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A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 926.—VOL. XVIII.

[Registered as]

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1898.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A correspondent is quite right. Our theology is a trifle vague, and we do *not* feel about it always in the same way. We would even admit that we *are* a little inconsistent; but so is human nature; so is life. We think there is a good deal of sense in what a certain character in 'The Latimers' says: 'My mother, God bless her! used tuh to say that religion was mixed a deal like her receipt for cup cake—one of butter, two of sugar, three of flour, and four aigs. One of theology, says she, two of human natur', three of downright honesty, and four of charity. Beat 'em up well with sound common-sense, says she, an' there's a religion good enough for a Christian or anybody else.'

But that is just it. The proportions vary according to our taste at the moment. Sometimes we incline to more theology, or to a little extra human nature; or we feel a longing for honesty, or, may be, we have a craving for charity. But we are steadfast to one thing: we hope we always beat up the ingredients with common-sense.

The previous Note partly suggests a further reply to 'Puzzled,' who, by the way, has not caught the drift of our first reply, probably because it is not an easy thing to convey one's thoughts in the English language. We do not remember crying 'Hush!' or suggesting that any one was 'infallible.' On the contrary, we welcomed him and cheerfully pointed out his uses; and we shall always be delighted to hear from him.

All we venture to say is;—It will never do to think that we can know all, and to get sick and disgusted because we cannot.

It is a touching thought that multitudes, night and day, are sending to Heaven a ceaseless cry for light, for guidance, for consolation. Never a moment without its stream of entreaty, longing, prayer. Perhaps, after all, the great secret is that this is the place for learning how to long, and that they are most blest who often seem least fortunate. Perhaps, too, the real answer to every prayer is beyond the veil. In that sense, it would be literally true to say: 'Seek and ye shall find.' Sooner or later, every seeker will find. We lately saw this winsomely put by an American poet, E. R. Sill:—

O heart, that prayest so for God to send
Some loving messenger to go before,
And lead the way to where thy longings end,
Be sure, be very sure, that soon will come
His kindest angel, and through that still door
Into the infinite love will lead thee home.

Many who write to us are in almost painful earnest about the stupendous problems of life here and hereafter.

In some cases we think it best to hold back a little rather than urge on. There is such a thing as being too anxious. After all, it is absolutely certain we shall never know all the secret while here. Our highest wisdom is to make the best of what is, and to trust ourselves all in all to the Almighty Power who so manifestly reveals Himself to us, at least as The Eternal.

And yet we know the longing will go on; and it is right that it should. It is at least a prophecy of something to come; and it is inseparable from the higher planes of human existence. 'Those anticipations of immortality and God—what are they?' said F. W. Robertson. 'Shall I call them God, Father, Spirit, Love!—a living Being within me or outside of me? Tell me Thy name, Thou awful Mystery of loveliness! This is the struggle of all earnest life.'

We do not suppose there is much danger of remorse or repentance being overdone by the vast majority; but there are sensitive spirits who need to be told that it *can* be overdone. Crying mends no broken glass; and brooding sorrow, even for sin, may hinder in the way of righteousness. The spirit needs energy, not tears; hope, not despair; the joy of the fresh start, not the depression of the old failure. Emerson understood this well when he said:—

Finish every day and be done with it. For manners and for wise living, it is a vice to remember. You have done what you could; some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. To-morrow is a new day: you shall begin it well and serenely, and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense. This day for all that is good and fair! It is too dear with its hopes and invitations to waste a moment on the rotten yesterdays.

This is exaggerated, Emerson fashion, but there is good sense in it. The call of the spirit is ever to climb over our 'dead selves' to better things.

Spiritualism, as distinguished from bare Spiritism, looks to the spirit-spheres for the realities, even for the realities of phenomena in the sphere of time and sense. 'The things which are seen are temporal,' said Paul, 'the things which are not seen are eternal.' And, deeper still, 'The invisible things of God, since the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made.' But there is a transcendental sense in which it is true that the invisible things are *real*, and all the same, whether the visible things exist or not. Thus, Anna Kingsford, in the columns of 'LIGHT,' once went so far as to say, even of Jesus Christ and of all history:—

Not the historic, but the spiritual Christ is the real essential of Christianity and subject of the Gospels.

I have said that I should be glad to be able to think the Gospel stories true, because so to think would bring me into closer union and harmony with many friends whose sympathy is dear to me. But, for myself, such a belief would add nothing to my faith in Christ. For I am quite sure that there is, virtually, no such thing as history. The things that are truly done are not done on the historical plane; nor has any fact in the history of the world ever been truly chronicled. For no man can know any fact, and cannot,

therefore, set it down. The knowledge one man has of any given fact is not the knowledge of another; man is incompetent to know facts, for he has no possible means of knowing them. Only Omniscience can know facts.

But man can and does know his own spiritual experience, and this is, indeed, the only needful knowledge. Jesus Christ comes in the flesh when He is incarnate in man; and this is the way in which He comes to all mystics—in which only He can come.

It does not matter to me, therefore, whether the Gospels are true or not on the merely outer plane. They are true, essentially, and, for my soul, my true self; the historical and the physical *are not*. Nothing done on that outer plane can save my soul; it must all be transmuted into spiritual terms and spiritual application before it can have any true saving value and grace.

'R.W.,' writing in the 'Westminster Gazette,' mildly protesting against the prosecution of a Somersetshire 'witch doctor' for 'casting out devils,' and of the 'Peculiar people' for taking literally James v. 14 and Mark vi. 13, puts in the pillory our profession that we are Christians, and even that 'Christianity is part and parcel of the law of the land.' This mistake is often made. But, taking Christianity to mean the doctrine and example of Christ and his Apostles, we are sorry to say that there are but few Christians left. If Spiritualists and the Salvation Army could be blended, we might come a little near to the original, but that seems very improbable. As it is, Christianity is, indeed, 'a civilised heathenism' now: and that is the honest truth.

The Church Congress is a tempting subject from our point of view, and we may have to make room for it. Just in passing, we can only say that it gave many a glimpse into regions of thought and spiritual apprehension which are, indeed, signs of the times. For various reasons, the whole of the reports of the discussions are worth reading.

A late writer has given us a summary of many curious Japanese 'superstitions,' and some of them seem absurd and deplorable enough. But there is one which has indeed 'method in its madness.' The recorder says: 'When husband and wife are quarrelling, a devil is believed to be standing between them, encouraging them to go on from bad to worse.' Sensible Japanese!

The following, by William Brunton, an American writer, has a subtle but sunny thought in it:—

On a lone grave there blooms a rose,
The dust of dust that lies below;
Its pure white heart resplendent shows:—
What sweet surprise from death may grow!

BURIED ALIVE.

The 'Liverpool Daily Courier' of September 30th tells the following gruesome stories:—

Mr. H. H. Johnson, Amlwch (Anglesea), writes concerning cases of burying alive: In Longton, Staffordshire, a poor woman, whose father was in receipt of parish relief, was laid out for dead. Being only in a fit, she heard distinctly everything, even the bell tolling for her burial; but could not speak or move. She was fearfully cold. Happily, her old father would have it that 'the wench was not dead,' and had the parish pair of blankets, given him, put on her. She warmed to life then, and told the above details herself. She was in service with my uncle, the then rector of Longton. The sister of a former rector of Llanfaethle, Anglesea, Julia Lloyd, was subject to fits, and, in one of these, was buried alive. On the Lloyd vault being opened to bury her brother, her coffin was found fallen, she having struggled within it.

In Cairo, Egypt (near Suidna Hussein), is a poor huckster in the streets with his barrow. He is a Syrian, who was buried alive some forty years ago when he had some money. He was able to make some motion or noise which caused his unburying, but only to find that his relations had divided his cash. I have myself heard a groan in the Mohammedan graveyard outside Cairo, where the 'dead' (real or supposed) are buried in a very few hours.

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

In the following letter from the pen of Dr. R. M. Theobald, which appears in the 'Westminster Gazette,' the writer offers some suggestions for the solution of what is admittedly a very 'perplexing problem':—

SIR,—Let me express my admiration for your brief reference to the Peculiar People. You admit that they offer a 'perplexing problem,' and that 'it is difficult to inflict punishment on people of this type.' I am glad that some kind words are spoken for these good but misguided people. Most journalists have no suggestion to offer but pitiless persecution.

Can this 'perplexing problem' be solved? I think it can; but not by criminal prosecution or any other violent interference. For if the 'neglect of medical assistance' is to be made illegal we must agree amongst ourselves what kind of medical assistance is to be accepted as sufficient. *And this is impossible.* Some perfectly lawful methods of medical treatment are considered absolutely inert—useless or worse—by a large majority of the profession. Many doctors give no medicine at all, but trust to expectation aided by nursing. And I suppose our Peculiar friends do not neglect nursing. You say, 'No doubt many young lives have been sacrificed in this way.' I very much doubt it. Sir John Forbes, in his book on 'Nature and Art in the Cure of Disease,' expressed his opinion that if drug treatment were entirely abandoned, the mortality from disease would not be much increased. A great many people would prefer no treatment at all rather than exchange their 'Peculiar' system for some other. But I am inclined to advocate the policy of non-interference with this special experiment in living on other grounds. Why should the methods resorted to by the Peculiar People be forbidden? Why should they even be rejected or denounced? The President of the British Association this year claims scientific recognition for quite an indeterminate variety of occult forces. This is a claim which may include the Peculiar People. What forces they summon into action by their proceedings is a matter worth inquiry. For they do not do *nothing*. They send for their Elder; they pray over their patients, they anoint them with oil; that is to say, they resort to something like mesmerism or hypnotism; and they are particular in the selection of their operator. We need not accept their theory of the hidden agencies evoked. But there is no reason why the door of the sick-room should be shut against these forces—call them Jehovah, or God, or angels, or psychic force, or magnetism, or what you like. I do not offer scientific justification of their methods—I only say that scientific thought is opening its mind to these subjects, and may have something to say even for the Peculiar People.

Some years ago a well-known surgeon, speaking through Professor Tyndall, suggested hospital action very much resembling that adopted by these people. Let there be a ward, he said, in some hospital set apart for patients who are to be treated by prayer; and another ward for treatment *secundum artem*, and compare the results. The suggestion provoked much discussion at the time, and is even now occasionally debated, but I do not remember that it was ever suggested that the result might be manslaughter, and a criminal prosecution for the hospital authorities. It seems to me that the Peculiar People supply an improved version of the same experiment that Sir Henry Thompson advocated. I presume he for one would say *Fiat experimentum*, even if he would not dare to complete the quotation.

Well, then, leave them alone. They are in all other respects worthy folk and valuable citizens, as any earnest believer in any kind of religion—*i.e.*, of a supernatural element in life—is likely to be. The very qualities which make them socially valuable depend to a great extent upon their religion; and if you could construct a profit and loss account of the good which they contribute to society as 'well-behaved decent folk,' and the loss occasioned by their Peculiar tenets, I rather think the balance-sheet would show a preponderating gain. And to prosecute them is a distinct injury to society as well as to them; for it is a public recognition of something very much resembling persecution.

—Yours, &c.,

R. M. THEOBALD.

7, Grosvenor-street, W.

TRANSITION.—On Tuesday, September 27th, Thomas Arthur Wilkins, fourth son of Mrs. Wilkins, trance medium, at 356, Portobello-road, North Kensington.

MESSES. MARTIN AND SALLNOW, photographers, 416, Strand, W.C., have kindly presented to the London Spiritualist Alliance cabinet portraits of Dr. J. M. Peebles, Dr. G. von Langsdorff, and Mrs. Cadwallader—taken during their visit to the recent International Congress. As likenesses, these pictures leave nothing to be desired; as photographs, they are so excellent as to reflect the highest credit on the well-known firm by whom they were produced.

SPIRITUALISM IN ALL LANDS AND TIMES.

By J. M. PEEBLES, M.D.

*Written for the International Congress held in London,
June 19-24, 1898.**(Continued from page 485)*

The Roman Catholic Church has never denied the miracles—the spiritual manifestations of the ages. All the religious movements of the past originated in spiritual manifestations. Take as a sample George Fox, the founder of Quakerism; Ann Lee, the founder of Shakerism; the Wesleys, founders of Methodism; and Swedenborg, the founder of the Swedenborgian or New Church. Swedenborg held open intercourse with the spiritual world during the period of twenty-seven years. The world's religious epoch-builders were all possessed of marvellous spiritual gifts. Elder Frederick Evans, a distinguished American Shaker preacher, used to often say, 'Quakerism began in the spirit, but is ending in the flesh, and in the worldliness of the world.' Sir James Macintosh says of Fox's Journal: 'It is one of the most extraordinary and instructive narratives in the world—which no reader of competent judgment can peruse without revering the virtue of the writer.'

This journal reminds us of, and is a fitting companion for, Swedenborg's Diary. The following statements are condensed from it:—

Born in July, 1624, Fox was naturally when young of a rather grave deportment. When about nineteen he became annoyed by the frivolous and profane conversation of the young; and spending a night in prayer, he heard a voice saying: 'Thou seest how young people go together into vanity and old people into their graves; thou must forsake, be a stranger to, all, and be guided by the spirit.'

Travelling to London and listening by the way to many preachers, he remarks: 'I was afraid of them, for I was sensible that they did not possess what they professed.' After relating to the clergymen that at times 'he heard voices and felt the presence of spirits,' one of these jolly old clergymen of the Anglican Church told him 'to smoke tobacco and sing psalms.' Another advised him to 'go to a surgeon and lose some blood.' Turning to the Dissenters, he 'found them also blind guides.'

Wandering often in quiet places; fasting frequently with Bible in hand; meditating, and battling with doubts and temptations, he at last 'fell into a trance that lasted fourteen days, and many who came to see him during that time wondered to see his countenance so changed, for he not only had the appearance of a dead man, but seemed to them to be really dead; but after this his mind was relieved of its sorrows, so that he could have wept night and day with tears of joy, in humility and brokenness of heart.' 'In this state,' he says, 'I saw into that which is without end, and things which cannot be uttered; and of the greatness and infiniteness of the love of God.'

When at Mansfield he 'was struck blind,' so that he could not see, after which he says: 'I went to a village and many people accompanied me. And as I was sitting in a house full of people, I cast my eyes upon a woman and discerned in her an unclean (undeveloped) spirit. Moved to speak sharply, I told her she was under the influence of an unclean spirit. Having the gift of discerning spirits, I many times saw the states and conditions of people, and could try their spirits.'

He frequently healed the sick by the laying on of hands. To Richard Myer, who had long had a very lame, rheumatic arm, he said: 'Stand upon thy legs and stretch out thine arm.' He did so, and Fox exclaimed: 'Be it known unto you and to all people that this day you are healed.' Although Macaulay sneers at Fox's casting out devils and performing miracles, many remarkable cases of this kind are recorded in his Journal, and were witnessed by thousands of people. In his 'Life Sketches' he uses 'Lord,' 'angels' and 'spirits' interchangeably, as do the old Biblical writers.

'Coming to within a mile of Litchfield, where shepherds were keeping their sheep, I was commanded,' he says, 'by the Lord to put off my shoes. It stood still, for it was winter, and the word of the Lord was like a fire in me. So I put off my shoes and left them with the shepherds, and the poor

shepherds trembled and were astonished. Then I walked on about a mile, and as soon as I was within the city the word of the Lord came to me again, saying, "Cry, Woe unto the bloody city of Litchfield!" So I went up and down the streets, crying with a loud voice, "Woe to the bloody city of Litchfield!" It being market-day, I went into the market-place, and to and fro in the several parts of it, and made stands, crying as before, "Woe to the bloody city of Litchfield!" And no one laid hands on me; but as I went thus crying through the streets, there seemed to be a channel of blood running down the streets, and the market-place appeared like a pool of blood. When I had declared what the spirit put upon me, I felt myself clear. I went out of the town in peace: and returning to the shepherds gave them some money and took my shoes of them again.'

After this a deep consideration came upon me. Why, or for what reason, should I be sent against that city and call it "the bloody city"? But afterwards I came to understand that in the Emperor Diocletian's time a thousand Christians were martyred here in Litchfield. So I was to go without my shoes, through the channel of their blood in the market-place, that I might raise up the memorial of the blood of those martyrs which had been shed a thousand years before. The sense of their blood was upon me.'

These were among the common sayings of the inspired George Fox while preaching: 'Verily, I heard a voice'; 'The spirit was upon me'; 'I saw in visions'; 'The prophecies were open to me.' 'When at a meeting of Friends in Derby there was such a mighty power of spirit felt,' says Fox, 'that the people were shaken and many mouths were opened to testify that the angels of God do minister unto mortal men.'

The original Quakers, like the post-Apostolic Christians, were Spiritualists; but our latter-day Quakers, denying or deadening their spiritual gifts, by selfishness and worldliness have crystallised, and so are a dying religious sect.

In the old Wesley residence, Epworth, England, marked spiritual manifestations occurred for years. The account of these was written by the Rev. Mr. Hooley, of Haxey, by Dr. Adam Clarke, by a writer in the 'Arminian Magazine,' and others. It is pitiable that modern Methodist preachers do not mention them as among the present demonstrations of a future existence. From a large volume by John Wesley, entitled, 'The Invisible World,' published over a hundred years ago, I make the following quotations:—

'It is true that the English in general, and, indeed, most of the men of learning of Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions as mere old wives' fables. I am sorry for it, and I willingly take this opportunity of entering my solemn protest against this violent compliment which so many that believe the Bible pay to those who do not believe it. I owe them no such service. I take knowledge these are at the bottom of the outcry which has been raised, and with such insolence spread throughout the nation; and in direct opposition, not only to the Bible, but to the suffrage of the wisest and best of men in all ages and nations. They well know (whether Christians know it or not) that the giving up of witchcraft (the control of undeveloped spirits) is in effect giving up the Bible. And they know, on the other hand, that if but one account of men with separate spirits be admitted, their whole castle in the air (deism, atheism, and materialism) falls to the ground.

'One of the capital objections to all the accounts, which I have known urged over and over, is this, "Did you ever see an apparition yourself?" No, nor did I ever see a murder, yet I believe there is such a thing: Yea, and in one place or another murder is committed every day. Therefore I cannot, as a reasonable being, deny the fact, though I never saw it, and perhaps never may. The testimony of unexceptionable witnesses fully convinces me of both the one and the other.' (Page 2.)

Elizabeth Hobson was born in Sunderland in the year 1774. Her father dying when she was three or four years old, her uncle, Thomas Rea, a pious man, brought her up as his daughter. She was a serious child and grew up in the fear of God; yet she had a deep and sharp conviction of sin until she was about sixteen years of age, when she found peace with God, and from that time the whole tenor of her behaviour was suitable to her profession. On Wednesday, May 23rd, 1788, and the three following days, I talked with her at large. But it was with difficulty that I could prevail upon her to speak. The substance of what she said was as follows:—

"From my childhood when any of our neighbours died, whether men, women or children, I used to see them just

before, or when they died, and I was not frightened at all, it was so common. Indeed, I did not then know they were dead. I saw many of them by day and many of them by night. Those that came when it was dark brought light with them. I observed that little children and many grown persons had a bright, glorious light around them, but many had a gloomy, dismal light and a dusky cloud over them." (Page 3.)

'Perhaps the glorified spirits of just men made perfect may, like the angels, be employed in carrying on the purposes of God in the world. It is said of them, "His servants shall serve Him"' (Heb. xxii.).

'Possibly, as ministering spirits, they may minister unto the heirs of salvation, and watch over the interests of those who on earth were dear to them, either by the ties of nature or religion. One of them was employed to converse with the Apostle John and explain to him the wonderful things he saw in his visions (Rev. xxii.).

'The sentiment for which we are pleading has the sanction of the highest antiquity. Philo speaks of it as a received notion of the Jews, that the souls of good men officiate as ministering spirits. The Pagans, in the earliest ages, imagined that the spirits of their deceased friends continued near them, and were frequently engaged in performing acts of kindness, hence the deification of their kings and heroes, and the custom of invoking the names of those who were dear to them.'

'Cicero makes a better use of the doctrine, when he endeavours to comfort a father for the loss of his son by the thought that he might still be engaged in performing kind offices for him. And it is not improbable that the idea, though perverted by the heathen to the purpose of idolatry, might, like the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, be derived from a Divine source.' (Page 30.)

'A few years ago a gentleman of character and serious carriage, who resided near St. James and lived very happily with his wife, was taken sick and died, which so affected his dear left-companion that she sickened also and kept her bed.

'In about ten days after her husband's death, as she was sitting upright in bed, and a friend and near relation sitting near her, she looked steadfastly towards the foot of the bed, and said with a cheerful voice, "My dear, I will be with you in two hours." The gentlewoman that was with her (and who firmly attested the same as most true) said to her, "Child, whom do you speak to?" (for she saw nobody). She answered, "It is my husband, who came to call me hence, and I am going to him"; which surprised her friend very much, who, thinking she was a little light-headed, called in somebody else, to whom she spoke very cheerfully and told the same story; but before the two hours were expired she went on and up to her dear companion, to be happy together forever, to the great surprise of all present.

'The soul receives not its perfections or activity from the body, but can live and act out of the body, yea, much better, having then its perfect liberty, divested of that heavy incumbrance which only clogged and fettered it. "Doubtless," saith Tertullian, "when the soul is separated from the body it comes out of darkness into its own pure and perfect light, and quickly finds itself a substantial being, able to act freely in that light and participate in heavenly joys."' (Page 48.)

The former historical references prove that the facts and the fundamental truths of Spiritualism were in remotest antiquity similar to those of to-day. And why not?—since there is but one God, one law, one Divine purpose, one historical continuity, one brotherhood, 'one Spirit,' with, as Paul says, 'a diversity of gifts.'

A traveller in nearly all latitudes 'neath the northern star, or summering under the Southern Cross, I have seen neither races nor tribes, white, brown-skinned, or black, without sympathy for their kindred—without cemeteries for their dead—without altars, however rude, for their worship, and without dreams, apparitions, visions, and methods of some sort for communicating with the dead. Uncouth, vague, if not rude and vulgar to us, they may have been; yet, they foreshadowed the soul's immortality, and brought to sorrowing, trusting souls that peace of mind that passeth understanding.

These spiritual marvels, natural to the plane from which they proceeded, have through all periods of time appeared as echoing openings from the silence, as lights from the mountain-tops, necessarily assuming various forms according to the period, the temperament, and racial development of a people. They were, and are, all in the line of evolution. They were, and are, God's living witnesses of a future existence. To deny them, to destroy them, is to plunge the world into the thickest darkness of materialism.

The Spiritualism of this century was no modern inven-

tion by either spirits or mortals, but rather a discovery, the re-discovery of a fact, or range of facts, in perfect accord with natural law. It did not spring into birth full-grown like Minerva from Jupiter's brain. It was seemingly feeble at first. It is youthful yet, when compared with Protestantism and its swarming sects. And yet, it is afire with truth, and aflame with infinite possibilities. Atheistic materialists and sectarian priests might quite as well think of dethroning Divinity as of checking the onward march of Spiritualism.

Christianity started from a dream (Matt. i. 20); Spiritualism from a mystic rap. Angels and spirits were the potent powers behind them both. The mightiest results often follow from the minutest causes. Newton's falling apple pointed to that hidden law that holds suns and stars in their circling orbits. That little puff of steam from Watts's boiling kettle foretold of railways and steamers girdling the globe. How insignificant to proud Imperial Rome was that Babe cradled in a Bethlehem manger; and yet, there lay concealed mighty causes that in less than 300 years shook the old Roman Empire to its very foundations; and later, planted the cross, symbol of life, upon the hills and mountains of every civilised land. So those little half-muffled sounds, those gentle, telegraphic tickings, that came to Hydesville like messengers from the tear-lands of the tombs, came to bring messages—messages of holiest memories. This was the Epiphany, the Easter morning of this thinking, stirring nineteenth century! It was the golden dawn, the opening cycle of a newer and higher dispensation, ringing the death-knell of a dreary materialism and a creedal, soul-crushing sectarianism.

In the Judean dust-buried past, women were last at the cross and first at the grave; so, in this century, women—the Fox sisters—after hearing the sounds, were the first to discover the new alphabet, the first to translate those rappings into intelligent language, thus cabling the ocean of doubt, and bridging the chilling river of death, thereby enabling mortals and immortals to stand consciously face to face, re-clasping hands—the white hands of their dead—and re-affirming their undying loves and affections. As God is the soul, the spirit, interpermeating all nature, Spiritualism is necessarily naturalism. Nature is a divine unity. The chain of causes has no missing links. Law is as continuous as it is immutable, and truth is absolutely imperishable. All the good of the old times remains. Principles never die, and so of human beings—there are no dead. The Spiritualism of to-day has absolutely demonstrated this to be a fact. Shout, then, O ye nations, the song of triumph, for Death, the King of Terrors, is conquered! Creeds are doomed. The devil of mythology is defeated, and the fiery scare-crow, hell, is transfigured into lovely Gehenna-gardens and vineyards, where purpling grapes grow in richest luxuriance just outside the walls of Jerusalem.

A few years since I was in the Judea of the ancient Scriptures—in old Bethlehem, near Jerusalem; and recently, on March 31st, I was in the new Bethlehem, at Hydesville, near Rochester, N.Y. This has now become consecrated ground—consecrated and sacred to moral, mental, and spiritual science, to the brotherhood of races, to the immortality of Divine truth, to the matchless grandeur and glories of a present angel ministry, and to a sweet converse with those higher, heavenly intelligences that make radiant the highlands of immortality. Hydesville is America's Mecca.

The philosophy of Modern Spiritualism and the philosophy of Christianity during the first three centuries are in perfect accord. Spiritualists believe in God—a personal God, basing that personality not upon form or shape or mere *avoir du pois*, but upon consciousness, intelligence, will and purpose. They believe in Jesus Christ, accepting Peter's definition—"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by wonders, and miracles, and signs, which God did by him." Jesus' sympathetic character was certainly sweeter, diviner than that of the masses of men. Angels daily walked and talked with Him. Subordinating the earthly to the spiritual, fraternal love with Him soon bloomed out into the universal. Quick to feel the sorrows of others, the sensitive tendrils of His loving heart, constantly attuned and tremulously responsive, vibrated to every sound of human suffering. He identified Himself with sorrow and disgrace, with humanity in its lowest estate, that He might the more

successfully exert the healing, saving, love-power of His soul in the redemption of the erring.

Considered with reference to religious cycles, Jesus stood upon the pinnacle of Hebrew Spiritualism, the great Judean Spiritualist of that era. As God is Spirit—that is, the infinite Spirit-Presence acting by the law of mediation—the Apostle, with a singular clearness of perception, pronounced the Nazarene a 'Mediator'—that is, a 'medium'—between God and men. The persecuted and martyred mediums of one age become gods in succeeding ages. Such manifests the world's lack of both justice and wisdom.

But if Jesus was only divine man, elder brother, wherein, then, you will perhaps inquire, consisted His moral superiority over others of that era? If I rightly understand His essential and peculiar characteristics, His pre-eminent greatness consisted in His fine, harmonial organisation; in a constant overshadowing of angelic influences; in the depth of His spirituality and love; in the keenness of His moral perceptions; in the expansiveness and warmth of His sympathies; in His unshadowed sincerity of heart; in His deep schooling into the spiritual gifts of Essenian circles; in His soul-pervading spirit of obedience to the mandates of right manifest in Himself; in His unwearied, self-forgetting self-sacrificing devotion to the welfare of universal humanity, and His perfect trust in God. The leading thoughts ever burning in His being for acceptance and actualisation were the divine Fatherhood of God, the universal brotherhood of man, the perpetual ministry of angels and spirits, and the absolute necessity of toleration, charity, forgiveness, love—in a word, *good works*. These, crystallising into action as a reform-force for human education and redemption, I denominate the *positive religion*, and consider it perfectly synonymous with Spiritualism—Spiritualism as a definition and practical power in its best and highest estate. This pure religion and undefiled, established in men's hearts and lives, and not on 'sacred' parchments, would soon be felt in states and kingdoms, promoting peace, justice, and charity; rendering legal enactments wise and humanitarian, and causing the sweet waters of concord and goodwill to flow over all the earth for the spiritual healing and moral uplifting of the nations.

(To be concluded.)

THE REV. D. BASIL MARTIN ON SPIRITUALISM.

(FROM THE 'HEREFORD TIMES'.)

On Sunday evening at Eignbrook Church, Hereford, the Rev. Basil Martin referred to the remarkable address delivered by Sir William Crookes as President of the British Association a few days ago in Bristol. The first part of the address was, he said, a discussion of wheat supply, and this was largely commented upon by the newspapers, but the latter part, which was regarded by Sir William Crookes himself as the most important, was scarcely noticed. It appears that thirty years ago he undertook to investigate those curious phenomena which are declared by many to be manifestations of the spirit world. He had little doubt they were due to delusion, probably the unconscious working of the mind; he supposed that what men took to be a communication from another world was nothing more than the reflex action of their own thought. But his investigations convinced him that in many cases they could not be thus explained, and he published a book in which he avowed his conviction that unseen intelligences do make communications to men. Since that time further inquiry has strengthened his opinion, and this year, speaking as a man of science to the leading men of science, he declared that he had nothing to retract, but that on the contrary he saw more clearly and understood better the laws of the spirit world.

Such a statement as this, coming from a man at the very top of his profession, perhaps the first chemist and physicist of the day, is surely worthy of the attention of all thinking people, and ought at least to destroy any disposition to make light of the subject. One cannot help feeling what a difference it would make to the lives of many persons if the existence of a world of spirits were taken out of the region of speculation and hope and put into that of knowledge.

The unseen is not sufficiently real to Christian people. Often in time of bereavement they find little comfort, their minds are swayed by hope or by fear; whilst the majority of mankind think little about the question, their belief in the unseen is so weak as to practically amount to nothing. Moreover, what could be more natural and probable in itself than that departed friends or angelic powers should speak to us? If you were to die to-night, and wake up in the world of spirits, would not one of your first desires be to send some message to the friends you had left behind? The wonder is not that we should hear of some communication from the dead, but that they should be so few; not that angelic powers should sometimes manifest themselves, but that they should not do so more constantly.

If Sir William Crookes is right many parts of the Bible would be more real and intelligible. We should no longer be surprised to read that angels appeared to Abraham and Elijah, that some heard voices which others did not, that Saul went in his difficulties to consult a medium who brought Samuel up to speak with him, that in the midst of Belshazzar's feast handwriting appeared on the wall; we should understand the vision of Eliphaz recorded in the book of Job, the appearance of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, the rushing mighty wind on the Day of Pentecost, and the gift of tongues.

All these narratives are perfectly credible in themselves, our difficulty generally is that they transcend the limits of our own experience. In my own judgment we have sufficient evidence of an unseen world apart from Modern Spiritualism, but I cannot disguise the fact that it is very difficult to convince others of it, and that all of us would feel differently about life if we could hold any sort of intercourse with those who had passed through the gate of death.

But the matter must be investigated in the cold, clear light of science, and we must not substitute desire and imagination for fact. Let our minds be open to any revelation God may send us. As Sir William Crookes said: 'To stop short in any research that bids fair to widen the gates of knowledge, to recoil from fear of difficulty or adverse criticism, is to bring reproach on science. There is nothing for the investigator but to go straight on, to explore up and down, inch by inch, with the taper his reason, to follow the light wherever it may lead. In old Egyptian days a well-known inscription was carved over the portal of the temple of Isis—"I am whatever hath been, is, or ever will be, and my veil no man hath yet lifted." Not thus do modern seekers after truth confront Nature. Steadily, unflinchingly we strive to pierce the inmost heart of Nature. Veil after veil we have lifted, and her face grows more beautiful, august, and wonderful with every barrier that is withdrawn.'

SPIRITUAL ATMOSPHERES.

Dr. Horton, in opening some new buildings, a few days since, in connection with the Congregational Church at Barry-road, Dulwich, gave utterance to some thoughts which must have a little surprised some of his hearers. Emphasising the importance of creating a pure spiritual atmosphere, every person, he said, exhaled an atmosphere wholesome or impure, good or bad, and the places they frequented became charged with it. When, a short time ago, St. Paul's was reconsecrated because a man had committed suicide there, he looked upon it rather as an act of superstition. But, in thinking it over since, he had come to the conclusion that the death of such a man would vitiate the atmosphere, and, in so vast a building, spread a perfect miasma. The idea underlying the act of reconsecration became in these circumstances something more than mere superstition. A few years ago he (Dr. Horton) went with some friends to look over a 'haunted' house they thought of taking. The moment he entered he felt that the house was indeed 'possessed.' His friends took it, however, and although they had seen the vision that had so startled former occupants, they had so changed the atmosphere by their spirit of faith and prayer that the feeling of 'possession' that was at first so depressing had been altogether removed. He urged his hearers to develop such a spirituality of life and purpose that everyone entering the building they were then opening would feel its influence, and yield themselves to the same life of service and devotion.

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TRUTH MUST COME FIRST.

We disguise it in all kinds of pretty ways, we paint it and varnish it, or pretend all sorts of nonsense about it; but there stands the unpleasant fact that the overwhelming majority of us do not put Truth first—neither in Society, nor in Religion, nor on the Exchange, nor in Politics, nor in the quest for Truth. In a kind of way, we want the Truth, and we come as near to it as we dare, or as near as we can for the money; but, as we say, even in the very quest for Truth, we hedge and play a game—perhaps almost unconsciously.

Society has no legal pains and penalties to back it up in its demand that we shall conform to its conventionalities; but its own pains and penalties are all-sufficient. They are 'in the air'; they penetrate through every crevice, they filter through every obstacle; they, directly or indirectly, muzzle us and set us all on, moving to its tune, repeating its formulas, or playing its game: and the independent people, who are thorough and call their souls and lives their own, are labelled 'eccentric,' 'low,' 'unrecognised,' 'rebels,' 'dangerous,' or 'cranks.'

It is just as true in the Church, or, generally, in relation to Religion. Is there one teacher of Religion in five who is anything but an echo? They are not dishonest: they only talk in their sleep. And what of the great army of 'dear hearers'? Is there one in twenty who is engaged in the quest for Truth? With the majority, we fear, 'divine service' is only a decorous 'function,' not entirely disliked, but happily gone through and gladly disposed of. Or it is a musical entertainment with æstheticism mistaken for adoration, and pleasant sounds accepted for worship: though, of course, there is a strong and ardent minority earnestly and honestly bent on seeking for Truth, and longing for God.

We do not want, in the least, to attack the Church: we are only minding our own business in trying to read the signs of the times, especially in relation to Spiritualism and its position and chances in the world as it is to-day. We are also endeavouring to make people think. And, finally, we are making a stand for putting Truth first. And all this is immensely needed. We are still beset with the state of mind indicated by F. D. Maurice in that keen story of his about a young clergyman who came to him for counsel. 'He wanted me,' said Maurice, 'to put him into a family coach, and tell him he might go to sleep till he came to his journey's end. But all I could do was to give him a stick, a compass and a lamp, and to tell him, whatever he did, not to stand still.' A wonderfully enlightening story! How many still only want to be put into the proper family coach—and slumber!

In the 'Life of Dr. Anna Kingsford' a similar story is

told, but with a reversing of the parts of seeker and guide. Says the 'Life':—

Calling on a friend who was a Catholic, Mary met there a priest, who seemed to take great interest in her and engaged her in close conversation. Something that she said drew from him the remark, 'Why, my daughter, you have been thinking. You should never do that. The Church saves us the trouble and danger of thinking, by telling us what to believe. We are only called on to believe. I never think. I dare not, I should go mad if I were to let myself think.' To which she replied, 'Well, but, father, I want to understand, and I can't do that without thinking. And, as for believing without understanding, that for me is not faith, but credulity. How, but by thinking, does one learn whether the Church has the truth?' The only result was a further warning against the danger she was running, and she came home as much amused at the absurdity of the priest's position as shocked at its perniciousness.

That seems almost unbelievable—to one who has got into the open; but it represents a state of mind which very largely prevails.

In business, we believe, there is more of the 'salt of the earth' to be found than anywhere else. This is not a common opinion, but we firmly hold it. 'A nation of shopkeepers,' Bertrand Barère called us. Let us be proud of it! Shopkeeping implies reflection upon needs, and study how to provide for them: it demands care and attention, and a considerable amount of honesty which here is indeed 'the best policy.' But all the world has heard of adulteration and 'tricks of the trade'; and in proportion as business has become financing, and as company-promoting has taken the place of old-fashioned 'minding your own business,' poor Truth has indeed gone very low down to the bottom of the proverbial 'well.'

No one knows better than the observant Spiritualist how true all this is, in relation to a tabooed or suspected topic. Every new thought, coming from the large domains of Truth, into this workshop and dormitory, has to be first despised and rejected. The conservative and self-preserving forces of the world are sure to be all against it. It is unfamiliar, it is therefore uncanny or dangerous; it threatens to bring in contradiction and confusion; it offends our pride by suggesting that we are wrong; it bodes no good to vested interests; it causes divisions. Therefore Society is against it, the Church is afraid of it, Science itself may be angry with it, and the world of business may jostle it; and, at times, there is the hemlock or the cross.

Now, all this is true of Spiritualism, but, perhaps happily, only in a comparatively mild way. People are painfully shy of it, even when they four-fifths believe in it. As 'Society' really knows next to nothing about it, of course, dislikes it and discourages it, beyond the mere dallying or plaything stage; and, to the great majority, even the dallying or plaything stage is detestable. It is not a question of 'What is true?' but 'What is regular, conventional, safe?'

We plead for a different standard, and a much higher. It is a commonplace to say that we are here upon this earth to seek the truth and live up to it; but how few of us get anywhere near the height of that simple but splendid standard! Why, only to look at it shames us. Let it! we had better be ashamed than self-righteous. Here, then, is the Spiritualist's calling—to put Truth first:—

First, find thou Truth, and then—
Although she strays
From beaten paths of men
To untrod ways—
Her leading follow straight;
And bide thy fate!
And, whether smiles or scorn
Thy passing greet,
Or find'st thou flower or thorn
Beneath thy feet—
Fare on! nor fear thy fate
At heaven's gate.

SPIRITUALISM AND SOCIAL REFORMATION.

In the early period of spirit communion in this country its exponent was 'The Spiritual Magazine,' which constantly published the following as its definition of Spiritualism:—

'Spiritualism is based on the cardinal fact of spirit communion and influx. It is the effort to discover all truth relating to man's spiritual nature, capacities, relations, duties, welfare, and destiny; and its application to a regenerate life. It recognises a continuous Divine inspiration in man. It aims, through a careful and reverent study of facts, at a knowledge of the laws and principles which govern the occult forces of the universe; of the relations of spirit to matter, and of man to God and the spiritual world. It is thus catholic and progressive, leading to true religion, as at one with the highest philosophy.'

'LIGHT' also, in the freshness of its dawn, seemed in unison with this lucid exposition of its subject and essential purpose, by avowing its devotion to the well-being of humanity 'here and hereafter'!

However, as Spiritualism comprises all truth relating to man's eternal nature and boundless powers of progressive being, is it not as evident that this world's life-action should *systematically* have, and harmonise with, that basis: the opposite, and existing one—that of the ruthless animal spirit—being the main cause of self-ignorance, untruthfulness, and wretchedness? If the reciprocal principle, or that of justice—without which so-called morality and religion are self-evidently baseless and lifeless perversions of the truth—can only be gradually realised by most people, it must have a *beginning* ere long, if national disaster is to be averted.

Fortunately there is one Spiritualist of scientific eminence whose Spiritualism has for many years been expressed—among other healthful and constant reform work—by consistent and organised action to equitably abolish the primary radical cause of preventible human evils: the monopoly of the nation's Land and material source of all life and wealth. This can easily be done, with vast blessings to all, when people's eyes are opened to their own best service, on the lines of Mr. Gladstone's 1886 Bill for purchasing the land of Ireland, by which it would be restored to the nation in less than fifty years, and all taxes cease, as the natural source of Governmental revenue—the land rent—would more than suffice for it.

It is not, of course, suggested that spiritualist societies should in any way depart from their main and special mission, but that their representatives should individually do their best to make their Spiritualism a consistent and effective *reality*, capable of general extension. As destitution grows by what it feeds upon, the rule of the 'charitable' is to prolong existing evils by surface plasters; that of the wise to eradicate their *causes*: flagrantly unjust monopolies and false training, with national death as their inevitable ultimate, by the increase of population, human misery, and degeneracy.

The incomparable change of sight and knowledge of life, from that of the agnostic state generally, to that of the rational and enlightened Spiritualist, is vital to permanent regenerate progress from the prevalent and prominent habits of oppressive selfishness and silliness. As Ruskin so fitly states it, 'We have confounded wealth with money-making, instead of realising that it truly and literally signifies well-being.' Should it not, therefore, be seen that—whatever claims other duties and engagements have—aims to ensure the welfare of the great mass of the producers of life's enjoyments (who are generally too much absorbed in the struggle for physical existence to see wisely) are absolutely essential if truth and righteousness are ever to prevail?

So habituated are the vast majority to the effects of the present system of existence, and the consequent deceptiveness of its teachings—which, together, mainly make people what they are—that very few seem to realise their true and chief life-purpose through their inner nature, with its needs, and the compensating law which operates by loyalty to its guidance. But as truth can only be *known* to man logically through *his own* mind, and as adequate self-knowledge annihilates fear, so—as the world's greatest Seers ever exemplify—does it rightfully demand of the enfranchised the aid for

all to attain the same freedom, combined with those justly economic social conditions which are essential to its general and lasting attainment.

Whether more personal injury is caused to those possessing excessive worldly wealth, or to the destitute victims of that unjust excess, it seems difficult to determine—if, generally, the selfishness of people be not multiplied by the sum of their possessions. But as Spiritualists are assured that, as the state of people is here, so must it be, by the same natural law, for weal or woe, when the death of the physical body happens, should not that pregnant truth inspire them the more to see, and simply avow, what man essentially is, with the conditions of equity and enlightenment needful for his emancipation? As the next state is a mental one, without the sensuous means of dissipation which exist here, not a few must so realise a quickened conscience, with a haunting sense of wasted opportunities whilst on this plane! How many are there with superfluous wealth, either childless, or with a child or children who would be incomparably better off by simply having left to them security against want, with an incentive to honest and healthy work; and yet such people, through a blind and deadly habit, hug what they have, instead of more truly blessing themselves, and their offspring also, by blessing others in promoting the realisation of honest social principles.

The logical Seer knows, of course, that it is *impossible* to have an absolute system of ethical or religious truth otherwise than through an accurate analysis of man's inner nature and the facts evinced by it. Religion and ethics are necessarily *one* in essence, and therefore, of course, ever harmonious in principle and detail, because they represent the unity of the Supreme Spirit of the Universe and the laws thereof, of which the truthfulness of man's soul-nature is the united offspring and individualised reflex. It is easy for people to learn what they simply and essentially are, and therefore their main life-purpose here, if they sufficiently desire to do so; as easy as it is for the rational to see that morality and religion essentially consist in true and just *life-actions*. Should not these truths and principles be formulated as the simple and ever-guiding ethics of Spiritualists, unless they prefer to ignore the moral laws which the spiritual nature of mankind reveals, and so remain only truly described as spirit-phenomenalists?

How far a spiritual principle is apprehended and esteemed, or a cause of righteousness loved, is of course measured by the financial and other aid it receives from those who have the knowledge and the spare means to cherish it. If, then, the belief about man's nature, and of his immediate state hereafter, held by those described as Nonconformist Christians, among others, is deplored by Spiritualists, one may ask, Do the latter present a living religion of rational thoroughness to supersede it? Having the knowledge, is not that an imperative duty of earnest souls? Have they even a temple of their own in the chief city of the world, after possessing for some fifty years spiritual truth which should regenerate the world? The Nonconformists have at least the courage of their belief, however defective the latter may be. They provide the means, and build and endow their chapels wherever needed.

It may be, of course, that the Spiritualists of London are not to have a temple worthy of a philosophy so divine till, realising the unworthiness of existing entertainments, they are sufficiently inspired to avow the whole truth therein. Otherwise it seems that the intellectual strength and humane earnestness of the Ethical societies—if they lack the full sight of personal immortality, with its potent light and vital basis as a natural law of righteous being—may, by their plain-speaking thoroughness, do what is the supreme mission of *Spiritualists* to do. If the professed ministers of Christ, generally, betray their mission, have the Carlyles, the Emersons, the Ruskins, with other Seers of the age and ages from that of Christ, lived, however lonely, in vain? Have they not all consistently pleaded with their might for personal and systematic social action in harmony with the truth; and is not all other action—if not conscious hypocrisy—worse than futile?

From Rotten Row fashionables down to the wretched victims of Shop-land, the artisans, and other myriads of

squalid Eastern London, how few of them would not feel impelled—apart from any other thought—to rush into deep water to save a little child from drowning at the risk of their own lives! Yet, these same people—through the force of habit and the lack of *realising* a similar incentive—heedlessly view the deadly horrors of the vast and constant sufferings which exist around, and which, with incomparable gain to the more enlightened portion of the community, they could abolish by a united and wisely-directed effort. Let us trust that the present drifting deathwards as a nation may cease, and that by earnestly desiring a true social basis, a rational humanity may ere long blossom into life.

A. C. SWINTON.

SPIRITUALISM IN GLASGOW.

Mr. James Robertson, the energetic President of the Glasgow Society, and, indeed, all the friends in Glasgow, are very naturally congratulating themselves on the success of last week's meetings in that city. The proceedings took the form of addresses on Sunday, September 25th, by the Rev. J. Page Hopps, in the Assembly Rooms, Bath-street, and a bazaar and sale of work in the same building on the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday following, the objects being twofold—to celebrate the jubilee of Modern Spiritualism, and to raise money for the furtherance of the cause; and it is pleasing to be able to record that their efforts received the respectful and kindly notice of nearly every paper in the district.

On the Sunday Mr. Hopps spoke to large and deeply interested audiences—in the morning on 'Nineteenth Century Seers,' and in the evening on 'Things that must be in the Hereafter'; and we are assured by one who was present that 'his magnetic personality and glowing addresses charmed and cheered all hearts.'

The bazaar was opened on Thursday by Mr. Hopps. Mr. Andrew Glendinning presided, and in introducing Mr. Hopps, said the object of the bazaar was to raise a fund for the purpose of bringing before the people of Glasgow the facts, philosophy, phenomena, and more especially the higher teaching of Spiritualism. What was wanted in investigators was not merely scientific knowledge, but honesty, earnestness, and common-sense. This year of the jubilee of Modern Spiritualism was a fitting time for taking a new departure by extending the work of the Glasgow Association, and it was their duty to strengthen their hands and encourage their hearts in their uphill work.—Mr. Hopps then delivered the opening address. The campaign of Spiritualism, he said, was by no means a walk-over. If they had any proper self-respect, it was not a pleasant thing to be told by their friends that they were a set of fools about Spiritualism; or, if they did not say so because they dare not, it was not pleasant to know that they were always thinking it. Some of them gave them another alternative. They said, if they were not fools, then they were a set of knaves. But there were compensations. He loved adventure; and it was a brave and beautiful thing to be in the advanced guard as an adventurer. There was something in being the custodians of a truth; and if Spiritualism in any sense was a truth, if it in any sense was a truth that these unseen people could put themselves in communication with the seen, it did not much matter whether they were looked upon as wise people or fools, for in all the inventions and discoveries of this city of Glasgow there was nothing to beat that. If that was true, then it was an honour to be the custodians of such a splendid truth. They had something to do in life in teaching such a splendid truth to the world. It puzzled the speaker that in Glasgow, in Scotland, people who adored the Bible could scoff at Spiritualism. Whatever the Bible was or was not, from beginning to end, from Genesis to Revelations, it was soaked, steeped, saturated with Spiritualism. These people professed that they believed the Bible. How was it that when the Spiritualist said—'It is true; we can prove it; here is the whole thing in modern times as in days gone by,' how was it that they hated them and said it was the devil? If it was the devil to-day, what was it in days gone by among the Jews? Mr. Hopps concluded by declaring the bazaar open.

On the motion of Mr. Robertson, a vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Hopps, and the business of the day was begun. The receipts of this, the first day of the bazaar, amounted to £127 11s.

On Friday the bazaar was opened by Mrs. Ernest Stevens, wife of the lessee and manager of the Grand Theatre, Glasgow. Mrs. Bessie Russell-Davies, who presided, claimed that Spiritualists were not, as a rule, antagonistic to any of the accepted forms of religion, although most of the existing forms were antagonistic to Spiritualism. That antagonism, however, was not confined to Spiritualism, and they would see from the newspaper reports of the Church Congress that there was a general 'ruction' going on among the so-called professors of religion. After showing that Joan of Arc was being canonised by the Church that burned her for being possessed of devils, she said that Spiritualists had a bright future before them, for probably in a thousand years their friend the president would be known as Saint Robertson. In conclusion, she declared that there was quite as much religion among Spiritualists as among any other class of people, ninety per cent. of them being deeply religious thinkers.

Mrs. Stevens, in declaring the bazaar open, said she was proud to acknowledge the fact that she was a Spiritualist. (Applause.) Her sympathies were with that host of workers who so fearlessly devoted their time—nay, their lives—to the propagation of this grand philosophy which was the acme of all spiritual thought.

Mr. James Robertson moved a vote of thanks to Mrs. Stevens, and the day's business was then proceeded with.

Mr. Robertson presided at the opening of the bazaar on Saturday, and on introducing Mr. Morse he referred to the satisfactory return of the proceedings, which had been a great financial success. But it was not to gain a large sum of money that the bazaar had been held, so much as to bring before the public in a forcible manner the fact that Spiritualism was alive. (Applause.) This, he was glad to say, they had done.

Mr. J. J. Morse, in declaring the bazaar open, spoke of the great strides they had made with Spiritualism in Glasgow. He contrasted the small room in which the members had met years ago, and their meagre numbers, with the fine meeting-place in which the members now assembled, and the number and enthusiasm of the Spiritualists. He had lived long enough to see that Glasgow had not only flourished, but that Spiritualism had flourished with it. (Applause.)

The sales were then proceeded with, bringing the third and last day of the bazaar to a close, and it is gratifying to be able to record that the result was even better than had been anticipated. It is estimated, indeed, that after all expenses have been paid, there will remain a net profit of about £300. This, of course, is eminently satisfactory, and will be a great encouragement to the Glasgow friends to persevere in their noble efforts for the diffusion of what we all regard as a very precious truth.

It should be added that on the following day, Sunday, Mr. Morse spoke acceptably to large audiences, and his addresses are reported to us as having been at once 'grand, simple, pathetic, and yet profound!'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE. SOCIAL GATHERING.

The first of the usual winter gatherings of the Alliance will take place on *Friday, October 21st*, when a Social Meeting of Members and Friends will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 for 7.30 p.m. Admission will be by ticket. The special object of the meeting will be to afford to the Members and Associates residing in London and the neighbourhood an opportunity for friendly intercourse and the interchange of thoughts on topics of mutual interest.

In accordance with Rule XV. of the Articles of Association, the subscriptions of Members and Associates elected after October 1st will be taken up for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1899.

REINCARNATION—OR ATTACHMENT?

A communication reaches us from a correspondent in France—accompanied by the suggestion that, as it expresses views which do not accord with our own, we may hesitate to publish it. Our friend fails to understand us. It is true that, though we have given considerable attention to the arguments in support of the doctrine of reincarnation, we remain unconvinced, because—rightly or wrongly—the arguments appear to us inconclusive. We cannot help it. That is how we have been made. But that is no reason why we should act unfairly towards those whose opinions differ from ours, and it is our constant aim to be just all round. So we give a translation of our correspondent's communication:—

REINCARNATION—OR ATTACHMENT?

Such is the title of an article which recently appeared in 'LIGHT,' combating the theory of reincarnation, a theory that forms one of the most solid bases of Spiritualism, and I think it may be useful if I attempt to refute certain passages of it, not with the view of bringing its writer to my view of the question but to offer others a general idea which may enable them to form a well considered and thoughtful opinion on this great question. This said, let us enter upon it without pretending to treat it thoroughly, desiring only to elicit some luminous points which I hope will prove the theory consistent with logic and justice, and that it is not a quaint old theory, a baseless system born of a human brain, but the necessary consequence of affirmations of all kinds gathered from physical and moral phenomena too apparent not to be remarked, and which are inexplicable otherwise than by the theory of reincarnation. It is imprudent, then, to affirm that so little depends on it. True, the theory is incapable of material proof, but moral proofs are not wanting, and when they do not conflict with logic, reason, and justice they have for impartial and right-thinking minds the same cogency as material proofs. It is insinuated by the writer of the article I am noticing that the human being need not trouble himself about the future life, it being sufficient for him to reflect that the law of evolution will by itself act under the providence of infinite wisdom, justice, and pity, and that without personal effort. Now this is a kind of enervating fatalism destructive of all individual initiative and consequently of all progress. If development and progress can be made in the invisible world apart from all incarnation, of what use is material existence? Our friend is in the position of Nicodemus asking Jesus nearly 2,000 years ago for an explanation of reincarnation, and whether he would be obliged to enter his mother's womb a second time. 'What!' replies Jesus, 'You a master in Israel, and know not these things.' As a compromise the writer would accept the fact that the spirit surviving what we call death is not necessarily separated from terrestrial life, to which for various reasons it remains attached, one being that it has discovered, or been taught, that there is much to learn from earth life that is necessary for its development. Such being the case, it is clearly advantageous to undergo it again. Another spirit, we are told, finds that he must work out his own salvation. In what consists that salvation? Have we here a member of the Salvation Army? We gather from the whole of the article that the writer, in not accepting reincarnation, supposes that a spirit is specially created for each newly-born body, commencing then its endless career, it being a matter of indifference to it on which side of life the necessary probation has to be made. And what means the assertion that the spirit in reincarnating veils his personality, effaces his memory, loses the continuity of his existence? There is certainly here a confusion of thought with regard to the corporeal and spiritual life, for the latter, not being interrupted by the death of the body, the personality, the memory, and the continuity can no more be destroyed by the entrance of a spirit into a new body than it is by the separation from material organs. Have we not a striking example in what takes place in sleep, during which the personality is completely veiled, the memory effaced, and continuity suspended until the time of awakening? Nothing is

found to better replace the theory of reincarnation than to suggest that after death the spirit remains attached to the earth. The spirit, for example, of a great musician, artist, engineer, &c., in the invisible will associate himself with an instrument suited to serve his ideas and utilise his talents, and if necessary mould it to his use. That, we are told, would give inspiration instead of reincarnation, which, as Spiritualism rationally demonstrates, can alone explain the differences of physical and moral conditions, as well as precocious and exceptional faculties. The writer offers for what he considers an arbitrary conception, one that is equally arbitrary while completely devoid of probability. Here several questions present themselves, which prove, contrary to the writer's opinion, that reincarnation is connected with everything that interests spirituality. Whence comes the incarnate spirit, and what was it previous to incarnation? Is it created especially for the body it is to animate? Why terrestrial existence, if it has after the death of the body to continue the evolution in the invisible? How will this corporeal existence have profited it if, according to the supposed system, it has to serve as an unconscious instrument to inspirers? For whose benefit has it to suffer all the tribulations of earth life? Why! those unknown beings yet to be born. It is inadmissible that those who by their efforts, works, and suffering have contributed to the realisation of better conditions of life, to the progress, in short, of their generation, should not be called to enjoy through reincarnation the state of things to whose establishment they have contributed, while the new arrivals would profit by all the benefit which they have not deserved. On the other hand, who would be these inspiring spirits? How would they have acquired their superior attainments; when and on what globe? Or would they be privileged beings, in which case what becomes of divine justice? It is not probable that the system presented by 'LIGHT' will be adopted by Continental Spiritualists, who will hold, until shown their error, to the theory so simple, so rational, as that of the Kardecian Spiritism, not because Kardec has taught or written it but because it appears just and satisfies reason.

THIBAUD.

A STRANGE STORY OF HYPNOTISM.

An occasional correspondent of the 'Daily Mail,' in Paris, reports a curious case of somnambulism which has just occurred at Alfortville. Last Sunday night M. Antoine Clichy, a gentleman living on his means and possessed of considerable property, found that a package containing £2,400 worth of bonds had been stolen from his bedroom. He informed the police, who, to their own and M. Clichy's great astonishment, were unable to find any trace of the entrance of the thief or thieves. On Wednesday M. Clichy was obliged to take his wife, who has for some time past been suffering from nervous prostration, to the Salpêtrière Hospital, and the doctor there, in view of the state of abnormal agitation and excitement in which Madame Clichy was, asked her husband whether anything had occurred during the last few days to account for her condition. M. Clichy told the doctor of his loss, adding that his wife had taken the matter even more to heart than he himself had done. The doctor, a firm believer in hypnotism, immediately hypnotised Madame Clichy, and drew from her the extraordinary confession that she herself had stolen the bonds, which she had buried under a cherry tree in their own garden. This had been done early on Sunday morning, while her husband was at the hair-dresser's. M. Clichy immediately went home, found traces of recent disturbance of the soil, and a few inches from the surface discovered his bonds intact. He went to the hospital, found his wife in bed there, totally unconscious of the revelations she had made, and informed her that the bonds had been recovered in their entirety. Madame Clichy was delighted at the news. She is now much better, and is absolutely unaware of the identity of the thief.

DR. MACK.—We are asked to state that Dr. Mack has returned from a three months' tour in South Wales, and now resides at Hove, Sussex. His address can be obtained at this office.

NOTES FROM FOREIGN REVIEWS.

THE CONGRESS OF 1900.

The last few numbers of the always interesting 'Paix Universelle' have been particularly good. This bi-monthly publication—the organ of no special school or society, but an 'independent Review'—is edited in a praiseworthy spirit of liberality and impartiality, which has once more found expression in an excellent article by M. Bouvéry, concerning the Spiritualist Congress of 1900. Much struck with some opportune remarks made by our correspondent, Mr. O. Murray, before the Syndicate of the French Spiritualist Press, M. Bouvéry publishes a re-statement of these in the form of a letter, adding his own approving comments and many useful reflections provoked by the appreciative reports of the French delegates present at our late Congress. Referring to the diversity of the subjects introduced on that occasion and to the divergences between the various philosophical and experimental schools represented, and to the success of our efforts in combining these forces towards the attainment of one object, Mr. Murray clearly points out the disadvantages of isolation, the restrictions and errors unavoidably attendant upon specialised and individual research, and the urgent necessity, if serious advance is to be made, for intelligent and well-organised co-operation. Each worker in the field of experimental psychology, he writes, follows out his own theory, keeps his operations within rigidly-defined limits, refuses to benefit by the experience of others, but on the contrary, rejects, too often without any sort of examination, conclusions opposed to those he has formed. Thus, we have the hypnotists of the Salpêtrière, with their 'Charcotage,' as it is jocosely termed; the suggestionists of Nancy, under Liébeault; the students of various magnetic phenomena, as De Rochas, Baraduc, Durville, &c.; and the many psycho-physiologists such as Ramon, Cyal, Dr. Branly, &c., whose researches scarcely obtain from Spiritualists the attentive consideration they so justly deserve.

Now, the *union* of all these investigators for the comparative study of their respective discoveries and theories must be the very object of the next Congress. All efforts must tend towards conciliation, all elements of exclusiveness must be ruled out, restrictive measures must be avoided, and narrow denominations dropped altogether. A 'Spiritist,' or even 'Spiritualist,' Congress will, in France, fail to attract the attention of scientific psychical researchers, while a 'Congress of Experimental and Transcendental Psychology' will probably enlist their goodwill and bring them side by side with Spiritists and occultists. The same principle applies to the co-operation of Church dignitaries. 'Priestly influence is great, it is a power to be dealt with; let us win it to our cause; we are no mere iconoclasts; we must not destroy, but fulfil; we must not overthrow and scatter, but modify, purify, and edify.'

M. Bouvéry highly commends these views to all those interested in the coming Congress. Spiritualists must, he thinks, put aside every desire for self-assertion and independence; they must look far beyond all considerations relative to their position as a representative body. They must, indeed, be 'all things to all men' in order to diffuse their knowledge of the truth and to open up new avenues for their activities. If they can work on the lines indicated by Mr. Murray, and obtain but a fair measure of success, they will thereby give to the world at large a practical demonstration of the importance, of the magnitude, and also of the rationality of the spiritual movement. But on the other hand, some questions suggest themselves. 'Will psychologists respond to our overtures?' M. Delanne expresses his doubts on that point. Again, as regards ecclesiastics, it must be remembered that in May last the Pope declared *illicit* all attempts to communicate with the so-called dead. Roman Catholics would therefore violate Church laws by associating with Spiritualists. This, by the way, places Canon Brettes of the Société Psychique, and numerous other priests, in a curiously false position. As to the advisability of self-effacement, Spiritualists will no doubt be ready to practise this most excellent virtue, but effacement is not abdication, and the adoption of the title 'Congress of Experimental and Transcendental Psychology' must not be supposed

to imply what M. Bouvéry humorously calls 'excommunication of Spiritism.' The word, with the significance it has acquired, cannot, as M. Camille Flammarion wrote to Charcot, be dispensed with or replaced by any other. Addressing himself to special French Spiritist societies, M. Bouvéry has several things to say which Anglo-Saxon Spiritualists will heartily endorse, and which, it is to be hoped, will be duly noticed and pondered by those whom they may concern. 'If any of our friends,' he writes, 'cherish the hope of making *Kardecism* the dominant note at the Congress, let me tell them that Spiritualism, being as old as the world, cannot be monopolised by any *single* school, however excellent; nor coupled with the name of any *single* apostle, however worthy.' We want the progress of spiritual truth, and not the apotheosis of Allan Kardec; we run the risk of considering him as the discoverer of a knowledge which he has merely elucidated and propagated, and of degrading his teaching to the level of a narrow doctrine. He certainly would have been the first to repudiate such a thought. Kardecists are but a small part of the great Spiritualist family, and left to themselves, they could not possibly command the influential power which must animate our proceedings and realise our intentions.

In another article, M. Allan Dubet deals with the same question, and also pleads for judiciously effected union. Let there be no splitting up of precious strength in a number of isolated and insignificant Congresses, but a massing and fusion of forces in one great 'Psychological Congress.'

Although to many these considerations and discussions may seem somewhat premature, it is certain that a free and timely exchange of ideas on and around such an important subject will be productive of good results. Our friends allow their ambitions to run high, but if they persevere in their present earnestness and reasonableness, they will probably accomplish their self-imposed task, and the year 1900 may become to us a memorable one.

DELPHIC LYCEUM DEVELOPMENT CLASSES.

Mr. Thurstan desires us to announce that the next term of work of the Delphic Lyceum will be commenced in the third week in October. A new experiment, he says, is to be made of a class to develop sitters, as well as mediums, in the right frame of passivity for the attainment of results in the manifestations commonly called materialising and physical. The object of these meetings will not be so much the demonstration of the phenomena as the education of the qualities requisite for eliciting them. The class will be held in the evening in the Notting Hill district. There will also be the usual meetings at Buckingham Gate for practising the reception, projection, and concentration of thought so necessary in the education of the psychic nature; also lectures on Mesmerism by Mr. Frank H. Randall, with practical demonstrations. Persons wishing to avail themselves of these opportunities should apply at once for particulars to the director, F. W. Thurstan, M.A., 17, Buckingham Gate Mansions, James-street, S. W.

MEDIUMSHIP.

And were it not a blessed thing to be
The medium for higher powers; and to voice
Their purer loftier thoughts, through tongue of clay,
And make perchance a few sad hearts rejoice.

'Twere like the crystal streamlet bearing joy
To many a fainting floweret. What reck they
That it has flowed through an unbeauteous land
Where thistles and rank weeds have clogged its way.

But should we find some nobler master mind
Had chosen us to tell his thoughts to man,
'Twere better then to purify our lives,
And fit ourselves for his most gracious plan.

For, after all, in our more humble way
We are the prophets of an unseen power—
A God—a Good—All-Love, or what you will;
Our Father watching o'er us every hour.

J. M. GOWEN.

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.

Spiritualism.

SIR,—I thank you for your kindly notice of my letter on the above subject to the 'Church Review.'

1. Man is a tripartite being, consisting of 'body, soul, and spirit' (1 Thess. v. 23); therefore his state is so far imperfect if any of these be wanting.

2. I did not speak of 'two resurrections' in the sense you mean, but rather of two stages of the *one* resurrection, as gathered from Rev. xx. 11-13.

3. As to what will 'suffice,' God Himself has decided that point, and we can but acquiesce! See also what I have said in my first paragraph.

4. In mentioning Elijah as a disembodied spirit, or as one without his proper body, you forgot that he never laid it aside.

5. When you can explain how the identity of your body is maintained, notwithstanding all the changes through which it passes, I may possibly begin to try to tell you 'where the resurrection body is to come from.' See 1 Cor. xv.

6. As to the 'fog' of which you speak, pardon me if I say that I think *you* have created it! You fail to distinguish between things which differ, and then you gravely tax your opponents with being 'in a fog.'

7. Yes, I am perfectly clear that so-called 'Spiritualism' is not of God. If I had space I could fully maintain this proposition. At present I shall only say that there is all the difference in the world between an *unsought message* from the 'other side' and an unwarranted and unwarrantable inquiry. We are not to 'seek,' in this instance, because God has forbidden it! See Isaiah viii. 19-22.

R. MCKENNY, Priest.

Glazeley Rectory, Bridgnorth.

Difficulties.

SIR,—I am grateful to the writer of 'Notes by the Way,' and 'E.F.W.' for their notice of my perplexities, but I am also rather surprised. Brought up in a Calvinistic household, I am well acquainted with a policy which discourages questions, but the breezy pages of 'LIGHT' are the very last quarter in which I expected to find a recrudescence of the chilling 'Hush'! I am at one with 'E.F.W.' in his reverence for love and duty, but does he counsel the suppression of Reason? If so, I invite a perusal of history, especially the history of the Inquisition. The Inquisitors so loved the souls of their victims that duty compelled them to torture and burn the bodies of the latter whenever they got the chance.

I infer from this that our Creator means us to cultivate our reason concurrently with our emotions. I hope I am not crying for the moon. I only intended to ask for 'Light, more light.' I rise from a perusal of Mr. Page Hopps' sermons, of 'Spirit Teachings,' and of 'Q.V.'s' far-reaching communications, feeling fascinated by their many beautiful thoughts, and also puzzled by some seeming inconsistencies. I therefore endeavoured to sharpen the mental outline by appealing to these inspiring thinkers for more light. Should this correspondence happily catch their eye, they will not, I feel confident, set me down as a timid caviller, but rather as one of the humble investigators who, in the words of our grand leader, Sir William Crookes, is earnestly resolved to go straight on, to explore up and down, inch by inch, with the taper, his reason, to follow the light wherever it may lead, even should it at times resemble a will-o'-the-wisp. When at college, my tutors used to caution me strongly against the fatal trick of keeping mutually contradictory ideas in isolated water-tight compartments of my brain. By only trotting out one of these at a time its fallacy is never likely to be exposed. To take an instance: on one page of 'Spirit Teachings' I find a strongly-worded caution against forgetfulness of our individual responsibility for our actions, and a few pages further on an equally decisive affirmation that when we least suspect it our movements are in reality regulated by unseen operators. Is it timid, then, to inquire if I am to consider

myself in the light of a chess-player or a chess-pawn, of a dynamo or an electric current? These are surely very practical questions, to which I entertain no doubt Mr. Page Hopps and 'Q.V.' will kindly give a reply. Thinkers of their stamp do not lay claim to Papal infallibility, but welcome above everything the earnest truth-seeker.

In conclusion, permit me one word to justify my remark that 'many' of us live a hog's life. The writer of your Note on p. 441 says this is an exaggeration. The ink of his pen could scarcely have been dry when a little lower down on the same page he commended certain town councils for endeavouring to enforce 'a clean life' upon the dwellers in their districts. I wonder if your Note writer has ever seen the plague centres of the East, or if he read last week of the horrors of Omdurman as unearthed by our gallant black and white troops. Surely I only spoke the truth.

PUZZLED.

'Spiritual Fellowship.'

SIR,—After reading the address read by Mr. Charles E. Smith, and published in a recent issue of 'LIGHT,' I feel impelled to say a few words in reference to the work carried on by him and his friends. Mr. Charles E. Smith lays great stress on the Harmony of Life—the subordination of the Self to the Divine Will, which influences all and guides each one infallibly to such duties as will be most helpful to himself and others. This to me is the first fundamental step on the part of any person becoming a Spiritualist. What does the word Spiritualist mean? To be spiritual is to be pure. We are no longer satisfied with maintaining and proving facts, *i.e.*, transitory appearances. Yes, I am at one with him there, for we could go on maintaining and proving facts until we left our bodies, and still be at the bottom of the 'Ladder of Progress,' still be as far removed from 'true brotherhood' as ever. It is true that some find sweetness in clairvoyance and psychometry, as is proved by our hall filling on such occasions; but when 'Spiritual Fellowship' here in the body is preached, when brotherhood is talked about, very few care to hear and inwardly digest; but, instead of doing so, they say, 'Impossible,' which only shows that they are still clinging to selfishness and the narrow family circle. Let our circles and platform speakers deal more with true Spiritual Fellowship here in the body instead of giving entertainments; then, and only then, shall they be nearer realising the Kingdom of God on earth.

HENRY BROOKS.

55, Graham-road, Dalston, N.E.

Repressive Laws.

SIR,—Recent communications to your columns by objectors to repressive laws have, I admit, put their case clearly, but in this as in all other subjects, there are two sides to the shield. Our experiences may possibly have been unique, but can we look each other in the face and say that as moral and spiritual reformers we really have set the nineteenth century ablaze?

From careful inquiries and fair observation I would like humbly to state that, amongst possessors of medial gifts, in many ways a sort of moral atavism exists. The name of Spiritualism, in too many centres, has been saturated with a bad odour, and too often has been sneeringly alluded to as 'Fortune Telling.' With such charges confronting us, we may pose as moralists and reformers until Doomsday; but will the world endorse our claims? I feel honestly such a result would be very doubtful. Curiously, for some time now I have been engaged instituting a sort of census relative to recorded successes or failures in occult results through mediumic consultations; and if ever the list sees daylight it would, I assure you, indicate an undesirable chart of misdirections and cross currents, so far as futurity and business advice goes. But we all get here what we seek. Only let us reduce the world of spirit to the low levels of selfish materialism, and what really can the harvest be? I submit that it can be 'nothing but leaves.' Clairvoyance and spiritual prophecies may be, and no doubt are, in their last analysis, perfected sciences, and in judicious hands have often historically been attended with reverential and serious results. Not wishing to pose as a dogmatic

'Sir Oracle,' I still cannot believe that the Divine order would entrust such powers to the mass of mixed-up mediumistic conditions with which the most of us are acquainted. I will rather venture to predict that we are verging on a crisis when our ethical instincts will demand a divergence from such undesirable associations. The future, in our ranks, at least, will demand much loftier ideals than such undesirable methods. Many of your readers will see my point. I will leave the matter here for the present. So far as I am concerned, my opinion is this: The position being already bad, destroy legal control and a deluge will follow. I would not alone protect the irrational public, but I would protect fortune-tellers from themselves.

Newcastle-on-Tyne. W. H. ROBINSON.

A Challenge to the Secularists.

SIR,—Mr. G. W. Foote (editor of the 'Freethinker') gave a lecture recently on the subject of 'Death,' at the Secularists' Rooms in Birmingham, and used the same crude arguments concerning the power of physical dissolution to annihilate man that have been uttered by materialists for the last half century.

Mr. J. W. Mahony promptly invited Mr. Foote to a public discussion on the subject. This challenge has not been accepted. The unwillingness of the official leader of British secularism to meet Mr. Mahony cannot arise from the unfitness of the latter to speak in the name of Spiritualists, as Mr. Mahony met the most scientifically trained leader in the secular camp in the person of the late Dr. Aveling at a two nights' discussion in Liverpool about fifteen years ago; and also Mr. Collins, another philosophical secularist. It is thought that the true explanation of the matter lies in the likelihood that Mr. Foote knows too much of spiritualistic evidences to venture on the public platform in opposition to Spiritualism.

If this assumption be true, what must be said of the honesty of the leaders of Freethought, who preach annihilation and darkness, and refuse to meet the advocates of endless life and increasing light? N. SMITH.

156, Camden-street, Birmingham.

P.S.—Mr. Mahony is willing to give a few free lectures in reply to the secularistic views on 'Death.'

SOCIETY WORK.

BRISTOL, 24, UPPER MAUDLIN-STREET.—On Thursday and Sunday last we had the pleasure of a visit from Mrs. Preece, of Cardiff, who gave a trance address and good clairvoyance, her descriptions being recognised in almost every case. We shall welcome her again when possible. Mr. Hemmings is now supposed to have left Bristol.—W. WEBBER, Sec.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. J. J. Vango occupied our platform and gave excellent clairvoyance. Eleven descriptions were recognised out of fourteen given. The hall was packed, and the audience were greatly interested. On Sunday evening next, at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Orlando Drake. Wednesday, circle as usual, at 155, Richmond-road. Prospective: October 16th, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Brailey.—H. BROOKS, Sec.

HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—On Sunday last the meeting was conducted by Mr. Boddington, with Mrs. Boddington in the chair. From both we had excellent addresses; Mr. Adams, who is always interesting, also spoke well. Mrs. Murrill sang 'Answering Angels,' and short addresses were also given by Mr. Day and Miss Pierpoint. The Battersea Park meeting was a highly satisfactory one, the speakers being Mrs. Boddington, Mr. Boddington, and Mr. Adams. The chair was taken by Mr. Marsh. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., meeting; at 3.30 p.m., park meeting. Thursday, at 8 p.m., developing class. Saturday, at 8 p.m., members' and friends' social evening.—H. P.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST CONFERENCE.—A conference was held at 2, Ford's Park-road, Canning Town, on Sunday last. An open-air meeting was held at 11 a.m., when Mr. Clegg presided. Messrs. Davis, Bullen, Knowles, Brooks, and Mrs. Clegg addressed the meeting. There were about two hundred present. The afternoon conference was held at 3 o'clock, when Mr. H. Brooks, of Hackney, read a paper, subject, 'Spiritualism in Relation to Communism,' after which discussion took place, in which Messrs. Davis, Veitch, Richardson, Bullen, and Clegg took part. At night there was a good audience, when Mr. Drake ably replied to questions from the audience.—M. CLEGG, Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MARONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday morning last our circle was well attended. Mr. Long gave an instructive address, which led to many questions being put, to which satisfactory answers were given. At our evening meeting we had a large and select audience; Mr. J. A. Butcher presided, and Mr. W. E. Long gave the second address of a series of three, on 'The Spirit Senses.' At the after circle, the private developing circles which are held at 12, Lowth-road, were re-formed, many additions having to be made on account of the large increase of our membership. On Monday next our social party will be held at the above hall; tickets, 6d. each.—VERAX.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 14, STROUD GREEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last, Mr. Jones presiding, Mrs. Jones gave an excellent address on maintaining the higher aspects of Spiritualism by giving suitable conditions for the manifestations of the more progressed intelligences. Messrs. T. Brooks, Hewitt, and others also spoke. At the open-air meeting in Finsbury Park Mr. Emms spoke ably on 'The Larger Hope.' Mr. Thompson (who we regret is leaving us for Dover, and who would like to be put into communication with any friends there, with a view to forming a society) spoke on 'Eternal Progression.' Mr. T. Brooks answered questions, and time being up a large number were left discussing the subject among themselves.—T. B.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESRADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD, N.—Mr. Peters occupied our platform last Sunday, and gave an excellent address, followed by some very clear clairvoyant descriptions, the majority of which were recognised. His visit was much appreciated even by those inquirers who were not fortunate enough to get a test. Mr. Peters is indeed very successful with clairvoyance and we look forward to his next visit. On Sunday next, Mr. Sherwood will be with us again and will give an address on 'Animal Magnetism,' dealing especially with Christ's miracles. Friends are requested to note that on Wednesday, 12th inst., at 8 p.m., Miss MacCreadie will give clairvoyance in our hall. We are especially desirous of having a good audience on this night, and we shall be obliged if those intending to be present will come early.—A. CLEGG, Hon. Sec.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—The value to the cause of Spiritualism of the noble and self-denying work of Miss Rowan Vincent was again evidenced on Sunday evening last, when that lady, at a few hours' notice, and after a long and tedious railway journey, occupied our platform and delivered an intensely interesting and practical address concerning the problems that faced inquirers into psychical matters, the difficulties and prejudices to be overcome, and the objections and even dangers to be considered in connection therewith. At the conclusion of her address Miss Vincent gave nine clairvoyant descriptions, and before the meeting dispersed six of them were fully recognised. In one or two instances especially remarkable details were given, which enabled the spirit people described to be at once remembered. It is hardly necessary to add that the numerous audience again and again testified their appreciation of Miss Vincent's services upon this occasion. Next Sunday evening Miss MacCreadie will give clairvoyance at these rooms. Early attendance is particularly requested. Doors open at 6.30 p.m., the meeting commencing at 7 o'clock.—L. H.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. VEITCH.—On Thursday, September 29th, an interesting event took place at the Workman's Hall, West Ham-lane, Stratford. Mr. J. Veitch, whose labours for many years in our cause have won for him many friends and been productive of much good, has been advised to seek rest; and has therefore decided to retire from the more active position he formerly occupied. It was felt, however, that we could not allow such a noble worker to retire without some token of gratitude from us. A committee was therefore formed among the officers of the association, and subscriptions were solicited for the purpose of presenting a testimonial to our esteemed brother. At a meeting of the committee it was decided to present the testimonial on the above date, and a tea and social meeting was therefore arranged to take place. The testimonial took the shape of a purse of money and a framed address; and during the evening these were presented, with a few appropriate remarks by our President, to Mr. Veitch. Mr. Veitch did not feel able to publicly return thanks, but he has subsequently done so by letter. Thanks are due, and are hereby tendered, to the committee; to the ladies who so efficiently assisted with the arrangements for the tea; to Mr. Hayday, who officiated as M.C. at the evening's dancing; to Mr. Shead, for the floral decorations, and to all who contributed to the success of the occasion in any shape or form.—GEO. TAYLER GWINN, President.

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

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (OXON.)'

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held *over*, but not in contact with, it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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