

Light:

A Journal of *Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

When one comes to think about it, it does seem absurd to suppose that belief in certain 'views,' or that acceptance of the offer on any terms, can entitle a spirit to enter 'Heaven,' if, by Heaven, we mean a perfectly spiritual condition of being, and also a condition of perfect peace, purity and joy. Morally, it is bad: scientifically or philosophically, it is unsound. Axel E. Gibson puts that neatly, in 'Mind':—

The enjoyment of a certain mental state or condition necessitates the presence in the mind of qualities through which the inner value and importance of such a condition can be measured. Music, to be enjoyed, must be not only listened to but *understood*. The same strain of music that in one mind calls into action the pure ecstasies of a magically touched imagination may leave another mind unmoved and empty. So with the ecstasies of heaven: they must find a sounding board, an Apollo's-lyre, in the human heart by which to be recognised, understood, and enjoyed; and it is of this earth only, under the threefold influence of mental, moral, and spiritual evolution, that this faculty can find its unfoldment. 'The kingdom of heaven is within you,' and the soul that cannot enjoy a heaven on earth shall never succeed in enjoying it in a mystical hereafter.

It is barbarism of thought to believe that the mere passage of death, while arresting organised action, should have a power of generating mental and spiritual energies.

Incredible ages were needed for the gill-breathing fish to develop into a lung-breathing bird, and the change of an individual from a sinning mortal into a being transfigured by purity and holiness can surely not be accomplished in less time. The development of a single virtue, or the removal of a single vice, often requires the most tremendous efforts and enduring patience. What, then, must be the efforts and time required for an evolution which is to raise every human virtue into a state of divinity, and equip humanity with qualities and powers fitted for immortality!

We talk of going to Heaven as one might talk of going to dinner. It is monstrous. The work that lies before us; the stages that must be gone through; the heights that will have to be climbed; the spiritual changes that must be accomplished, are beyond all reckoning. We are afraid that multitudes who talk of 'entering into rest' will be painfully disappointed. But 'painfully' is probably a wrong word, except for some cases. We firmly believe that progress towards or through the Heavens will be full of animation and joy.

In this number of 'Mind,' Mr. H. Forbes Kiddle, in a short but important Article on 'Religion and Spiritualism,' argues that 'never has the need of intelligent co-operation between Religion and Spiritualism been greater than it is

to-day.' The following indicates the character of his central idea:—

Religion, fixedly associated as it is in the popular mind with rigid dogma and arbitrary tradition, will not be able to withstand the assaults being made upon it by the present purely intellectual methods of historical and literary research and rationalistic deduction without the quickening illumination of pure, reverential Spiritualism. The few intuitive minds may be able to recognise the just discriminations of the 'higher criticism,' but the mass of men, discarding the false in the process of proving all things, will not be able to hold fast to that which is true in the old faith.

The concrete presentations of Spiritualism are absolutely essential to demonstrate that genuine spiritual significance really does underlie the symbolism, allegory, ecstasy, and wonder-working of the Scriptures. In no other way is it possible to reconcile Bible 'supernaturalism' with the *naturalism* of to-day.

There is very much in this that demands, and will increasingly demand, most serious thought.

Dr. R. Osgood Mason's new work on 'Hypnotism and Suggestion, in Therapeutics, Education and Reform' (London: Kegan Paul and Co.) is a strong book. Its special field is that of the uses of Hypnotism and Suggestion as educational and reformatory agents, with an outlook upon 'their greatly misjudged ethical relations.' Dr. Mason dates from New York, and his work appears to have been done chiefly in or from that great centre. The book has important chapters on 'The subjective element in the newer therapeutics,' 'The relation of Hypnotism to the Sub-conscious Mind,' 'Educational Uses of Hypnotism,' 'Forms of Suggestion useful in the treatment of Inebriety,' 'Concerning "Rapport,"' and 'The Ethics of Hypnotism.'

It is not necessary to agree with everything in a work like this in order to feel that its value is very great, as it vigorously champions the still scorned or cold-shouldered persons who are working in the suspected regions of Occultism, Spiritualism and Suggestion (and 'these three are one'). Dr. Mason, like Dr. McConnell, holds fast by a material basis for, or a material union with, spirit: but it all depends upon what is meant by matter: and just now it is important to say this. Here, for example, is Dr. Mason following up his doctrine of a 'matter' basis even for 'gravitation, affinity, love and thought,' with this:—

Matter is no longer despised, but is dignified because of its spiritual quality, and spirit is no longer a useless abstraction, but is the essential attribute of every atom and molecule in the universe, whether it forms a part of the crust of a planet, the petal of a flower, the interstellar ether, or the thought of man.

This is excellent: only the conclusion must then be that matter is traced home to that infinite ocean of force which is still the mystery of spirit, ay! the mystery of God.

The book is charmingly written, with every evidence of wide knowledge, but it is all presented in a delightfully natural and simple way.

Mrs. Besant, in 'The Theosophical Review,' strongly argues for prayers and 'thoughts of love and peace' for the deceased. She says:—

All that we can do for the living by thought we can do even more easily for those who have gone in front of us

through death's gateway, for in their case there is no heavy physical matter to be set vibrating ere the thought can reach the waking consciousness.

In the world into which those freed from the physical body have gone, a loving thought is as palpable to the senses as is here a loving word or tender caress. Everyone who passes over should, therefore, be followed by thoughts of love and peace, by aspirations for his swift passage onwards through the valleys of death to the bright land beyond.

Then follows a passage which will interest those who have ventured the suggestion that Mrs. Besant may yet turn her eyes toward the Catholic Church:—

The occultists who founded the great religions were not unmindful of this service due from those left on earth to those who had passed onwards. The Hindu has his Shráddha, by which he helps on their way the souls that have passed into the next world, quickening their passage into Svarga. The Christian Churches have Masses and Prayers for the 'dead.' 'Grant him, O Lord, eternal peace, and let light perpetual shine on him,' prays the Christian for his friend in the other world. Only the Protestant section of Christians have lost this gracious custom, with so much else that pertains to the higher life of the Christian man. May knowledge soon restore to them the useful and helpful practice of which ignorance has robbed them!

We can never feel entirely placidly sympathetic with people who moan about 'obsessing spirits' and who ask how to be rid of them. But if we must give advice, we would say: Dismiss fear; live an unselfish and busy life; do not worry about money or friends or your soul. Keep the body pure, within and without, and really believe in God, by confiding in Him. And know this,—that one is never fit to be an angel unless he can profitably and bravely march on with a demon, or ready for heaven until he is willing to serve in hell.

At one time, Blanco White's perfect sonnet on 'Night and Death' used to be frequently quoted. It is far too good for oblivion: so here once more we present it, perhaps for fresh eyes and hearts and minds;—

Mysterious Night! when our first Parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came;
And, lo! Creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun? or who could find,
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

INTUITION.

Intuition is the all-seeing eye. Psychometry is the science of intuition. Psychometry means life-measurement. Spirit is pure light, unstained, translucent, in which all things show in their true relationship of development and use. In the astral light of unfolding consciousness, thought is obscured and images are refracted and reflected on the shadowy scenery like incoherent images of a dream. Matter, in all its countless forms, from the mineral to man, is spirit materialised, embodied, formulated. Material science ignores the existence of spirit and God, but it must admit the existence of life; and life is spirit, and life is God. So the difference between material and spiritual science is but a difference of terms. The material form only is perceptible to imprisoned material sense; the soul form is perceptible to clairvoyance, clairaudience, &c. Intellection is the wisdom that binds the trinity—matter, form, and force—in mystic union, the unity of all—all spirit and all phenomena.—'World's Advance Thought.'

A MAN who lives for himself alone may lay up a store of riches for himself on earth, but his treasure-house in the world of spirit will be filled only with the ghosts of lost opportunities, and with reflections of what he failed to do for others. Living and doing for others constitute the true life.

THE 'REFEREE' SEANCES.

It is to be hoped that the result of the 'Referee' test séances will in the end prove beneficial to the cause of Spiritualism. Years ago vigorous protests were made against 'dark' and 'cabinet séances' for promiscuous gatherings, and for a time those protests were effective, but latterly there has been a manifest revival of the discredited practices which brought so much odium upon the movement.

If we consider the subtle nature of the forces at work, and the delicacy of the conditions that are required in the production of materialisation phenomena, we shall see the utter futility and fatuity of all attempts to secure successful results in promiscuous assemblages where incongruous, not to say hostile, mental and psychical conditions prevail.

Surely these manifestations should be the *last*, not the *first*, to be observed by the student of spiritualist phenomena; and then only after a period of probationary preparation to harmonise his forces and attune his conditions to those of the rest of the sitters. For this purpose, too, select circles should be formed and mediums be set apart and protected from the sight-seeing, curious phenomena-hunters, and the antagonistic sceptic who does not want the truth, but is more anxious to discredit Spiritualists.

Let us consider for a moment the mental attitude of the 'committee' for the 'Referee' fiasco (it cannot be dignified by the name of 'investigation'), and we shall see that they furnish an object lesson to all Spiritualists. Their endeavours were concentrated—not upon providing the psychical conditions by means of which success alone is possible, but on devising tests to preclude the medium from cheating them. Time, thought, money were all expended—not to elicit phenomena, but to eliminate the medium as a possible factor in the results. How pitifully they failed in their avowed object, if their charge against the medium is true (which, by the way, is not demonstrated), is manifest from their report. If it is true that 'we find what we look for,' and 'get what we make conditions for,' what possibility of successful spiritual results was there in the mental and psychical atmosphere afforded by this committee? Besides, what experience had they to warrant their selection, what were their qualifications beyond their supposed ability to frame 'fraud-proof' conditions?

One cannot refrain from expressing sympathy with the misguided medium and the over-zealous 'Searcher after Truth,' but what else but failure could be anticipated, when we consider the re-active influence upon a sensitive nature, of the suspicion and mistrust which were evidently the predominating mental states of the 'directors,' who occupied considerable time in instituting their 'tests,' and succeeded in making the members of the circle uncomfortable by compelling them to submit to be dressed up in other than their ordinary garb, and thus dissipated the psychic elements, upon the existence and harmony of which success depended?

One of the first lessons that the tyro in the investigation of spiritualist phenomena has to learn is the absolute necessity for sympathy—psychical harmony. The influence upon the sensitive of the adverse positive thought of critical, cynical and opinionated people is inimical to spiritual intercourse and is analogous to the rude touch upon the sensitive plant which causes the leaves to curl up—while warmth and sunshine will lead to their unfolding. Knowing these things, how worse than foolish it is to invite disaster by issuing 'challenges' to those who first destroy 'conditions' and then announce 'another humbug exposed.'
PSYCHIC.

As, from communications received by me concerning the recent and regrettable 'test' séances, it appears that even among experienced Spiritualists there are some who are ready to accept the theory of fraud on the part of the medium, may I be allowed a few words on the subject?

The report of the committee seems to have been drawn up with studied fairness, and I have nothing to say against it or the drawing by non-Spiritualists of the (to them) obvious conclusions. Yet where in it are the proofs of fraud on the medium's part? The results are simply negative, and the *proofs* consist of certain strained and loosened conditions

of fastenings, and the *possibility* (tested by the committee) that certain results might have been brought about by ordinary means.

Now there seems in carrying out experiments of this kind to be a strange forgetfulness of the fact that we on this side are not the only parties in the experiment; and so, without any consultation with those on the other side, we lay down (so-called) scientific conditions, and call on the controls to humbly submit to our superior intelligence. The whole thing becomes thus a puerile and unscientific blunder, such as never would be made in experimenting on the physical plane. Requisite conditions for success are violated, and scorn and contempt are poured on the whole subject. Would not a man be laughed at who declined to believe in photography because he had laid down the condition that his photograph must be developed in full sunlight, and the attempt had failed? In the psychical, as in the physical world, the result of experiment under false conditions can be nothing but failure and disappointment.

But, again. Supposing fraud to exist, the question comes in—fraud on the part of whom? I should say that, as a rule, it is not on the part of the medium. Conditions being violated, the medium's controls either will have nothing to say to the performance, or, if they do, they are often able but imperfectly to control the phenomena; while tricky spirits are delighted to seize on the opportunity of interference, or take the entire management into their own hands, and rejoice in deluding and puzzling to the utmost extent of their powers. Those versed in the literature of the subject can recall many instances of such results. The outside world will scorn all such evidences as absurd and incredible, but for them what evidence, however good, will be sufficient till they come as humble inquirers after truth, not as incredulous critics?

The fact is that these pseudo-scientific researches are absolutely valueless—nay, worse; they are mischievous, and to be avoided by all Spiritualists. Failure is their fore-doom. Begin with known conditions and work from these onward is the only scientific rule; but to do this, patience, time and labour are required, and these, alas! the sceptic inquirer will not give.

The concluding paragraph in Mrs. Russell-Davies' letter in your last issue hits the mark, and I may perhaps quote it: 'Scientific researchers, public conjurers, sporting newspapers are not looking for a great and grand truth, but for objects for practice and experiment.'

Herein lies the secret. It is the old truth—hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Those who seek *truly* shall find.

I should like to add that in the past, while this lady was still following the life of a paid public medium, I had more than one sitting with her. On one occasion while she sat under her ordinary conditions the results were somewhat similar to those described in the report. Nothing occurred save that her necklace was taken from her neck and tied round the arm of the chair, and, when it was replaced by one of the sitters, it was again taken off and tied to the other arm of the chair. It argued something for her *bona fides* that, though at that time in considerable need of such money as she could earn, she refused, on being informed of the meagre result obtained, to take anything whatever from the sitters, who were quite willing to compensate her for the two hours of discomfort which she had devoted to their service. Had she been capable of producing fraudulent phenomena, she would scarcely have thrown away money which she could so easily have obtained, the conditions having been those under which she habitually sat.

M.D.

Recent test sésances and their results are calculated to make Spiritualists pause and consider the grave danger now threatening them. On all sides thoughtful people are struck by the increasing demand for this sort of thing, and by the amount of newspaper controversy resulting therefrom; nor can a sincere desire for knowledge always be alleged as the reason for such sésances. The ardent searcher for truth scarcely asks so much publicity in his investigations.

Would it not strike us as absolutely indecent were other religious bodies to rush into public controversy on the

subject of their beliefs? Nor can it be seriously contended that such a course would attract inquirers. However successful the exhibition might prove, few converts would be found, while in all probability a crowd of impostors would arise in consequence. The real purpose of sésances and circles should be, and, to speak the truth, generally is, for spiritual communion and development, as also for the spread of knowledge, not for an evening's amusement or the gratification of morbid curiosity.

The forward movement now noticeable in Spiritualism is likely to receive a check should this sort of thing continue to any extent. As things are, an amount of moral courage is required to confess even that one takes an interest in the subject. The terms weak-minded and hysterical are thrown at anyone who seriously acknowledges entertaining such a belief, and comparatively few have the resolution to brave such contemptuous epithets. Besides, many ask, is the game worth the candle? There is no practical benefit in receiving a few flowers, or in any other material phenomena, and the people attracted by such means are scarcely those who would reflect credit on the movement. Those we would prefer to see gathering round us are serious-minded, thoughtful people who, by seeking earnestly and prayerfully, would call down higher influences, so that real progress might be made towards knowledge and enlightenment. Those also of large sympathies, full of that charity which thinketh no evil, and not always on the look-out for imposture or trickery, would be heartily welcome.

The tests and precautions prescribed were alike degrading to those demanding and to those accepting them, both in the case of the 'Referee,' and in that of Madame Rothe. How any self-respecting woman could be found to submit to them passes comprehension; nor would any sane person expect a satisfactory result under such conditions; though the balance of probability shows that imposture was neither contemplated nor attempted in either case. Verily, Spiritualism may pray to be defended from her friends, and then she could well afford to let her enemies (Mr. Maskelyne included) severely alone.

KATHERINE ST. CLAIR.

I was glad to see in last week's 'LIGHT' that you were just and generous enough to express your conviction that 'Merlin's' report on the recent sésances was drawn up with 'studied fairness and moderation'; and in confirmation of your view of that gentleman's attitude, I ask you to publish also the following paragraph from his pen in this week's 'Referee':—

'Had the confident hopes of the promoters been realised, and had even the most trivial manifestations of psychic power been displayed, a point would have been gained. Failure—utter and unredeemed though it was—has taught us nothing. It leaves the question precisely where it was, and no man can say with reason that he is convinced of the *impossibility* of the professed truths of Spiritualism because of the discovery of one more pretence. You cannot establish a negative by any number of experiments.'

We have no fault to find, I think, with either 'Merlin' or his committee. The fault lay with the Spiritualists who offered the challenge, and who ought to have known that the phenomena which they undertook to exhibit are not to be had just at any time for the asking. Some of us who have occasionally witnessed materialisations under favourable conditions know well enough how at other times we have been grievously disappointed, though as far as we could judge the conditions were the same. Nobody can guarantee their occurrence, and the challenge was therefore not only unwise, but reprehensible. I am grateful to feel that neither 'LIGHT' nor the London Spiritualist Alliance has ever led us into so disagreeable a dilemma.

'AN OLD SPIRITUALIST.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.—The next series of meetings of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be opened with a *Conversazione* in the Banqueting Room, St. James's Hall, on the evening of *Thursday*, October 21st; and addresses will be given in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall (entrance from Regent-street) on *Thursdays*, November 7th, November 21st, December 5th, and December 19th. Further particulars will be announced in due course.

FLOATING OR LEVITATION DURING SLEEP.

Seeing the varied non-material experiences related in your columns under the heading 'Levitation,' I should like to record similar happenings with myself.

It has been an experience of mine on more than one occasion, during the last few years, to apparently float in space. The first I relate gave me unmistakably happy moments during its progress—moments indeed of true bliss. It should not be overlooked that on each occasion I have been conscious of not being encumbered in any way. It has, as a matter of fact, surprised me at the time to feel that I was without weight, and though my form was visible to myself, I have several times been conscious that it was entirely spiritual. I appear to move as the result purely of my own will and not by the action of my legs and arms; it being particularly noticeably on the first and second occasions that, when I tried to regard myself as still in the flesh, I would return to the body. Still, to give a full description of my experiences would occupy too great a space and encroach too much upon your columns. The following are the facts:—

A few years ago, after having retired to bed one night with my brothers, who slept in the same room, I felt myself gliding softly and gently from the bed to the centre of the room, and commenced to float about, first over the bed, up to the ceiling and all round the room. In so doing I endeavoured to waken my brothers and attract their attention, but in this I failed. Then thinking I should like to demonstrate my power, as I thought, to my brothers later on; I repeated, partly, the above in order that I might discover wherein lay the secret; but the more I tried to discover the same, the less was I able to remain in space and continue as before; and wondering how it could be possible to raise my body in that manner, I became conscious and awoke, gladdened by what had just happened.

Another and more noteworthy experience occurred as recently as four weeks ago. I had been desirous of finding the residence of a certain gentleman, and I was concerned one night, before retiring to bed, as to how I could communicate with him. I had gone to bed and had slept for about an hour, when I realised that I was gliding out into space, and as I seemed to believe, on a manifest spiritual visit to the gentleman I wished to see. I passed over the street, wherein all was quietness, over gardens and housetops, across the main thoroughfares, now deserted, over large office buildings and a chemical works and warehouses, at which point I noticed the darkness of the night and its terrible quietness. Then I had doubt as to whether I was proceeding in the right direction. I had now got fully one and a half mile away from my apartments and that in the space of a second or two; but the quietude of the night, and my wondering as to which house I should find the man I desired to see, made me anxious to return. Then I queried my ability to take possession of my body again, but the next moment, as it seemed, I returned to my body and stretching my hand out to the dresser, I was convinced of being all right, with a vivid recollection of the experience just then terminated.

CHARLES NORRIS.

The recent letters in 'LIGHT' on levitation, have been of great interest to me, having, as long as I can remember, had similar experiences. My usual sensation is that of floating above ground from one to two feet only. At times I scarcely seem able to rise sufficiently to clear small objects, such as a footstool. At other times the effort of raising myself is quite easy. It is then I enjoy the luxury. Cycling on a 'free wheel' is nothing to it. My performances generally seem to take place in a long room before a few friends, to whom I am pleased to exhibit my newly found power. At other times I am floating along the highways in places unknown to me, when I excite much curiosity among the pedestrians whom I pass, apparently at the rate of ten to twelve miles an hour. My greatest difficulty is to get the initial start, viz., to be able to raise myself off the ground. This I do by holding my breath and giving a spring from my toes, and the will power then seems not only to exert a forward motion, but at the same time to govern suspension

by overcoming gravity. I always find it difficult to go round corners after following a straight line. This requires a great mental effort to check the speed, at the same time to incline the body from the vertical, the upper part being made to incline to the corner according to the acuteness of the curve.

Now the strange part of these experiences is that they are so vivid and real that, on rising from my bed, I have such a feeling of *certainty* that I have acquired the power of floating that I forthwith begin to try, again and again, the same process which was so successful in my sleep, my reason at the same time telling me that it is useless to try. But lately it has passed, as it were, into a new phase, for while I am dreaming I say to myself, 'You have often done this sort of thing while asleep in your *dreams*, but now you are *wide awake*, and not asleep, and as proof just try it; and lo and behold! I feel that I can do it at last in my normal state.

Now these dreams leave such a feeling of reality on my mind that I have even left my work, persuading myself that I have at last overcome gravity. I have often thought whether this is a foretaste of our *will ability* some day 'over there.' It is quite a settled thing in my mind that *will power* is the factor in 'levitation during sleep.'

J. F. YOUNG.

Llanely.

Under the above heading, 'Tehem' describes the pictures he saw presented to the gaze of a dying man. In 'Death and After,' by Mrs. Besant, we read that these pictures actually present themselves to each individual in the last few seconds of earth life. The perusal of this and other elementary theosophical works may prove of interest to your correspondent, and should be none the less so because they bear the theosophic label. Levitation in sleep is, I think, more common than generally supposed. I have had experiences of this myself, but nothing to compare with that of 'Tehem.'

J. MONGER.

In reading Mrs. Kate Taylor-Robinson's experiences of spirit-floating, I was struck with the thought of how much these things varied with different people. With her the consciousness seemed to be divided between the floating form and the physical body, and her 'great anxiety' was lest 'something should prevent the soul returning to the body.' In my first experience of the sensation of floating, when only twelve years of age, and in nearly every incident of the kind since then, the entire consciousness was with the floating form. Like K. F. R., I also had, at first, a great anxiety, but it was lest my body, not having the spirit to control it, should come to grief in some way, and I, in consequence, be punished for misbehaving. This fear prevented my experiencing the full extent of the power. At that age it was not an uncommon experience with me, and it always occurred when sitting in a congregation for worship, or at a lecture, but I was too nervous ever to get far from my body or even to get quite clear of it sometimes. It was merely an amusement to me, and I never mentioned the subject to anyone. Whether these were real experiences or only 'day-dreams' I cannot say, for I never heard of there being a clairvoyant present to confirm my belief in their being facts. Now it is chiefly in dreams of the night that I have this power, and, if I am to trust the evidence of others, I sometimes use it, but without retaining any remembrance of the circumstances when awake. A gentleman to whom I was introduced a few years ago, but whom I met on that occasion only, and whose name I had entirely forgotten, for we had little if any conversation, told me on the next occasion of meeting in the following year, that one evening my 'double,' as he named it, appeared to him. He related the conversation which took place, but the only part I can now remember was that he asked me whether my physical form was asleep; to which I replied in the affirmative. Then he asked whether, on waking, I should remember having had an interview with him. My reply was that I did not know. He asked, 'Will you try to impress the fact on your physical brain, and as a proof that you have done so write and tell me of the circumstance?' But I had no

consciousness of the incident when awake, so of course I did not write. The gentleman was a good clairvoyant and much interested in psychic studies.

Theosophists say that such experiences are possible, and who shall now draw the line as to the impossible ?

W., Ilfracombe.

[We can, for the present at least, afford no further space for communications on the subject of 'Floating or Levitation during Sleep.'—ED. 'LIGHT.']

SPIRITUALISM—ITS MEANING AND MESSAGE.

BY JAS. ROBERTSON.

There are many fine minds abroad, rich in spiritual feeling, who are close akin to what may be called rational Spiritualism, and who yet have not entered its domain, but view the name with abhorrence, because they know not what the word and its message really convey. John Stuart Mill points out that the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, a man of the most unblemished justice, whose writings are the highest product of the ethical mind, differing scarcely perceptibly, if they differ at all, from the teachings ascribed to Jesus, was one of the most pronounced persecutors of the early Christians. The story repeated by these people did not appear credible to him ; he felt that society could only be kept together by holding on to the old stories. Mill calls this one of the most tragical facts in all history. And yet we have a repetition of the same thing in our own times.

For over half a century earnest and noble souls have pointed to our spiritual facts as giving the food for which so many had hungered, and yet these most notable people, whose word would have been listened to readily on other topics, have, when they sought to impress mankind with the import of these modern revealments, been laughed to scorn by the very class who agree with Mill that it was unfortunate for the world that Marcus Aurelius did not see in Christianity a thing of beauty. Carlyle points to similar treatment accorded to the Christians at an earlier period by the Roman historian Tacitus, who speaks of Christianity as a baneful superstition, through which all atrocious and abominable things were collected and flourished. He applauds Nero for his studied severities to such people, who were hated for their general wickedness. Carlyle, in similar vein to Mill, regrets that Tacitus, the wisest, most penetrating man of his generation, saw no deeper than he did as to the value of Christian teaching. All this is but little removed from the handling which Modern Spiritualism has received, and some day the Mills and Carlyles of a later era will express their regrets that the voices were not listened to more attentively of those who attested that clear evidence had been gained that there was a spiritual world, whose inhabitants had in varied manner brought to earth the evidence of their continued existence, and who taught a lofty morality which harmonised with the best thought of ancient and modern seers.

The words uttered through the inspirations of these unseen workers ran in line with what men of science had found in their researches, and were capable of putting a new soul into religion when it needed it so much, and of giving real consolation on the great matter which affected all. The Homes and Fosters have come and gone and what transpired in their presence has become almost a forgotten chapter in the world's history. A Crookes might vouch for the actuality of the abnormal occurrences ; a Wallace might reiterate how the facts beat him, and dissipated his materialism ; an Elizabeth Barrett Browning might mourn and wonder how those weeping for their dead could pass by so readily matters of such moment, while to her they were a balm and a joy. So remote from our world had the word 'spiritual' become, that the crowd of unthinking souls paid no heed, or if they did for a moment, it was to ascribe all to fraud, illusion, or quackery. How hearts would have warmed and thrilled in many quarters had only men inquired of this new thing whether or not it had fact and reason in association with it !

Since those early propagandists and defenders, a new school of workers has arisen, whose voices it is hoped are destined to make a deeper impress. Scientific men have again come to the front, helped, no doubt, by what a Crookes and a Wallace had done, who begin again to set forth that these claims made by Spiritualists are based on objective realities and that it is man's duty to probe them, and see what light they may throw on the problems of life. The Society for Psychical Research, whose workings tired out so many of us, have at last reached a seam of valuable metal. That they have at length come near us, have realised some of the light and glory with which many Spiritualists had long been familiar, was clearly shown when they published in their transactions the fact that evidence had been found by them of old companions coming back and beginning the old conversation and speaking out what had been checked by death. Those experiments with Mrs. Piper may seem a bit fragmentary to some, but there must be some mental deformity where they do not make evident that our dead are not dead but alive with us. It is those who have come into closest contact, who have patiently and minutely checked all the circumstances, who admit the fact that other personalities than the medium use the organs of speech, write through the hand, and evince a knowledge of circumstances which could not be obtained other than by the person claiming to speak. Dr. Hodgson, Mr. F. W. H. Myers, Dr. Oliver Lodge, have done brave and useful work by their standing forth and again repeating that it was no mean fugitive thing, this evidence of immortality. What they have done will make still more apparent the valuable life and labours of men like W. Stainton Moses, whose story told in clear lines would thrill the world for many a year. What marvels came to this man, about which we know little, we having only the fragmentary glimpses which crop up in 'Spirit Teachings' and 'Spirit Identity.' The world needs these duplicated and more fully set forth, for it is gradually ripening for their reception. Here was a life work of the most important kind hid from many, as great a loss, surely, to humanity as Marcus Aurelius' blindness, or Tacitus' mistaken orthodox zeal. The words spoken by Professor Oliver Lodge on his ascended friend, F. W. H. Myers, are full of cheer ; they give us hope that many who have been toiling all day and caught nothing will turn their nets to the other side of the ship, where there may be a great draught to be pulled in.

John Sterling, in his last letter to Carlyle, said : ' If I can lend you a hand when *there*, that shall not be wanting.' It may be that the faith in what has gone before will bring about new mental conditions under which the helping hand of the unseen may be felt. No doubt those as yet unpublished volumes of Mr. Myers on 'Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death,' will reveal the existence of many helping hands, which, attracted by his honest pursuit of truth, assisted him to reach the goal. After prolonged searching there were gathered together evidences regarding the spiritual world which he felt made up a message of moment to humanity and which would represent for all time his real life's work. I do not speak of his cultured essays and poems, but of the evidence which became his own that there is no death. This was the great treasure he had found and for which he vouched. It is not often that the gifted literary man is content to place unpopular ideas, issued in later years, as worth all that had gone before. When men of this stamp speak forth as to what consolation and knowledge despised mediumship gives, there should be a more receptive attitude towards the subject of Spiritualism on the part of many who, though they know it not, are akin to us in all that makes for spiritual progress.

A LARGE CLAIM. The Commissaire de Police of Clichy, near Paris, has summoned before him a man of thirty, an upholsterer by trade, who calls himself the 'new Messiah,' claims to heal all diseases, to tell the future, to interpret dreams, and to kill his enemies at a distance. Five years ago he was a humble workman. He now lives in a luxurious house, attended by a host of men-servants. The 'Messiah' confesses that his fees ranged from 20,000 to 50,000 francs. From one foolish woman he took £2,400. 'Daily News.'

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THE IDEAL HOLINESS.

A few years ago, one of the urgent questions debated in the region of philosophical religion turned upon the point whether it was possible for man to know what right is in itself, or what it is in God; and many acute disputants tried to pin us to the deplorable conclusion that all our knowledge was entirely relative, and that even in the sphere of Ethics we were living only 'from hand to mouth.' A plain man, reading his Bible, listening to the Ten Commandments, or listening only to the monitions of conscience, naturally came to the conclusion that justice was justice everywhere, and that holiness was holiness everywhere;—that if God ever promulgated the command, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy,' the inference is that we may know what holiness in its essence is, and that, in essence if not in degree, we may, in the spiritual self, be as God. But the acute philosophers referred to denied this: they said, 'We know nothing about the ultimate ethical reality: we know only the need and the duty of the hour, and their working adjustment: all beyond these is as land unexplored, as a governing law unknown and unknowable.'

Now, if we carefully look into this historically, we shall be able to see precisely where, and precisely why, this perilous idea was born. It was not a spiritual birth at all. If we cannot say it was 'born in sin and shapen in iniquity,' we can truly say it was born in a conspiracy and shapen in a hurry. It had become clear that many of the old thoughts concerning God were no longer tenable,—that, to be frank, many of these thoughts were utterly repugnant to modern ideals, and that they attributed to God purposes and performances that would be abominable in an average man. Something had to be done: and something was done. Instead of falling back, as, for instance, every well-instructed Spiritualist would have done, upon the testimony of the voice within, and rejoicing if it led to something higher and purer, the desperate idea was started that we had no right to carry over our notion of goodness and justice into transcendental regions, inasmuch as we knew only what applied to our present grade of being. In this way a defence was thrown up against the onward march of spiritual thinkers who insisted upon the ethical unity of God and Man. So, when we repudiated the survivals of the dark ages, as contrary to our best ideals of the right and the just, we were told to be 'silent before God,' as not knowing how far that would be right and just in Him which would be wrong and unjust in us. And still this is true, as Spiritualists will be more and more driven to recognise: for what stands in our way more than anything

else is the solid wall of religious prejudice whose foundations run into the old unfortunate delusion that a supernatural revelation is necessary to tell us what we must think and do.

Now it is precisely here that our Spiritualism comes to our aid, and it is here that it is destined to do most for us, because it bases itself on the inner witness, and finds its God, its inspiration and its shrine within. The human unfolding is the unfolding of divine revelation, and the march of Man is the real manifestation of God. If this is not so, the Lord's Prayer is a mockery, and when we say 'Our Father,' we lie. But, if that phrase 'Our Father' tells the deepest truth, it must follow that man is not only on the right track for time but for eternity when he gets the smallest glimpse of the just, the beautiful, the merciful and the good. The only sure basis for religion, as for ethics, is that we are dealing with moral and spiritual realities, and that God is not only amusing us or regulating us with artificial and temporary contrivances, but setting our feet on His own eternal rock of righteousness when He says, 'This do, and thou shalt live!'

They who tamper with this vital truth cannot see what they are doing,—'cannot,' or they would not do it. They are virtually cutting away the highest sanction and the surest security from righteousness: they are evaporating the very life-blood of human justice: they are filling up the fountain of moral and spiritual life, with earth and stones: they are practically telling us that it does not much matter whether we try to understand the will of God or not, since, in any case, we cannot perceive any genuine reflection of His glory, or truly know anything about the spiritual state in which He ultimately delights. And all this is so, whatever meaning we attach to the word 'God': for, in any case, the word refers back to The Ideal, to the highest, the deepest, the most vital, the ultimate, whatever that is. The question is a question of human destiny, and upon what principles that destiny will be determined: and what it is that lies at the heart of all things, whether we call it Nature, The Eternal, The Absolute, or God.

The acute philosophers, we have said, began it, but the acute philosophers cannot end it. The subject has now passed over from them to plain people like ourselves. It is just one of those questions which can never be only abstract: and this in particular rushes into the concrete. It is an intensely practical question, for people who want to stand, not on the quicksands, but on the rock, and who, feeling it necessary to base the inner life upon abiding realities, would feel themselves cut off from the springs of that life if they could be convinced that they were not in living contact with God or The Everlasting Life: for all depends upon this, whether our little stream of righteousness really does flow from the great fountain of goodness which lies beyond and above us, or whether it is only the outflow of a poor earthly spring which at any moment may fail us and leave us desolate and dry. What we want to know is whether we are only guessing at goodness, or whether we have really commenced to know and to feel what is eternally right and true.

In whatever sense God created Man, in that sense this question is fundamental. The venerable legend of the Old Testament presents the Creator as saying: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness': and one of the sublimest sayings of the New Testament is, 'In Him we live and move and have our being.' If these sayings represent spiritual truths, it follows that holiness is on the same plane both for God and Man, and that what is essentially justice and goodness upon earth is essentially justice and goodness in heaven—or hell; and that therefore we may logically and legitimately reason from the seen to the unseen, and from the known to the unknown. It follows

also that the farther we go on towards the discovery of the ultimate reality the fuller will be the confirmations that God had always been educating and not baffling us; that we lived and moved and had our being in Him as the originator of our best thoughts, our purest affections, and our most spiritual ideals; and that these spiritual qualities were always, in their nature though not in degree, faithful reflections of His own. We are on the right track, and in our hands is the golden clue. We have only to follow it dutifully and patiently. It will lead us at last to The Ideal;—The Centre, The Father, God.

B U D D H A ' S I L L U S I O N S .

In 'LIGHT,' of August 17th, 'H. W. T.' discourses upon 'Buddha's Illusions,' and refers particularly to the Law of Karma as being one of those 'illusions,' and as being a 'law of bondage.'

That which appears as 'bondage' to 'H. W. T.' is in reality the highest freedom and liberty. Karma was explained very simply by Buddha when he said, 'Evil thoughts and acts produce pain and misery; good thoughts and acts produce happiness and bliss.' Karma is the law of cause and effect working on the moral plane. There can, therefore, be no bondage except as we bind ourselves. 'Ye are not bound,' said Buddha, and, knowing the law, we can choose to be free.

The simple doctrine of the Buddha, that all misery and illusion is rooted in desire (selfishness), and that by the destruction of (*his own*) selfishness man enters into liberty, spirituality, peace and immortality, leaves no room for illusion in the mind of the disciple who devotes his life to the practice of that doctrine, for the whole process of such practice is one of stern disillusionment. He who has practised that doctrine knows its truth. He who has not practised it does not know.

Buddha refused to discuss God as a metaphysical speculation, for such controversies are the outcome of selfishness and egotism; but he never denied God as an *inner* experience, for he spoke of himself as 'One who has been reborn in the country of Brahma' (God), and, 'One who has seen Brahma face to face.'

To discuss about God leads to endless error and self-delusion; to *know* God by the practice of the most deep-seated unselfishness is eminently sane, loftily spiritual, and supremely glorious.

Surely we have enough to do in understanding and removing our own illusions before accusing the loftiest, purest teachers of our race of being the victims of illusion. When we are as sweetly and sublimely patient, as spotlessly pure, as deeply compassionate and as infinitely lovable and lovely as the Buddha, we shall be in a position to judge of his 'illusions,' for these divine qualities mark off the man who has risen above the world of illusion and has comprehended the world of Truth. To accuse the Serene One of having illusions whilst falling immeasurably below him in moral and spiritual attainment, is as though a crumbling molehill should accuse the Sphinx of instability.

'THE PATH.'

H Y P N O T I S M .

We propose to give in our next issue the first of a series of articles on 'Hypnotism,' from the pen of a contributor who is well qualified to speak with authority on the subject. Of course Hypnotism is a matter about which many people know something, but it is at the same time one of which most people might with advantage know more. So we commend the forthcoming articles to the special attention of our readers.

THE OCCULTISTS' DEFENCE LEAGUE.—Mr. Frederick A. Hyndman, barrister-at-law, of the Inner Temple, has been appointed standing counsel to this league, which has been founded for the purpose of defending professors of the 'occult or predictive sciences' against wrongful prosecution, and also for encouraging and promoting the study of those sciences. The league likewise seeks to legitimatise the practice of the said sciences, so as to protect the public against charlatans.

FRAU ROTHE—A SO-CALLED EXPOSURE.

OBSERVATIONS BY PRINCESS KARADJA.

In these days, when the enemies of Spiritualism are doing their utmost in trying to ruin our cause by casting discredit on our mediums, it ought to interest the readers of 'LIGHT' to learn what sort of weapons are being forged for use against us.

During my stay in Paris, this spring, I was present at a séance where poor Frau Rothe was submitted to the most cruel indignity. While she was entranced, a French person . . . a Monsieur Carl, dashed at her, screaming 'If you come to Paris to perform tricks, you ought to be more clever than that.' The medium fell backwards, in violent convulsions. One of the ladies present, Princess Gortschakoff, kindly led her into another room, and began undressing her, as her body was terribly swollen, owing to the fluids being violently forced back. Meanwhile, Monsieur C. continued to scream that he had seen the medium pulling flowers from out of her dress! To vindicate her honour, I immediately requested that she should be undressed and searched. This was done. All the people present examined her clothing and found that no flowers were concealed on her person, and that her dress contained no kind of pocket or bag, where any articles could possibly be stored away.

To prevent any untrue reports about the event being spread, I asked for a written statement about the deplorable scene which had taken place. I have in my hands a document, signed by all the people present (except Monsieur C. and his wife, who had been requested to retire), that is to say, Monsieur Gabriel Delanne, Professor Sellin, Madame Waltner, Princess Gortschakoff, Monsieur and Madame de Yarochenko, and a Swedish clergyman, Professor Soederblom, stating that Monsieur C.'s accusation was false, and that the medium on being searched was proved *not* to have any flowers secreted on her person. I wish to point out that the séance took place in Madame de Yarochenko's apartment, wherein Frau Rothe had never before put her foot. As this gentleman is *not* a Spiritualist, it is quite clear that the flowers the medium had produced at this sitting were genuine *apports*. After the examination had taken place, the interrupted séance was continued, and a fresh *apport* of *dewy* flowers occurred *in the air*, straight over my head. Several hours had passed since the medium entered the room.

Professor Soederblom, who absolutely refuses to admit the spirit-theory, considered this *apport* to be very satisfactory, and has openly stated in the Swedish papers that it is 'inconceivable how it could have been fraudulently executed.' He says: 'Even if Frau Rothe had not been *thoroughly* searched (as we had done), it seems quite *impossible* that this great quantity of perfectly fresh flowers should have been hidden on her person.' Professor Soederblom concludes his statement with these words: 'My conviction is that Frau Rothe is honest . . . it is a pity that she has fallen into the hands of the Spiritists.' His statement is doubly valuable, as he openly states he is an antagonist to our doctrines.

The medium's innocence had on this occasion been clearly established. My surprise was therefore immense when, on my return to Sweden, I found that a report had been spread that Frau Rothe had been 'exposed' in Paris! One of the daily papers, 'Dagens Nyheter,' contained on July 1st an article in which Monsieur C. had the audacity to publish a column of misstatements. The article began with an incorrect allegation about a sitting in Monsieur Flammarion's house (which I shall describe later on) and continued to state that Monsieur C. had noticed (at the séance Yarochenko) that the medium 'pulled flowers from under her petticoat'; that he had 'indignantly protested *against being present at such deception*'; that the medium had been compelled to go away, and that the people present had, 'on lifting up her dress, found it trimmed all round with *tiny bouquets*.' He afterwards described how, at the sitting at Madame Noeggerath's house (a narrative of which appeared in 'LIGHT,' of June 22nd), he had brought a bag which he wished to be tied round the throat and ankles of the medium, who had *refused to put it on*, and that Frau Rothe

had, *in semi-obscurity* behind a curtain, produced an orange, which Monsieur Delanne had noticed her pull out of her stays.

This article was reproduced in several Swedish papers. I wrote a reply in which I proved the utter inaccuracy of the various accusations. I pointed out that very far from being compelled to go away, Frau Rothe had continued the séance at Madame Yarochenko's as soon as Monsieur C. had left as requested. His observations about the sitting at Madame Noeggerath's house could not possibly be true, for the following reasons:—

1. Monsieur C. not having been invited to her house, he could not have brought any bag, and the medium could consequently not have refused to put it on.
2. The séance took place with *five* great lamps lit. (Rather quaint 'semi-obscurity'!)
3. No curtain was used.
4. The medium *wore no stays*, as she had taken off *every garment*, and only wore a chemise and a dressing-gown which Madame Noeggerath had lent her.
5. No orange was produced at this sitting.
6. Monsieur Delanne was not present.

Six misstatements in one sentence! Monsieur C. is almost *too* lavish!

In consequence of this reply (which was *not* inserted in most of the papers that had published the false accusation), Madame C. published a request that she and her husband should no further be mixed up in the matter. 'Mixed up' is a curious expression, when one considers that it is these two worthy people who have tried to dishonour a fellow creature by a baseless accusation. By acting thus, people *do* risk getting 'mixed up' in affairs which may turn out unpleasantly for themselves.

In my reply, I had had the generosity not to mention a fact which throws a clear light on Monsieur C.'s motives, viz., the fact that he had attempted to borrow money from me—and failed! I have in my possession a letter proving this fact, which he consequently cannot deny.

Monsieur C. and his wife (a Swedish actress) were total strangers to me. For several months she kept on writing humble and flattering letters, praising my literary works, and begging permission to translate them into French. Later on her husband wrote to ask me to lend him a thousand francs. I declined! On my arrival in Paris I met these people. They professed to be ardent Spiritualists, and had taken part in the Congress. They asked me to procure their admission to Madame de Yarochenko's very select séance. Very much against my own wish, I wrote—out of sheer kindness—and begged Madame de Yarochenko to admit them. This charming and distinguished lady replied that 'she wished to be agreeable to me—but—but—but'; for every well-educated person this meant a refusal! I consequently informed Monsieur and Madame C. that I could not introduce them. To my utter surprise, however, *they insisted on coming*. I flatly refused to bring them, adding, 'You can ask Monsieur Delanne to introduce you if you like. I shall not do it!' Monsieur Delanne also refused.

Having paid a call to Princess Wizniowska just before the séance, I arrived a little late, and could hardly believe my eyes when I saw *Monsieur and Madame C. seated in the drawing-room*. They had come all alone *in advance*, leading the courteous hostess to believe that I brought them (against her wish)! If people commit such a breach of etiquette as to force themselves into the house of a lady who has expressed her wish not to see them, they ought, at least, to behave decently, and not create a disturbance. Madame de Yarochenko, having paid one hundred francs to have a séance with Frau Rothe, was entitled to select her guests; and if strangers trespassed, she might at least expect them not to molest her medium. I cannot doubt that Monsieur C. came to the séance with the deliberate intention of insulting Frau Rothe. In his excitement he screamed: 'I suspected her to be a fraud: it was on that account that I was so anxious to come!'

Is it surprising that the presence of so ill-intentioned a person has a paralysing effect on the powers of a medium? Frau Rothe is one of the most sensitive creatures I have ever seen. There is an enormous difference between the phenomena she obtains in harmonious conditions

and those taking place when the mental atmosphere is disturbed by evil emanations. I have seen her produce an *apport at a distance of five yards from her body*. I have also, to my grief and distress, seen her utterly unable to produce anything except in the immediate vicinity of her body. It is as if the fluids were repelled by the unkind feelings of her surroundings; adverse thoughts prevent them radiating out and building up the *apports* at a distance.

This extreme sensitiveness puts the unhappy woman at the mercy of her enemies. She is absolutely unfitted for obtaining thoroughly convincing phenomena in the presence of sitters who, in advance, have made up their minds to prevent her success. This explains why she has *not* consented to sit any more with Dr. Bohn, who makes a *sport* of persecuting the defenceless creature. It would be exceedingly desirable if a noble and eminent man like Sir William Crookes would thoroughly investigate her mediumship. In Germany Frau Rothe cannot expect fair treatment, as Dr. Bohn's book has created a strong prejudice against her. All the witnesses he produces against her may be people of the same type as Monsieur C.

I am perfectly convinced that if ever Madame Rothe has cheated, she has done it *in an irresponsible condition*, being hypnotically influenced by low spirits or ill-intentioned people who know that the best way to harm our cause is to discredit our mediums. I often noticed in Paris how one could make her obey every impulse by the use of will power. This explains why the results she obtains are invariably most brilliant when occurring spontaneously, and get less and less satisfactory if the sitters are suspicious or malignant. It was, indeed, a great pity that Mrs. F. did not thoroughly undress her at the *first* sitting; the phenomena being then obtained in excellent conditions, the sitters would not have injured subsequent séances by their suspicions. Mrs. F.'s remark that she is not certain whether the raps were to be attributed to Mrs. Corner or to Frau Rothe, makes me wish to mention that *the first time* Frau Rothe called on me at my residence in Berlin, *my husband rapped out the signal he always uses* (seven sharp knocks—ta-ta-ta-ra-ra-ta-ta). I have received this signal through several mediums at different sittings, but this was *no* sitting; so it came utterly unexpectedly. The raps occurred on a table standing at a yard's distance from Frau Rothe, who had her hands in her lap and her feet on the floor; and it was broad daylight.

In reply to Dr. Bohn's remark that Frau Rothe is *no medium at all*, I wish to mention a splendid test that she gave at Monsieur Flammarion's house in Paris. She described a suffering spirit standing behind Madame Flammarion, who failed to recognise the description. Frau Rothe said the spirit had known Madame Flammarion in her early youth and that he had committed suicide, by shooting himself in the breast. Madame Flammarion declared that she had never known such a person. Frau Rothe then said he was stretching out his hand with some flowers to Madame Flammarion, and at the same moment *nine* glorious Gloire de Dijon roses, on long stalks with thorns, fell down over her shoulder. I asked Frau Rothe if the spirit could not tell his name or give any proof of identity. Frau Rothe sat silent a moment, apparently listening intently; then she said: 'He says his name was Gustave X.' Very much excited, Madame Flammarion screamed: 'Gustave X.! Why, I *did* know a man with that name, when I was a girl, and he *did* shoot himself!' This little fact alone proves that Frau Rothe is an excellent clairvoyant.

Nothing can more utterly repudiate Dr. Bohn's accusation of *cupidity* than a beautiful act of Frau Rothe in Paris. She had been engaged for 100fr. to give the sitting at Madame Noeggerath's house. It was a settled matter, but on the day before the sitting she came and told me that she could not accept the money, as her guide wished her to give this sitting *for love's sake*. Is it likely that such delicate scruples occur to swindlers? How many mediums would be generous enough to refuse an offered remuneration? This act alone claims respect for the humble tinsmith's wife. For my part, I regard her as a friend, and a sister in Christ, and I hope many British Spiritualists will join with me in prayer for this persecuted fellow-creature, who is now

crushed, weary, and heart-broken. May God grant her patience, strength, and peace, so that she may be able to fulfil her mission on earth to His glory and the benefit of humanity!

Stockholm.

PRINCESS KARADJA.

SPIRITUALISM AND EVOLUTION.

I have been much pleased with the discussion in 'LIGHT' on the question of 'Reincarnation,' and only regret that I am unable to contribute anything on this interesting subject that might appear worth reproducing. One of your contributors, however, not long ago, inadvertently opened a side issue, which, on account of its paramount importance, calls me into the lists. To wit, that 'Darwin's theory would seem to be more true than he could have had any idea or conception of,' is a doctrine I cannot admit. (See 'LIGHT,' April 6th.) The writer, 'Spes,' here speaks of Darwin only, omitting poor Huxley, who certainly is entitled to the same left-handed compliment.

To begin with, I beg to remind 'Spes' that he or she unconsciously uses the same word in two different senses, substituting the one for the other according to expediency. Evolution, in its original and proper sense, means individual development. Thus a seed evolves into a tree, an infant into a man. Darwin and Huxley appropriated this word to use it in a metaphorical sense for giving a name to one of the boldest speculations of modern materialism. It has always been a puzzle to materialists how to account for the existing species of plants and animals. Taking the bull by the horns, Darwin attempted to solve the mystery by mere conjecture. The different species, according to his scheme, were formed by a clever process of exceeding expediency, consisting in the wholesale slaughter or extermination of uncounted millions of less favoured individuals, leaving only the more perfect candidates alive. 'Survival of the Fittest' would have been a far more appropriate term and has been actually adopted by another evolutionist. The Spiritualist believes in the individual evolution of souls, but not in their wholesale destruction and the preservation of the fittest only for immortality. 'Spes,' however, mixes up, or 'blends,' as the modern tea dealer says, the two notions, and thus by a kind of self-deception arrives at a wrong conclusion.

Darwin had 'idea and conception' enough to see in Spiritualism the spectre which would swallow up his theory, and was terror-struck when he was first brought face to face with the phantom. 'Lord,' said he, 'have mercy upon us, if we have to believe in such rubbish!' ('Life and Letters,' III. p. 187). This exclamation refers to a séance held at Erasmus Darwin's house, 6, Queen Anne-street. F. Galton was there and says it was a good séance. Darwin, however, bolted, saying he could not stand the heat of the room. It nearly gave him a fever—it was too hot for him. The following is the description given by Darwin:—

'We had great fun one afternoon; for George hired a medium, who made the chairs, a flute, a bell, and candlestick, and fiery points jump about in my brother's dining-room in a manner that astounded everyone. It was in the dark, but George and Hensleigh Wedgwood held the medium's hands and feet on both sides all the time. . . . How the man could possibly do what was done passes my understanding.'

He further says that 'the chairs were lifted over the heads of those sitting round the table and placed upon the table.'

The séance in question led to a smaller, and still more rigorously organised one being undertaken, at which Mr. Huxley was present. Huxley's letter is lost, we only have Darwin's reply, which may be found on the same page. From Darwin's letter it appears that Huxley gave a long account of the séance, which does not at all tally with the supercilious style he adopts in writing to the Dialectical Society.

And now I will give 'Spes' Darwin's 'idea and conception' about Spiritualism:—

'Astounding miracles or jugglery' (p. 187).

'Rubbish' (ditto).

'Mere trickery' (ditto).

'All imposture' (ditto).

Darwin, however, it seems, had sense enough to feel that some explanation was required to justify these distinguishing epithets. Here it is in Darwin's own words:—

'My theory was that the medium managed to get the two men on each side of him to hold each other's hands, instead of his, and that he was thus free to perform his antics.'

It does not transpire, nor does Darwin suggest, that 'the two men on each side' were drunk or idiots. The one was Darwin's uncle, I believe, and the other the author of a scientific work.

E. SCHINZEL,

Author of 'Criticisms on Evolution' (Francis Hodgson), 6d.

117, Allison-road,
Harringay, N.

SÉANCE WITH MR. GEORGE SPRIGGS.

In the course of an able address on the question 'What Spiritualism Portends,' given by Mr. James Smith before the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, and reported in the 'Harbinger of Light,' the lecturer narrated the following experience with Mr. George Spriggs, who, he said, gave the benefit of his services 'without fee or reward':—

'We sat in a semi-circle in the dining-room of our host. There was a shallow recess near the fireplace; a chair was placed in it for the medium, and curtains were drawn over the recess. There was no wearing apparel in it, and no place for concealing any. The medium, as you know, is about 5ft. 7in. or 5ft. 8in. in height, and rather inclined to be stout. At the commencement of the proceedings he was somewhat convulsed, and then passed into a state of trance, at which stage he was controlled by a spirit who spoke with a decidedly foreign accent. Addressing Professor John Smith, he said, "Standing beside you are two spirits named — and —." The names given were those of two gentlemen formerly resident in Sydney; and they explained that the object of their coming was to signify to the members of their family, through the Professor, their wish to communicate with them. The speaker added that he had discovered that his own younger son, whom he named, was mediumistic, and that he wished his old friend to make known the fact on his return to Sydney, so that advantage might be taken of it for the purpose desired. Shortly afterwards the medium retired behind the curtain, and after some music had been played, to harmonise the conditions, a shadowy wavering figure emerged into the room, clothed in a white robe, and fluctuating greatly in height and form, much as a wreath of vapour might. It produced a weird and uncanny impression upon the mind of a spectator witnessing the phenomenon for the first time, as I did. Imagine a dim cloud, resembling a human figure in outline, ineffectually endeavouring to assume substance and solidity, and you will be enabled to form an approximate idea of the curious spectacle presented by this vapoury phantom. Two or three distinct voices were heard behind the curtain, and one of these stated that this spirit was unable to materialise; and the apparition rapidly melted from view, seeming to become part of the surrounding atmosphere. The next form to appear was that of a slender, lithe and graceful girl, about five feet three inches in height, swarthy in complexion, slight in figure, and singularly supple in movement. Every pose and gesture was picturesque; and she wore a single garment which fell in beautiful curves and folds about her plastic form. The texture of her robe resembled that of white cashmere, and it was semi-diaphanous. She was represented to have been an Egyptian dancing-girl; and her feet and ankles, which were bare, like her arms, were exquisitely small as well as delicate in shape. When she lifted her softly-rounded arm and diminutive hand, the substance and colour of the curtains behind her were visible through them and through the enveloping drapery. Her age might be from fifteen to seventeen. She disappeared and reappeared half-a-dozen times, for the purpose—as it was explained—of gathering fresh vital force from the medium. This process, as well as that of dematerialisation, was always accompanied by a peculiar wheezing sound. This apparition, the outlines of whose slender figure were clearly defined beneath her half-transparent robe, was not half the bulk of the medium, and her extremities were feminine in the extreme. During an interval, in which the wheezing sound went on continuously, someone behind the curtain, speaking in a voice resembling that of a boy, with a provincial accent, offered an explanation—in reply to a question from the Professor—of the *modus operandi* of materialisation. It was plausible, certainly, but it was not reconcilable with the

known laws of matter. To another interrogation propounded by a second visitor, with respect to the objective presentation of ghosts when no medium is present, a reply was given which seemed to satisfy the querist. I whispered a sceptical comment to a neighbour and before I had finished the sentence, which was inaudible to any other ear but his own, a conclusive answer to my objection came from behind the curtain, which was eight feet distant from where I was sitting. Another visitor remarked, jestingly, "The Theosophists say you are no spirits at all, but only shells." "Are we?" was the immediate response, "If you were as we are, you'd know that there is an oyster inside the shell." Presently a third figure walked out into the room. It was that of a swarthy, dark-bearded man, with high square shoulders, his spare body clothed in a Hindoo costume, composed of a material that looked like Indian cotton. His head was surmounted by a voluminous turban. He was seen with remarkable distinctness; and shook hands with one of the gentlemen present. He also lifted a heavy chair, and removed it from where he was standing to another part of the room. The next spirit who materialised was a female child, apparently about eleven years of age, and not more than 5ft. in height. She was not visible for more than a few minutes, and seemed rather to fade away into the curtain than to pass through it. The last apparition was that of a robust, muscular and stalwart man, three inches taller than the medium, with a thick black beard and a manly stride. By his own request he was furnished with a small round table, and writing materials, with which he wrote a short sentence on each of several sheets of paper which he presented to those present. Walking across the room to where I was seated, he gave me one of the sheets of paper, which I have still in my possession. He then held out his hand, which I grasped. It was soft, but scarcely warm, substantial to the touch, but not firm in its clasp. Upon the paper was written, in a clear, bold, upright character, "I am pleased to meet you to-night, Geordie."

'By this time the sitting had lasted for two hours; and the controlling spirit, in a voice altogether unlike that of the medium, declared that he was becoming exhausted, and that the proceedings must be brought to a close. I find that I have omitted to mention that, in the course of the evening, one of the spirits had drawn the curtain aside, in order to show us the medium in a heavy comatose condition lying on the couch. No other person occupied the recess. When he came forth he was still in a state of trance, and the voice with the strangely marked foreign accent continued to use his organs of speech for some minutes afterwards. Then the control bade us good night, and intimated his intention of relinquishing possession of the medium, who was convulsively agitated at first, with a violent spasmodic action of the hands, as though struggling with and repelling some hostile influence; and the contrast between the tone of his voice, when he exclaimed, 'Why, it is ten o'clock'; and that in which the controlling spirit had spoken, was almost startling. Of what had passed since eight o'clock, he was wholly unconscious.

'Such were my own carefully recorded observations of the phenomena of materialisation during an investigation of them privately undertaken for scientific purposes.

'Some years later, being anxious to understand the why and the wherefore of these deeply interesting manifestations of occult forces in Nature, I asked a friend in the other world for some explanation of them; which he gave me in these words: "Everything you behold is only thought materialised. This desk upon which you are writing is but the materialisation of the thought of the artisan who made it, and in whose mind it pre-existed as an idea. So, too, with a tree or a flower,—what are they but the materialised expression of thoughts emanating from the Divine Mind? You are only materialised spirits, the difference between your own forms, and those which are materialised through a medium, consisting merely in the time occupied by the process. A certain number of minutes suffices to build up a body in the one case, while several years are consumed by the same process in the other. But one strictly natural law underlies and governs both phenomena."

'Such are the chief physical proofs of the action of the inhabitants of the invisible upon those of the visible world, and of the simplicity and naturalness of the methods of communication between the two.'

DREAMS OF THE BLIND.—Mr. Friedrich Hitschmann has written an article upon the dreams of the blind. They dream of voices, by which the person of their acquaintance is recognised, but never dream of seeing things. Mr. Hitschmann tells us that, while the dream-world of the blind is poor in sensory images, it is rich in abstract phenomena. It is characteristic of their dreams that the sleeper often feels himself a spectator, as if he witnessed a play at a theatre. He never dreams of handling a book for the blind, or of using his writing apparatus.

THE DIVINING ROD.

Rhabdomancy, or divination by the use of rods, is no new thing. It had its origin in very remote ages, and it is sufficient to recall the miraculous rod mentioned in Holy Scripture with which Moses, striking the rock, caused a spring to flow in the desert, and thus saved the life of his people, to whom death seemed certain. At first rhabdomancy was directed to the discovery of hidden springs, but since then its use has been extended to the discovery of metals, hidden treasures, and mines, and even to the tracing of murderers and thieves. Despite the denunciations of official science, the belief still exists in the power thus to discover springs. Is it all a mistake? One can hardly think so, in the face of what is passing in America. There actually exist, on the other side of the Atlantic, two professors of rhabdomancy whose power is truly marvellous, as has been fully proved by many sensational discoveries, so that no person can any longer reasonably doubt. And in this matter, as in many others, America has made more advance than the Old World. Monsieur A. G. Fredin, of Swedish origin, has for several years, by means of a metal rod with two branches, made an income of fifty or sixty thousand francs. Thanks to his wonderful mediumship, there have been discovered the goldfields of Crispph Creek, the famous copper lodes of Lake Superior, and more than twenty mineral beds of great riches in the State of Wisconsin. Monsieur Fredin is forty years of age, and resides in the town of Drayton, in the State of Iowa, when he is not traversing the mountains and valleys, carrying in his hand his metallic rod with two branches. He is a man who already possesses, thanks to his marvellous gifts, a considerable fortune. His charges vary from six to ten thousand dollars, according to the importance of his discoveries.

The second professor of rhabdomancy is Mr. Jacob Long, who resides in the town of Jefferson, in the State of Indiana. He is perhaps even more sought after on account of his wonderful gift, which enables him, always with the aid of his rod, to discover the sources of petroleum. Amongst his great and numerous discoveries the most astonishing is that of the springs which belong to the powerful 'Manhattan Oil Company,' and of which the outflow reaches six million litres per annum. Aged seventy years, Jacob Long, rich as a nabob, is regarded in America as one of the founders of the petroleum industry, so prosperous in the United States. At such an age and with such riches, he might well take his repose and live quietly on his income, but he has no desire to rest with folded arms and is incessantly making excursions in the State of Indiana, his metallic rod in hand. As a result no one knows so well as he does the ethnography, geology, and geography of his country.

In Sweden, in the town of Hölö, resides C. W. Alsson, aged thirty years, well-known as a diviner. One day there was a desire to try whether he was able to discover other things besides water, and a road which was in course of construction in a park was chosen for the trial. There was a series of trenches (*fosses*) there, and in one of these a garnet ornament was hidden. When Alsson passed before the selected trench his rod was instantaneously depressed, although the experimenter had walked behind him so that there might be no possibility of influencing him in any way whatever. In the second experiment a photograph was hidden in the same way. When Alsson passed the first trench the rod made no movement, but a little further on, opposite another trench, the rod bent down. This, however, was a failure, due, probably, to the fact that Alsson was the subject of auto-suggestion by the pre-conceived idea that the object had been concealed in the trench. He then proceeded further, and on reaching the third trench he said that he felt a drawing exercised on his hand, and the photograph was actually found in that trench precisely at a spot indicated by the rod.

JOSEPH DE KRONHELM.

Gajsin, Podolia, Russia.

THE true man is he who rises above prejudice, above jealousy, and envy, and in honour supports principle in all things, even though he is thereby compelled to support his bitterest personal enemy for public office, or in a crusade for the right.

HEART RELIGION.

The 'Light of Truth' has devoted considerable space of late to a series of articles by C. S. Carr, M.D., of Columbus, Ohio, entitled the 'Sayings and Doings of Dr. Talkwell.' In a recent issue the theme dealt with was the well-known text of Scripture, 'Ye must be born again,' and the writer shrewdly observed:—

'I used to think theology was everything. I had an idea that if I could get men to think right I had done my whole duty by them. I had an idea in those days that if a man had a bad theology he would necessarily be a bad man. It was my thought that if I could broaden a man's theology I would be sure to broaden his life.

'I have long since found that this was a mistake. Life comes from the heart, not the head. You may give a man the most rational philosophy of life possible, without touching his heart at all. I know men who accept as an intellectual belief the goodness of God, but appear to know nothing of goodness in their own lives. Theology touches their intellectual life only. I know other men who profess to believe in a theology which seems to me very unfair and cruel, and yet in their daily lives they are tender and loving.

'Jesus said to Nicodemus, who seemed to be a man of very good intellect, "You must be born again." Jesus perceived that, however much Nicodemus might know, he needed a change of heart. This is what the intellectual man needs. This is what the ignorant man needs, a change of heart. It is from the heart that the religious life comes.

'No amount of education, or correctness of belief, or pious observances, necessarily denote a change of heart. I used to think that the man of rough speech and uncouth manner, who rarely went to church, who paid little or no attention to religious observances, was the man, more than others, who needed a change of heart, but that the man of polite address or pleasing speech, who gave attention to the outward observances of culture and theology, had already experienced a change of heart.

'Closer observation of men has convinced me that this is a very unsafe mode of reasoning. Some of the best-hearted men that I have ever met are men who would never be suspected of having a particle of piety. Some of the worst-hearted men that I have ever met are men who appear outwardly pious, and have the reputation of being very religious.

'We hear a great deal about liberal theology. I used to think that a liberal theology denoted a liberal heart, a heart alive with sympathy and fellow-feeling. This is not necessarily true. Many of those people who hold what is known as liberal theology are narrow, sordid, and selfish in their lives. It took me a good while to learn that theology does not touch the heart at all. Whether a man advocates old theology, orthodoxy or heterodoxy, narrow views or broad views, is nothing to me, as it affords no criterion whatever to judge of his religious life.

'I know a clergyman whose theology is of the mediæval sort. He believes in all the horrors of a literal hell, and all the vagaries of the plan of salvation which was so commonly preached fifty years ago. His views of the life and mission of Jesus seem to be absolutely fantastic, and without a particle of Scriptural warrant. His theory of the plan of salvation would make God to be a fiend, who holds the human family in His clutches without mercy or reason. He is continually talking about "souls for ever lost," about "unpardonable sins," about "total depravity."

'And yet he is one of the kindest, most self-sacrificing men I ever knew. He goes about continually trying to do good. I have been with him frequently in his rounds of mercy. He has the confidence of a few men of means. He takes their contributions, and buys food and fuel for those who are suffering. He spends most of his time in hovels of wretchedness and places of poverty. He is a good nurse, a strong, courageous friend, and an ever-willing assistant to all who need him. He has no church of his own, no salary, and labours among the people without any respect to colour, nationality, or condition of mind. Although frequently hungry himself, he is always striving to feed the hungry; always dressed in the plainest clothes, yet trying to clothe the naked.

'I know another preacher whose theology is as broad as it is beautiful. His words are like honey. It is a delight to listen to his sermons. He is always holding up God as the personification of love, and Jesus as our elder brother. He portrays the life of Jesus as one of daily sacrifice and unrequited labour for mankind. His sermons are without a flaw. They are rational, broad, inspiring, and wholesome.

'And yet this man, in his private life, is very aristocratic. He lives an exclusive, self-complacent life. He associates only with the best people. He is fastidious in his habits and dress, lofty and unapproachable in his manner, and sur-

rounds himself with every elegance and luxury. He never comes in contact with poverty or vice or degradation of any sort. He chooses as his associates exactly those people whom Jesus did not choose. Every detail of his life seems to have been selected with an especial reference to doing the things which Jesus did not do. This man's head is all right, but his heart is wrong. He needs a change of heart just as much as the swearing man, the drinking man, or the criminal. His theology is all right, but he has no religion. He thinks exactly as I used to think, that when he has preached a nice sermon he has done his whole duty. He never imagines that his life ought to exemplify his theology. If he were to preach what he practises his sermons would be cold and heartless to the last degree.

'Now, I do not mean by all this that a man holding a liberal theology necessarily has no religion. Neither do I mean that the man advocating a narrow theology is necessarily a good man. What I mean to say is that the theology does not seem to make any difference whatever. Sometimes a man holds a broad theology and lives a broad, humane life. Sometimes a man's life is as narrow and mean as his theology. But it is just as apt to be the reverse of this. The theology does not seem to make any difference whatever.

'If only a man's heart is changed from selfishness to that love of humanity that knows no creed, no sect, no colour, it makes little or no difference what his theology happens to be. Of course, it would be better if the head could be right as well as the heart. But if either must be wrong, let it be the head. Jesus taught that the only thing necessary for all alike was a new birth, a change of heart. And when this change comes it is like the wind, no man knoweth whence it comes, or whither it goeth.

'Creeds cannot produce this change. The formal ceremonies of religion cannot bring it. But the faithful performance of the simple duties of each day, making our contact with each person helpful, hopeful and loving, is the sure and only way to find it.

MR. A. ROLAND SHAW.

I should like to be permitted to say a few words by way of a supplement to the announcement, in last week's 'LIGHT,' of the very sudden decease of my friend, Mr. A. Roland Shaw.

He possessed naturally a good constitution, but owing to a severe malarial fever terminating in abscess of liver in early manhood, his health had since been more or less indifferent. His appearance attracted attention and elicited sympathy, as his very pale face, with blue penetrating eyes, and long jet black hair, denoted a weak physique while manifesting a striking personality. A few months ago he had a sharp attack of influenza, and gradually his strength had become much reduced; indeed, it was known to his friends that his heart had rapidly become enlarged and dilated, with indications of liver and kidney complications; but his mental powers and spiritual capacities were not diminished, and with a true unconquerable determination, fighting against physical exhaustion, he struggled on, and amid the troubles and disappointments of his business life, he devoted much time and energy to the advancement of spiritual philosophy.

He was born in the State of Vermont, in America, and as a very young man became a pastor of a Congregational community, and was a remarkably good preacher. As soon as he was convinced of the truths of Spiritualism, that religious sect was too contracted for him, and with an intellectual honesty much to be admired, he resigned his clerical position and began life again in a commercial career. His history all along was that of a faithful struggle of an earnest human soul for what is best and highest, acting often in opposition to the conventionalities of the day. His Spiritualism was to him an unspeakable comfort amid the successes and disasters of his later years. As a business man he was successful and made a fortune, but owing to his trusting nature and belief in the inherent goodness of humanity, he was beggared in a single hour by the unscrupulous action of a partner.

During his days of prosperity he devoted a considerable amount of money to the development of several individuals who possessed mediumistic qualities, and was always specially considerate of such folk, for he also had like gifts, and ever sympathised with his more sensitive brothers and sisters, especially with those who utilised their powers as professional mediums.

His great ambition was to recover his previous monetary independence, so as to have leisure and opportunity for developing mediums by placing them in circumstances in which they would be free from the cares of life, and from the struggle for the necessities of physical existence. His ideal was not to be realised, for he has not during several years been 'a favourite of fate.'

His testimony, we know, has been a stimulus to many to investigate the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism, and he worked strenuously for the cause to the end. Indeed, he was a member of the circle for the unfortunate 'test séances' arranged by 'Merlin,' of 'The Referee'; and was due at the last meeting of these experiments on the evening of his passing away.

With a terrible sadness there appeared in the issue of that weekly, just three days after his decease, a letter very characteristic of him, dealing with a correspondent whose indiscretion was unwarranted, and in which he manifested the proper attitude of mind towards a prejudiced opponent.

A. W.

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.

Encouragement for Inquirers.

SIR,—In your issue of August 10th, 'C. A. M.' refers to my article, 'Encouragement for Inquirers.' I fear my closing remark has somewhat misled him; therefore, please let me explain that I hold conversation with my little son in this way—I speak, and he replies in writing. Once only has he spoken audibly, and my father twice; in the latter case the voice, which resembled his earth voice, was heard also by friends sitting near.

One of our spirit friends, writing a few days ago, told us that a sister had passed from earth life that afternoon; and a letter received on the following morning brought confirmation of the fact.

FLORENCE L.

Automatic Writing.

SIR,—With regard to a letter from John Nuton on automatic writing which appeared in your issue of 17th inst., may I venture to suggest that perhaps he does not pay sufficient attention to the conditions, both of mind and body, under which he sits. In the first case he would need to encourage a calm, earnest, and prayerful mood, some little time before commencing, and if he would diet himself on the lines recommended by the Society of Spiritists, viz., fish, vegetables, fruit, and similar light food, and avoid meat, beer, wine and spirits, especially the two latter; also take nothing for at least two hours before sitting, as well as, in as far as possible, keeping to a fixed day, hour, and place for his séances, and not sitting too frequently in the week or too long each time, he would soon, I think, find improvement.

'L.'

Mrs. Corner and Frau Rothe.

SIR,—I am sure you will feel it due to Mrs. Corner to permit me, in your columns, to bear out most fully her statement as to her attitude of mind towards Frau Rothe.

Instead of being, as Professor Sellin supposes, from jealousy, unsympathetic and inimical towards Frau Rothe, Mrs. Corner proved herself to be very much the reverse by writing to me, immediately after the dinner-party mentioned by Mrs. F. and referred to by Professor Sellin, a glowing and graphic account of the wonderful phenomena given on that occasion through Frau Rothe's mediumship. She also, in the letter, wrote that she had been pleasantly impressed by Frau Rothe herself.

This letter, as you will remember, sir, I showed to you at the time; and you would have published it in 'LIGHT,' had I been able to obtain Mrs. Corner's permission for you to do so. She, however, felt herself bound in honour to her entertainers to keep silence towards the public until they had spoken.

I still have this letter, but unfortunately it is not with me here, or I would have given you the option of publishing it now.

MARY MACK WALL.

The Bungalow,
Symonds Yat, Herefordshire.
August 19th, 1901.

'The Backbone of Spiritualism.'

SIR,—Mr. Joseph Clayton has, I think, put forward a timely plea for those so-called 'lower' phenomena of Spiritualism through which, I suppose, most of us had our attention first arrested, and from which many of us may still learn a good deal without wandering off to systems which, whatever be their merits, must be more or less foreign to the Occidental, or at all events, to the English mind.

But as a parson of fifty years' standing in the ministry of the Establishment, I was particularly 'fetched' by his assertion as to the possibility of being a Spiritualist first and a Churchman—or a Chapelman, for the matter of that—afterwards. Years ago, I tried the experiment of Anglican services, with séance in place of, or in addition to, a sermon. We have too much preaching and too little practice. A shortened evening service, or a simple Communion on the lines laid down by Mr. Haws, would surely form a fitting introduction to a séance. Spiritualists, however, thought I was too 'Churchy,' and I relinquished the idea. Nevertheless, I am glad to find so intelligent an apologist for what I still deem a 'fair conjunction.' In any case Mr. Clayton deserves thanks for the happy phrase with which I head this letter, and which so fully describes the unduly despised 'lower' manifestations.

AN UNORTHODOX PARSON.

A Free Gift.

SIR,—A lady having placed several copies of a pamphlet by Mr. O. Brien Hoare, entitled 'What is Mental Science?' at my disposal, I am prepared to send it to any address on receipt of two stamps for postage. I will also include a copy of Mr. Wood's pamphlet, 'Has Mental Science a Valid Scientific and Religious Basis?' and a brief review of 'Christian Science Healing,' by a member of the Anglican Church, in order that those who have no idea of the 'New Thought Movement' except from the pens of those who have little or no knowledge of the subject, may obtain information of a reliable character from those who are at work in it in a very practical and prosperous manner.

We see so much in the Press respecting what are termed the vagaries of the science, that it is time someone should begin to show the other side, or an unprejudiced view of the subject. In these pamphlets will be found much that will stimulate further inquiry, and it gives me pleasure to be able to offer them in this way. I hope all the readers of your journal will avail themselves of the opportunity.

G. OSBOND.

Scientor House,
Devonport, Devon.

SOCIETY WORK.

CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—We had most beneficial meetings last Sunday. The continuance of the series of addresses upon 'The Holy Ghost' stimulates much inquiry. We have pleasure in announcing that Mr. W. E. Long will deliver a further address upon the same subject next Sunday evening, at 6.30 p.m. At 3 p.m., the children's school; and at 11 a.m., an opportunity will be afforded to any inquirer to put questions, which will be gladly answered at the public circle.—J.C.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON.—On Sunday evening our president had charge of a very full meeting, at which Mr. E. W. Wallis spoke for an hour and a quarter, giving while under control a graphic description of spirit-experience in the after-life. The latter part of the discourse was even more than usually interesting, being the 'control's' account of transition in the individual sense. The whole address was received by the listeners with marked attention and we may unhesitatingly say warmly appreciated. Mr. Wallis prefaced the address by a poem 'Life is too Short,' which he rendered with much graceful taste. Mr. Edward Whyte will give the address next Sunday. There will be an after-meeting. Friends are requested to note the social fixed for September 11th.—A. J. CASH, Cor. Sec.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday, September 1st, at 3.30 p.m., meetings in Battersea Park and on Clapham Common; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Messrs. Greer and Lock. On Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope. On Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., public séance. An enjoyable time was spent at Epping Forest on Sunday last on the occasion of the Union Outing. A meeting was held in the afternoon, when Mr. Adams presided, and the following speakers gave brief addresses: Mr. T. Brooks, Mrs. Holgate, Mr. H. Brooks, and Mr. Davis. In the evening Mr. Gwinn presided over another meeting, when the following speakers addressed the company: Mr. Adams, Mrs. Boddington, Mr. Kinsman, Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Boddington, and Mr. Drake.—YULE.