

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	205	'Brain-Waves' or Telepathy	209
Re-incarnation Refuted	206	Is Man God's Failure?.....	210
Answers to Questions. By Mr. J.		A Prophetic Dream	211
J. Morse.....	206	Mr. Robert Cooper (with portrait)	211
'Facts in Magic'.....	208	Unsought Psychological Experiences..	214
Re-incarnation and Divine Justice	208	'How we Master our Fate'	215

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Certain of our correspondents and critics fail to see that we are almost entirely untouched by the assertion that much evil lurks in the path of spirit-communion. Did we ever deny it? Did we ever deny that much evil lurks in almost every path in which we hold communion with our fellow-creatures? What then? The dangers are granted; but what about the helps, the consolations, the hopes? We have a strong bias, we admit, against the policy of hiding the head in the sand—or desertion from real or imaginary dangers.

It is highly probable that the evil, or the danger, very much turns upon the abnormality of the experience. If spirit-communion were more familiar, if it were regarded as natural and normal, a great many of its perils would vanish. We make the thing uncanny, and then wonder that it sometimes becomes uncanny in its results. That is hardly the policy of wisdom.

But even if bad, ay, even if only bad, had we not better have it out with the evil thing? What shall we gain by hiding? If the room is full of bad air, it is best to know it, and then to open windows and doors. If we decline to touch the evil that may lurk within spirit-communion, can we be sure it will not touch us? Had we not better acquaint ourselves with the subtile enemy and his ways?

Still further. All facts are of God,—and, before trial, no one can tell what will come of any experiment or struggle. There is a sense in which it is true that 'whatever is is right.'

In the records of witch findings and witch trials compiled by Cotton Mather in the seventeenth century, there are some extremely curious side-lights concerning Spiritualism. In fact, few chapters in the world's history throw more light upon certain sides of Spiritualism, and few chapters are, in turn, more illumined by Spiritualism. Here is a record of the trial of George Burroughs, of whom Mather says, 'Glad should I have been if I had never known the name of this man, or never had this occasion to mention so much as the first letters of his name.' Here, then, is what Mather says:—

Now, God had been pleased so to leave this G. B. that he had ensnared himself by several instances which were now produced against him. He was a very puny man, yet he had often done things beyond the strength of a giant. A gun of about seven foot barrel, and so heavy that strong men could not steadily hold it out with both hands there were several testimonies, given in by persons of credit and honour, that he made nothing of taking up such a gun behind the lock with but one hand, and holding it out like a pistol at arms-end. G. B., in his vindication, was so foolish as to say that 'an Indian was there, and held it out at the same time.'

Whereas none of the spectators ever saw any such Indian; but they supposed the 'Black Man' (as the witches call the Devil, and they generally say he resembles an Indian) might give him that assistance.

It is evident that poor George was simply a medium, and 'he was so foolish' as to say that an Indian did the feats of strength through him: 'whereas,' says dry old Mather, 'none of the spectators ever saw any such Indian'! But, of course, 'Indian' suggested Devil, and so poor George had to die for having dealings with the Devil; and dull Mather simply says, 'When he came to die he utterly denied the fact whereof he had been thus convicted.' Poor old Mather! Poor George!

Victor Hugo has somewhere a lovely but untranslatable passage which runs something like this:—'Let us live like the bird which alights for an instant on the twig that bends and swings beneath it. But, unfearing, it sings on; for it knows it has wings.' A beautiful reflection! and as true of the human being as of the bird. We alight upon this earth, which itself often seems to yield beneath us; and, day by day, the little twigs of circumstance on which we try for a foothold do the same, but the soul that is fully conscious of itself and of its powers ceases not to sing. It is its own master. It can conquer circumstance. If the branch breaks, it can hold its own and fly on the wings of courage and hope and the supreme sense of self-possession. Or if all should yield and the very earth itself refuse or fail to bear it up, it still conquers. Even death cannot end it. It has wings.

A friend of ours, who persists in discussing all kinds of burning questions, and who has a strange knack of starting questions and making them burn, asked us the other day whether we thought anybody ever spoke the exact truth. This, of course, appeared to us to be a perfectly monstrous question. It was absurd, impertinent, cruel to one's fellow-creatures, and we said so. But, as usual, he stuck to it with puzzling pertinacity. He declared he had never heard two people tell the simplest story in the same way. In his coolly insolent way, he went on to say that not many people intended to tell lies, but that they were all liars all the same. The vast majority, he thought, were influenced by good motives, but he maintained that good motives were responsible for about two-thirds of the lies of the world. At last we grew rather hot over it, and all the more because he appeared to have the best of it. Then he ended by telling a story of a clever girl who had somehow made the same discovery as himself, and who confided to her mother the momentous decision that she did not want to go to Heaven. 'Why?' asked the agitated parent. 'Because,' said the wonderful child, 'because I don't want to be for ever alone with George Washington and God.'

Our readers will be glad to learn that the drizzle of tracts, sermons, and criticisms, attributing all spirit-manifestations to the devil, has almost entirely ceased. We hope we may take some credit to ourselves for the finer

weather. There are reasons for believing that at least one of our arguments has told. It is this:—If all the manifestations on which we rely are satanic, how can we be sure of any influence or inspiration from the Unseen?—how do we know that the spirit-manifestations of the Bible were not precisely what ours are? Perhaps, too, our very severe judges are beginning to find out that their assertions are, after all, merely arbitrary. It is told of President Lincoln that once upon a time, when he wanted to silence and dismiss a deputation of arbitrary people, he said to the leader, 'If you call the tail of a sheep a leg, how many legs will the sheep have?' Of course the poor man said, 'Five' 'Oh, no,' said Lincoln, 'calling the tail a leg wouldn't make it one.' We always thought Lincoln was right.

REINCARNATION REFUTED BY A REINCARNATIONIST.

In a former number of 'LIGHT' I quoted the late Dr. Anna Kingsford's alleged reminiscences of her past human incarnations, and pointed out some glaring inconsistencies. Maitland's 'Life of Anna Kingsford' contains a statement which, if critically analysed, is fatal to the reincarnation hypothesis. Speaking of her childhood, he says (Vol. I., p. 2):—

'She would associate with the flowers on even terms, holding converse with them as sentient beings, and putting into their petals tiny notes addressed to the fairies with whom her fancy tenanted them, and with whom, in virtue of her own fairy-like form, rich golden hair, and deep-set hazel eyes, by turns eager and dreamy, she might well claim affinity. Indeed, in these early days she used to declare that she was really one of them, of fairy and not of human lineage, and to cherish a secret persuasion that only by adoption she was the child of her parents, her true home being in fairyland. It was with descriptions of the beautiful landscapes and palaces which seemed to be clear in her recollection that her first verses were chiefly occupied. She could even recall, she believed, her last interview with the queen of that lovely country, the prayers with which she had sought permission to visit the earth, and the solemn warnings she had received of the suffering and toil she would undergo by assuming a human body, which in her case, she was assured, would greatly exceed those ordinarily allotted to mortals. But she had persisted in coming, being impelled by an overpowering impression of some great and necessary work, on behalf both of herself and of others, which she alone could perform, to be accomplished by her. And her coming had not separated her from her fellow fairies, for they were wont to visit her in dreams; and so real were they for her that, when taken for the first time to see a pantomime, the sight of the fairies in their airy costumes and floral abodes was the signal for her to declare aloud that they were her proper people and she belonged to them, and to cry and struggle so vehemently to get to them that it was necessary to remove her from the theatre.'

Now, if any of her alleged recollections were reliable, it would surely be this one, being the most recent; and it is evident from this description that the warnings said to have been given her presupposed that she had had no past human experience, in which case they would have been unnecessary. Moreover, her reminiscences were of her pre-human existence as a fairy, one of the many elemental races; if, therefore, she had repeatedly reincarnated on the human plane, how came it that before her last incarnation she had fallen to the elemental plane?

This stage of evolution, higher than the animal, but lower than the human, does not seem to be mentioned in theosophical literature; but Mr. T. L. Harris has written much thereon, and claims to remember his pre-human existence. (See 'Respiro's' pamphlet, 'T. L. Harris the Seer'). Here we get another side-light on the hypothesis of reincarnation. If the spirit passes through this *pre-human* stage of evolution and instruction, it is reasonable to conclude that illustrations of actual earth-life would be taught for the purpose of example and warning. These knowledges might, under certain conditions, be dimly recollected, and erroneously identified with past personal experiences.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BY MR. J. J. MORSE.

(Continued from page 197.)

QUESTION: Do the spirits see the sun, moon, or stars? If not, where does their light come from?

REPLY: That opens a very interesting question, sir. What is light? Well (some one may say) 'Light is light': yes, but light after all is a sensation which creates a mode of consciousness and is a something absolutely dependent upon a certain mechanism, to wit, the eye, the nerves associated therewith, and the brain. A man who is blind is one whose optical apparatus does not register the impressions that create the sensation which is recognised by you as light. There is just as much light in the world as ever. No light has gone out, but that man's apparatus will not register the impressions that you call light. Hence, then, your perception of natural phenomena is in strict relation to the perfection of the organisation by which natural phenomena become registered in your consciousness, and translated into the phenomena of existence, as you understand it, subjectively. Suppose, then, a spirit has an eye that is adapted to register certain impressions which in his state of existence give him the consciousness of light. Suppose that spirit comes back into this world; his optical apparatus not registering the vibrations belonging to this world's light, he would be in darkness. That is all. It could not be otherwise. Then go back again to the spirit side. What is the source of the vibrations known as light? Here we must confess that while science and philosophy help you to understand many things, they have hardly reached the position of being able to help you on this point, because the ultimate analysis of all things leads you back to the Incomprehensibility we call God. The Divine activity radiates through the universe, and according to grade and condition produces phenomenal consequences. On the material side you find worlds, systems, suns, universes, so many focalised conditions of Divine action, from each collectively and individually radiating the Divine energies. Philosophy, or rather science, hardly puts it in these terms, expressing it in a more materialistic and mechanical form, but the issue is the same.

When you get into the spiritual world you find there conditions, centres, worlds, which radiate the more subtle powers or forces that flow from, or are the results of, the Divine activity, and such vibrations are related to, or the spiritual organisation is accordant therewith. So that the consciousness over there is informed through the conditions pertaining to it of the phenomenal realities of that world in a way similar to that by which you are informed of the phenomenal realities of this world. There is no necessity for spirits to see the material sun, moon, and stars; but this much is true—they see the spiritual side of those luminaries, for there is a spiritual side to the whole of the material universe. There are spiritual orbs as distinct from the purely material ones, and these have their motions in the universe, have their effect upon the conditions of the spiritual world, radiate their forces and exert their influence, and the spiritual organisation, being correlated thereto, registers into consciousness—translates by registration into consciousness—the experience of light in a way similar to that of yourselves here.

Now when certain spirits come back to you they say they cannot see material things. That is true enough. Very often the material world is dark, blank almost, to them. But when they can come into personal relationship with the consciousness of a human being they are enabled to extend their personality through the subsidiary agency into relationship with the physical world, and then they can see physical things. Otherwise they see only the subjective or spiritual side of the world in which you live. Hence they are very often utterly unable to judge distance, locality, or time, because they are out of proportional relationship with time and space. It should be remembered that there is a spiritual side to this material world which is luminous to the spirit entering into it. There is also the independent spiritual realm which has its luminosity through the vibration of the ethers there. Nature never contradicts herself on either side of the condition man calls the line of death.

Her laws and principles everywhere prevail. There are differences in the method of manifestation, but the essential purpose or cause of it holds true throughout the universe.

The remainder of the replies must, for the sake of brevity, be given in a summarised form.

QUESTION : How do the regulation prayers of a monastery or convent impinge upon the spirit world ?

In reply, the speaker said there were various kinds of prayers. Prayers that were simply mechanical, that were devoid of earnestness or purpose, simply flowed out on to the psychical atmosphere and dropped dead. Other prayers, born of the struggles of the soul, the needs of life, coming out of great griefs or glorified happiness, flowed forth as living realities—divine vibrations one might almost call them—on to the spiritual atmosphere ; and whosoever came within the range of such prayers felt their influence. The prayers of those who desired things holy, pure and good, entered those spheres where holiness, purity and goodness prevailed, and brought back answering inspirations. Prayers addressed to some personality in the spirit world—one of its great and good inhabitants, no matter whom—were sometimes responded to. It was necessary to utter a word of caution against the idea that if one prayed direct to God, the Deity would directly answer the prayer. There was an immeasurable distance between the very wisest and best of human life and the Divine Existence, and God always worked through intermediaries, never directly.

QUESTION : Suppose that one has the power to separate the spirit from the body, what are the special dangers that beset the spirit when first emancipated ?

In reply, the speaker said the especial danger was this : Such liberation was only accomplished when the person was deep in natural sleep or in the induced sleep of somnambulism. When it was accomplished the spiritual part was attached to the material brain and personality by a long, thin, slender cord—'the silver cord.' So long as that cord remained intact return was possible, but instantly the cord was snapped return became impossible. The sudden disturbance of the sleep, any unexpected cataclysm occurring in the organisation itself, any strong will directed against the temporarily-liberated spirit, might snap that silver cord and so prevent the spirit returning. This, under ordinary circumstances, might be considered danger enough. But there were still other dangers. The spirit might be making certain investigations, and become so absorbed and interested in what it was doing under the new conditionings that it might forget all about its sleeping body. Frantic efforts might be made by the human mesmerist to bring back the spirit. These might set up perturbations and disturbances along the line of connection and produce a certain shock in the spirit itself, leading to the disruption of the line. Generally speaking, it was better to exercise psychical powers only up to the limit of withdrawing the spirit from bodily relationships.

QUESTION : Swedenborg states that he had open vision into the spiritual world for twenty-five years *continuously*. Can this be claimed for any modern seer ?

In reply the control said : There are doubtless seers in existence to-day who can lay claim to an experience of similar length. Possibly a little inquiry would elicit the facts. If we mistake not, there are two somewhat noted seers in the ranks of your American brethren—Andrew Jackson Davis and Hudson Tuttle—who have virtually enjoyed a like acquaintance with the circumstances of spirit life.

QUESTION : Do we stop the progress of souls to a higher sphere by continually inviting communion with them ?

In the course of his answer to this question, the control said : When a soul is 'stopped' from going on to a higher sphere, it is evidence either that it is capable of being held back and therefore not fitted for that higher sphere, or that it voluntarily relinquishes its desire in favour of doing some temporary good work. You have to decide under which view the matter should be judged. It seems to us that if a man is capable of going to a higher sphere he has unfolded in will, intelligence, and wisdom, and is therefore unlikely to be held back unless he voluntarily elects to remain in a lower state.

QUESTION : Is it possible for every living person to com-

municate with those that have passed away ? Can every spirit hold communication with people still living here ?

In reply, the control said : As a latent possibility the contention is correct. As a practical experience, it is not correct. All people possess the relationships latent within them that associate them with the spiritual side of life, but only some people have those capabilities developed. All spirits possess potentially the capabilities of returning to earth and manifesting their presence through mediums, but only some spirits have developed themselves so that they can utilise the agencies by which such return is accomplished.

QUESTION : Do spirits write letters to one another in the other life ?

The reply was in the affirmative. But there were other and subtler methods than the conventional one of using pen, ink, and paper. It was possible, for instance, for a spirit, by the power of the will, to telegraphically, or telepathically, write across the ether a message that, impinging upon the brain of the person for whom it was intended, set up its corresponding characters, and became translated into intelligence in the mind of the recipient. It was also possible for the spirit to actually materialise from the surrounding elements the substances necessary to inscribe its thoughts in suitable characters when writing to its friends. Spirits could also utilise the atmosphere of the spirit world and project thereon numerous characters conveying intelligible messages to their friends in distant localities. These were all possibilities of the higher and greater culture of will possessed by spirits.

QUESTION : How is Christ regarded in 'Tien's' sphere ?

In replying, the control said that amongst the spirits with whom he was associated, Jesus Christ was regarded as one of the world's heroes and martyrs whose example in many respects the nineteenth century might copy a little more closely than at present.

QUESTION : As most spiritualistic phenomena appear to require a negative disposition for their manifestation, is it not useless, in most cases, for persons of a very positive type to sit for development ?

The control said it was not always useless. In his opinion the best class of personal phenomena—that which involved trance, clairvoyance, clairaudience, and impressions—would always be found in association with the highest type of intelligence and mind. It was a mistake to suppose that the purely negative condition was absolutely necessary in such cases. What was required was that the mind and will should be trained to co-operate with the spirit operators and not act in opposition thereto. 'We should like,' the control continued, 'to disabuse the minds of Spiritualists entirely of the supposition that mediumship means the surrender of personality and character. It should mean the cultivation of these things so that the highest abilities of the individual should be at the service of the spirit operators.'

QUESTION : Are spirits more in touch with their friends on earth immediately after passing over or must they wait some time before they can communicate with or influence them ?

Dealing with this question, the control said it depended upon the condition of the spirit personally. If the spirit was one that had lived an aspirational or spiritual life, then, as a result, it passed, when leaving the body, into a spiritual state, and did not at first experience any desire to return to the lower life. When it grew wiser, and learned that life is high or low according to the use men make of it, then it might return, and endeavour to come into contact with the life of this world again.

QUESTION : Space in the world is limited. Souls coming into the world exceed considerably the souls leaving it. Consequences, so far as we can see, seem to point to a time when the whole inhabitable surface of the globe will be covered with human beings, allowing no room for animal or vegetable products necessary for the maintenance of bodily life. This, we think, would mean great distress and starvation to the people. This seems a great calamity towards which we are proceeding. Could 'Tien' give us any light on the subject ?

The control replied, in substance, that this would be perfectly true if the rate of human reproduction continued in the same ratio as it had been in the past and was to-day. Experience showed, however, that the higher the race

developed, the higher it rose in the scale of culture and civilisation, the less prolific it became. It was only in the lower conditionings of the human race that this fecundity, which appeared to afflict the minds of certain philosophers, really prevailed. If the race was progressing, then the rate of reproduction was bound to decrease in proportion to the cultivation of the higher nature of mankind.

QUESTION: Is there any correspondent form in physical science to the spiral movements continually given through the hands in automatic training?

In reply, the control said that the spiral of lines of force was certainly one of the forms in which force exercised its energy, and there must certainly be correspondences in the line of physical forces to the spiral so frequently made through the hands of writing mediums.

QUESTION: We suffer here and hereafter from our organisation and surroundings, neither of which we can help. Can 'Tien' reconcile this with eternal justice?

The control said it was difficult to suggest that such was not in accord with eternal justice, because one simple law was involved—action and reaction inevitably followed each other as a sequence all through the Universe. And in the course of a lengthy reply he showed that human evil and injustice were the outcome of human ignorance and folly, and the remedy was in the hands of man himself. To arraign God's justice was always unwise until men had exhausted human capabilities. When God created man He endowed him with every faculty to overcome the difficulties he might encounter; otherwise the creation of the race would have been a failure and God a bungler.

The proceedings concluded with the customary vote of thanks.

'FACTS IN MAGIC.'

Under this heading the Editor of 'The Theosophist' (Adyar, Madras), in his issue for April, tells the following marvellous story. We do our best to keep an open mind, as far as possible—but there must be a limit somewhere, and we are afraid that we must for the present fix it here:—

A gentleman in the Madras Presidency, occupying an influential position, and whose word may well be accepted, has told the writer of some experiences of his own that are interesting as illustrating the occult knowledge and powers possessed by some of the natives of India. He had heard of a man who had the reputation of being able to manufacture an ointment that if applied in a stipulated manner, would, for a short time, render the person experimenting invisible to every one. After some difficulty the man was found, and finally consented, on receiving fifty rupees, to sell a small portion of the magic unguent, which he declared, if properly applied, would render the purchaser invisible for over ten minutes.

Our friend took his purchase home, and proceeded at once to a large open balcony, where he applied the ointment to his forehead in the prescribed place and manner.

At once he called out sharply for his servant, 'Boy!' The man replied, and came running into the balcony in all haste, stopped, looked bewildered, and went to another room calling out 'Master!' He had evidently not seen anyone on the balcony.

Again the call was given, 'Boy!' and again the perplexed servant returned, and finally ran right into his master.

He became frightened at being able to feel but not see, and when questioned declared he could not see his master although standing close to him.

Our friend, although in the sunlight, was unable to see any shadow cast by his body, and on going to a looking-glass, utterly failed to perceive his reflection there.

Shortly after the ten minutes had elapsed, his form gradually became visible both to himself and others, until it assumed its normal condition.

Our friend returned to the sorcerer and offered to purchase the secret of the manufacture of this most potent and extraordinary unguent, but failed to obtain his wish, as the purchase price was altogether beyond his means, reaching to many thousands of rupees.

REINCARNATION AND DIVINE JUSTICE.

By 'EXCELSIOR'—RIO DE JANEIRO.

(Continued from page 185.)

II.

The evident incompatibility of the conditions of isolated corporeal existence with the perfect justice inseparable from a conception of the Supreme Being, is alone amply sufficient to justify, and is indeed the base and starting point of, our beliefs.

Yet by considering more positive questions involved, new difficulties arise with each step of investigation. For instance, it is impossible to conciliate an eternal law of material evolution with the hypothesis that man is but temporarily subject to its action; nor can we logically suppose that after a few fleeting years of incomprehensible and, in this light, purposeless existence, all the subtle relations between matter and spirit are as abruptly and irrevocably ruptured as if but abstractions rather than a manifest part of the divine plan! Thus every effort of reason fails to fathom the mystery, and we are almost tempted to demand why matter was created, or at least why man has been made temporarily subservient to this universal law, if destined to eventual exclusion from its action?

But is this arbitrary assumption justified? Do the advocates of the theory of absolute spirituality really comprehend what it implies, or the infinity of modifications and conditions which govern an alliance so presumptuously derogated? And it is well to remember that the hypothesis of literal and permanent spirituality not only arrogates to the creature the exclusive attribute of the Creator, but revives the most mystical difficulties of ancient dogmas, and renders impossible a rational comprehension of either the past, present, or future of humanity, from whatever point of view considered.

If the spiritualist hypothesis *does* exclude the idea of any alliance with matter, how is man's destiny presumed to be accomplished; of what use knowledge laboriously acquired but definitely annulled by a transition that creates the most opposite conditions; and how harmonise the conviction that all effort or study is destined to fructify if these conditions must neutralise the development and application of peculiar knowledge only materially available?

All rational faith inspires the belief that God has created nothing without a purpose, and that all that is must necessarily be destined to *permanent* mission in the universal design. The ideal of future absolute spirituality vitiates this faith, whilst, as Kardec justly says: 'The belief in reincarnation opens more extended horizons, for in place of the narrow perceptions which concentrate to present life the starting point of eternity, it shows that this is but a link in the grand harmony of the Creators' design; shows the connections between the existences of the same creatures, all creatures of the same world and those of all worlds.'

And it does more; for it is at once eminently consolatory and a source of true resignation and hope. Without it, man cannot see any justification of earthly trials; with it, all is logically explained, and that which before appeared as arbitrary and capricious, is seen to be merited and just. Where all was doubt and darkness, faith and light are substituted: not the blind faith of the fanatic, but the reality sanctioned by reason.

To the sincere believer, there is not a single anomaly of life that cannot thus be explained. We understand that the present is literally a reflection of the past, and comprehend the *raison d'être* of all that before confounded reason and faith. We become convinced that of all previously acquired, nothing is lost; and that if each turpitude of the past must be expiated, each virtue will be rewarded. Thus, he who now suffers misery and degradation may understand that these are the results of former abuse of riches and social advantages; he who is afflicted by physical or mental incapacity may be morally certain of having before misused the faculties now wanting; he who is tortured through his affections has despised and tortured those who once loved him.

And such conclusions are far from being vaguely indicated to those who honestly and intelligently study the

tendencies of their first years, and the prominent features of present character, for by such analysis can be formed a tolerably correct conception of probable cause and effect, and relation of past and present.

If we see the wicked prosper, and the just suffer, this in no way affects confidence in divine justice, and while pitying the one, we congratulate the other, because convinced that the former is incurring a debt that the latter is cancelling.

Thus is logically vindicated the ideal of infinite justice and wisdom; thus is confirmed the eternal and impartial application of the universal law—'To each according to his works'—from which all deviation is impossible.

The 'John Brown' creation before alluded to, though unworthy of serious consideration, at least indicates how little known or understood are the theories which form the base of our beliefs.

The spirit may be reincarnated in the same world, but this does not imply a literal, grotesque, and useless identity, nor can such proposition be found in our doctrine. True, the collective principles we advocate sanction the theory of plurality of existences on the same planet, and their true significance is perfectly logical.

Many intermediate causes may temporarily prevent a revival of *conscious* identity, and we believe that for wise purposes each successive existence is to external perception isolated; that each individual gyrates in the apparently exclusive circle of present effort; as, otherwise, the merit of progress would be annulled.

But we also believe that our spiritual selves retain the identity that is a necessary link in the solidarity of existences, and without which our personality would be virtually annihilated by death. This identity, however, is latent during incarnation, or only manifested indirectly, though sometimes, under exceptional conditions, more positive indications are obtained. We maintain that the peculiar demonstration of character, inclination, and aptitude so common in early life and otherwise unexplainable, may rationally be considered as eloquent proofs of what we assert, and that, therefore, the present is, to a great extent, the mirror of the past, as it also the factor of the future.

If the inhabitants of our planet were all exactly on the same intellectual and moral level, greater progress could only be attained by migration to others more advanced, and reincarnation here would therefore be without utility. As nothing is permitted without a purpose, if every degree of terrestrial intelligence and morality had already been traversed, there would then be no necessity to return.

But insignificant as is our world compared with many others more advanced, it is higher in the scale than those we have probably once inhabited; retarded as it must now appear to those emancipated from its conditions, it before aided their advancement; however repugnant be the misery, vice, and egotism of this unhappy world, it yet affords a vast field for relative progress. We must, like schoolboys, work our way from rudiments to perfect knowledge, but there is no more necessity of transfer to new worlds at each step of progress, than for a student to change his college with each class; indeed, for many reasons, this would evidently be an obstacle to advancement, unless the conditions of all worlds were the same.

I noticed in 'LIGHT' of November 25th, 1896, the following: 'A reincarnated spirit, unconscious of its previous existences, would really be another person, as much so (so far as individuality is concerned) as a fresh creation would be.'

Here, again, is an assumption that necessitates a partial repetition of our arguments. The hypothesis advanced much resembles a supposition that because a sleeper is temporarily unconscious of previous events his identity is lost! For an infinity of reasons relating to past faults, retardment, or progress, the conscious solidarity of different incarnations is wisely suspended. We may have traversed many opposite degrees of social position; may have been princes or mendicants, rich or poor, free or slaves, without any direct recollection persisting of these incidents of our evolution, and the only vestiges are the sentiments of pride or humility, vanity or resignation, tyranny or submission, engendered by intuition.

Still, we maintain that the intellectual and moral level

previously attained will predominate, and be manifested now; that the reminiscences of the past subsist and are universally indicated by intuitions which powerfully affect our present lives, characters, and actions. In this sense, though far from imagining that the Kean of a past incarnation will return as a notable actor, or that the former poet, painter, philosopher, inventor, or mechanic will directly manifest identical abilities, we consider that solidarity with the past is proved.

(To be continued.)

'BRAIN-WAVES' OR TELEPATHY.

The 'Daily Chronicle' calls attention to the fact that in the May number of the 'Nineteenth Century' the editor, Mr. James Knowles, republishes a letter which he sent to the 'Spectator' just thirty years ago. It was one of the earliest statements of the theory of 'brain-waves,' or telepathy, as most students of such phenomena would call it now, and Mr. Knowles recurs to his old hypothesis, because it appears to him to be largely confirmed by the success of Signor Marconi's wireless telegraphy. In wireless telegraphy a message can be passed through space, for great distances, from brain to brain in the entire absence of any known means of physical communication. To explain this in any terms we must assume, says the 'Chronicle,' the existence of an ethereal medium pervading space. Through this medium an electric energy derived from the cells of an ordinary galvanic battery acts, and reflects, as it were, upon another delicately contrived apparatus which serves as receiver. Now, why, asks Mr. Knowles, should not such a mechanism as the human brain generate and emit tremors or waves of energy which such sensitive 'receivers' as other human brains might catch and feel, without the usual channels of sensation? The idea occurred to him after witnessing some mesmeric performances as long ago as 1851, and under Tennyson's encouragement, he formulated it in a letter to the 'Spectator' in 1869, as mentioned above.

In that letter he quotes one or two very notable instances within the experience of men whose word is above suspicion. One is Robert Browning, whose natural bias was strongly averse to Spiritualism and magic of all kinds. Indeed, his one serious disagreement with his poet-wife concerned this very point. Yet he told Mr. Knowles that in Florence he met a Count Ginnasi, who professed clairvoyant powers, and when Browning gave him a gold stud, which he had never worn before or told anyone about, the Count said, 'There is something here which cries in my ear, "Murder, murder!"' That stud had been taken from the body of Browning's great uncle, who was murdered on his estate in St. Kitt's eighty years before. A more familiar case of 'second sight,' at the death of an intimate, though far-off friend, was given Mr. Knowles by Woolner, the sculptor; and Tennyson himself once mesmerised a patient, who became so susceptible that he felt the poet's approach by railway two hours before he arrived, and in one case was aware that he had been near the house the day before, though all denied it, including Tennyson himself, who for the moment, had forgotten the fact!

'Such stories must, of course,' the 'Chronicle' suggests, 'be invariably received with the utmost scepticism. We must allow no new force or magic or Spiritualism or anything of the kind as long as any possible explanation on the ordinary lines of Nature can be suggested. But the case for telepathy is becoming almost too strong to be resisted. Even the scepticism of the Psychical Research Society is hardly proof against it now.'

So, in the matter of telepathy, at least, one would suppose that the 'Chronicle' is a full fledged believer, and feels itself justified in rebuking 'the scepticism' of the Society for Psychical Research! In truth, however, some of the leading minds of the Society for Psychical Research believe in telepathy, not only between the living, but also between the living and the so-called dead. This the 'Chronicle,' no doubt, at present regards as not being 'on the ordinary lines of Nature,' whatever that may mean. But it is not long since the 'Chronicle' scorned telepathy altogether! To be sure its progress has been little and slow—but the signs are hopeful!

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT, 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
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EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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IS MAN GOD'S FAILURE?

That is a shocking question, some will say. We sincerely hope it will seem so to some who need it. The time has fully come for very plain speaking respecting the most shocking article of belief that ever afflicted weary and heavy-laden humanity;—the belief that the Almighty and All-wise God would condemn a portion of the human race (and His creatures) to an eternity of hopeless and helpless misery.

It may be said that this is setting forth to slay the thrice slain. We wish this were true. True it is that the leading spirits in all the churches have drifted away from the old superstition, or are in active and even scornful opposition to it, but we are sorry to say that vast numbers of the rank and file are just where they were, learning nothing and forgetting nothing, true to that greatest of all delusions in Christendom, that all the truth has been revealed, that God has spoken once for all, and that there is only one court of appeal;—A Book. And so, strange as it may seem, civilised and kindly English men and women go on believing—or shall we say, go on thinking they are believing?—that God will do what, so far as we know, no earthly ruler would do; for there is not the slightest evidence that any ruler upon this planet would consign his bitterest enemy to an eternity of unimaginable misery.

But even the most stolid believers in this central horror of Christendom have been insensibly influenced by the Time-spirit. No respectable or entirely sane preacher now 'piles up the agony' as Jonathan Edwards or the early Moody or Spurgeon did. Take, for instance, the following passage from Reynolds' rather famous work, 'The State and Economy of the Angelic World':—

So high and great, so incomparably supreme is God, that ten thousand times ten thousand most miserably tormented spirits shall not in the least be pitied or regarded by Him to all eternity; ten thousand times ten thousand most doleful sighs, and shrieks, and groans, and yellings, and roarings, and howlings, under the most exquisite torture and anguish of spirit, shall not meet with the least pity, compassion, or relenting unto all eternity. O, the dignity of that Being that has an everlasting hell to be the representation or the triumph of His grandeur. There He rides in magnificent though gloomy state, and marches over a world of damned heads with most uncommiserating disregard and disdain. Over the gates of hell may be written—'Holy and reverend is His name.' There He is tremendously aggrandised.

Who raves like that now? But it was quite the fashion fifty years ago. And even yet the echoes creep in. Here before us is one of the nicest of modern hymn-books, including hymns by Stopford A. Brooke, Oliver Wendell

Holmes, J. Page Hopps, S. Longfellow, and others, and yet what do we find? Such verses as these:—

Return, O wanderer, to thy home!
'Tis madness to delay:
There are no pardons in the tomb,
And brief is mercy's day.

The rhyming is not good, and the assertion is odious. But this is perhaps worse:—

Soon as from earth I go,
What will become of me?
Eternal happiness or woe
Must then my portion be.
I must from God be driven,
Or with my Saviour dwell;
Must come at His command to heaven,
Or else—depart to hell.

And there is plenty more of the same sort: and people think they believe it, and even talk of it as 'The Gospel,' as though one should talk of a black bluebell.

Now what is this but to attribute to our Heavenly Father an appalling failure? In fact, the whole scheme of salvation and condemnation, as held by the writers of these terrible hymns and the good but queer people who like to sing them, is based upon a catastrophe which makes it impossible logically to talk of God as almighty or all-good. The honest truth is that a good deal of what we call 'Christianity' is only a kind of baptised Paganism, and it cannot be denied that it is a part of the mission of Spiritualists to say so, and not to be over-tender about it, either. That popular hero, General Gordon, though in nearly all respects keenly 'evangelical,' set us a good example here. He said:—

Nothing can be more abject and miserable than the usual conception of God. Imagine to yourself, what pleasure would it be to Him to burn us or to torture us? Can we believe any human being capable of creating us for such a purpose? Would it show His power? Why, He is omnipotent! Would it show His justice? He is righteous—no one will deny it. We credit God with attributes which are utterly hateful to the meanest of men. Looking at our darkness of vision, how can He be what we credit Him with? I quite wonder at the long time it has taken us to see that the general doctrine of the Church is so erroneous. Think over what I say. Is not the preaching of every place of worship you have ever entered this? 'If you do well, you will be saved; if you do ill, you will be damned.' Where is the Gospel or 'good news' in this? When one thinks of the millions on whom weighs that yoke of bondage, one wonders. I do not know a single person who says the real truth straight out. When one thinks of the real agony one has gone through in consequence of false teaching, it makes human nature angry with the teachers who have added to the bitterness of life.

General Gordon knew his Bible as well as most men, and, though probably fully alive to the dark side of the shield, it is certain that he saw the bright side. Here and there, in the Bible, the lightning seems to flash in our eyes, but the general drift is all the other way, with at least a strong bias in favour of the conclusion that there is hope for all, through the infinite justice, mercy and power of God.

And certainly all natural law points that way. Nature has her tragic and inexorable duties, but everywhere she suggests advance, uplifting, emancipation. There are glooms; but the glories far predominate. On the whole, evolution proves itself at every turn. Are we not bound to prolong that into the Unseen?

Modern civilisation, again, suggests the same Gospel of hope: and what is modern civilisation but a product of evolution—evolution on the social side of human life? Again there are dark spots, but, on the whole, society is enormously advancing in the direction of dealing with every thing and every one for their betterment. Except in our treatment of the so-called 'lower' races, respect for human life has increased beyond all computation; and, though long delayed, the Gospel of prison reform is solidly making way. Already we are sufficiently ashamed of

hanging to get it through out of sight. Presently we shall not tolerate it at all. We try to reform our failures. Will God be left alone to only hide or torment His?

One thing, at all events, must be clear to every instructed Spiritualist,—that God can deal with His creatures only as spiritual beings, and for what they are as such:—nothing arbitrary, nothing vindictive, nothing unalterable. Hence, and hence alone, we arrive at the idea of Divine Justice. Another thing is nearly as clear,—that there can be no real and permanent waste in the Universe. There is at work, at the present moment, a mechanism which, by a deep inbreathing, takes into custody the rubbish of a factory floor, and conveys it to a furnace, where it is utilised to provide motive power for the engine which does all the work. The rubbish is not burnt in anger, neither is it wasted. What if 'Our God is a consuming fire' in the rational mechanic's sense? Can we utilise our refuse: and must He only waste it? Dr. Peebles has told us how he saw delicious grapes growing in Palestine, in that very Gehenna which gave to Christ his analogy as to the undying (or unfailing) worm and the unending fire. Well! we will not only hope, we will rise to an assurance, based on the fullest faith in God, that He will have no failures, but that, in the end, every Hell will yield its fruits and flowers.

'QUÆSTOR VITÆ' AND THE BANGS SISTERS.

A few weeks ago we published some communications from the pen of 'Quæstor Vitæ' defending the Bangs Sisters from charges of fraud, which had been brought against them by Dr. Hodgson. We are now in receipt of a long contribution from Dr. Hodgson in reply—so long, indeed, that it would be impossible to find space for it in a single number of 'LIGHT.' It is clearly our duty, however, in fairness to Dr. Hodgson, to lay it before our readers, and we shall therefore print it *in extenso*, giving the first instalment in next week's issue.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A Social Meeting of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall (entrance from Regent-street), at 7 for 7.30 p.m., on Thursday *next*, May 11th, when

MRS. BESSIE RUSSELL-DAVIES

has kindly consented to give a narrative of some of her most notable

MEDIUMISTIC EXPERIENCES,

and it is hoped that some friends will also contribute illustrations of clairvoyance.

Music and Refreshments during the evening.

Admission will be *by ticket only*. Two tickets will be sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can, on application to the Secretary of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. 6d. each.

A PROPHECIC DREAM.

The following prophetic dream is related by the president of a Theological Seminary in the United States. It had been the custom of one of the professors to invite all the students with members of the Faculty to dinner at a hotel on the annual Thanksgiving Day. On the morning of that day the wife of this professor suddenly fell dead in her dressing-room at eight o'clock. That morning at seven o'clock one of the students woke up from a bad dream. He had dreamed that he sat down with the usual company at the Thanksgiving dinner, and that immediately one of his fellow-students rose in his place, saying that it was his painful duty to announce to the company that the wife of their host had suddenly died at eight o'clock that morning. This dream, however, he had instantly banished from his mind as an uncanny improbability, and had thought no more of it. But on going to the dinner and taking his seat with the company he was unspeakably amazed to see the student seen in the dream rise, and to hear him make the announcement heard in the dream. Subsequently he related this experience to the president.—From 'The Christian World' of April 20th.

MR. ROBERT COOPER.

We are indebted to a friend for the following particulars regarding Mr. Robert Cooper, whose name for about thirty-five years has been familiar as that of a zealous and indefatigable worker in the cause of Modern Spiritualism:—

Mr. Cooper was born on the banks of the Thames, at Rotherhithe, in the year 1821. his father carrying on business there as an apothecary and surgeon. His father's only brother, Mr. John Thomas Cooper, was a noted scientist in his day. He was a lecturer on chemistry, and, as a consulting chemist, did much to develop arts and manufactures in his time. He was also the first to apply the oxy-hydrogen limelight to the microscope; and his son, who was chemist at the Polytechnic Institution, was one of the first to



MR. ROBERT COOPER.
(From a photograph by Lavis, Eastbourne.)

popularise photography. Under his supervision three establishments were started in London, and that was really the commencement of photographic portraiture in this country by the daguerreotype process.

Mr. Cooper's parents dying when he was very young, he was placed under the care of his mother's sister, residing at Eastbourne, of which town his mother was a native. Here he was educated; and after passing two years at Brighton, and about the same period at Hastings, in being initiated into the business of chemist and druggist, he commenced business on his own account at Eastbourne in 1843, soon after marrying a sister of his old schoolmaster's wife.

Whilst living, as a boy, with his mother's relatives at Eastbourne, he used frequently to hear of strange occurrences happening to a young lady, a cousin, who was evidently a medium. On the death of any member of the family she generally had some intimation of the event. Thus, on one occasion when a female relative died, a cold white hand came on hers, as she was about to fill a scuttle with coals in the coal-cellar, which alarmed her so much that she threw down the shovel, rushed into the sitting-room, and sinking into a chair covered her face with her hands, and did not speak for some time, when she told what had happened. On another occasion she was taken by the shoulders and turned round, when she saw the form of her grandmother, sister of the relative alluded to. These two old ladies filled the office of postmistress, and one having died the other followed very soon afterwards. Such was the kind of incident Mr. Cooper was familiar with in his boyish days. They used to make him feel nervous and afraid to be left alone, especially in the dark; and when in after years he read Mrs. Crowe's 'Night Side of Nature,' he became more 'superstitious' than

ever. The father of the family was somewhat of a 'free-thinker,' and the wife and daughters, who were piously inclined, were very much concerned about him. He had an inveterate hatred of 'parsons,' and one of his favourite books was Howitt's 'History of Priestcraft.' Thus it will be seen that Mr. Cooper was brought up in a conflicting religious atmosphere, which, no doubt, accounts for his not entertaining any settled religious convictions.

During fourteen years he attended regularly the Established Church. Being a lover of music, the musical portion of the services had a charm for him, and for about a year he officiated as organist. After his wife's death, although he could not help thinking of her as still living, his mind, being unable to accept the doctrines of the 'orthodox' school, began to assume a materialistic tendency, and he became more sceptical in regard to religion, and wrote an

essay embodying his views. But the remedy which was to solve all his soul's doubts and difficulties was at hand.

INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUALISM.

In the year 1862, Mr. J. H. Powell came to Eastbourne to lecture on the subject of Mesmerism. The lectures were attended by Mr. Cooper, who invited Mr. Powell to his house, when the subject of Spiritualism became the topic of conversation. Mr. Cooper had just read the article by Robert Bell in the 'Cornhill,' 'Stranger than Fiction,' giving an account of séances with Mr. Home; and the experiences of Mr. Powell greatly interested him. A few months afterwards he met Mr. Powell in Holborn, when, after the interchange of a few remarks, Mr. Powell said, 'Would you like to go to a medium? there is one lives close by'; and Mr. Cooper assenting, they turned into King-street and visited Mrs. Marshall. The three sat at a small table; and raps promptly came, by which the presence of 'John Colman' was intimated. This was an uncle of Mr. Cooper's who had died a few weeks before, and to whom Mr. Cooper had been appointed executor. Other manifestations occurred, but this was the most striking and important. Mr. Powell soon afterwards, at the suggestion of Mr. Cooper, took up his residence at Eastbourne, where the subject was followed up, mediums were developed, and much interest was excited; the matter being taken up by the local newspapers in the town and neighbourhood. Several clergymen took part in the discussion, and one of them, who lived in some rural district, said 'the matter had gone far enough, and must be put a stop to!' Mr. Cooper, having seen enough to satisfy himself that Professor Faraday's theory of 'involuntary muscular action' would not account for the movement of tables, wrote to that gentleman, asking him if he still held to that theory. He received the following letter in reply:—

'ROYAL INSTITUTION.

'January 31st, 1863.

'SIR,—My opinion is in no way changed in character, but greatly strengthened. Nobody has ever been able to *show me* the effect, therefore I have no occasion to show a cause. I do not believe those who say they have seen it. I doubt their competency to examine facts, and evidence of facts, and think their statements as of no value for the cause of science and simple truth. When they can lift a table in the air in the presence of parties adverse to them in opinion, and subject what they think can be done to strict and cross examination, then it may be worth while to think about the cause.

'Very truly yours,

'Mr. Cooper.

'M. FARADAY.'

After further experience Mr. Cooper again wrote, giving a detailed account of experiments he had made to satisfy himself that the table was not moved by the muscular action of those sitting around it, either voluntarily or involuntarily excited, and that he had seen a table move *without contact*. The following is the learned Professor's reply:—

'THE GREEN, HAMPTON COURT,

'September 25th, 1863.'

'SIR,—I hasten to acknowledge your letter, for I freely admit my belief that you are perfectly sincere and truthful in your account and experiments; nevertheless I refer you to my former letter for my answer now. Your observation that you have the greatest confidence in your colleagues makes me smile when I call to mind certain investigations that have come to my knowledge in former cases. I do not doubt your competency to check the facts, if you are willing to work with an unbiassed mind; but I decline to enter into the matter.

'Very truly yours,

'R. Cooper, Esq.

'M. FARADAY.'

LECTURING ON SPIRITUALISM.

A lecturing tour was now entered upon, commencing with two addresses given by Mr. Cooper at Eastbourne, at the second of which great astonishment was manifested at an experiment that was made. A medium went on the platform, and, placing her hands on a table, loud knocks were made by the legs striking on the floor. Mr. Cooper sat among the audience with an alphabet in hand. Then these words were spelt out: '*You must all believe in Spiritualism, for the truth will come out.*' Mr. Cooper next visited the town of Lewes, where he received very rough treatment at the hands of a rowdy and bigoted mob. Hastings and Brighton were afterwards visited, and a lecturing tour, extending to Southampton, and including the principal towns in the Isle of Wight, was undertaken. The lectures were not largely attended, but through reports of them in the newspapers great publicity was given to the subject, and thousands of persons for the first time thus heard of Modern Spiritualism.

'THE SPIRITUAL TIMES.'

The 'Spiritual Times' was now started, being the first weekly spiritualist journal published in England. The first four numbers were ordinary newspaper size, the first page of which only was devoted to spiritual matter, the remaining three consisting of general news. It was then resolved to reduce the size of the paper and to devote its columns wholly to Spiritualism. After a few numbers had been printed in Eastbourne, the work was undertaken by Mr. Job Cauldwell, 335, Strand, who acted as printer and publisher for several months, Mr. Powell acting as editor. Then premises were hired in Newman-street, Oxford-street, at a rental of £140 per annum, where an institution was opened under the name of the 'Spiritual Lyceum,' and was used as a publishing office, reading-room, &c., where lectures were given and meetings held, and where at length the 'Spiritual Times' was printed and published. All this expense—amounting to about £350 a year—was borne solely by Mr. Cooper. Mr. G. J. Holyoake, Mr. Moncure D. Conway, and the late Mr. Walter Weldon were occasional attendants at the meetings, and the two former had generally something to say in the way of criticism.

Soon after Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten's arrival in England, arrangements were made by Mr. Cooper for her to give two lectures in the large hall that formed part of the premises, then known as 'Cambridge Hall.' These were of a most successful character, the building being filled in every part, and the lecturer being listened to with spell-bound interest by the enthusiastic audiences. These were con-

sidered at the time the best meetings that had then been held, and it is doubtful whether more important meetings of a popular character in connection with Spiritualism have since taken place. Mr. Cooper subsequently hired the Polygraphic Hall, King William-street, afterwards Toole's Theatre, in which Mrs. Britten lectured on Sunday evenings for three months, these being the first regular Sunday services in connection with Spiritualism in this country. In consequence of the action of the Lord's Day Observance Society, who tried to prevent the meetings taking place, the hall had to be registered as a place of worship. It was accordingly registered as the 'Spiritual Church,' in the names of Mr. Cooper, Mr. Shorter, and Mr. Slater.

EARLY LITERATURE AND MEDIUMS.

The 'Spiritual Magazine,' under the editorship of Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, and containing excellent articles by Mr. Thomas Shorter, Mr. William Howitt and others, appeared monthly, and Mr. Benjamin Coleman was ever active in communicating by voice and pen the phenomenal facts of Spiritualism to all whom he could in any way reach. Mr. Home was the most prominent medium of the time; Mrs. Hayden, Mr. Foster, Mr. Squire, and Mr. Conklin having come from America and returned again. A few books had also appeared on the subject. One by Mr. Rymer, of Ealing, gave accounts of séances with Mr. Home. Mr. Shorter had also published an excellent little book entitled 'Confessions of a Truth Seeker.' A reprint of Adin Ballou's 'Spirit Manifestations,' with a long preface by Mr. Andrew Leighton, of Liverpool, had also appeared; and whilst residing at Eastbourne, Mr. Powell wrote his 'Facts and Phases of Spiritualism.' These, with the first volume of Mr. Home's 'Incidents of my Life,' and Mr. Coleman's 'Spiritualism in America,' were the only books that had then been published in England. Mr. Home, Mrs. Marshall, and her niece Mary, were the best known mediums at the time, but Mr. Home was only accessible to the select few. Mr. W. Wallace also did good work as a physical medium and trance-speaker, and was useful as a pioneer in the movement.

THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS.

With a view to increase the facilities for the obtaining of evidence by the public, Mr. Cooper communicated with Dr. H. F. Gardner, of Boston, respecting available and suitable mediums for the exhibition of phenomena in this country. Among others the Davenport Brothers were recommended, and Mr. Cooper gave instructions for an engagement to be made with them to visit England; but he was forestalled by Mr. Palmer, who had already engaged them, and in due course they arrived, accompanied by the Rev. Dr. Ferguson. Their success at first was very great, and it seemed as if the public would be converted to Spiritualism in a sort of wholesale fashion; but the *fiasco* at Liverpool, when it was alleged that their *modus operandi* had been discovered, produced a reaction, and led the public to believe that they were nothing but skilful conjurers; and this impression amongst the uninformed largely prevails to this day. Similar disturbances occurred at Huddersfield and one or two other towns, after which the Davenports proceeded to London. The first séance there was given at the Hanover-square Rooms, and the proceeds were devoted to the benefit of the 'Spiritual Lyceum.' On this occasion twenty policemen were secreted in a room at the back of the cabinet to be ready in the event of a disturbance, but their services were not required. These manifestations, being of a very decisive character, quelled the opposition of the most sceptical. It was admitted on all hands that the Davenports had triumphed, and vindicated their character as true and genuine mediums.

Mr. Samuel Guppy, who had taken great interest in the mediums, now took them to Paris, where at a public séance a disturbance similar in character to that at Liverpool took place; and afterwards only private séances were given, the Emperor Napoleon III. having them twice at his palace, and rewarding them most handsomely.

TRAVELS WITH THE DAVENPORTS.

Mr. Cooper, feeling that their work had not been fully done in this country, took the responsibility on himself, and,

after giving a few séances in London and in several provincial towns, took them to Ireland, where he remained with them for several weeks, introducing them at their séances, and defending them in the Press. After visiting the principal towns in Ireland, a return visit was made to Dublin, and a farewell séance given in the Rotunda, at the conclusion of which a London policeman put his hand on Mr. Cooper's shoulder, read a warrant for his apprehension, and took him to the police-station. Early the following morning the policeman and his prisoner started for London, where they arrived on Saturday evening; and as no bail could be found at that late hour, Mr. Cooper had to remain in the police cell until Monday morning, when he had a hearing before Mr. Knox, a stipendiary magistrate; and was committed for trial at the Old Bailey on the charge of libelling Mr. Sothorn, of 'Dundreary' fame. This popular actor had for some time been making fun of Spiritualism, and acting offensively to Spiritualists, especially to the Davenports; and Mr. Palmer, who still remained in England, seeing a paragraph in a New York paper charging Mr. Sothorn with malpractices in that city, incautiously reproduced it in the 'Spiritual Times,' while Mr. Cooper was away in Ireland, and knew nothing about it. The matter was, fortunately, settled by Mr. Sothorn, on the facts being explained to him by Mr. J. G. Crawford, he agreeing to accept an apology, which was accordingly tendered. Mr. Cooper, however, had to go through the form of a trial, and was bound in his own recognisances for £500 not to molest the prosecutor for six months.

Mr. Cooper then made arrangements with the Davenports to visit Germany, and spend a month in Berlin, the Emperor granting the free use of his private concert-room. The séances excited great interest and produced a very favourable impression. After a week in Hamburg, the principal towns in Belgium and Holland were visited. In Russia the Davenports were very successful, particularly in the presence of the Imperial family; but Mr. Cooper, though urgently pressed to do so, was not able to accompany them to that country, being unable to leave England. In 1867 Mr. Cooper published a volume entitled 'Spiritual Experiences; and Seven Months with the Brothers Davenport.' This book, which is out of print, gives a fascinating account of Mr. Cooper's early experiences, lecturing tours, and a full description of his European travels with the Davenports.

On returning from the Continent the Davenports proposed to return to America forthwith, but Mr. Cooper further engaged them for six weeks, for which they were to receive £200, Mr. Cooper taking the responsibility of the séances upon himself. The principal suburbs of the Metropolis were visited, finishing with a week at Birmingham. As the receipts only covered the working expenses, Mr. Cooper was £200 out of pocket by this venture. Feeling that he could no longer sustain single-handed the responsibilities of the public advocacy of Spiritualism, he gave up the Lyceum and the 'Spiritual Times,' and retired from the scene of his activity, to which he had devoted four years of his life.

Mr. William Howitt, who had assisted Mr. Cooper by his counsel and personal influence in many ways, wrote thus to him:--

'MY DEAR SIR, Thank you for your little volume of 'Spiritual Experiences.' I consider it a very valuable addition to the history and evidences of this great dispensation. Some parts of it read like a narration of the persecution of days gone by; of the Quakers or Methodists, especially in your being hauled away to the dirty lock-ups and English police courts.

'If our press and scientific men could blush, the account of the rational reception of the Davenports in Belgium, Holland, and Russia, would make them do it; but there is no country on the face of the earth which is so arrogant and so materialised in spirit. They think themselves 'the people and that wisdom will die with them'; but in all except what relates to matter and material operations and money-getting, they are the stupidest people living. Material science has made great progress among them, but it has been at the expense of everything that marks the truly philosophic mind. The theories of philosophy never were so grovelling and degraded. If there be a thing that marks the glory and dignity of human character, *that* they reject and spurn from them. They desire *not* to live hereafter, and they prefer believing that they are descendants of monkeys than the directly created children of God. Is it possible to conceive of a more earthly and contemptible generation?'

Let us bless God that He has wrenched us, by unexampled revelations from the unseen, from the thralldom of such stupidity. You, indeed, must feel great satisfaction in the service you have been permitted, and have had the will, to render. You will have your reward.

Yours faithfully,
 'Robert Cooper, Esq.
 'August 1st, 1867.

'WILLIAM HOWITT.'

WORK IN AMERICA.

In 1874 Mr. J. J. Morse visited America on a lecturing tour, where he spent a year. Mr. Cooper, who followed him a month later, was with him, and remained there five years after his departure. The first person he visited on his arrival in New York City was Mr. Andrew Jackson Davis, who offered to give him an introduction to certain Spiritualists. Mr. Cooper said he had a letter of introduction from Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, on reading which Mr. Davis remarked, 'That will carry you all over America.' That lady had also given him special letters of introduction to William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips. Mr. Coleman had also given him letters of introduction to Epes Sargent and others. Mr. Cooper therefore found plenty of friends.

During his six years' residence, principally in Boston, he did a good work in a quiet way. He was first to make known among others the wonderful powers of Mrs. M. B. Thayer, the 'flower medium'; and by giving accounts of séances in the spiritual papers, the 'Boston Herald' and the 'Boston Investigator,' he rendered essential service in spreading a knowledge of spiritual truth. When Mr. Cooper arrived in Boston, owing to dissensions, Mr. Morse's lectures were the last given under the auspices of the 'Music Hall Society.' Months passed and nothing was being done in the way of lectures. Mr. Cooper consulted Mrs. Britten, who consented to give four lectures without a fee. Mr. Luther Colby, editor of the 'Banner of Light,' agreed to pay the rent of a hall for four Sundays, and thus lectures were started and have been going on ever since. Mr. W. J. Colville was met by Mr. Cooper at the steamboat wharf, and got him an engagement the first Sunday after his arrival. He was also instrumental in giving, through C. E. Watkins, satisfactory evidence of spirit phenomena to the Rev. Minot J. Savage, one of the most popular and influential clergymen in Boston, who has not hid his light under a bushel. But space will not allow a more extended notice of the work done by Mr. Cooper, for which he never received a dollar's remuneration. Since his return to England he has lived quietly at Eastbourne, where he still endeavours to keep the subject, whenever an opportunity occurs, before the public. Mr. Cooper is now an invalid, never having recovered from a serious tricycle accident sustained several years ago, which incapacitates him from walking.

A NEW BIRTH IN SPIRIT LAND.

Passed to the higher life, at 2 a.m. on Tuesday, May 2nd, Countess de Hamong, aged 70, mother of Count de Hamong ('Cheiro'), at her late residence, 12A, Gledhow-terrace, South Kensington. She was glad to go, and had no fear of the change called death. Forgetting self in the service of others, she will be held in grateful memory by all whose privilege it was to have her friendship and know her goodness, as did the writer. The many friends of Count de Hamong give him their deepest sympathy in this his hour of great sorrow.

W. J. MASTERS.

THE DELPHIC LYCEUM.—Mr. F. W. Thurstan, M.A., the director of the Delphic Lyceum, has issued a circular, in which he expresses regret that, owing to an accession of professional duties, he will not be able, for some time to come, to devote himself to the constant attendance required by the work of the society. He is, therefore, obliged to close it for a time, returning the part of the subscriptions still owing to members who have taken out only one term of a full subscription. He returns his heartfelt thanks to all those ladies and gentlemen who, by their sympathy and constant attendance, have assisted his schemes and experiments in this much-needed branch of social work.

UNSOUGHT PSYCHICAL EXPERIENCES.

BY HELEN L. MANNING, IN 'MIND.'

Psychical experiences that come unsought are invested with a peculiar interest. To some they come but rarely, perhaps only once in a lifetime. Sometimes they come with warning, occasionally with direction for rescue from imminent, unseen danger, and frequently with the spirit of consolation. I have no theory or explanation to offer, but would only seek to chronicle some well-attested instances that have come to my personal notice.

A few years ago a mother and two daughters, members of the Society of Friends, were returning home in a carriage from a journey of several miles. It was an uncommonly dark evening, with gathering clouds, and they had to trust to their horse to keep the road. A culvert, with a steep embankment on each side and no railing, had to be crossed, and they were all apprehensive of this as a point of possible danger, though none of them voiced the fear. As they neared the place, a light shone around it, clearly revealing the roadway over the little bridge. The horse shied slightly at first at this remarkable illumination, but accepted it and crossed safely. One of the daughters cried out, 'What is that?' when the mother answered, solemnly and with awe: 'It is light in answer to my prayer. For the last half-hour I have been thinking about this narrow embankment and praying that we might have sufficient light to guide us over in safety.'

The following is the experience of a lady whose domestic relations were unhappy, and who was battling with ill-health and discouragement in consequence. The record of it is copied from a letter she wrote to an intimate friend:—

'Quite recently I had a remarkable dream, or vision—I hardly know what to call it, but I know that it was beautiful and precious. My mother came to me and lay down in the bed, and held me long and close—in that firm way that one clasps a hand in intense sympathy. I opened my eyes. It was quite dark, but I turned my head to look at her. She was plainly visible—with that clear, youthful look in her eyes that they showed the day before she left me. I was a little afraid and thought to call my daughter, but remembered that the door was locked and that I should have to get out of bed to open it. Then mother seemed to hold me closer, and I thought: "Surely I need have no fear of the mother who loved me more than anyone else ever did—the blessed mother who never did aught but love and help me to the last hour of her earth life!" And although she spoke not a word, yet there came to me a sense of utter contentment, and something like an exhilaration of happiness that has remained with me ever since. I cannot explain it, but my mother seemed to bring peace and comfort so tangible and real as to abide with me.'

Another lady, well known to the writer, was circumstanced in a way similar to the one above referred to. She finally reached a point of despair at which she was ready to give up everything, as she declared, and make no more effort to bring about improved conditions. Throwing herself on her bed in this mood, she soon became unaccountably calm. Then the silence was broken by the well-remembered voice of her mother, who had passed on some years before, saying, 'Be faithful to the end, dear child, and you will not fail of your reward.' This message was an inspiration that aroused her to renewed effort, and gave her courage faithfully to abide in what seemed a hard path of duty. In the end her reward was abundant.

A gentleman whom I know very well was a few years ago engaged in repairing a piece of machinery in a factory. It was run by water-power, and the gate was supposed to be entirely closed and the whole machinery thrown out of gear. He was at work inside a cylindrical shaft, when suddenly he paused and looked up on hearing his Christian name spoken distinctly and sharply by a woman's voice. No woman met his gaze, but what he did see was that the wheels of the machinery had begun to turn. Instantly recognising his danger, he made a spring that enabled him to catch hold of a beam, to which he clung with desperation until he could be rescued. The delay of a minute would have been fatal; and, as it was, a part of his clothing was torn from him. It was found that the water-gate was imperfectly closed, and the pressure of the water had finally forced it open.

VOLITIONAL SELF-SUGGESTION.

'HOW WE MASTER OUR FATE.'*

BY U. N. GESTEFELD.

Cease living on the circumference only. Live in and from the centre—our fixed being; then peace will follow. Govern your thinking. Co-operate with the inner. Live in insight, not in oversight. The Kingdom of God is within you. Say to yourself: 'In my real being I am the expression of God.' As a man thinketh so is he. Let us concentrate our thought upon our fixed centre, and we cease to be sucked into the whirlpool. Living in the centre gives self-mastery; its power masters the circumference. If we think *with* that central power, that power builds our soul accordingly; we incorporate the Divine essence. As soul-perception grows it becomes feeling.

Say to yourself: 'Am I using the faculties and senses of my being, or are they using me?' Control your thoughts and words. Words carry the mental energy of your thoughts. Think not of past failures. Say to yourself: 'I am made whole.' Think of purity, love, truth, goodness. The quality of soul is that of its dominant thought.

We become able to help ourselves by voluntary self-suggestion. Suggest to yourself that you are free, you are whole, till it forms as much a part of you as the multiplication table has become. You can transform yourself into what you declare in this way. The passive suggestions of Nature may be changed by positive self-suggestions. By changing the mirror the reflections are changed. Thought is creative; ingraft thought. It will bear fruit according to its kind. Choose the graft. By intentional intellection undesirable conditions consequent on ignorant thinking may be altered. You can ward off the current pouring through you, and fill yourself from the fountain head within. Prevent your soul from being the conductor of the common thought of unenlightened minds. Think not from influence but from choice. Come out of the passive natural into the positive spiritual. Sensation will then no longer rule, but be ruled. Cease to allow sense impressions to give quality to and to govern your thought, but, instead, make thought change the quality of the impression.

Your first self-idea is the natural one: your visible shape according to sense impression. But the force of the living soul pushes you away from sense impressions till you recognise that your real body is the invisible thought-body, infused with quality by thinking, which pervades the physical body.

To appropriate soul you must mentally represent it to yourself. Think of yourself as you are in your real being, as you are ideally, and represent that ideal—and not as you are on the objective plane. Compel the appearance of your highest ideal. You can build in thought by constructive imagination. Represent as your self-idea the likeness of the God-idea; then you will build a temple of the living God. We shall never know, feel, and be our highest till we have done this. In self-consciousness we are what we think we are, for we are our own self-idea. You are what you present for your own recognition. You have power to represent the God-idea. You are able to think as you choose, and to choose what you will think. You are able to think from influence to choice, to remain on the natural plane of sense impression or to ascend to the God-idea.

Your presentation to your own recognition is always a representation. You tread the round of sense thought and feeling till, through experience, you become able to follow the round of clear-vision thought and feeling. You can represent sensations or what spiritual insight reveals. You can summon what you will by imagination. You must be a builder, constructor. You are making yourself; see that the self you build is like unto the God-image. Present this likeness to your own recognition.

Thought-building is character-building; character-building is body-building. Difference in your thought body alters your physical body. Till you embody truth, it is not incarnated. By representing the God-idea as your self-idea

it becomes incarnated in you, because your self-idea determines the quality of your thoughts, and your thoughts are your building material. When you embody its real being into flesh you will embody its likeness to God; then God will appear in the body.

The character which you, living soul, have builded endures when the sense garment has disintegrated. Ascend the Mount of Transfiguration through voluntary use of thought force. When space is vacant and sound is stilled, and you are alone, a voice will be heard saying: 'When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, I will take thee up.' You will know the Comforter. The riddle of Samson shall be made plain to you.*

*This refers to the mystic at-one-ment, the wholeness that ensues on the ascent of the Mount of Transfiguration, as dealt with also by the author of 'Ideal Suggestion' It is a sacred benediction and is unattainable by the external object-relating, sense-perceiving, self-ambitious mind or by the will of the personality. Only to the pure in heart who surrender their external selfhood to the service and direction of their inner spiritual consciousness or Divine Image, can this wholeness be known. It is symbolised in the sacred romance of Parsifal, who ascending the Mount of Salvation approaches the Holy Grail in simplicity and innocence (purity) of mind. Its illuminating radiance comes forth, enveloping and transfiguring him. Its rays heal the wounds of the sense mind and body of the King. Q.V.

CONCERT AT CAVENDISH ROOMS.

On Monday evening last, under the auspices of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, an evening concert was held at the Cavendish Rooms. The programme was performed under the direction of Mrs. Cooper, R.A.M. (Miss Butterworth), the choir-mistress of the association, and proved to be of excellent quality. The following were among the more notable performances. Songs: 'Zulieka' (Mendelssohn), 'Ouvre tes yeux bleus' (Massenet), and 'Mabel's Song' (Alitsen), given with much distinction by Miss Florence Hughes. The *Æola* solos of Mr. John C. Ward ('Scotch Airs,' 'Rigodon,' and 'Sweet and Low') were received with great appreciation, and were, indeed, brilliantly executed. Madame Alice Grey rendered the songs, 'Severed' (Alitsen), 'Comin' through the Rye,' and 'Kitty of Coleraine,' with marked finish and vivacity. Mr. H. Lane Wilson was loudly applauded for his quaint old English songs and gipsy melodies, the latter having all the wild, weird spirit of the Romany. In the rendering of these old-world and pastoral pieces Mr. Lane Wilson would seem to have found his *métier*. His songs included the gipsy pieces, 'Sound the Pipe and Tabor,' 'One Old Song my Mother Taught Me,' and the old English songs, 'The Pretty Creature,' and 'False Phyllis.' Miss Kate Ashdown and Miss Freda Carr Jackson (pupils of Mrs. Cooper) gave some graceful pianoforte solos. Miss Samuel (to whose vocal talents the association has many times previously been indebted) sang 'Beloved, it is Morn' (Aylward), 'Stars' (Leoni), and 'Come, Little Birds' (Barton), with her usual ability. Mr. Ernest Meads, whose reputation as a reciter needs no comment, contributed the elocutionary portion of the entertainment, and gave Poe's weird poems, 'Annabel Lee' and 'The Raven,' with full dramatic intensity. The entertainment concluded with a duologue, or farce, 'The Mouse Trap,' sustained by Miss Olive Morton and Mr. Ernest Meads, the acting of both artistes being greatly admired. We believe that the idea of the concert was projected by Miss Rowan Vincent, to whom fitting credit must be accorded, and judging by the large and appreciative audience, the Marylebone Association is to be congratulated on the result of its efforts. Due recognition should also be paid to the labours of Miss MacCreadie, Mr. A. J. Sutton, and Mr. Leigh Hunt, amongst others, in promoting the success of the enterprise. The grand piano used at the concert was kindly lent by Messrs. Brinsmead and Sons.

Mr. J. J. Vango wishes to inform his friends that he has removed to 61, Blenheim-crescent, Notting Hill, W., where he will be very near to the station. There is also a good service of omnibuses.

*The Gestefeld Publishing Company, New York.

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.

Theosophy of the Late Dr. Anna Kingsford.

SIR,—My thanks are due to 'C.C.M.' I am unable to refer to the discussion, but a further examination of 'Clothed with the Sun' shows that his present interpretation is the more accurate. Theophilus and Ambrosius were, therefore, not the actual forgers, but only accessories after the fact. This does not, however, invalidate my argument that the discovery of a third century fragment of the Gospel is incompatible with the theory that the documents from which they were forged were intentionally destroyed to prevent detection of the forgery, as late as A.D. 390. In the 'Arcana of Christianity,' 1858, Mr. T. L. Harris says: 'The living witnesses of the transfiguration of our Lord still exist, and testify that all those things contained in the Gospels concerning Him are true' (p. 634). Logically, this can only mean the *original* Gospels, not of necessity the existing copies. In other writings, he admits the existence of alterations. Speaking of the Gospel of John, he says, in the 'Wisdom of the Adepts,' 'It is slightly interpolated and defaced' (p. 739). But this phrase implies its substantial accuracy. The discoveries of the Egypt Exploration Fund will doubtless throw much light on the reliability of our existing text. But here comes in a problem. Why does the Christian Church continue to circulate as the Word of God the 'authorised' version of the Bible, knowing as they do, and as they admit in the 'revised' version, that it contains interpolations, or to speak plainly, forgeries? Also, why does not the Church issue a new edition of the Bible, containing as an appendix the recently discovered 'Logia,' which are of earlier date than the MSS. of the complete Gospels? But the Church prefers to waste its energies over the questions of the 'Eastward position,' the use of altar-lights, and other similar puerilities.

E. W. BERRIDGE, M.D.

48, Sussex-gardens, Hyde Park, W.

Dr. Fisher's Healing Tour.

SIR,—Some weeks ago I made what I then considered, and still consider, a generous offer to societies generally, offering them, for the benefit of suffering humanity, my services, without money and without price. That offer only brought me four inquiries from societies, hence I feel myself compelled to defer my anticipated tour throughout England for the present, which I regret.

It was my intention to give up the coming season to this grand work, but as conditions do not appear favourable for doing so now, I have taken a furnished house for the season by the sea (where I shall hope to have rest and quiet), and shall, as usual, gladly treat any poor sufferers freely, providing I receive with them notes or certificates that they are deserving cases.—Yours in the cause of truth,

ALLAN FISHER, M.D.

6, Carlton-terrace, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Mr. E. W. Wallis.

SIR,—I hear that Mr. E. W. Wallis will discontinue the editorship of 'The Two Worlds' on June 1st. If this statement is correct, I hope that on his retirement Spiritualists will acknowledge substantially his indefatigable efforts on behalf of Spiritualism during the time he has been editor. It will be a pleasure to me to subscribe five guineas.

ARIEL.

[It is quite true that Mr. Wallis is about to leave 'The Two Worlds,' having accepted an engagement as Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

Intimation of a Friend's Decease.

SIR,—A cousin of mine lately died. On the morning of the day on which she died I awoke a little before seven, and fell asleep again. I suppose I must have dreamed of her, for somebody seemed to say, 'Dora is gone.'

I attached no importance to my dream till later in the day, when I heard from an aunt that a wire had been received announcing my cousin's death. It was not till the next day that a letter came to say that she had really passed away at *seven*—the very hour at which my poor cousin's death had been announced to me.

K. A.

South Kensington.

Midland Spiritual Tract Enterprise.

SIR,—The first month of this novel endeavour to reach the people and lift their thoughts to the unscen realities of the spirit world, through tract literature, has had the

blessing of God and the angel world. So far so good. A few of those who first responded, '*I am ready*,' have till now failed to confirm that pledge by action. I still wait for them; but the large number of those who have fulfilled their promise and received the cases of tracts warrants the hope and expectation that, if well distributed (of which there is little doubt), these little leaves have been read by three thousand people at least.

BEVAN HARRIS.

Radcliffe-on-Trent.

Thomas Lake Harris.

SIR,—Being desirous of studying the works of Thomas Lake Harris, I should be obliged if any of your readers will kindly tell me the order in which they should be read, and the name and address of the publishers. I should also like to know where I can obtain 'Respiro's' pamphlets.

'CONINGSBY.'

Order of Progressive Spiritualists' Sick, Benefit, and Pension Funds.

SIR,—Kindly allow me to acknowledge with thanks the donations to the above funds received by me in April:—From 'S.E.' (monthly subscription), 2s.; Miss Mack Wall, 10s.; Mr. J. Bowring Sloman, 5s.; Mr. James Robertson, 10s.; Mr. J. W. Pound, 2s. 6d.; Plymouth Society (quarterly subscription, for Rev. C. Ware), 3s.; Mrs. S. Trueman (proceeds of circle), 13s.

Mrs. Trueman writes: 'I am glad to have been the means of raising even that small sum to benefit the less fortunate mediums—those who have nobly helped to spread the glorious truths of Spiritualism in the past. I consider it our bounden duty to do all we can to assist. I hope to see many others striving to swell the funds.'

Mr. W. W. Richards (Luton) writes promising to subscribe one shilling per month himself, and suggesting 'that all the societies subscribe at the rate of not less than one shilling per week, or that all members of societies should subscribe at the rate of one half-penny per week.'

We are now disbursing regularly nearly £6 per month, besides responding to special appeals as far as funds will allow. The receipts during April total only £2 5s. 6d.; hence the necessity for continued appeals. What is really needed is for this matter to be taken up with determination; then funds would soon be forthcoming. I am hoping to receive answers from the presidents or secretaries of societies in regard to their willingness to help, and again appeal to Spiritualists generally to send their contributions to me.

322, Waterloo-road,
Hightown, Manchester.

(MRS.) M. H. WALLIS,
Hon. Sec.

SOCIETY WORK.

HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday evening last Miss Russell-Davies read an interesting paper entitled 'The Influence of Priestcraft on Religion.' Mrs. Russell-Davies also gave an excellent address. Next Sunday, Mr. King, 'The Astral Body.'—W. J. T.

GROVE-LANE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On Sunday last an attentive audience listened to an address from Mrs. Holgate. Mr. Lovatt gave successful clairvoyance at the after circle, together with a short address. Three cases for healing were successfully treated by Mr. Lambden at the close of the meeting. Next Thursday, at 8 p.m., public circle as usual—H. F. F.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST CONFERENCE.—An open-air meeting will be held on Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., in the Grove, Broadway, Stratford. A conference will be held at Martin's-street, Stratford, to commence at 3 p.m., when business of importance will be discussed. Tea will be provided at 6d. each after conference. In the evening several speakers at the conference will assist in the meeting.—M. CLEGG, Sec.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 14, STROUD GREEN-ROAD, FINSBURY PARK.—On Sunday last the subjects considered were 'Systems of the Universe,' and 'The Power of Thought,' by Messrs. Jones, Hewitt, W. Walker, and Wallace; Mr. Walker also giving clairvoyance and spiritual advice. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., open-air meeting in Finsbury Park; at 7 p.m., in the hall. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., members. Wednesday, at 8 p.m., lecture.—T. B.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—Our president, Mr. John Kinsman, opened the meeting last Sunday evening with a reading from Stainton Moses's 'Spirit Teachings,' and in the address which followed, 'Is Belief in Spiritualism Justifiable?' the speaker cited the testimonies of several of the leading men of the day in favour of Spiritualism. Wednesday, at 8 p.m., members' circle, at 233, High-road, Clapton. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., open air meeting, in Victoria-park. Evening, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. A. White, clairvoyant.—O.H.