

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !"—Goethe.

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

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	277	Homological Association.....	283
Reincarnation and Divine Justice..	279	Milton—a Medium?	283
Some Recent Experiences	280	Works of C. Brodie Patterson	283
Trance and Inspirational Speaking.	280	German Psychical Papers	285
Visions of the Astral Plane.....	281	Declaration of Principles.....	285
How to Sweeten Life.....	281	Psychic Study Society	286
The Web of Mystery	282	Reincarnation	287

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We cannot help liking 'The Christian Register,' but it has its drawbacks. For one thing, it is so painfully respectable; and painful respectability is always in danger of hushing up the plain truth.

Here, for instance, is Dr. M. J. Savage, who openly says that he believes in the facts of Spiritualism, and who, like a man, tells us why, but who adds: 'I do not want to be called a Spiritualist.' We can understand that, and we quite willingly grant to anyone the right to decline labels and to keep outside of a campaign.

But now, what does 'The Christian Register' do? It prints the following paragraph:—

Fragmentary reports concerning Dr. Savage's attitude toward Spiritualism have been circulated. It is due to him that he be allowed to say to the general public that which he said to his own congregation on Easter Sunday. We therefore print elsewhere his reasons for declining to be called a Spiritualist.

Then, turning over a leaf, we find a column and a-half filled with all the reproof which Mr. Savage thought it necessary to administer to Spiritualists. And that is all! 'The Christian Register' prints the condemnation and omits the blessing; and this in correction of 'fragmentary reports'!

We are sorry to say that a few pages further on there is a third reference to the sermon which has so fluttered 'The Christian Register,' and this is what it says:—

Dr. Savage spoke on 'The Significance of Spiritualism, and its relation to the Easter Hope.' To many who were in doubt as to his attitude toward Spiritualism and its devotees it was a satisfaction to hear him declare that, while not denying the truth in the principle of Spiritualism, which everyone who believes in the significance of Easter must also recognise, he could not overlook the fact that Spiritualism has objectionable features which disgusted him.

We say we are sorry, but, to tell the truth, we are moved to use its own word, 'disgusted.' 'Everyone who believes in the significance of Easter' does *not* believe as Dr. Savage does in Spiritualism; and 'The Christian Register' has no moral right to shunt the issue in this over-adroit way.

We have had before us, for some weeks, an account of an interview with Colonel Ingersoll, reported in 'Mind.' The Colonel is probably the best-known agnostic in the world, with an unconscious affectation of readiness to believe if anyone could prove anything to him; but there are few men whose mental doors are more palpably double-locked against anything and everything that threatens to upset his determined materialism. One paragraph in the 'Mind' article amusingly illustrates this. The interviewer

starts him on Psychical Society Research work, and the Colonel leaps, positively leaps, into his beloved corner and behind his earthwork of Materialism. He said:—

For every action and for every thought we draw upon the store of force that we have gained from air and food. We create no force; we borrow it all. As force cannot be used apart from matter, it must be used *with* matter. It travels only on material roads. It is impossible to convey a thought to another without the assistance of matter. No one can conceive of the use of one of our senses without substance. No one can conceive of a thought in the absence of the senses. With these conclusions in my mind—I have no confidence in 'spiritual manifestations,' and do not believe that any message has ever been received from the dead. The testimony that I have heard and have read—coming even from men of science—has not the slightest weight with me.

This has about it an air of rationality and candour, but it is essentially prejudiced. He has a preconceived notion, and a very limited one, too; and everything has to be judged by that. The upshot of that ('testimony . . . has not the slightest weight with me') is amusingly naïve. Elsewhere, the Colonel admits that he does not know what matter is, but he does know, he says, that there can be no force, no life, no thought, without it. But if matter is *x*, we may all agree that there can be nothing without *x*; at all events, it is a safe enough assertion. Even Colonel Ingersoll, in the plenitude of nescience, might admit that the use of some form of what we call 'matter' might be quite compatible with the manifestations of what we call 'spirit.' But these agnostics are, as a rule, remarkably certain.

It is not easy to keep pace with the newspapers in what looks like their energetic efforts to convince us of their curious ignorance in relation to our subject. Only a day or two ago, 'The Daily Mail' came out with a startling 'discovery,' and started the whole pack. Here is what 'The Evening News' said:—

AFTER DEATH—WHAT?

A DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN SCIENTIST BELIEVES THERE IS A CONSCIOUS EXISTENCE.

The very latest result is discovering that after death there is a conscious existence.

Dr. Hyslop, of the Columbia University, has announced that he expects in the course of a year to prove scientifically that there is a conscious existence after death.

Dr. Hyslop has, says the New York correspondent of the 'Daily Mail,' been making experiments through Mrs. Piper, a Boston medium, and he claims to have received a large number of *bonâ fide* communications from departed spirits.

The professor is not one of the common herd of Spiritualists, but is regarded by his colleagues as a sound-minded, keen, scientific man. He is being helped in his investigation by other well-known psychologists.

'Common herd' is lovely. But these scribes do not seem to know anything about Dr. Hodgson and 'LIGHT,' through whose steady inquiry and advocacy all this is familiar. But only fancy announcing that 'a conscious existence' is 'the very latest result,' and that the fact of 'a distinguished American scientist's' belief in a conscious existence after death deserves a head-line all to itself! What *do* these saucy young gentlemen who write for the 'Mail,' the 'Sun,' and the 'Evening News' know?

We are always pleased to hear from such entertaining writers as Mr. Russell-Davies, or from anyone else who has ideas and good English, but we must really try to avoid attributing 'anger,' or 'hate,' or impatience to those who differ from us. For our own part, so far from being angry, we are only increasingly amused at those who believe in reincarnation. It makes very little real difference either way; but we think reincarnation is entirely out of harmony with modern science, and we might almost say we know it is a survival of ancient speculation. As such, we decline to entertain it, though we think no worse of anybody who does.

'Expression' continues its beautiful extracts from 'Letters to a Student.' The following sentences are as deeply rooted as they are beautiful:—

When does the soul have intercourse with the spirit?
Whenever she is saying (thinking and believing that is) the same things that spirit says. What does the spirit say? At all times: 'I am Creator, I am life, I am power, all laws are mine; I made them to use them for expressing myself by means thereof; I can use them, for I am wisdom and I am love.'

In millions of ways that song is being eternally sung by spirit in us and in everything, and each individual soul must learn to know its song and sing it too.

All day long soul should be saying to herself: 'This is God's soul, a soul of love, wisdom and power—an everlasting soul full of love and of loving thoughts'; and of the body: 'This is God's body: all the bones, muscles, nerves, brains, the flesh and blood in their entirety—everything is God's body, a body of love, wisdom and power, and of everlasting life.'

These then are the songs we should sing to ourselves each time our soul feels limited, each time the body hurts or pains anywhere, each time the soul resents or is repulsed by anything, each time the body does not respond to what a God-body ought. Thus one grows hourly.

Does it not seem simple and childish? Try and see what power it requires, which nothing less than absolute power would enable one to accomplish.

O! may the dear Christ-love, forgiving, sweet and powerful, sweep through all hearts, and change the soul into a state to see its infinite nature and possibilities, until the song of freedom begun by Jesus shall find an echo in the heart and soul of every man.

To 'Labour Co-partnership' (an instructive publication, by the way), Mr. A. K. Connell contributes the following thoughtful little poem. We believe it was written in memory of Thomas Blandford, a devoted friend of working men, and advocate of all good causes that meant *their* good:—

'Those whom the Gods love early die':—
So sang the Greek sage long ago;
The tides of centuries may flow,
Still to their graves the noblest hie.

What means it? Must the early bloom,
That dares to face the frosty breeze,
That dares to grace the leafless trees,
Be woven but with threads of doom?

Who knows? Brute Chance's incidence,
That seems a foul and earthly blight,
May shroud some fine mysterious light,
That burns, but blackens Providence.

At times the veil is rent above,
And smarting eyes discern a star,
Through darkness dim, aloof, afar,
A quivering, quickening fire of Love.

'My Invisible Partner,' by T. S. Denison (London: Gay and Bird), is a gruesome story, simply and by no means brilliantly told. The 'invisible partner' is the story-teller's double, concerning which, and concerning the weird world in which it acts, many more or less crude reflections are made. Towards the end, the story is interrupted while the writer explains his 'notion of the relation between *mind* and *soul*,' and discusses, in a hurried way, various theories on the subject. 'The alleged spirit manifestations of the day will doubtless be found to be, when not pure humbug, the result of physical and psychical laws as

yet undiscovered,' he says. But we find neither light nor guidance in these reflections. As for the story, it would probably interest people who must have stories or die. For our own part, we would almost rather die than spend life in reading stories.

John T. Dow (Duluth, Minn., U.S.), the writer of that pithy pamphlet, 'Wisdom and Folly,' has just published a letter on the growing glorification of fighting-men. It seems to us that his plain-speaking is as timely as it is sensible. Here is a specimen of John's good sense:—

The higher or better class of the community look upon the pugilist as belonging to a low and barbarous branch of the human family.

And their views of him are correct. But how wonderfully different their views upon the same thing in nations! We boast of being a Christian people. And yet we place upon the very pinnacle of national fame and glory military heroes who have dipped deepest into the barbarities of war and have succeeded in slaughtering the greatest number of human beings.

Shame on professed Christians who are so destitute of the vital element of Christianity, so low in the scale of spirituality, and are so thoroughly controlled by their carnal, brutal passions as to place the horrors of human butchery, the slaughter of the people and the devastation of their homes, above everything else.

It is right that due honour should be ascribed to all. Far be it from us to knowingly detract from the glory that rightfully belongs to any man, but the maudlin sentiment that makes the glory of military heroes overshadow and outshine every other phase of possible attainment is an unhealthy growth, and has no tendency towards cultivating in the nation the spirit of the meek and lowly Nazarene.

In the name of all that is good; in the name of God and humanity and the dear innocent children of our land, I ask, when will Christians become Christ-like? When will people learn that 'peace on earth and good will to men,' is not brought about by the slaughter of human beings, but that love and not hate brings peace and joy and pleasure? Oh! that professed Christians would drink deeper from the great fountain of Infinite Spirit, and draw from the source of all life, light, wisdom and love!

A translation of Dr. Alfred Binet's curiously subtle work on 'The Psychology of Reasoning' is given to us by Mr. A. G. Whyte through 'The Open Court Publishing Company,' in Chicago, and Kegan Paul and Co., in London. This work is announced as 'based on experimental researches in Hypnotism'; but we should emphasise the word 'based,' as the book is much more a philosophical and psychological argument than a serving up of hypnotic experiments. It is, however, a work of pure curiosity, so far as the argument is concerned; but the incidental descriptions of hypnotic experiments are manifestly and practically important. We do not think the time has come for interpreting these profoundly important experiments. The experiment described on pages 74-6, for instance, turning upon the invisibility of M. Féré upon suggestion, and his continued invisibility to the subject, after some days, in consequence of the operator's omission to make M. Féré visible again by means of suggestion, is not satisfactorily accounted for by the argument which follows. There is something deeper, but we confess our ignorance. For all that, this book was worth writing, and its ingenious reasonings will probably help students on the road.

'The Church Gazette' is fond of poking fun at the very High Church Party, and especially at the very young devotees. This is not bad:—

A clergyman sends me the following:—A young ritualistic curate, applying for a vacancy, dated his letter 'St. Anthony Day.' The vicar, an old-fashioned Evangelical, headed his reply 'Washing Day.'

It may save trouble and prevent waste of time if a notification in another column (page 283), concerning Mr. J. Page Hopps' new address, is noted and borne in mind.

REINCARNATION AND DIVINE JUSTICE.

BY 'EXCELSIOR'—RIO DE JANEIRO.

(Concluded from page 255.)

V.

If the collective theories I have tried to illustrate be kept in mind and impartially considered, I think it will be recognised that the subject of reincarnation has hitherto been much misconceived, and that our conceptions, far more expanded than has been supposed, simply embody a rational hypothesis of permanent union between matter and spirit, which union constitutes the essential line of distinction between the creature and the Creator.

I have endeavoured to demonstrate that, subject to the superlatively important proposition presented, each fresh investigation augments the difficulties of the spiritual theory; that the integrity of our belief in an infinitely wise, just, and merciful God is at stake, as unless we be convinced that all men are created equal, with identical facilities to attain a common destiny Divinity is transformed to a mystical fable and faith extinguished.

It has also been my object to show that our theories do not inculcate the narrow and vulgar identity that some have imagined, but that they constitute a logical and elevated hypothesis of the successive phases of human life and destiny; that they teach that the routes to progress are infinite; but man being obdurate, the spiritual predominance consistent with better and higher destinies can be but slowly attained. They also teach that once emancipated from the trials, sufferings, and grossness of earth, these necessary, but not *permanent*, elements of progress are modified with each successive existence and each new world, whilst novel and improved corporeal conditions correspond to the spiritual advancement in evolution. Conceiving that infinite wisdom has not created to destroy, they maintain that however altered, ethereal, and quintessent these conditions may finally become, the principle of reincarnation subsists, because the union of matter and spirit, under *whatever* aspect, is its confirmation, and however varied the *application* of the law, this, like the Author, is eternal.

The transcendent nature of these conceptions is well illustrated by the following detached citations from a series of communications automatically obtained by myself, which, though purporting to be dictated by one whose earthly opinions were widely diverse, I have good reason to consider as authentic:—

'I find reason to recant many of my former opinions in regard to the spiritual nature of man. The ideal created by earthly intelligence is correct only so far as that the reality is indeed the *apparent* confirmation. Of itself, the soul is immaterial; but its surroundings, *from which it is never entirely separated*, partake in a greater or less degree of the materiality to which the creature must ever be subject. By materiality is meant, not alone such as you can understand from the evidence of the senses, but new combinations of matter totally unappreciable to them, and which indeed are in some respects identical in their effects with our old conceptions of the spiritual.'

'To you, therefore, we are spiritual beings; to ourselves we are simply in a new phase of existence whose conditions remain subservient to a universal law, that which *has* been and *continues* to be, but so different in its application as to be almost unrecognisable.'

'This may seem like heresy, but is not; the soul, the real man, is immaterial, and, therefore, to your conception, spiritual. It follows that the term "spiritual beings" is just as applicable before as after death. The error consists in supposing the soul destined to an isolated existence independent of all material surroundings and agents for manifestation. We have imagined light without the intermediate and necessary means for its transmission, and thus separated from its power for universal utility.'

'Humanity here may be compared to the delicate and beautiful butterfly: and the identity of the crawling creature whose slimy trace alone remained, with the brilliant and soaring traveller from flower to flower, is no unapt symbol of past and present phases of existence.'

'God alone is purely spiritual: but of a spirituality beyond the conception of the creature; and between the Great Cause and the effect the distance cannot be bridged over.'

'The manifest and unerring wisdom of the Divine plan has been misinterpreted by earthly conception. The inter-

mediate links in human elevation from primitive materiality to the supreme essence of God-like spirituality, cannot be spanned, nor can the intuition of a better future justify an imaginary and illusive presumption of a state whose conditions would be a direct contradiction to the harmonious evidence of the Creator's works.'

'The alliance of matter to spirit is as necessary as is oxygen to combustion, or the union of certain chemical combinations to their efficacy; and the Great Author of all has willed that, though distinct, both shall be mutually dependent for the purpose designed.'

As I have already declared, my principal object has been to make manifest the discordancy created by the spiritual theory when confronted with the anomalies of human existence, and the impossibility of harmonising them with a rational conception of Divine justice. On the other hand, I have attempted to demonstrate that reincarnation affords a satisfactory and rational solution of every difficulty, and that this theory elevates instead of debases our ideal of Divinity.

We do not pretend to any monopoly of the truth, but hold that a proposition of the nature presented acquires decided and exceptional authority; and therefore, as all conceptions that clash with Divine attributes must of necessity be erroneous; as both Spiritualists and Spiritists must recognise that discordancy of detail in a doctrine professing to be inspired cannot fail to depreciate the whole in the eyes of inquirers we consider as a duty the propagation of convictions which at least have the merit of sincerity.

To this end I have suggested a line of discussion that, though in one sense restricted, yet presents a most ample field for investigation, and may perhaps aid in the elaboration of the truth that must finally be victorious.

(Conclusion.)

THE LATE GEORGE THOMPSON, M.P.

INTERESTING REMINISCENCES.

In the course of an interesting narrative, written by the veteran American Spiritualist, Mr. Giles B. Stebbins, published in 'The Light of Truth,' that gentleman relates how the late George Thompson, M.P., the noted anti-slavery speaker, became a Spiritualist. He was introduced to a séance in America by Isaac Post, the Quaker, who bravely defended the Fox Sisters when they were put upon trial in Rochester. The séance in question was conducted by Leah Fish, a physical medium, and Mr. Thompson watched the proceedings with much interest. Mr. Stebbins says:—

'After half an hour or so, Isaac said: "Ask for some friend to come." Mr. Thompson laid his hands on the table, asking: "Have I any Hindoo friend present?" The reply rapped out was "Yes," and the alphabet was called for. A gentleman near by offered to write down what came, letter by letter—the result, as follows, not being understood at first by anyone: "d-w-a-r-k-a-n-a-t-h-t-a-g-o-r-e-e."

'Mr. Thompson asked for the slip of paper, to see all the letters together. After brief study he started back in great surprise, exclaiming: "Dwarkanath Tagoree! My God, is it you!" A joyful shower of raps was the reply.

'The Hindoo had never been nearer than England, and his existence on earth was known only to the English friend present. "Where did we first meet in Hindostan?" "Calcutta." Street and number right. "What did you send home by me as a present to my wife in London?" "A cashmere shawl." Right. "Where did we meet last?" "Regent-street, London." Number right, and date. "In what mood did we meet?" "Anger." "We had a serious difference, and did not part with our usual cordiality," said Mr. Thompson to the company, and then he asked his invisible friend: "Do you still keep up that unfriendly feeling?" "No, dear George; in the spiritual light of this celestial life my sight is unbiassed. I go below transient perturbations and see you as you are. We are true friends, as of old."

'Joyful raps responded to the deep pleasure expressed by Mr. Thompson, varying emotions vibrating through the sounds, giving them soul and meaning higher than the mechanical click of the electric telegraph ever conveys.'

MR. ROBERT BUCHANAN appears to be on the side of the Anti-Vivisectionists. At any rate he has written a short story for the current 'Zoophilist' entitled 'A Dream: and a Deduction,' which deals with vivisection. The story is written with his customary ingenuity.

SOME RECENT EXPERIENCES.

By 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

I.

In the beginning of May last I had a visit from a military friend home on three months' leave, and who has had a distinguished career as a soldier, having been engaged in the Afghan, Egyptian and Soudan campaigns, in all of which he has lost many a brave comrade. Being profoundly interested in Spiritualism and its problems, we have had many talks on the subject and sat at many private séances, with several mediums; but chiefly with my lady relative, who has clairvoyantly seen and described many of the military friends of this officer now on the other side, and has also written a number of messages from those spiritual personages, clearly denoting their identity, and the continuity of existence beyond the grave. At my suggestion, on the present occasion a séance was arranged with the aforesaid lady clairvoyant, to take place at my house on the evening of Sunday, May 21st, at 8 p. m. Our military friend came, and during the course of the evening received a most coherent though somewhat commonplace message from Colonel B., a friend who was killed at Candahar, who greeted his old friend and companion in arms with great cordiality and affection. The message also referred to the name of a Colonel G., who was then with him, and who, when he was in earth life, was also a personal friend of our visitor. It also gave the details of the death of one Private McGavin, of the regiment, who was killed some time ago by an accident at Fort George, Invernesshire. Our visitor, on reading the message, stated that he believed the accident had occurred at the place mentioned, but he was unaware of the person or persons who were injured or killed on this occasion. The clairvoyant had seen this private soldier in the room and had tried, but ineffectually, to make out his name, which was accordingly supplied in the written message. Taking the communication from Colonel B., however, as a whole, there was nothing in it internally proving identity, more especially as through the same medium our friend had about four or five years ago had many more convincing written messages containing specific details of the writer's military career, &c. One cardinal point, however, requires to be noted. The first message got from this source was automatically written in 1892. The caligraphy of it and of all later messages got at that time was always uniform in its character; though quite unlike the earthly script, which was shown to me. On the present occasion, seven years after the first message was written, comparison with the previous messages disclosed the fact that the particular script of 1892 was again reproduced with absolute fidelity. This has been my experience in several other cases; but not at the same distance of time.

After Colonel's B.'s message was written the medium was controlled by Dr. — (her usual guide and control), who, as your readers are aware, states that at one time he practised as a physician in Lancashire and Westmorland; and who again greeted our military friend in a few kindly sentences, explained some of the obscure incidents which occurred at the séance, and offered to reply to any queries audibly put. Two questions were put and answered, one as to the possibility of Colonel B. being able to materialise at any séance with a medium who was an adept at that form of psychic demonstration; and the other as to the nature of a grave malady from which a friend of our visitor was then suffering, and his chances of recovery, as to which last I shall wait results before communicating the details, and will only remark that the opinion of the spirit doctor is in direct conflict with the diagnoses of the two earthly physicians attending the patient.

During the course of the séance the medium informed us that two other officers were present in the room, but were unable to do more than indicate their intention later in the evening to communicate with her. The séance, which had lasted an hour, thereupon closed.

The next time we saw the medium, which was on the following day, she informed us that the two officers before referred to had come to her in her room at a later period in

the night and were able to give their names as Major O. and Captain F. They further promised to write messages by her hand in the course of a night or two. These messages will be dealt with in their order of date, but the next and rather interesting episode, being earlier in date, falls to be dealt with in a new article.

(To be continued.)

TRANCE AND INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKING.

When it is claimed that certain speakers are entranced and 'speak as the spirit gives them utterance,' we listen to the oration, and while admiring the fluency with which the 'inspired' or 'controlled' medium sets forth certain ideas, we feel inclined to ask: 'How much of this comes directly from the spirit? Does the medium consciously participate in the elaboration of the argument, or does his sub-conscious self build up the case and present it with more than the ordinary normal ability of the sensitive? Do we get the veritable words of the "control," or does the medium consciously or involuntarily dilate upon his theme, impelled thereto by the "suggestion" of a spirit?' In other words, are 'trance' and 'inspirational' discourses the veritable expressions of the thoughts and arguments of some discarnate person, or is the medium merely excited by, and impelled to speak because of, a suggestion or impression from the spirit, which, while it arouses the mental faculties to a supra-normal activity, more or less suspends the ordinary personal consciousness of the psychic? Are the illustrations, analogies, anecdotes, sarcastic remarks, or fervid appeals, supplied to us direct from the consciousness of the spirit operator—transferred by him to and poured through the medium—or are they supplied by the latter in response to the stimulating influence of the spirit hypnotism?

In a recent issue of 'Immortality,' a Chicago magazine, Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, evidently speaking 'under influence,' said:—

'From the spirit side of life, our own observation and experience is, that no one exercises the gift of psychometry, or any other spiritual gift, without the inspiration or distinct action of disembodied human spirits, who act upon (or through) the sensitised intuitive qualities of the medium, qualities awakened by these spirit presences.

'It is our observation and experience that this luminous background (or foreground) of spirit influence forms the basis not only of the exercise of all such gifts as are clearly classed under the head of "mediumship," but that "geniuses," "discoverers," and all who really "perceive" new things (*i.e.*, new manifestations and statements of truth), and give them forth to the world, do so under the distinct influence of particular personal intelligence in spirit life.'

Mr. Byron W. Barge, writing in the 'Progressive Thinker,' said:—

'That inspiration is a fact, few persons will deny, but when we attempt to find the personality of the inspirer, there is less unity of thought. Dr. Buchanan would probably contend for Jesus and Abraham Lincoln; Allie Lindsay Lynch would also acknowledge George Washington and Abraham Lincoln; while J. C. F. Grumbine is quite certain that he can receive inspiration from Jesus and Socrates. Personally, I believe that we can and do receive inspiring thoughts (not words) from a disembodied spirit guide, one who vibrates in unison with our degree of mental and spiritual unfoldment. However, I also believe that we should seek to develop a higher phase of universal mediumship where we shall be independent of the need of special or personal inspirers.'

In what is somewhat loosely termed 'test mediumship,' we apparently get into closer contact with spirit personalities, but, as the spirit who manifests through Mrs. Piper, for instance, can only give fragmentary statements of a precise and definite character which compel us to admit that they have emanated from the communicating intelligence, we are curious to know how much of the subject matter—how much of the phraseology—is directly due to the spirit? We are sometimes informed that it is inevitable there should be an admixture of the medium's mentality, but, in that case, how far can the addresses of our best exponents be regarded as proofs of spirit action? We should like to hear what our esteemed and experienced trance mediums and inspirational speakers have to say. Will they assist us by relating their experiences when under the influence of their 'guides'?

VISIONS OF THE ASTRAL PLANE.

In 'LIGHT' of May 27th, 'Q.V.' says that Mr. Fullerton 'could not reply with regard to the means of distinguishing the perception of the astral forms of the Masters from spirit forms, as seen by mediums.' This, if true, is decidedly a weak point. But if there really are such beings as Mahatmas, surely a *good* seer could distinguish between them and ordinary spirit forms. Psychometry would be a help in this direction, for it can be quite as useful a gift in the spirit world as in this, as I have often proved.

In one of my early experiences I remember seeing two spirit or astral forms coming towards me, walking on all-fours like animals. There was no need to label them 'Evil Spirits,' for on the instant I read their nature and knew. The sight of them gave me a feeling of intense fear, for they were as real to me as if they had been living human beings. Their power for evil, too, was great, and so rapidly did they approach that I had not time to think what was the best thing to do, or even to remember that, by asking for help, protection would be given to me by higher powers. But it came without asking, for when these two strange beings were within about a yard of me the inspiring thought came like a message,—'Throw out your hands towards them and *will* them to depart.' I did so. At first they merely stood still; then, as with a feeling of desperation and will combined, I threw out my hands a second time, an expression of baffled rage came into their faces and the distance between us widened. I now felt encouraged and continued the process till they were quite out of sight.

On another occasion I had been long meditating on the question of guardian angels, and wondered if I really had such a being to protect and guide me, or was it all a myth born of human needs and longings? I wished and willed very earnestly that the power might come to me to be able clairvoyantly to see this being, if indeed such an one existed. It often happens that just before falling asleep I see faces. Many of them will pass before my vision, but rarely do I recognise any. Still I thought that would be the best time to try the experiment, and for the prayer to be answered. So I kept passive and waited for the faces to appear, but not one could I see. No other mode of manifestation had entered into my mind, but instead of seeing, as I had expected, I suddenly sensed an angelic presence of such exalted goodness, sympathy and protective power, that I could not but be grateful for this response to my wish—this answer to my prayer. And again there was no need for me to be told that 'This is a good spirit.' And so real was the sense of a presence that I had not a shadow of doubt. Yet this spirit, though so angelic a being, did not feel to me like Christ; neither was it one of the Adepts or Masters of whom the Theosophists tell us. But rather was I reminded of that saying of Jesus when, talking of the little children, He said: 'Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.'

It is said that 'seeing is believing,' yet that is not always true, for I have seen what I was given to understand were incidents on the astral plane, yet I am not convinced. The incident came about as follows: Three of us were sitting chatting round the fire, when suddenly the voices of my friends seemed almost to die away, so far off were they. I heard all that was said, but only in a dreamy sort of way, for my interior vision was opened and I was on the astral or spirit plane. The atmosphere was not so dense as ours, yet I saw forms floating about as fish might float in water. One, the nearest to me, was extremely beautiful, with quite an angelic sort of beauty. She appeared to be asleep, and, judging from her expression, must have been having very happy dreams. This form was surrounded by a white mist, which, from the feet upwards, gradually became more and more condensed, till, as I looked, all but the face became hidden from view, clothed in this mist-like substance. There were several other forms near, all apparently awaiting reincarnation, but while the vision lasted I had not time to examine more than the one form, and this one being so beautiful I had no special wish to do so. But another thing I noted was that there was no illumination except from these floating forms; they were like the stars on a clear frosty night, and like the stars they were of varying splendour, the one upon

which I gazed being the brightest and most beautiful of all. Some were merely white and more or less opaque, while a long way off I became conscious of others which could not be seen at all, because, like the foolish virgins whose lamps had gone out, they had lost the power of self-illumination, or else had never possessed it—the varying degrees of illuminative power being indicative of the spiritual progress.

A few days after the preceding vision I again for a moment saw these or similar forms on the astral plane, but this time they were not in repose and dreaming but hurrying about here and there, seeking reincarnation. They were like swarms of bees, and the 'struggle for existence' about which we hear so much in this world is quite as operative on the astral plane—supposing there to be such a place and my visions true.

But another question arises. If all our thoughts are registered on the astral plane, as Theosophists tell us is the case, and if these thoughts according to their intensity become as living entities on this plane, is it not possible that I was simply seeing the personified thoughts of some Theosophist, which, while I was in a passive state, impinged on my thought-life and so appeared to me as visions of realities?

But the extent of my visions and psychometric experiences of spirit beings had better not be told now; only I may say this, they lead me to believe that if anyone *does* see a Mahatma there will be no doubt about the question, for they would only reveal themselves to those whom they thought worthy or for a special purpose; and then would either hide their identity altogether, or else so clearly reveal themselves that there could be no question of doubt.

It is very advisable for the inexperienced seer to be cautious about believing all that is seen or heard in the spirit world. The credulous are certain to be fooled, just as in this world some people delight in telling all sorts of absurdities to those who will believe anything. But if we are cautious and 'try the spirits,' and do not pin our faith to anything and everything that seems supernormal, we shall in time be able to distinguish between the real and the unreal, the true and the make-believe, the good and the evil. And even Mahatmas will be known by their majesty, wisdom, power, and love.

W., ILFRACOMBE.

HOW TO SWEETEN LIFE.

The Rev. George H. Hepworth is a firm believer in the power of well-directed thought and cheerful expression to sweeten life and aid in the formation of character. He denies the right of anyone to be petulant or impatient, and regards anger as a crime against one's self. He says:—

'There are some horses which are generally kind, docile, and tractable, but once in a while there is one which, under a sudden impulse, will kick the dashboard out of the waggon. On the whole, whatever other qualities such a horse may have, you will not set a high price on him. There are men and women in the world who would be humiliated by the comparison which is suggested, but who thoroughly deserve to have the comparison made and emphasised.

'There are states of mind which are destructive of peace, and there can be no happiness or dignity of character until we get out of them. It must be done, even if we have to be born again in order to accomplish it. They are not the proper belongings of a noble soul, for they are like weeds in a flower garden. You have no more right to indulge yourself in them than you have to push your neighbour down stairs or over the river bank; no more right to injure him spiritually than to injure him physically. Because you are in a bad mood why should you feel justified in making your mood epidemic and spreading it throughout the household?

'Think of a philosophy of life in which love is proclaimed the "fulfilling of the law," in which it is called "the royal law," and in which we are commanded to "bear one another's burdens"! This is a new field for exploration. We are not to be companions of animals but the peers of angels.'

Mrs. BESANT has been delivering lectures upon 'The Ascent of Man' in the small Queen's Hall, Langham-place, W. Half the series have already been given on, 'The Man'; 'The Man's Instruments'; and 'The Savage'; and on Sunday next, June 18th, the fourth address will be delivered, entitled 'The Combatant.' The subject will be continued on the 25th, inst., and the last lecture of the series, on July 2nd, will be upon 'The Christ.' Doors are open at 6.30., and the lecture commences at 7 p.m.

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EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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'LIGHT' may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

THE WEB OF MYSTERY.

In the midst of a heap of pamphlets daily accumulating on our table, the vast majority of which are only a weariness to flesh and mind, we find one with a good deal of subtle light in it. It is entitled 'Anti-Ritualism: The Church Association and the Jesuits' (Brighton: Mr. Sprake). The writer occupies our neutral position. He says: 'I speak quite as an impartial spectator, belonging neither to one camp nor to the other.' We, in like manner, not only belong to neither camp, but see defects and merits on both sides. Much of what is called 'Popery' is natural love of symbol, even love of beauty, abandonment to mystery or authority, and a not altogether blameable reaction from slovenly cheapness and dry-as-dust. On the other hand, there is a notable and wholesome revolt against priestcraft, and a rough-and-ready attempt to resist the assault upon 'The Reformation.' But we shrink from the degradation of sacred things in this miserable scuffle, and the lowering of Religion in the brawl about pictures and petticoats. At the same time, the subject naturally interests us, and, indeed, specially interests us, for reasons that will presently appear.

Before we come to that, however, there is a tempting window through which this pamphlet invites us to look: and it promises us a good view of the web of mystery, which, we may say, begins with Mr. John Kensit, and ends right away in the spirit-world where, so we are assured, very clever people still pull the wires; for the writer lays before us the astonishing proposition that the present agitation against the extreme Ritualists is the result of an intensely subtle plot to ruin the Established Church and enrich Rome. Says this writer: 'A clergyman who has studied these matters, and is, I believe, an initiate of several secret societies, or has been in his lifetime, made the thing entirely plain to me.' The authority is vague, but the theory is plain enough,—and, to tell the truth, likely enough.

It is something like this: The ultra Protestant Church Association is trying to drive out the Ritualists from the Church. But, next to the Broad Church party, the Ritualists can boast of possessing the greatest amount of education and culture. Besides, they are far and away the most ardent and most devoted party in the Church. So, if they can be driven off from the English Church, Rome stands to make an enormous gain. The Ritualists out, and, perhaps, the Church disestablished, the great National Institution would no longer stand in the way of the Romish Church, and her path would be so much easier.

The policy of Rome has ever been to divide and conquer, and that is its policy now. 'The end justifies the means,' and the loud protests of attachment to Protestantism may be only a part of the game.

This writer goes on to remark that it is not in the least degree necessary to suggest that the outer circle know the game that is really being played. Mr. Kensit, for instance, may be as guileless as a child and as sincere as a saint, but he may be spun into the web of mystery all the same. No sane conspirators who knew their business ever appeared in the outer circle. The centre moves a circle surrounding it, and so on through as many circles as may be necessary. The ultra Protestants themselves declare that Rome is all craft, and that the Jesuits are all cunning, and work with the greatest secrecy. This writer takes them at their word, and says:—

The Jesuits who guide and direct are 'behind the scenes,' seemingly very pious, very holy and reverent, and very zealous for the Poppedom, but not vulgar, and filled with pride and vanity, and poor Mr. Kensit and the rest think they are being 'guided by holy men of God, zealous for the Protestant faith of our fathers!'

To carry on such a thing with perfect and complete success is the easiest thing possible to men 'thoroughly trained in all deception and wiliness,' as they are said by Protestants to be, 'those who are in the secret being under the most solemn binding vows never by hint or word or look to betray.'

Let us imagine round the guiding centre A another circle (or circles) X; and beyond X another circle (or circles) Y. A represents the Pope and the College; the Head Centre guiding all. X, the Jesuits ('double faces') with one face to Rome, who knows them and they know her; and the other face to the outer circle Y, the great mass of zealous fanatical Protestants! The men of circle X know them; but the men of circle Y do not know the men of circle X and cannot! Of course the more circles (as is actually the case) the more elaborate the thing becomes and the more impossible to penetrate the secrecy of the inner circles. So the circle Y—the fanatics and dupes—can never tell whose orders they are really carrying out, but think they are carrying out Protestant ideas 'in excelsis!' the unconscious agents and willing dupes of the most powerful and intellectual and secret and all-pervading society in this world!

This is really diverting, and we should like to hear John Kensit on this suggestion, that he, good man, is, after all, the victim of a Jesuit plot. But more unlikely things have happened in this 'naughty world.' Every day, the conspirators take snuff and the victims sneeze.

We are carried, however, still further into this web of mystery, and it is here that we are specially concerned. This writer adds, with an indication of knowledge which we frequently trace in his pamphlet:—

Not only this, but as clairvoyants have informed us, the spirits of Jesuits going into the unseen simply continue their work with greater zeal and greater success than ever, for while they can see and direct their unconscious agents in the flesh, their agents in the flesh cannot see them; not having any experience in spirit seeing, nor cultivated clairvoyant gifts which they despise or fear. It seems, then, there is no help for our Protestant friends except in spiritual methods; but they prefer noise and legal force, which can do nothing.

It comes to this, then: Our Protestant friends are completely surrounded and enveloped in an unseen net of the most potent magic, and hypnotised by unseen influences, all the while they imagine they are free! They are working the will of Rome all the time they fancy they are doing the reverse! They are unconscious mediums most easily played upon by conscious, unseen, and highly intelligent powers! They may be the stoutest Protestants in the world, and yet all the time be unconsciously influenced and guided by visible powers in the visible planes or invisible powers in the unseen, doing the work of Rome.

We ought, perhaps, in fairness to add that the writer of these remarks is no enemy to the Church of Rome. He proceeds, indeed, to indicate his strong preference for a great deal of ritual and symbolism, and describes, with considerable eloquence and insight, ideal services of Baptism, Confirmation, and a natural 'Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass' 'in which unleavened bread and mingled wine, as representatives of the fruits of the earth (which

alone are the true and proper food of man), are offered by the priest in thanksgiving for mercies continually received from our Father-Mother God, and with supplication "for those who have gone before, and those who are with us now, and those who are yet to come!"

As mere onlookers, we think there is a good deal to say in favour of the point of view of the Church of Rome in relation to ritual and symbol while these are intimately connected with spiritual presences and powers. The mischief comes in when spirit-communion is ignored, or forgotten, or opposed, or surrendered. Then priestcraft becomes a peril, and sacraments only set forth a lie.

HOMOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

On Saturday last a large number of ladies and gentlemen thronged the drawing-room at 126, Cromwell-road, London, W., the headquarters of the Homological Association. This association, which has been in existence about six months, was formed for the purpose of assisting all those who are interested in the reading of character by external signs—that is to say, by physiognomy, palmistry, graphology, and similar methods. The 'At Home' was intended to be the first of a series of half-yearly social gatherings to be held for the purposes of raising funds and securing new members. The decorations had been kindly lent by Mr. J. W. Morris; and Mr. Murdock Wright presented some clever paintings. Among the attractions were lectures by 'Cheiro,' whose 'personal experiences' were amusing and pathetic, and narrated so humorously that all were interested and amused. Palmistry by Miss Oxenford, Madame René, and Miss Price; crystal gazing by Madame Chester; and graphology by 'Graphma,' constituted a programme sufficiently varied to meet the wishes of the most curious or inquiring mind. In the concert room a large number of artistes kindly gave their services as vocalists, pianists, violinists, accompanists, and readers, &c. Miss Beach Yaw sang Eckhart's 'Swiss Echo Song' and Auber's 'Laughing Song' in inimitable style, her remarkable voice being heard with fine effect. Mr. Carl Heinzen, an American violinist, charmed his hearers with his brilliant rendering of Bohm's 'Legende' and Mlynarski's 'Polonaise.' Miss Lilian Isoz gave recitations with much power and feeling. Miss May Garstang won applause with her song and clever dancing, as also did Herr Georg Liebling with his pianoforte solos. Miss Percival Allen, Miss Cordelia Grylls, Miss Violet Ludlow, Miss Annie Boxall, Miss Ala Wilson, Mr. Dwight Edwards, Madame Shatel, vocalists; Miss Isabel Hirschfeld, Madame E. Arnold, pianists; Miss Jessie Grimson, violinist; and Miss Fulmar Phillips, with a monologue, contributed to the pleasure of the company. We understand that the promoters of the 'At Home' were much pleased with the success achieved.

MILTON—A MEDIUM?

Mr. Phillips admits that Milton may have been a medium, but objects to his being called a Spiritualist, 'as we now use the word,' on the ground that Milton emphatically rejects all belief in the immortality of the soul. What is Spiritualism? In another part of the same issue (June 10th), 'LIGHT' puts the question thus: 'We do not care what is said, or who says it; the really important matter is: *Does anything come from behind the scenes?*' Let each person answer this question for himself. If he can honestly answer it in the affirmative he is a Spiritualist in the widest sense. In that sense Milton surely was a Spiritualist. How can a man be a medium without being a Spiritualist?

The columns of 'LIGHT' are probably not open to a discussion of Milton's belief regarding the soul after death. But it may be permitted to observe that Mr. Phillips seems to contradict himself when he goes on to say 'of course he (Milton) believed in the resurrection.' How can a man who believes in the resurrection be said 'to reject all belief in the immortality, or even survival, of the soul'? L. R.

REV. J. PAGE HOPPS.—The address of Mr. Hopps is now, and will be until further notice, 'Rushworth,' Ashburton-road, Croydon.

WORKS OF CHARLES BRODIE PATTERSON.*

'BEYOND THE CLOUDS.'

This book is a delightful presentation of 'the inner life principles. The preface states these to consist in a belief in the universal Fatherhood and Motherhood of God; the universal brotherhood and sisterhood of man; the immanence of the One Life in the universe, from which proceed Light, Love, and Truth.

We are all dead, says the author, till we realise that we are born of the will of God; till we perceive that God worketh in us to will and to do and our wills are brought into submission to the divine. This is the new birth; then the spirit of God becomes the controlling power, then man knows that freedom consists in obeying the higher will.

The sacrifice of bulls, goats, &c., symbolises the offering up of the animal part of our own natures as a sacrifice, which we must make before the higher will takes full possession of our souls. The shedding of blood is the putting off of the old nature, the animal nature, so that the spiritual can acquire the ascendancy in the soul of man. There are as many animals in man as ever entered Noah's ark.

The soul of man is the temple of the living God, and God acting from within us must ever be the source of all wisdom and power. When the Christ has arisen within us, it is perceived to be not external, but a light shining from within; it is the passage from the human to the divine; then the son of man ceases to be, and the son of God arises in all his majesty and might.

To attain psychical development we must practise self-control. This is far more than mere control of our words and passions and denying of earthly pleasures; it means the control of our every thought. Concentration of mind can only evolve through self-control. The renunciation of selfishness is ever followed by spiritual growth. It is through divesting the mind of its purely personal self, attaching no importance to personal feelings and things, and seeking to realise the higher selfhood, that true individuality is attained, which will endure when the personal self has vanished away. A pure and unselfish life will do more to fit you to become possessed of spiritual powers than all the study of magic, occultism, or clairvoyance.

Male and female are not images of God, but the image of God. Throughout nature we find these dual principles; their union generates the child or constitutes the trinity. It is the universal Christ that constitutes the third principle. But before this can be realised the thought of personality must disappear. When we realise that there is but one mind, one will in the universe, then will that mind and will reign supreme in our lives. When the selfhood is lost the Godhood is found. 'It is the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.'

SEEKING THE KINGDOM.

This work consists of a series of addresses on Spiritual Science given at the Mental Science Institute at Hartford. It is an earlier work and less mature in expression, yet full of gems.

Our thoughts are the greatest factor in life with which we have to deal. Every thought we think expresses itself in our bodies. The fruit of false thought must be sorrow, pain, disease. Right thoughts bring health and happiness. To think in accord with God, to reflect the will of God, is the highest mission of man. When he realises this, he comes into his birthright; he becomes a son of God. Every thought we think goes forth on its mission; the beautiful pure thought goes forth as messenger of health and happiness to uplift, cheer, and brighten life; while the thought of evil makes more dense the darkness.

The prodigal son is presented as the thinker who is in open rebellion to the Father, who will not be led by the spirit of truth, but who blindly follows his own will and falls into the belief of his separateness from the One. Self-sufficiency reigns supreme.

But to the son who is led by the spirit of the Father's will, who has brought his own will into subjection to the Father's will, all things come within reach. He is no longer

* London: Redway, or Gay and Bird.

held in bondage and subjection by his lower nature, but is free, with God alone as his ruler, and He, dwelling within, ever guides and directs aright, and ever leads upward and onward

The knowledge of the oneness of life and intelligence is the message of paramount import throughout. 'That they may all be one; as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, and they also may be one in us.' 'I in them and Thou in me, that they may be perfected into one.' 'ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?'

The belief that the body is something of itself brings us into bondage; brings us under the law; while when led by the spirit we are free. It is by the giving up of personal self that we gain the victory over the lower nature. Then comes the resurrection of the spirit; then we can say, as said Jesus: 'I and the Father are one.' 'Not my will, but Thine be done.'

Man, to be whole and at one with God, must be controlled by the spirit of God, and that control must begin with the highest and descend to the lowest; beginning in the heaven, the soul, and descending to the earth, the body; never from the sense-nature up.

A carnally-minded man depends solely on sense and intellect to bring him a knowledge of the Truth, while a spiritually-minded man relies on the intuitional, or spiritual, to show him the way of life and truth. The carnal mind is the lower, or sense-nature, controlling, or seeking to control, the intellectual.

Love of the world appears to us from many stand-points: ambition, desire for riches, for worldly honours, for intellectual attainments. The devil of self is the greatest devil about which we know, or ever will know anything; and being under the control of such a devil, is the worst kind of bondage, this self which puts us in rebellion against God and our fellow-man. When we have overcome this evil one, we are then in a fair way to know the hidden things of God. It is against reason to suppose that true happiness can come to man if, in any way, he places his will in opposition to the Divine will. The Divine will teaches us that by seeking the good of all, we lose sight of personal considerations; it also teaches that no true happiness can be derived through the gratification of personal sense desires. Our greatest happiness comes in the giving of pleasure to others.

NEW THOUGHT ESSAYS.

This book is rich in valuable information. It recognises that man possesses dual modes of consciousness, spiritual as well as empirical. The most sublime and exalted feelings, we are told, are not the result of outside influences but proceed as intuitions from impulses such as love, hope, faith, from within the soul to the mind, which is an outgrowth of the soul, as body is an outgrowth of mind. Mind is in fact that aspect of being that relates man to the world of form. Man is heaven within and earth without, and relates himself by these correspondences to the inner and the outer worlds.

Mind is double-faced, like Janus, and may relate inwards or outwards. When both passages are kept open, it receives on the one hand and gives on the other. For light to be received from within as intuitions, meditation, contemplation, and concentration must be practised.

Meditation is entering into the inner consciousness of life; becoming one with the eternal source and fount of life; communing with God. Man's spirit blends with the Universal. God lives in man and man lives in the life of God. The human mind becomes the vehicle for the manifestation of God.

Concentration makes manifest that which has been received. It prevents dissipation and brings the rays to a focus, as a sun-glass does.

Contemplation may partake of both inner and outer impressions. It is the connecting link between meditation and concentration. It is the point of poise between the inner and outer, by which the mind acquires force in the inner and uses it in the outer.

The outer is ever the symbol or expression of the inner. The whole visible manifestation, body and world, is the symbol or clothing of thought, which is constantly shaping

for itself new apparel. The spiritual is the plane of causes, the physical of results. Everything we think is imaged in the mind, and then expressed in the body. Our thoughts are first ideated, then expressed outwardly. It is necessary to make all appetites and desires subordinate to the inner impulses of the soul. Interior harmony, or beauty of thought, entails beauty of form, as expression corresponds to inner thought.

The discordant emotions that affect the mind come from the outer world, while faith, hope, love come from within, and image only things beautiful and harmonious. We should seek to rise above the discords and unrest of the material consciousness. The heaven within shapes the heaven without. Beauty of thought relates itself to things beautiful in the outer world, and refuses to see the discordant side of life. Inner harmony recognises outer harmony. We may thus make new environments for ourselves.

Thoughts are living entities which clothe themselves with form. Control and direction of thought are the prime requisites. Whatever you wish to be or do, picture that ideal clearly in the mind and it will take form. The freedom and power of individual will consists in its conformity to the law of God; in the recognition that there is but one will in the universe—the will of God becoming manifest in the life of man. When the mind perceives that man's spirit is one with the Universal spirit, then we realise that the life of man is not in any sense separate or detached from God. Then is the recognition of the indwelling spirit of God; the becoming at-one with God; the human will disappearing before the Divine will; the light shining in the darkness becomes a living flame, and enlightens the mind and body.

The knowledge of this truth brings the absolute freedom of life, whereby a man becomes a law unto himself, disclosing in his own life God's perfect image and likeness.

The essays on Telepathy as a scientific fact; Healing at a distance; the Imaging faculty; Breath vibration; the Mental Origin of Disease; How we make our environment; and the Evolution of power, deal with the application of these principles in practical expression. The whole presents a science of thinking or mental science, in which principles which are in accord with metaphysic are brought into practical utilitarian bearing on our daily life. Yet this system differs from scholasticism in recognising the presentation of thought from within as well as from without; intuition as distinct from empirical relations, and rational judgments or reasoning. It differs also in recognising the fundamental power of love as co-equal with spirit, and present in the one source of life.

While metaphysic recognises thought as the logical pre-condition of expression or manifestation, it deals essentially with the bearing of this law on a rationalised theory of the universe and the process of becoming. This system of mental science deals with the bearing of the effects of the same law on human life, and on its environment, and shows how man, by identifying himself with the Infinite, actually present (infinitude) within his own central being, and recognising his oneness with the Infinite, may rise from a state of determinism into freedom; may transcend the discords, contention, conflict, and servitude of outer life, into peace, harmony, stillness; and rise from the rush into the hush of life; and how co-operating in identity from that altitude of oneness with the Divine will, which alone is free, which alone doeth the works, he may think harmony, happiness, success, love, into manifestation in his environment, and bring the kingdom of heaven from the within into the without; from an internal condition into an external representation.

'A SPIRITUALISTIC LEADER.'—We have received from Berlin a neat little pamphlet written in the German language, and entitled 'Spiritistisches Leitwort' (or 'Spiritualistic Leader'), intended for distribution amongst inquirers. It gives, in plain and simple language, a good deal of valuable information on various matters pertaining to Spiritualism, and is calculated to be of great service in the promotion of our cause. It may be obtained at Siegismund's, 68, Mauerstrasse, Berlin, W., for 2½d., or 5 cents per copy, or directly from F. Böhme, 5, Perlebergerstrasse, Berlin, N.W., at 1½d., or 3 cents per copy, post free, on an order of at least fifty copies.

THE GERMAN PSYCHICAL PAPERS.

The greater part of the 'Uebersinnliche Welt' for May is taken up with continuations of long and philosophical essays, and there comes a further account of Mrs. Corner's séances with the 'Sphinx' Society, in Berlin. Two gentlemen, members of the society, give their experiences; the first, Herr von Blankenburg, very briefly and concisely, while Herr Lorenz Oldenburg gives a long and detailed account of the two séances at which he was present.

The phenomena in no wise differ from those already described. Perhaps the most curious of these was the finding of a solid wooden ring, as well as of a chair (on one occasion), strung on the cord with which the medium was bound, between two of the seals, at the conclusion of the séance, when the gas was turned full on and the curtains drawn back, the medium being still in her trance sleep, and the bindings all intact as before the séance.

Both gentlemen express their satisfaction with the manifestations, and their conviction of the utter impossibility of any deception on the part of the medium; indeed, it is difficult to imagine how 'test' conditions could have been more stringent. The séances were held in the house of one of the members of the Sphinx Society, Mrs. Corner being an invited guest; at every séance she was strictly searched by some ladies in an adjoining room, with the result that no white clothing of any sort was found upon her; the 'cabinet' was a sort of iron cage affixed to the wall, as was the arm-chair to which Mrs. Corner was bound by Herr Max Rahn, the secretary of the society; the tying and sealing of the cords seem to have been done in the most complete manner, from ten to fifteen minutes being occupied in the process.

Mrs. Corner appears to have made a very favourable impression upon the members; while, on the other side, in spite of the necessary bondage to which she was subjected, entirely with her own concurrence, she was treated with great courtesy and kindness by the investigators—conditions very necessary to ensure good séances.

A short paper follows this, entitled, 'Proofs of the Existence of the Soul,' an address delivered by Mrs. Annie Besant, in Chicago, probably much curtailed in the report. Mrs. Besant begins by remarking on the universal belief of all ages and nations in a future life, which, however, she says, is no proof of it; and she therefore does not intend basing her theory on this intuitive conviction, but wishes to follow step by step a train of thought which, she says, is open to materialists as well as to ourselves, and which must, by a process of logical reasoning, succeed in demonstrating the existence of the soul. She then proceeds to recapitulate all the arguments advanced by scientific materialists some five-and-twenty years ago, to show that there was no thought or mental power apart from the material brain; but, she says, since those days science has greatly changed in its conception of matter, which is no longer so narrow or restricted.

After recapitulating these arguments, Mrs. Besant says: 'And thus these proofs were triumphantly summed up: If thought is developed, grows, and becomes matured with the growth and development of the brain; if it changes with the condition of the brain; if when the latter becomes seriously injured, the power of thought vanishes, is it possible to maintain that when the brain at death is finally destroyed the mind rises triumphantly from this ruin and lives on in power and majesty?'

This process of reasoning is, she says, very impressive, but is entirely inductive and argues from details to generalities. Splendid proofs may be obtained by means of inductive logic, but there is always a weak place in this mode of reasoning. You must be certain that it embraces the whole of the facts, for one single fact in the contrary direction upsets the whole edifice. Now, she says, it was the discovery of such facts which had been overlooked in this noted inductive argument, which brought the edifice to the ground. One fact would have sufficed, but there have been hundreds known. And she concludes by saying that often the very reverse is seen; that is, instances are known in which the brain becomes partly paralysed and yet the mind or thought is far more active than when it is dependent on the brain.

'Psyche' enters on the vexed question of Eusapia

Paladino's mediumship. It gives a translation of some of the latest 'proceedings' of the Psychical Research Society, referring to that subject; then follows Mr. F. W. H. Myers' letter to 'LIGHT' of February 18th, and then the translator, Dr. Wittig, of Leipzig, adds some—to my thinking—very sensible remarks of his own. While acknowledging that some of the phenomena occurring with Eusapia are undoubtedly genuine, he says there is likewise no doubt that she has been detected in the most barefaced cheating. But whether she is herself to be blamed for this is another question. Few persons who have had much experience of mediumistic phenomena are unaware how unscrupulous sometimes the invisible operators are as to how they perform the manifestations expected from them; and if, on account of faulty conditions or other reasons, they are unable to produce them by fair means, they often do not hesitate to use their unconscious medium's physical powers, thus exposing the latter to cruel suspicion and insult. Dr. Wittig says it must be remembered that Eusapia, during the whole time the phenomena are occurring, is in an unconscious or trance state; and it is as unjust to condemn her as it would be to punish a sleeping man for a murder he had committed in his dreams. With this medium, he says, it is better to let the wheat and the tares grow together, and not, by adopting too extreme measures, run the risk of rooting up the wheat with the tares.

M. T.

A HEAVENLY DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

We quote, with pleasure, the following from the June issue of 'The Coming Day':—

The First Association of Spiritualists in Philadelphia has just been holding a Jubilee, with very considerable *éclat*. From a charming programme which someone has sent us, we extract the following 'Declarations of Principles.' We wish all poor ignorant people who think of Spiritualists as fools or frauds could have the opportunity of reading it, and the good sense to ponder it:—

Believing—1st. That a Beneficent Power and Wise Intelligence pervades and controls the universe, sustaining towards all human beings the intimate relation of parent, whose revelation is nature, whose interpreter is science, and whose most acceptable worship is doing good to all:

2nd. That all truth is sacred and its authority absolute to the individual that apprehends it, but that while one may aid another in the perception of truth and duty, no one can determine for another what is truth and duty; hence that each human being must believe and act upon individual responsibility:

3rd. That all action, according to its quality, results in suffering or in joy by the operation of inherent laws, physical and spiritual:

4th. That all human beings are destined to a continued individual existence in a future state, for which the experience and attainments of the present life are preparatory, and hence that it is the duty of all to perfect themselves in knowledge, wisdom and love, by making a right use of all the means obtainable for developing completeness and beauty of character, for aid in which divine inspiration, and angelic ministrations, and spiritual gifts are ever available to mankind:

5th. That realised communion with those who have gone before us to the spirit world is practicable under suitable conditions, and is a privilege of high value to those who use it wisely:

6th. That the human race is one family of brotherhood, whose interests are forever inseparable, hence that it is the duty of each individual not only to refrain from whatever would wrong or harm another, but also to live for the good of all, seeking especially to aid the unfortunate, the ignorant, the inharmonious, and the suffering, of whatever race and condition:

7th. Believing, also, that the achievement of true lives and a nobler civilisation can better be attained by associative and co-operative than by merely individual action; we therefore agree to unite our efforts for the practical application of these convictions.

IN MEMORIAM.—Mr. William Thomas Reynolds, of Lyndhurst, passed away on the 3rd inst. The deceased, who was seventy-eight years of age, had lived at Burnham some two years. For many years he had an extensive practice in the Mile End district as a medical electrician and professed mesmerist. He leaves a widow, one son, and several daughters. He was an ardent Spiritualist, and was president for some years of the Stratford Spiritualists' Society.

A PSYCHIC STUDY SOCIETY.

The Rev. Henry Frank, pastor of the Metropolitan Independent Church, New York, whose public work has hitherto been mainly confined to the exposition of scientific religious thought, has been privately making investigations in psychical phenomena, and his researches have led him to conclude that human immortality can be demonstrated by the evidences to be obtained in that realm. With this object he has recently promoted the formation of a society in New York City for 'the rational and scientific investigation of alleged psychic phenomena.' Commenting upon this proposal, the Editor of 'Mind,' writing as a 'well-wisher of the new society,' 'earnestly advises the directors to drop the word *alleged* from their prospectus,' and he wisely says:—

Psychic phenomena are no longer 'alleged'—their existence is admitted by everyone who is not either an ignoramus or a bigoted materialist. While in no enterprise is the importance of starting right so vital as in the exploration of an unknown realm, yet the psychic realm to some minds is much less of a *terra incognita* than to others. The 'discerning of spirits' is frequently as much a matter of capacity as of opportunity. By all means be conservative and scientific; but it should be remembered that not all the things of the spirit are measurable by the yardstick of material 'science.' Their only analogy is their dependence upon *conditions*. As in chemistry and agriculture, so in the affairs of the psychic world—definite results are only obtainable by compliance with certain conditions. This law of dependence pertains to the conditioned everywhere. The Absolute alone is unconditioned.

Another suggestion we would make is, that when the society has at hand, and provable, a simple, natural explanation of a given phenomenon, it should not waste its time in investigating solutions that are more wonderful and incredible than the phenomenon itself. Remember that 'hypnotism' has sharply-defined limitations; and, above all things, do not overwork the 'sub-conscious mind' theory. The inventors of far-fetched and artificial explanations are generally forced to admit that there are *some* phases of psychic phenomena that they have heard of but have never *seen*—otherwise their favourite 'hypothesis' would die in infancy.

Experiments in telepathy, psychometry, improvisation, mind-reading, automatic writing, and mental suggestion—also the study of dreams and visions—may be carried on among the members themselves, without outside aid. But when it is thought desirable to enlist the services of mediums, or psychic sensitives, such assistants should preferably be chosen from among the ranks of the private, unprofessional, and uncommercialised variety. Fraud may be suspected only where there is the incentive of personal profit. In fact, among the very earliest things to be studied should be mediumship itself—a faculty by no means uncommon among perfectly trustworthy persons.

Finally, we would warn the society that over-cautiousness defeats its own purpose as frequently as does over-credulity. In dealing with problems of this kind, the most important conditions are mental ones. The conceited scepticism of a coterie of positive minds, who *believe something contrary to the facts*, has been known to convert a perfectly legitimate psychical operation into a seeming insult to their intelligence. Passivity and receptivity need not be mistaken for gullibility. The continuation of life beyond the grave has already been proved objectively—the proposition need no longer be accepted on 'faith,' or *a priori* speculation.

We trust the Psychic Study Society of New York will not fear to follow wherever its researches may lead; that it will never be afraid of the truth; and that the phenomena it reveals and classifies will be regarded and used as a means of spiritual development, not as an end in themselves.

Experienced Spiritualists will recognise the force and wisdom of the advice tendered to the society by the writer of the above. It should be of service to the members in

making their experiments, and we shall watch for, and be glad from time to time to chronicle, the results of their investigations.

THE FRAUD QUESTION.

The Spiritualists of San Francisco have been considerably exercised over the constantly recurring 'fraud' question in relation to mediumship, and at the People's Spiritual Society, meeting at 117, Larkin-street, on Wednesday evenings, overflowing audiences have listened to lectures by Professor William Patterson dealing with the nature of true mediumship in contradistinction to the erroneous ideas and opinions held by some people regarding physical phenomena. A correspondent of the 'Banner of Light' says:—

These lectures have been followed by demonstrations by Bishop Garrison of how pretending mediums perform their unholy work, and deceive the uninitiated. Mr. Garrison's illustrations and explanations cover the whole ground of fraudulent phenomena, such as the many methods of slate-writing, materialisation, etherialisation, trumpet, and dark séance manifestations. Those who attend these meetings say that Messrs. Patterson and Garrison deserve the thanks and support of every honest Spiritualist in the ranks for the brave work they are doing in showing up the tricks of the gang of robbers who go about the country swindling honest people under the guise of a pretended mediumship. At a recent meeting Professor Patterson read some 'Banner of Light' editorials bearing upon the fraud question. The applause that followed the reading showed how deeply in earnest the people are, and their determination to know and uphold the truth, and condemn and expose the false.

During the course of Mr. Garrison's illustrations it was readily seen how easily an honest person could be deceived in any branch of the phenomena. The method used by prominent slate-writers in giving public manifestations was demonstrated and explained after the entire audience had been set guessing 'How was it done?' No one present detected the trick, and none could tell how the writing was done until it was explained to them. If every spiritual society throughout the land could secure such teachers for their platforms they would soon rid the ranks of fake mediums, and pave the way for honest, genuine psychics to do the work the spirit-friends are anxiously waiting to see inaugurated. I only need add that when these demonstrations were commenced, some of the goody-goody, no-fraud Spiritualists opposed the innovation, but the President, Mrs. May Drynan, determined the work should go on, and has been rewarded by having her hall packed to overflowing by the eager people, and often many are turned away for lack of room. To an investigator it is worth a great deal to go into his researches forewarned and forearmed with this knowledge of *how* the fakir does his work; for he is then prepared to distinguish between the true and false phenomena.

MADAME LA GÉNÉRALE CARMENCITA NOËL contributes to the June number of 'La Revue Spirite' a long and very interesting article regarding some wonderful manifestations which are being continuously observed at her residence, Villa Carmen, Mustapha, Algiers. It is too long for us to copy, but those of our friends who are familiar with French will be gratified in reading it in the 'Revue.' Madame la Générale has kindly promised to supply a short account to 'LIGHT,' at an early date, regarding some of the principal phenomena which have come under her own personal observation, in addition to those which we have already given from time to time.

A NEW BOOK BY MISS GOODRICH-FREER.—The following paragraph has appeared in the London 'Daily Telegraph':—Spiritualists will be attracted by a book which Mr. Redway is to publish in a fortnight or so. It is by the Marquis of Bute and Miss Goodrich-Freer, and is entitled 'The Alleged Haunting of B— House.' The residence in question was a shooting and fishing box, in which were assembled a number of guests, most of them well known in society. Only one or two were aware of the reputation of the house, and the intention was to await events, which occurred in the most approved form of psychic phenomena. The book includes a diary of three months kept by Miss Freer. It was believed that the manifestations arose from religious differences in the family of the owner of the house; and Mass was said in all the haunted rooms, some being in addition sprinkled with Holy Water. The plan is said to have been entirely successful.

THE HARMONY OF RELIGIONS.

It has been well said that 'theologies are many but religion is one.' The tendency of the age is towards the discovery of this underlying unity, and the recognition of the sympathy running through the fundamental affirmations of all systems of faith. This point is clearly presented by F. R. Fisher, in the current issue of 'Mind.' He says:—

'If we critically examine the beliefs of all peoples from the most remote periods and divest them of their ritualistic symbolisms and mysteries, we find certain ultimate religious concepts underlying them. These constitute the common base upon which all creeds are formulated, no matter how diverse their structure. Perhaps no better instance of this can be cited than the religion of ancient Egypt, with its host of divinities. A careful perusal of "The Book of the Dead" leads to the conclusion that the belief was fundamentally monotheistic, and the multitude of minor gods and goddesses but the attributes of the Supreme Deity personified—by which personification an attempt was made to present the character of the attributes in thinkable shape.

'In the Vedas, the Avesta, the Upanishads, the Assyrian-inscribed legends, and similar sources, we find a like discrimination between the Supreme Entity and the attributes so personified as to manifest in the simplest manner their relations to mankind. Yet, again, the highly-cultured Greeks had an altar to the "Unknown God" whom Paul made known to them. We note also upon investigation that the virtues required of men by the Supreme One, under these otherwise diverse beliefs, are essentially if not identically the same as those set forth in modern theology.'

A SENSIBLE VICAR.—The Rev. T. P. Brocklehurst obtained the special permission of his Bishop for a medical man to occupy his pulpit on Hospital Sunday in All Saints' Church, South Merstham. The reason for this arrangement he gives in the following plain language: 'I feel it is almost a farce to come and talk to some of you on spiritual matters when all the while my fingers itch to open or clean your windows, scrub your woodwork, and wash your children. And you cannot truthfully say that I ever pry into your concerns or dictate to you; but I cannot help seeing what I do see.'

ARRIVAL OF MRS. M. E. CADWALLADER.—Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader's many friends in this country will be pleased to know that after a long and serious illness of five months' duration she is now in London, accompanied by her father, Mr. B. B. Hill, and Mr. and Mrs. Cutter, of Philadelphia. They are passing through on their way to Paris and other cities. If sufficiently recovered, Mrs. Cadwallader may undertake some public work upon her return from the Continent. Letters can be addressed to her at Mrs. Morse's hotel, where she is staying.

A CHARGE OF HERESY.—The Rev. B. F. Austin, one of the leading Methodist ministers of Ontario, Canada, whose sermon on 'Buy the Truth' appeared in the 'Light of Truth' recently, is now upon his trial for heresy at Port Stanley. The charge of heresy was brought forward by Rev. H. A. Going, who wrote to the Editor of the 'Light of Truth,' concerning the validity of the authorship of the sermon 'Buy the Truth,' saying that upon the reply would rest 'our future course.' The Rev. Goring evidently was satisfied with the reply, and 'our future course' is to be seen in the trial through which Principal Austin is now passing. Advices from Canada state that Mr. Austin is not receding from any stand he has taken, and he will publish a book with the arguments, *pro* and *con*, which will also be put in pamphlet form and sent broadcast through the Dominion. The Rev. Dr. Austin is a Spiritualist, and this trial will be watched by Spiritualists with interest.

'STAR LORE' for the June quarter (Glen and Co., 328, Strand), contains much interesting matter. Writing of 'Her Majesty's Eightieth Birthday Anniversary' the Editor says: 'Although some good primary directions come into operation in the Queen's eighty-first year, there are three of opposite nature which may cause some trouble. The head and eyes may suffer in the summer.' The wrecks of the 'Stella' and 'Paris' are astrologically considered and shown to be in agreement with predictions contained in Zadkiel's Almanac for 1899. The horoscope of the late Lord Randolph Churchill (born at midnight, February 12th, 1849) is also given and discussed. The recent solar eclipse, it is pointed out, is not favourable to trade and commerce. August is to be a time of stress, and November will bring epidemic sickness. Other articles deal with the 'Peace Conference,' 'Shakespeare and Therapeutics,' and the 'Ruling Sign of Roumania.' There is no attempt at weather prediction.

NEW YORK, U.S.A.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Messrs. Brentano, 31, Union-square.

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.

Reincarnation.

SIR,—If, as Mr. Thurstan would appear to suggest, the late Countess of Caithness had so far modified her views on reincarnation as to liken the process to the succession of buds upon a tree, may she not almost be said to have renounced them? At least, I fail to see any apt comparison between recurring crops of buds and the re-embodiment of distinct personalities for the purpose of growth, experience, and retribution. In 'LIGHT,' May 27th, your correspondent on 'Reincarnation and Divine Justice' implies that to be born blind is a penalty for sin; too terribly cruel an implication to be suggested in the absence of definite knowledge, and one utterly at variance with the teaching of the Master (John ix. 2, 3). This is no burning question with me. I am almost indifferent as to the facts, and quite ready to believe in reincarnation *here* whenever sufficiently good reasons are forthcoming, but up to the present I am chiefly impressed by the weakness of all pleading in its favour, in spite of the ingenuity displayed in seeking to overcome difficulties and contradictions.

BIDSTON.

Reincarnation.

SIR,—Mr. Thurstan says that 'Trident' has 'misrepresented the views of the late Countess of Caithness on the subject of reincarnation.' I beg to suggest that it is Mr. Thurstan himself who has done so, as the following will prove. Mr. Thurstan says: 'It is true she thought herself a reincarnation of Mary Queen of Scots, and yet professed to have held converse with her spirit. But in some of her last writings I remember noticing that her theory was that we are all reincarnations, in the same sense that the rose budding on a branch of a rose tree is the reincarnation of the rose that budded there last year.'

In the issue of 'LIGHT' for January 19th, 1895, there is an account of an interview between the Countess of Caithness and your Special Representative, in which the following occurs:—

'Your rose tree, madame, which inspired Mr. Sinnett's Higher Self—what is that?'

'A rose tree had been taken by Marie as the symbol by which to illustrate the high spiritual truth that our life here is but one bud of a series put forth in orderly succession by a permanent spiritual parent tree. This little passage from one of Marie's inspirational writings through my hand will help you to gather the meaning of the symbol. Marie says: "Souls are born of souls, as bodies are born of bodies. The rose tree in your garden is not the real rose tree; the real plant is the spiritual tree in its dual nature, and it is continually acted upon by the Divine nature to put forth a new bud on the outward plane, which is but an emanation, an incarnation if you will, but never a reincarnation, because the same elements, either spiritual or material, are never used again, and yet your rose tree is permanent, ever living and breathing, and putting forth the outer from the inner, ever working out its interior principles. It is, in fact, a manifestation of the Divine Spirit. And as of the rose tree, so of all the trees in God's garden; and even so of the least bough of a tree which sheds and renews its leaves, which are its objective life, season after season, and draws its nutriment therefrom. And so it is with the human trees in God's garden, which are not the real trees, for these have firmer roots than earth can give, being planted in heavenly soil; they are but a manifestation, but an expression, of the real and spiritual man in his dual nature.'

'So that, as I take it, the claim is, that you and Mary "Queen of Scots" are two buds breaking into leaf and flowers at different seasons, but owning the same parent stem; two of a series of successive form manifestations of the same Higher Self?'

'That is exactly the case. People have said that I call myself a reincarnation of Marie, which is entirely false. She and I, though exceedingly close in affinity, are separate individualities, and I gratefully acknowledge her inspiration and unceasing spiritual care.'

Thus, it will be seen that the late Countess of Caithness did not regard herself as a reincarnation of Mary Queen of Scots, and did not believe that 'we are all reincarnations, in the same sense that the rose budding on a branch of a rose tree is the reincarnation of the rose that budded there last year.'

JOHN RYLEY.

SIR,—I have been much interested in the letters that have lately appeared in 'LIGHT' on the subject of reincarnation. With the help of a friend 'on the other side' I have for some time enjoyed the gift of automatic writing. The identity of this friend having been proved to my complete satisfaction, I place as much trust in all his communications now as I should have done during his life on earth. He tells me he has not passed into any distant heaven but that, simply freed from the encumbrance of an earth-form, he lives on in a stage of evolutionary development in advance of ours, his physical and mental faculties marvellously increased and extended, his moral state just what his spiritual insight had enabled him to attain here.

I asked him many questions, and among others have touched on that of reincarnation. This is his view. I give it as I should that of an experienced friend:—

'Two distinct lines of evolution are to be traced, *i.e.*—that of the molecule to the man, and that of thought latent to thought expressed. The theory of physical evolution may now be mastered by the proverbial schoolboy; that of spiritual evolution is carried on in the unseen universe around us. As every molecule yields up its life, its tiny resulting experience continues in unbroken line to evolve in reincarnating force of outward expression, ever increasing in power, and ever increasing in wealth of intelligence until man's estate is reached. That gained, no further reincarnation is obligatory, for the soul of man once acknowledging its Divine origin can henceforth obtain all spiritual knowledge, either by the extended power of communicating with the wise of all ages, or by its own observations of unfolding truth.'

' A READER OF 'LIGHT.'

The Value of Spiritualism.

SIR,—May I be allowed to suggest that the leading Note in last week's 'LIGHT' is liable to be misunderstood? To many it will seem to imply that the only value of Spiritualism is in the proof offered by it of the existence of intelligent beings in the unseen. Whilst fully recognising the importance of establishing the reality of this fact, and the value of Spiritualism as a means towards doing so, I feel confident that the Editor will agree with those who hold that this is by no means the *only* gain which communications from the other side bring to us. Many of us care very much for 'what is said,' and also 'who says it.'

Until the existence of spirits apart from bodies of flesh is accepted not much advance can be made, and to produce conviction on this point physical phenomena of the most elementary order are of value; but when this fact is once accepted as proved, the beneficial or non-beneficial character of the intercourse between the spheres is obviously chiefly determined by 'what is said,' and in a less degree by 'who says it.'

As to what is said, it has been sometimes objected that it is not new. Some of us are thankful that it is so; the universal root-truths which have been revealed to earnest seekers all down the ages are really the essential truths to live by, and as we begin to see a little way into their significance we find them to be so magnificent, so wonderful, containing within them such unsuspected possibilities, that we have newness enough in these eternal seeds, and quite enough occupation for our minds during their short incarnation in trying to apprehend and assimilate a little of their meaning. Those messages, therefore, which endorse the intuition of the deepest thinkers, that ratify the hopes which have inspired the noblest seers, are the communications we most value, and if we are able to identify the communicators their value is increased. Such corroborative testimony from those who have gained a higher vantage ground brings something new, even though the truths conveyed have been glimpsed long ago, if it brings to the receiver a new consciousness of the reality and meaning of the old truths.

H. A. D.

Spiritualists' National Federation.

SIR,—I shall be glad if you can find space (before our annual conference at Blackpool on Saturday and Sunday, July 1st and 2nd) for the following 'notices of motion' which have been sent to me in accordance with the requirements of our constitution, and also the list of nominations for the vacancies on the General Executive Committee. All delegates and associates requiring accommodation at Blackpool will oblige by *promptly* intimating the fact to me, so that the Blackpool friends may have time to make the necessary arrangements. W. HARRISON, Sec.

37, North-street, Burnley.

By the Walsall Society.—That in future the Executive Committee of this Federation shall hold its meetings at various centres where convenient, and when invited by the local society or societies; and that public demonstrations be held on the Sunday following in conjunction with such

societies, with a view to assisting them in their work, and furthering our spiritual cause generally.

By the Blackpool Society.—That the time has arrived when it is desirable that the relationship between societies and their Lyceums should be strengthened and better understood.

By Mrs. M. H. Wallis.—That the Spiritualists' National Federation be requested to adopt the 'Order of Progressive Spiritualists Sick, Benefit, and Pension Funds' at their conference in July, 1899, with the recommendation from the council of the O. P. S. that the pensions now being paid to Mr. William Wallace, Rev. C. Ware, Mrs. Barnes, Mrs. Keyworth and Mrs. Kinchlea shall be continued.

The following persons retire from the General Executive Committee, *viz.*: Mrs. M. H. Wallis, Messrs. S. S. Chiswell, T. O. Todd, A. Kitson, W. Johnson, J. J. Morse, J. B. Tetlow, and A. Smedley.

Persons nominated as per rule: Bibbings, Mr. G. H. (Nottingham), Butterworth, Mr. S. (Blackpool), Chiswell, Mr. S. S. (Liverpool), Howes, Mr. H. (Blackpool), Johnson, M. W. (Hyde), Kersey, Mr. H. A. (Newcastle), Kitson, Mr. A. (Batley Carr), Mason, Mr. W. (Burnley), Morse, Mr. J. J. (London), Ormerod, Mr. G. (Rishton), Parker, Mr. J. (Bradford), Parr, Mr. J. J. (Bootle), Pemberton, Mr. J. (Warrington), Roche, Mr. A. H. (Salford), Tetlow, Mr. J. B. (Manchester), Wallis, Mrs. M. H. (London), Whittaker, Mr. J. (Keighley).

The O.P.S. Funds for Distressed Mediums.

SIR,—I desire to place the following suggestion before your readers for the help of the above funds, which Mrs. Wallis has in hand, *viz.*: that in the early autumn a concert, or musical evening, be given in one of the London Town Halls (say Stratford), and that the hearty co-operation of all London Spiritualists be requested. The talent would not be found wanting for such an object, especially when we remember that it should be one of our first duties to help those who have borne the heat of the day. I should be quite willing to give my services in organising the concert or to assist from a musical point of view. Will the London Societies kindly consider the suggestion and communicate with me?

ALFRED CLEGG.

18, Fleetwood-street, Stoke Newington, N.

SOCIETY WORK.

BRISTOL, 24, UPPER MAUDLIN-STREET.—On Sunday last a splendid address was delivered by Mrs. Stephan, of Derby, upon 'Have we a need of a Saviour?' followed by very satisfactory clairvoyance and psychometry.—W. WEBBER.

GROVE-LANE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On Sunday last an address was given by the control of Mrs. Holgate, on matters relating to health; after which the little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Scott was named 'Maggie May' by the spirit friends. At the after circle clairvoyance was given by Messrs. Lovatt and Renny.—H. E. B.

THE CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—At our morning public circle our leader gave good clairvoyance. The children of the Lyceum in the afternoon were entertained by the Ethical Society of South London, and had a very enjoyable time. At the evening service, Mr. Long's guide 'Douglas' gave an interesting address on the 'Ascension,' from a spiritual standpoint. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 3 p.m., children's Lyceum; at 6 p.m., lending library; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long; and at 7.45 p.m., circle for members and associates only.—VERAX.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 14, STROUD GREEN-ROAD, FINSBURY PARK.—On Sunday last, Mrs. Paton, of Leeds, again addressed an interested audience on 'Spiritualism and Religion.' In the afternoon another large meeting was held, when Mr. Smith and Mr. Terry, of the Christian Evidence Society, discussed Spiritualism. In the evening, at the hall, Mr. Jones in the chair, Messrs. Brooks, Wallace, Sutherland, and Hewitt addressed the meeting. An inspirational address and clairvoyance were also given by Mrs. Jones. On Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., in the park; at 7 p.m., service in the hall. On Tuesday, members only; and on Wednesday, at 8 p.m., lecture.—T.B.

HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, S.W.—Last Sunday Mrs. Boddington and Mr. Adams dealt with 'The Gift of Healing.' Mrs. Boddington stated that she had been enabled by a knowledge of this art to effect many splendid cures, and urged the audience to make good use of their powers instead of letting them lie dormant. Questions were also answered by Mrs. Boddington, and advice was given upon the subject of healing. Meetings were held in Battersea Park and on Clapham Common as usual. Next Sunday, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 3.30 p.m., Battersea Park and Clapham Common; at 7 p.m., Henley Hall, 'Magic and Magicians.' On Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope. On Thursday and Saturday, at 8 p.m., members and friends.—W. J. T.