much as those Four Religions notoriously contradict and hate each other, they are presented to us by Mrs. Besant as equally true and equally beautiful, which, be it said in passing, does not seem to be quite in accordance with the dictum of logic, that two propositions which contradict each other cannot both be right, although they may both be wrong. The fact is that in matters of religion Mrs. Besant may be said to be a kind of free-lover, and, as La Rochefoucault said of woman's love, so may we say of Mrs. Besant's religion—that in her first religion Mrs. Besant loved her own particular Creed, but in her subsequent faiths what she loved has been Religion itself. The religion she loves best is that with which, as it were, she happens to be consorting at the moment. Not that she is fickle or heartless, but rather that she has got so much above the foolish prejudice of thinking that any particular religion is the happy possessor of all the truth, that she is able to see in every religion a partial embodiment of her ideal religion, and so she is able to love them all in turn with perfect impartiality. When one reads what she says about Hinduism, one concludes that she is a worshipper of Vishnu, and pictures her as bathing religiously in the Holy Ganges; when she dilates on Buddhism, one cannot help thinking that she certainly must be a Buddhist, and imagines her burning joss-sticks before the shrine of her Lord; when one listens to her glowing eulogy of Zoroastrianism, it strikes one forcibly that she is in reality a Zoroastrian; and when one

comes to her exposition of Christianity, one is inclined to exclaim, 'Bless me! if she is not a Christian after all!'

There can be no doubt that Mrs. Besant in these four essays to a large extent succeeds in her endeavour to prove that the great religions she so eloquently interprets are all exponents of the same ideas, of the same conceptions of the universe and of life; whereas they are mistaken by the careless observer for the embodiments of so many different theories of God and the Cosmos. But this is not a conception peculiar to Mrs. Besant or to Theosophy; it is put forward by some Spiritualists, and by Agnostics who see in all religions a central theme, of which those religions are merely so many variations. The peculiarity about Mrs. Besant's version of this proposition is that it is not drawn from data derived from historical experience, nor is it worked out by logical inference, but it is founded on authority—on the authority of her anonymous 'Masters' (for, after all, Koot-Hoomi and Morya are known to be only pseudonyms). In a 'Foreword' Mrs. Besant explains her position thus :—

The general principles underlying these lectures are the following: Each religion is looked at in the light of occult knowledge, both as regards its history and its teachings. . . . Secondly, each religion is treated as coming from the one great Brotherhood, which is the steward and custodian of spiritual knowledge. . . . Thirdly, an attempt is made to distinguish the essential from the non-essential in each religion, and to treat chiefly the former.

Of course, all the absurdities and horrors of religions are 'non-essential,' and, therefore, are ignored—the grotesque and incomprehensible dogmas, the human sacrifices, the pious persecutions and cruel slaughter of millions of men, women and children. Were these integral features of what is historically known as 'a religion' to be taken into consideration they would have to be accounted for by some Theosophical 'Mara,'—some evil spirit who successfully opposes the good spirit—otherwise it is hard to see how the 'Masters of Wisdom' who are credited with all the good there is in religions can be held innocent of their absurdities and horrors. Of course, there is 'the Black Magician' ready at hand to be called in on an emergency, but Theosophists seem to have become rather chary of employing the services of that *Diabolus ex Machina*, for he brings a whole host of awkward questions in his train.

We are told by Mrs. Besant that 'Occultists have two kinds of records on which to rely,' and it may help our readers to form their own estimate of the value of theosophical teachings about the origin of religions if we quote Mrs. Besant in that important matter :—

First, the great Brotherhood has preserved the ancient writings—the writings themselves, taken away at the time when they were written; these writings are stored in underground temples, underground libraries, where no enemy can find them and where no injury can touch them. There, millennium after millennium, the knowledge of the world is gathered in its written form, and there are people to-day, men and women to-day, who have been permitted to set eyes on many of these ancient writings—writings the very knowledge of which has passed from the world of profane history, writings in the ancient sacerdotal language, different from anything which the most ancient of the races now knows. That is not the only record on which the occultist depends; he depends also on those imperishable records written, as we sometimes say, in the Akasha itself.

Theosophists seem to be in a stage of mental growth which Spiritualists have by this time nearly outgrown—the stage of innocence, when the mere *ipse dixit* of a mysterious being is sufficient to command belief. Thirty years ago there were numbers of Spiritualists who firmly believed that Shakespeare, St. Paul, and other old-world worthies came personally and dictated long-winded commonplaces to them, and when you asked these good people how they knew that it was really Shakespeare or St. Paul that was communicating with them, they answered triumphantly, 'Why, it must be true, for *they told me so themselves!*' When you ask a Theosophist how he knows that the personages who, according to him, are shepherding the Theosophical Society, are really the Masters of Wisdom, and the eminently 'blessed Beings' he pictures them, his reply amounts to nothing in the world more than, 'Why, they must be so, for *they say so themselves!*'

But while, in reducing all religions to a common denominator, Theosophists range themselves side by side with Free-thinkers of the Agnostic kind, there is an all-important difference between them, namely, that Theosophists believe it

* 'Four Great Religions.' Four Lectures delivered on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Theosophical Society, at Adyar, Madras. By ANNIE BESANT, Fellow of the Theosophical Society. (Madras—and London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 26, Charing Cross-road. 1897. Price 2s.)

a good thing that the old religions should be revived, while the Agnostic thinks that they should be allowed to die quietly out. The idea of the Agnostic is that since religion itself is a characteristic of human beings, some form of religion in agreement with the knowledge and moral ideas of the times is certain to spring up spontaneously as the old religions fade away. The idea of the Theosophists is that man is practically dependent for his religion (that is to say, for his sense of religion or his religious emotions) on the revelations from Manus and Mahatmas which are embodied in the old faiths. Theosophists, in their endeavours to re-animate the old religions, are, therefore, like the people who, in the interests of peace and brotherhood, do all they can to intensify the sentiment of nationality by appealing to the patriotism of each nation ; forgetting that this is exactly the way to revive all the old national animosities and jealousies. Even so, the re-animation of the old religions, and the re-establishment of the priestly influence, necessarily imply the revival of the religious hatreds which were happily becoming dormant, if not, indeed, extinct. The Spiritualist agrees with the Agnostic in looking forward to a universal religion, founded on a more complete knowledge of Nature and of human nature ; and a rejuvenation of the great religions of antiquity, each filled with contempt and hatred for all the others, seems just as incompatible with the creation of a universal religion as the sentiment of nationality is incompatible with the 'collectivism' of the human race which is the aspiration of so many enlightened people to-day.

Theosophists, it is true, profess to re-animate that only in religion which is common to all religions, and which, therefore, may be thought to be compatible with a universal or collective religion ; but they must know perfectly well that for one person who can take in *the spirit* of a religion, 'which giveth life,' and which might possibly bind all religions peaceably together, there are thousands, or tens of thousands, who can by no possibility understand anything but *the letter which killeth*, and which makes men 'hate each other for the love of God.' It is certain that in reviving Hinduism and Buddhism in the East, Theosophists have greatly intensified the hatred and contempt with which Christianity is there regarded by the people.

Nevertheless, for Spiritualists who follow the advice which Buddha gave to Ananda, to 'keep wide awake,' Mrs. Besant's little book on the 'Four Great Religions' will have considerable interest, for it illustrates the theosophical way of handling some of the greatest and most deeply interesting problems which can occupy the human mind ; and theosophical ways and methods, devious as they sometimes seem to be, are of great interest, because they illustrate how religions are made. For Theosophy is a baby religion, at present but cutting its teeth (with howls and screams painful to hear)—a religion which, if it be not born out of time, bids fair before long to have its sacerdotalism and its dogmas, if indeed it has not got them even now !

DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON AND SPIRITUALISM.

At the time I became interested in Spiritualism the two most notable events that impressed me and excited my wonder were the levitation of Mr. Home at a séance recorded in the 'Cornhill Magazine,' under the editorship of Thackeray, who vouched for the reliability of the writer, Mr. Robert Bell ; and the breaking up of a strong table at Hayward's Heath at the instance of Dr. Lockhart Robertson, whose death, just recorded in 'LIGHT,' brings the subject to mind. To myself, who had only got as far as raps and table movements, these two events, which had recently taken place, seemed to my unsophisticated mind incredible ; and I wrote to Dr. Robertson about the table incident, not only for my own satisfaction, but that I might have something confirmatory to show to my neighbours, who, like myself, were very incredulous on the subject. The reply of Dr. Robertson was not satisfactory, not at all to the point, and said nothing about the table—in fact the communication, which I have by me, was of an evasive character. I showed the letter to Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, who took the medium to Hayward's Heath, and who was at the time editor of the 'Spiritual Magazine' ; and he was greatly surprised. Some time after, however, I took a run to Hayward's Heath, which is about twenty miles from here on the Brighton line, and called upon the doctor, who admitted the fact of the table phenomenon, and showed me a table like the broken one, which was a strongly-built, round table, about four feet six inches in diameter.

Here is Dr. Robertson's own account of the experiment : After speaking of the table as 'a heavy, circular table, made of birch and strongly constructed, being lifted a somersault in the air and thrown on the bed,' he goes on to say : 'At my request the table was afterwards smashed and broken, and one fragment thrown across the room, the table at the time being held by the writer and Mr. Squire (the medium). This occurred in half a minute. The writer has since vainly endeavoured, with all his strength, to break one of the remaining legs. The one broken was rent across the grain of the wood. The noise of the table thrown and knocked about by unseen agency on the floor, while the writer held Mr. Squire's hands, was really awful and mysterious, and it was impossible for Mr. Squire to have taken any part in the operation.'

Such is Dr. Robertson's account of this marvellous phenomenon, which, as far as I know, has no parallel in the history of Spiritualism, and entirely disposes of such theories as unconscious muscular action, subliminal self, and such-like nonsense, as an explanation of spiritual phenomena. Dr. Robertson's article is very interesting, and would, I think, be read with interest by the present generation, now that such noteworthy phenomena have ceased to take place. The 'Cornhill Magazine' article, which, at the time of its publication, 1860, attracted more attention to Spiritualism than anything that had preceded it, the publication of which caused the loss of six thousand subscribers, would also be read with interest at the present time. Dr. Robertson's statement, as given in the 'Spiritual Magazine,' was reprinted in the Dialectical Society's Report, p. 247.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION.

'On the outer rim' is the title of a novel Article in 'The New Unity,' in which the writer traces back the process of evolution to what we have too readily called 'dead matter.' Everything must be traced back to atoms, hence our poor relations, the minerals, come in for recognition. The following is at least curious and stimulating :—

When in the course of our investigation we come to the mineral kingdom, the temptation to draw the line at this point becomes almost irresistible. But stern logic drives us on. The stone looks so utterly lifeless and shapeless ; besides, did not science long since make a sharp distinction between organic and inorganic matter ? Yet, being in unbiased quest of truth, we must inquire whether or not this dull piece of earth has any property besides that of matter. We observe at once that it does possess the quality of cohesion. Well, what is that mysterious force which binds the molecules together ? It cannot be anything like gravitation. Is it anything in the nature of vitality ? Can it be allied even distantly to the life-principle ? Singularly enough, science fails utterly to explain the nature of cohesion, leaving us to guess it out for ourselves. But there is another property of the mineral which science has distinctly recognised, though only in recent years, and somewhat reluctantly at that. In a general way the public has been informed of a certain property belonging to or associated with all matter, namely, vibration. Thus is vindicated the old axiom that there can be no matter without motion. It has remained for the closing years of the century to proclaim the scientific truth of the mysterious law of vibration—that disturbance of the ether which, according to its rate, produces sound, colour, light, heat, and electricity. Likewise every atom of matter in the stone is in a constant state of vibration. And the latest theory of vibration is that all the forms in the universe are produced by varying rates of vibration among the material atoms of which they are composed.

Here, then, we find both threads of our investigation meeting at a common point of origin, the atom. And the atom has not only a material form, but a something besides, a vibratory motion. What is the vibration ? It is not matter. Is it spirit ? No. Is it something which under the eternal law of evolution may develop, along with its material nature, out of force motion, out of motion life, out of life sensation, out of sensation instinct, out of instinct mind ? This is the question which the wider evolution is now asking.

Beyond mind there are yet other and higher stages. Mind may be described as a lower phase or plane of soul, whose

highest state is intuitive knowledge or wisdom. Evolution can only end in pure spirit.

And throughout the millions of ages yet to come the process will go on, until mankind, freed from the burdens of the flesh and the bonds of ignorance, will have become spiritualised and perfect. But long ere then may we realise the beautiful occult allegory of that which 'sleeps in the stone, dreams in the plant, and awakes in man !'

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.*]

Auto-Hypnotism.

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent, I may say that I have practised this method for years in obtaining sleep on going to bed ; previous to which experiments I often, owing to mental distress, lay awake the chief part of the night. My method is to abstract myself, and in that spiritualistic state ask God or my guardian spirit to give me sleep ; and the answer usually comes in a few minutes.

I would, however, warn all who attempt self-hypnotism to do so with sincere and unselfish desires, for otherwise there may be a risk of obsession.

M.D.

The Re-incarnation of H.P.B.

SIR,—Regarding this strange story may I ask how we are to dissociate Re-incarnation from Obsession ?

We know that spirits may obsess human beings and speak Sanskrit, Russian, and other languages, and that this obsession may last for years. If this is evidence for Re-incarnation as usually taught, then let us pray to the good Lord that our empty bodies may not be so utilised after our souls have departed for Paradise, for it is evident that if our bodies, supposed to be dead, suddenly began to talk foreign languages, our relatives would simply conclude we had gone mad.

X.Y.Z.

Jesus Christ Still Living in the Body on the Earth.

SIR,—I was astounded the other day when the editor of a large occult magazine assured me that this was a fact ! Where, he would not tell me, however. Doubtless his motives were good in withholding proofs, but my limited intelligence submits that, if true, it should be widely known.

Can you or any of your readers confirm this statement, or inform me what grounds are there for the belief ?

I am sorry I do not feel justified in giving the editor's name, as the statement was made in the course of a private conversation ; but this I may say, that my informant was an educated gentleman who would not willingly deceive, but I and millions of others would give anything to be certain of this truth, if truth it be.

'Rusholme,' Leicester-road,

East Finchley, London, N.

J. H. DOWNES.

Thought-transference.

SIR,—It appears to me quite clear that your correspondent, Mr. Newton Crosland, not only justifies my charge of extreme rashness on his part, but goes even further in the same direction in his letter in your issue of June 5th.

My cases of thought-transference to a distance were two in number, and were clearly described by me. The first was that I sent a message, the words being, as near as I can remember, 'I send my best wishes, and hope Mrs. B. is quite well.' Now what Mrs. B. experienced was a sudden drowsiness ; she went to the sofa, lay down, closed her eyes, and in a few seconds said, 'Tell Mr. D. I am quite well.' She told me herself afterwards that she heard my voice asking the question. *But she did not see me*, although she is a clairvoyant. Moreover, no one has ever seen me at a distance from my body and I cannot perform the part of Mr. Newton Crosland's imaginary guardian angels. The whole thing is simply another rash assertion, as usual unaccompanied by the smallest shred of proof.

My second case, however, is still more convincing. Here the messenger was seen, and it was a wholly imaginary form, which I first pictured in my mind and then drew. She saw that very form and afterwards recognised it amongst many others, similarly drawn by me.

At my house in England many like experiments were tried with various clairvoyants, and all tending to the same conclusions, viz., that thought-transference of images in the mind, whether to a distance or not, was an easily proven phenomenon ; and further still, that clairvoyance was in the vast majority of cases simply thought-reading, which is the converse of thought-transference.

VIR.

Mr. Stainton Moses' 'Spirit Teachings.'

SIR,—I often hear it argued that the collection of automatic script known as 'Spirit Teachings' may quite easily be the out-working of the late Mr. Stainton Moses' own brain ; 'the unconscious reflection of his own mind' is the favourite expression. May I offer a few reasons for accepting the claim made on behalf of the external source of these writings ?—

1. Because we have overwhelming evidence of the activity of spirit people in our midst.
2. Because *in the end* Mr. Stainton Moses himself accepted it, he being a sane and honest man.
3. Because similar claims of inspiration have been made and accepted on behalf of religious teaching in other days.
4. Because 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' and the ethics taught are of the highest.
5. Because the teaching was often at variance with many of Mr. Stainton Moses' cherished convictions, and cannot, therefore, be said 'to reflect his own mind.'
6. Because were it in any conceivable manner his own work, he must be charged with great deceit for signing the names 'Imperator,' 'Rector,' 'Prudens,' &c.
7. Because the supposition that a man could thus be both true and false at the same time is too objectionable to be entertained, while another and better explanation is forthcoming.
8. Because it is only the materialistic spirit of the age which renders the claim hard of acceptance.
9. Because the spirit teachers, while asserting they had God's work in hand, disclaimed all pretension to infallibility, and declared that revelation must necessarily be progressive, and a mixture of truth and error.
10. Because it is alike foolish and presumptuous to reject so weighty a message for no better reason than that its mode of delivery is one unfamiliar to the objector.

'BIDSTON.'

Psychical Science v. Spiritistic Preconceptions.

SIR,—Allow me to point out that Mr. Newton Crosland, in his letter in your paper of May 29th, has quite misconceived the telepathic explanation of the tiger incident to which he attaches his own theory of the 'guardian.' As I advanced the former explanation in 'LIGHT' many years ago—probably on the occasion of a review of the book of Mr. Crosland in which the incident was first published—and as it is to my mind unquestionably the true explanation and of very wide application, it seems to me important that it should be rightly understood.

Mr. Crosland supposes the idea to be 'that the destructive tiger in Wapping projected a psychical sensational current, which fastened upon the susceptibilities of a merchant crossing Great Tower-street, stirred up his apprehensions, and took the shape of a tiger prowling about the streets.'

Not at all. There is no suggestion of a psychical projection *from the tiger*. But the tiger being loose in a crowded street, 'expending his fury on passengers in Wapping,' would set up in that present and alarmed human crowd a collective and concentrated emotion eminently able and certain to start a 'psychical current,' which would follow 'the line of least resistance,' i.e., would impress at a distance such impressionable or sensitive persons as happened at the moment to satisfy the indispensable, but very rare, condition of mental passivity or absence of pre-occupation. And that, Mr. Crosland tells us, was, in fact, his own state at the time ; he was 'thinking about nothing in particular.' The definiteness of the impression in this case—the explicit dread of a tiger—was consequent on the acuteness and intensity of the tiger-figure in the propulsive imagination of the Wapping crowd, the whole psychical activity of the terrified people being gathered into that one image.

Telepathic projection, to impress, must always have a concentrated excitement at its source ; having that, and not encountering the resistance which mental pre-occupation always offers, the effect will be proportionate either to the general sensitiveness of the recipient, or to any special rapport with the originating subject. Most of our telepathic evidence is

naturally of the latter character, for in the absence of a particular sympathy (such as between close friends or relatives), only a great collective *élan*, or impulse, has the requisite force. But in this way, rumours of great events at a distance have often preceded all possible arrival of news by known means of communication. The proved fact of telepathy with *rappoport* should open our minds to the truth that there is always potential psychical diffusion or projection; only the coming to consciousness of it is dependent on special energy or susceptibility. Not an emotion, not a thought of any one of us, but is potentially communicable to others in its very inception, and many 'coincidences' find their explanation in this fact of our general human solidarity, especially in a community of studies or of dispositions, which thus unite many who, in their external lives, are entire strangers to one another. Often have I urged this true and deep significance of 'telepathy' as testifying to our radical unity, and as forecasting a spiritual development in which consciousness shall penetrate to our humanity itself, with its concrete infinity of relations, as yet insensible.

Such expressions as 'projection,' 'line of least resistance,' &c., must, of course, not have their physical signification of passage through space, as if the 'psychical current' travelled in that way, or across. The conception of our radical or organic unity (junction in a common root or centre) as the explanation of transmitted consciousness would thus be lost. The physiology of sensation in the individual organism offers a better parallel. The stimulus is transmitted from a peripheral point to the nervous centre, and is re-conveyed thence by another set of nerves, as sensation, to the surface. Every state of affection or sympathy between human beings is a real psychical junction, and potentially a subliminal centre, mediating community of consciousness. An emotional disturbance at either surface being strong enough to vibrate up to this point of junction, can re-descend, with more or less force and modification, to the other surface, or personal consciousness. But for such disturbance to be so communicated without the mediation of a proximate junction (special *rappoport*), is for it to reach the far deeper racial root or centre, and to re-descend from that. This is rare; but the whole humanity is a potential organism, the realisation or vitality of which would be the universal consciousness and spirit in all the component individuals or cells. But to return to the particular matter suggesting this letter:—

Contrast this conception of telepathic projection in the case before us, a conception guaranteed by much indubitable experience, with the explanation so confidently put forward by Mr. Crosland: 'One of my guardian angels saw the catastrophe at Wapping, hurried to my rescue, and impressed me with a wholesome dread of a possible similar visitation.' I have nothing to say against 'guardian angels' in general, but I submit that Mr. Newton Crosland's might be more usefully, or less ridiculously, employed. Wapping, we are told, the place where the tiger was at large and attacking people, was 'about a mile from the spot' at which Mr. Crosland received the impression. A mile of London streets, think of that! of streets crowded with human beings, traffic, &c., not to say that, with a free and unresisted course, and an appetite or a ferocity unsatisfied by the proximate victims, the tiger had many points of the compass to choose from, and that even had he proceeded, regardless of all intermediate opportunities of ravage and repast, as straight as he could to Mr. Crosland's quarter, that gentleman, at his most leisurely walk, would presumably have reached the safe shelter of his destination—the Custom House—long before the beast's arrival. Would any sensible man have given a penny for an insurance of £10,000 against death or injury by a wild beast in such conditions? And, in fact, we are not told that the tiger got a hundred yards before he was recaptured or perhaps killed.

But the moral is this: A gentleman of Mr. Crosland's intelligence—or for that matter of any intelligence at all—would not have put forward this absurd supposition of danger except under the influence of a preconception of spirit influence. If he had not had the impression, it would not for a moment have occurred to him that he had had an escape from danger, when he read of the Wapping occurrence in the 'Times' next day. But as the impression was to be credited to a 'guardian,' it must also have a ground of danger to justify the guardian. And so all the obvious considerations of common-sense are overlooked. This comes of 'Spiritualism' (in the phenomenal sense) being taken out of its proper order and

sequence in the interpretation of experience, instead of finding its proper antecedent, ground, and connection in the study of human forces and potentialities—such as hypnotism, mesmerism, subliminal consciousness, and telepathy. But having already recently (in the course of a review on a German work on 'Magic') made some observations on this unfortunate inversion of the right order of occult studies, I forbear further remarks thereupon at present.

New Forest.

C.C.M.

The Mystery Name.

SIR,—The following is such answer as I am able to give to Mr. Elliot's question. It is, of course, a pure assumption that these six letters have any special relation to the Hebrew; although the *I H V* are singularly suggestive. Taking such relation for granted, Mr. Elliot will readily appreciate at least some portion of this reply; for he drew attention, in his last letter, to the importance of the figures 7 and 9; and

<i>Yod</i>	= 10		
<i>Samech</i>	= 60	$7 + 9 = 16$	$1 + 6 = 7$
<i>Teth</i>	= 9	$7 \times 9 = 63$	$6 + 3 = 9$
		—	—

Now, if we substitute *Shin* for *Samech* (and there are some reasons for preferring the former), we get $10 + 5 + 6 + 10 + 300 + 9 = 340$ by ordinary addition in column; and $3 + 4 = 7$.

Multiply, instead of adding, and we obtain $8,100,000 = 8+1 = 9$. One cannot avoid seeing that this combination, *YST*, is remarkable from the occultist's point of view. Yet what remains to be considered I find still more interesting.

Still retaining *Shin*, let us examine *YST* from another standpoint. The *YS* instantly suggest a crowd of names, all of which point to one conclusion. They are *Isis*, *Issi*, *Jesse*, &c., and innumerable others with the prefix *Is*, as *Islam*, *Israel*, &c. *Jesse* (= *YS*), for example, actually means Deity as *existing*, as *YHV* stands for Deity as *essential*. We have, therefore, *YHV* as the first principle of Being, or Being in Itself; and *YS* as the second principle—the otherness or passive side of Being or Deity, in Itself. That is to say, we have *Yaveh-Yessa*, Love-Wisdom, Good-Truth, Man-Woman, Father-Mother, Deity as an Unit in Duality.

Teth (a roof) is sufficiently suggestive of the relation of *Yaveh-Yessa* to *His-Her* 'church,' its protection, the 'overarching infinite' for all male-female humanity.

Now let us return to the letters, but with *Samech* instead of *Shin*. We have then the following dual series:—

<i>Yod</i> = <i>Virgo</i>	<i>Yod</i> = <i>Virgo</i>
<i>He</i> = <i>Aries</i>	<i>Samech</i> = <i>Sagittarius</i>
<i>Vau</i> = <i>Taurus</i>	<i>Teth</i> = <i>Leo</i>

This is significant enough to those who study the divine mysteries. Deity incarnates (*Virgo*) and operates in humanity along two lines, or by two distinct modes; 'First that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual.' Humanity, in the earliest stages of spiritual development, becomes subject to authority, dogmatism, priestly dominance, and even, in extreme cases, to physical force (*Aries*); and submits, practising blind obedience (*Taurus*). This is the masculine method, with feminine result. In the case of the higher revelation of the 'World-Saviour' (the second *Yod-Virgo*), the process is spiritual (*Sagittarius*), and the result is a loving, wise, and prudent humanity (*Leo*). This is the feminine method, with an active and masculine result.

Curiously enough, 'Papus' states that *Leo* and *Teth* correspond with *Iesod* of the Kabbalah. Here we have the *YS*; but by what process *D* becomes *T* in the present case I do not know.

It goes almost without saying that the twenty-four rays represent the third principle of Being, regarded in the most general sense, namely, its emanation for the sustentation and vivifying of humanity. They signify all the essential elements of humanity in their discreted unity.

While thinking closely upon this subject, I erected a horoscopic figure; and found the sexual duality of the letters indicated in a most striking and multiplex manner.

It would be easy to extend the possible signification of the letters over several columns; but I must not encroach further upon your limited space.

44, Wright-street, Hull,

G. H. Lock.