

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Some of our correspondents question the accuracy of our statement that the mightiest leaders of the world's thought and hope have come from places equivalent to the slums. We not only stand by that: we extend it, and say that the majority of the strong leaders in science and commerce have come from obscurity. It is a well-known fact. A list of reformers, religious leaders, scientists, and militant spirits generally, sprung from 'the upper classes,' would be a small one compared with a list of such characters who began low down. We might go even farther afield, and say that the good and gracious people of the world have mostly been poor.

We know what we are talking about when we say that Mayfair is probably not as ethically and spiritually good as Shoreditch. One of our correspondents says:—

Alas! we know the 'child of the slum' pictured by Mrs. Besant: born of degraded, brutalised parents, breathing an atmosphere vitiated morally and physically; its ears drinking in blasphemy and obscenity; its eyes gazing only upon squalor, filth and vice! If the warning cry of a street preacher or a city missionary chances to reach it, what meaning can that cry convey to the being to whom the name of God is only a word wherewith to intensify the power of an obscene oath or jest—a word without a meaning?

With all respect, we venture the opinion that this description of the poor districts of great towns does not proceed from real knowledge. It is, at all events, exaggerated. The air of these districts is not nice, and landlords, who do not live in slums but only profit by them, do their best to sweat their poor tenants into squalid nastiness, but, we repeat, the moral and spiritual! ay! the commercial and political, contribution to the world's life of, say, Shoreditch is probably higher than that of Mayfair.

In 'The Theosophist,' for June, Colonel Olcott revives the fascinating subject of the impregnation of images and shrines with the aura of the Brahmins who, during a period of forty days, perform the ceremony which results, he says, in an actual transfusion into them of vitality. Colonel Olcott demonstrated this to the father of a girl who was 'a good psychometer.' He magnetised one out of a number of glasses of water, and, on the girl coming into the room, to conclude the experiment, 'her hand was instantly drawn to that tumbler with the same swiftness and directness as a suspended steel needle exhibits at the approach of the uncovered north pole of the magnet.' He adds:—

I explained to my host that if he had brought me a dozen, or twenty, or fifty small brass or wooden idols from the bazaar, I could have given him the same proof of the reality of *Prāna-pratishthā* as he had just then got from

the simple experiment with the water-glasses. Ignorant missionaries and their backers who talk so flippantly about the 'heathen in their blindness, bowing down to wood and stone,' are, presumably, unaware of the vivification that occurs in the image after it has passed through the mesmerising process.

If this is true, and if we are to be logical and fair, we must apply this to a multitude of objects and performances in, say, the Roman Catholic Church.

A story of the fall of the Maya Empire is pleasantly told in smooth and simple verse by Alice Dixon Le Plongeon, in her book, 'Queen Moo's Talisman' (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Co.). The book contains also eight curious full-page plates, a short Glossary, an important Introduction and five ancient pieces of music. The story itself turns upon reincarnations working out destinies, and the virtues of talismans. The Mayas, we are assured, were 'much addicted to the study of occult forces; they certainly used magic mirrors and appealed to haruspicy in their desire to foretell events.' One tableau represents a man in his feather mantle, mesmerising another, 'showing that hypnotism was anciently made use of in Yucatan by priests and wise men.'

Incidentally, Miss Le Plongeon refers to Atlantis, or MU, to which Maya traditions, writings, and memorials refer. One ancient Maya MS. affirms that this land disappeared in the Atlantic Ocean 8,060 years before it was written.

An important work by Mr. Arthur Edward Waite, 'The Doctrine and Literature of the Kabalah,' has just been published by the London Theosophical Publishing Society. It is a handsome and workmanlike volume of 528 pages; and, if any book could turn old chaos into modern order, this does. The subject does not yield itself to a brief notice, or, for the matter of that, to any review unless in a volume of similar size and from another point of view: but we can report that we have in this work by Mr. Waite a scholarly discussion of the subject for the unlearned, but, still, for those who are interested in occult subjects. The book is presented in as many as 62 chapters, each chapter dealing with its own portion of the work, a noticeable advantage to the reader who is not an expert, but needs to be told what to look for, and shown how to look. There is a first-rate Index of 32 columns.

'My search for truth, and what I found,' by J. Horton (London: Williams and Norgate), has evidently grown out of a deeply moved human soul. The opening story, pathetic and intensely personal, might, by some, be regarded as too private for the use here made of it; but we welcome it as a vivid indication of purpose in this book,—a book which is evidently a confession of intellectual and spiritual upheaval that filled the writer with surprise. It is, in fact, not so much a book that we read, as a deeply interesting spectacle we witness, in going through these stirring pages. It is not merely an argument we follow but a psychological study at which we assist.

The book has in it many touches of amateur work, but there is power in it, and occasionally there are brilliant flashes, especially when the writer is making his strenuous protests against identifying Man with Matter, and when, taking him apart, he is linked with the spirit-spheres and God. There are very many passages as luminous as the following :—

Who is there amongst us who has not turned from the silent witcheries of this beautiful world with a feeling of emptiness and utter loneliness and passionately exclaiming, 'Oh, for an audible voice!' to look again within himself, convinced that however great nature may be, there is something greater there? However high, 'the thought of man is higher.' Here, in the human nature, we look behind the garment or veil and catch the whisper of the still small voice, and though it giveth not account of any of God's matters, though it is forever silent on the how and what and why of creation, it urges us to a deeper search, and bids us seek their meaning. Truly it is man, and not matter, that goes onward : the individual and not the world that evolves.

And many as suggestive as this :—

In death, man is still a looker-on. He sees its shadow looming in the distance, and enters the vale in a waiting attitude, perhaps fearing no evil—expectant, yet uncertain what to expect—because all he had hitherto learnt or taught had been taught, or learnt by the agency of natural things, and death was his last experience with the temporal. He has reached the extreme point to which the infinite mind carries matter, and the extreme point to which matter carries the finite mind, for death is a stage in the natural world beyond which neither God nor man is seen. Where man dies out, God ceases to manifest Himself—the earth connection is severed. They both meet, and are both lost to sight on the very verge of eternity, where reigns everlasting silence; and if we cannot follow, suffice it to know that, as we have been unable to separate God from man, and man from God, in life, even so we lose sight of them together. At this universal junction we see the greatest physical law in nature exhausted, and mind, which never was its victim, fluttering on the border of reality and lost in God.

We can commend Mr. W. R. Pope's 'The Science and Art of Physical Development' (London: Greening and Co.) as a sensible guide to bodily vigour. It is announced as 'Hints on the Sandow system,' but takes a line of its own. It includes a good deal in a small space, with an eye to the busy man who cannot live for training or 'getting into condition.' Mr. Pope is dead against strong drinks and tobacco.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS (From many shrines).

Eternal God, that blindest the springing of the seed and the ripening of the fruit, unto Thy keeping we commit all our doings and our sayings, and pray Thee of Thy fulness to fill them with the strength of life, and to bring them unto the fruition of peace and righteousness. When we are weakest, show us Thy gentleness; when we are most eager to do great things, show us Thy wisdom that works in silence, waiting patiently, using lowliest means, oft making souls perfect through suffering. Renew in us the mind of Christ, and lead us in his footsteps, both here in the troubled years of time, and there in the eternity of blessedness and peace. Amen.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

'W. C. P.'—The address for which you ask is 58, Uxbridge-road, W.

'SERPHARIEL.'—You have omitted to furnish us with your name and address.

IN proportion as we love truth more and victory less, we shall become anxious to know what it is that leads our opponents to think as they do. We shall begin to suspect that the pertinacity of belief exhibited by them must result from a perception of something which we have not perceived. And we shall aim to supplement the portion of truth we have found with the portion found by them.—HERBERT SPENCER.

MATTER, FORCE, AND CONSCIOUSNESS.

By JOHN B. SHIPLEY.

(Continued from page 341.)

IV.

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF MATTER.

As a moral counterpart to the physical aphorism 'Stones grow, plants grow and live, animals grow, live and feel,' we may propound the following hypothesis :—

Man is conscious, active, impressionable, and responsible.

Animals are conscious, active and impressionable.

Plants are semi-conscious, active in growth, and impressionable.

Matter is unconscious, passive, but limitedly impressionable.

Man is impressionable by other conscious entities, human or superhuman, perhaps better classed as incarnate and ex-carnate. Man has more or less the power of impressing his fellows, whether incarnate or ex-carnate, and all lower forms of existence.

The consciousness of animals is increased by association with human beings, and thereby their intelligence and moral sense increase in activity.

The semi-consciousness of plants, manifested by their powers of growth, their vitality in resisting adverse conditions, in profiting by the sunlight and other favourable influences, and their sensitiveness to external contact, is also, apparently, increased by association with human beings. Those who love plants are often struck by the vitality exhibited by favourite specimens that are tended and cared for, even if this care be not always the most judicious, or given in a way to greatly improve the conditions of growth. It would even seem as though a plant that is tended lovingly, even though ignorantly and unwisely, derives from the mere human association and sympathy the vital strength to resist conditions in which it might otherwise dwindle and die.

In such cases the personality of the individual who tends the plant has more to do with the result than even the treatment. I have seen people who followed mechanically the advice of experienced gardeners, and yet could scarcely raise the most hardy plants. I have seen others who over-watered and over-coddled their greenhouse or garden pets, or the plants in their rooms, and yet they seemed to thrive in spite of injudicious treatment, because it was so lovingly given.

Inanimate objects appear to take, retain, and even return impressions as the wax takes the stamp of the seal, or as the type takes the ink and gives it up again to the paper. I am not going so far as to impute definite powers of repartee to inanimate objects, but I must say that 'mere things' have before now given me back my thought, but counterchanged or reversed in sometimes an unexpected fashion, as a looking-glass reflects my features in reversed position. I am not going to say that this process may not be purely mental and self-responsive, as when a logician has no sooner stated an argument than he formulates the possible objection or reply. But nevertheless I seem to feel the thought influenced by the character of the object, and especially by my previous treatment of it, just as the face in the mirror will be distorted by curvature or irregularities of the reflecting surface.

We use 'things' harshly, thoughtlessly, because we are assured that they have no feelings; and were they fully conscious and capable of reply, that reply would be embittered by the sense that our power over them is absolute, and may be unwittingly abused. Plants, on the other hand, are like animals in their affection; those to whom we have given it will return it, even more surely than animals, because more unselfishly; while those we have not tended are strangers to us, and therefore unresponsive. But if they do not fawn on us, neither do they bite.

Is all this incomprehensible, is it mere fantasy? Spiritual science teaches us that we impart our 'aura,' our vital product, an emanation from ourselves, as the perfume is an

emanation from the flower, to everything with which we come in contact; that a garment which we have worn may speak of us to those who are susceptible enough to receive its message, and enable them to get into touch with us. Even a person not especially sensitive to impressions may be repelled by one of two letters arriving at the same moment and containing substantially the same matter, while he is attracted to the other, according to the personality of the sender. The personality is impressed on the outside of the letter by the action of closing and addressing the envelope, and the sender may also have carried it to the post in his pocket or hand, thereby saturating the envelope with his auric influence. An envelope and letter written, closed, pressed down, stamped, directed and posted by an amanuensis will convey an impression different from that conveyed by the dictated words. A mere blank sheet of paper sent by an antipathetic person, and put among miscellaneous scribbling paper, may turn up months afterwards and affect the recipient so that he cannot bear to write on it. But enough said.

Perhaps passive, active, and responsible existences are three stages of development; and perhaps the little girl who hugs and kisses, and thereby vitalises, her favourite doll, is not far wrong after all in her unshakable belief that Dolly loves her in return! At least she receives back the impression she has imprinted upon the unconscious object of her vivid childish affection.

(To be continued.)

PSYCHOGRAPHY.

The first of what was intended to be a series of experimental seances was recently held by two Boston representatives of the 'Banner,' the medium being Professor Fred Evans, psychographer. Subsequently, however, Mr. Evans was called away on business and further seances of the kind were postponed until some future time, when he will be again in the city. During his sojourn in Malone, N.Y., Mr. and Mrs. Boyce will hold one or more seances and report the same for the benefit of our readers.

Mr. Evans' methods have been explained in a previous paper. On this particular occasion the sitters did not furnish slates, as they wished to create the best possible conditions for future experiments. Those selected by the medium were apparently taken at random from a pile of ordinary school slates lying on the floor at his right. He rubbed these off with a cloth, and threw them down upon the table in front of the two sitters, with a bit of pencil under each slate. In a few minutes he turned one of them over, and upon it was written a message from his guide, John Gray.

Then in rapid succession followed two or three slates bearing a very significant and gratifying message signed by Luther Colby, the nature of which proved to be of exclusive interest to the 'Banner of Light.'

In conclusion, one of the sitters selected a small piece of paper from a large number lying on the table and held it in his hands while chatting with the medium. In a moment or two he handed it to the medium, who tossed it upon one slate and laid another over it; and when the slate was raised the paper was covered with names in various colours, and a message, or rather a solemn blessing, which was written in ink. This undoubtedly was meant to be shared with the 'Banner' readers and we have had it photographed for them. Some of the names were familiar to the sitters only, but many will be recognised by our readers. As before stated, the names were written in colours, and were so fresh upon the paper that they easily rubbed off upon the finger.

The seance was a most interesting one. We wish all might have witnessed it, and deeply regret that others could not have been held according to the intention of the medium and the 'Banner.' No table cover is used to puzzle the sitter. The slates are not slipped under the table or out of the sitter's sight or reach. All is done in a simple way, and with evident faith in the powers of the spirit friends to do the work required of them.—'Banner of Light.'

SOME DANGERS IN AUTOMATIC WRITING.

Automatic writing has become the delight and the temptation of every tyro in spiritualistic research. Perhaps it may be useful, therefore, to say a few words of warning on the subject, from the point of view of an old student and researcher.

The 'dangers of Spiritualism' of which we have heard so much lately, are simply the dangers of ignorance and inexperience that attend *all* new departures. We might as well talk of the dangers of chemistry, or the dangers of playing with gunpowder, or the dangers of using knives and forks for the first time, and of cutting our fingers and prodding our eyes out.

Fortunately for most of us, our chemical experiments are generally supervised by teachers and guardians, and our nursery acquaintance with knives and forks is equally protected by experience and wisdom greater than our own. *Unfortunately* for most of us, when we begin to experiment in these new paths of psychic progress, we are not so protected, and in fact, are generally by no means eager or willing to take advice on these subjects.

I suppose that each one is apt to feel that his or her automatic writing is a new and delightful and almost unique experience; something too personal to be amenable to ordinary laws and ordinary experience. *Other* people may make mistakes and be deceived, but then *they* have not had the great privilege of being guarded and guided by our special guides and controls, and therefore the cases are not in the least analogous!

There is a good deal of Human Nature knocking about—even amongst psychics! The eager and humble-minded investigator of one season—almost too anxious to assert personal ignorance and inexperience—develops by subtle and rapid strides in a few months into the delighted and dogmatic writer of automatic script, or receiver of intuitional impressions. And this is just where the danger—and the Human Nature—creep in together. Combined with the generous instinct of wishing to help our neighbours and to share our good things with them, comes the almost inevitable desire to be the *special* channel chosen for this excellent work. To be able to fill page after page with writing, at a pace quite beyond what is normal to us, and often without knowing in the least what is coming next, is a most enjoyable experience. It appears to us to be the office of some kind but unknown spirit to enlighten our ignorance and hold a lamp to our feet, and the experience is all the more enjoyable when we find what a marvellous mission is before us! *To us* it has been vouchsafed to pioneer a new road, in which the world at large probably—our own immediate acquaintance *certainly*—is designed to walk.

Here at last, we think, is our misty and indefinite life work, which has hovered over us like 'a cloud no bigger than a man's hand,' condensing, and becoming that pillar of fire and cloud which shall direct all our future steps! No wonder that in the first flush of our delight and excitement, we are carried off our feet a little, and inclined to be less critical than is advisable of the claims made by our unseen companions!

Probably also we have not made such an exhaustive study of mental conditions and possibilities as would fit us to detect flaws in the new and charming experience of our lives, and enable us to surmise that thoughts and words which are not in our normal consciousness may still owe their origin to a subjective rather than an objective source.

In suggesting these words of warning, far be it from me to convey the impression that I doubt the *possibility* of outside influence in writing. I have received too much personal proof of it to do that; but I feel equally convinced that a great deal coming from our pens is in no way beyond our personal possibilities, and that the *pace* at which these communications often come, though abnormal to our daily experience, is also quite within the scope of our speedy development.

Mr. Colville very wisely pointed out to us lately that when we are told 'of marvellous pioneer work awaiting us in the future,' it is well to tread cautiously and allow at least for the possibility of self-deception, or for the work of

spirits who find it quite as amusing to fool egotistical men and women to the top of their bent from another sphere, as they may have found it amusing to do so whilst in the flesh.

There is no reason to suppose that flattery from discarnate spirits, directed to the vanity of incarnate spirits, is going to lose its inevitable result merely because one of the contracting parties has dropped his or her envelope of flesh. We see people *here* manipulating their fellow creatures every hour of the day through the subtle influence of more or less cleverly disguised flattery. Why should we suppose that cause and effect are to cease the moment a spirit passes to other spheres, so long as such a spirit is still capable of such methods?

Again, we must saddle the right horse by admitting that it is as often our own vanity as flattery from the other side which leads us to accept so quickly all these fascinating prophecies of our stupendous influence and its vast results.

To many people (amongst them some of the kindest of our fellow creatures) there is nothing in the world more seductive than to play the rôle of special Providence. Hence arise so many philanthropic schemes, from the Lady Bountiful of the quiet village to the millionaire who gives his thousands of pounds to found libraries, and endow public institutions. The feeling of 'doing good,' combined with the 'exercise of power,' is a most fascinating combination for ninety-nine out of every hundred.

And automatic writing, under the supposed guidance of a 'spirit' of 'Love,' or 'Joy,' or Truth,' or a little 'Sunbeam,' or a 'Dewdrop,' gives us easy and delightful opportunities for tasting these subtle joys! Our friends are only too eager to exalt us to the Throne of the Delphic Oracle. Is it wonderful that we should accept the situation?

Our words (the words, of course, of 'Truth' and 'Love' and 'Joy') are received with bated breath and most flattering respect. Do they not come from spheres to which the ordinary 'man in the street' has no access? These words are very apt to point out the mistakes and failings of our neighbours and note incidentally our own wiser ways as a question of useful example! Of course 'we are bound to give what comes,' even when it is flattering to ourselves at the expense of some one else!

Just as some of our Christian Science friends have a tiresome trick of telling us that 'we are in mortal mind' when we demur to any of their shibboleths, or question their authority, or point out their lack of logic; so do these dear, kind, well-meaning, but very 'young' automatic writers affirm and aver that nothing is more painful to them than to be forced to 'pass on' the strictures and criticisms which have been given to them in their self-imposed character of Delphic Oracle, and which they feel conscientiously bound to share with the poor victims of these 'faithful friends.'

In many—perhaps in most—of such cases, the Delphic Oracles are perfectly honest and perfectly well-meaning; but they are 'young at their work,' and have not reckoned with their own human nature. I have heard one child say to another, 'You are a very naughty little girl, and all I can do is to pray for you!' And I firmly believe that the first child was a perfectly honest little prig, and did not realise that vanity and love of power were at the bottom of her remark. So it is with many of our self-appointed teachers through automatic communications, and it naturally leads in the end to much disharmony and heart-burning.

This is one of the dangers of automatic communications as they concern *others*, and I have laid some stress on this point because it has lately come under my notice in a rather striking manner. But I would also draw attention to the danger of indulging too rashly and without sufficient training and experience in this occupation *as it concerns ourselves*. For over five years my spirit friends kindly, but very firmly, warned me against using pen or pencil, because they said I was not sufficiently developed in other ways to be safe from invading influences which would have tricked and deceived me—probably by suggesting the Delphic Oracle business to me in those days! I cannot be sufficiently thankful for the wise warning, or for the good influences that helped me to accept it.

It has since been explained to me by spirit friends that

it is more easy for invading influences to get hold of a subject who opens the door by automatic writing *than to get hold of his thoughts direct, and without this material channel*, and this appears a very reasonable supposition. Thought is presumably at a higher rate of vibration than pens and pencils, and, therefore, less open to the incursions of those spirits who are living in spheres of lower and more grossly material vibration.

I have been the subject of a good many experiments in automatic writing with my friend Mr. Stead, and we always deal with these in a thoroughly business-like way. He sends his script to me for remarks and criticisms, and I mark the various paragraphs purporting to represent my thoughts and actions, as 'correct,' 'incorrect,' or 'partly true and partly false,' as the case may be. We recognise very fully the personal equation, or the 'coloured glass,' as I call it, in these useful exercises. Very often I am obliged to condemn whole paragraphs as 'W. T. S.' rather than 'E. K. B.,' and often these represent something which Mr. Stead has had reason to suppose I was doing or thinking. At other times the successes are equally subtle and unexpected.

Now I think all this exceedingly useful because it can be at once corroborated or corrected, and it gives us some sort of standard to go upon as regards automatic messages from the Unseen which cannot always be verified or disproved so readily. Mr. Stead is a man of exceptional ability and quickness in receiving ideas—as I think even his enemies will concede. Therefore he would compare very favourably in these ways with most of the newly-developed students of psychic matters who are receiving automatic messages *galore* from their 'spirits' of 'Truth' and 'Love,' &c. Mr. Stead, like other human beings, is subject to prejudices. *So are they*. Have we any reason to suppose that these tyros in psychic development are more likely to receive accurate and untainted messages from their various guardian spirits with high-sounding names (*even allowing that such spirits have the qualifications which they claim*), than a man of exceptional quickness who has had years of practice in assimilating the ideas of other people, both in the physical and psychical worlds? I can testify to the very considerable mixture of error with truth in the one case, and am equally convinced of it in other cases.

In conclusion, I would urge those psychics who are young in development, but also sensible and not carried away by conceit, to take everything that comes to them with the caution that is ready to give hospitality to *any* message, but which weighs every sentence on its own merits, apart from its supposed source, and which realises that messages which place ourselves at the top of the tree and our neighbours at the bottom, are very apt to have taken on some colouring matter from our own latent Human Nature; or—allowing that the source of the message (which so constantly backs up our own opinion) is entirely objective—then we may be sure that the spirit of Truth or of Love is more likely a spirit of deception, fooling us to the top of our silly bent, and ready to enjoy the spectacle of that fall which, in some form or other, is the inevitable sequel to dogmatic self-satisfaction.

'By their fruits ye shall know them.'

When we receive wise and loving counsel, or sensible suggestions, it matters little whence they come so long as we heed them. When we are flattered and encouraged in criticising and spiritually patronising our presumably less fully evolved fellow creatures, we may be pretty certain that the source is tainted or the channel is tainted—or more probably *both* are unreliable.

E. KATHARINE BATES.

ANNUAL OUTING OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—It has been decided by the Union of London Spiritualists that the annual outing of London Spiritualists shall take place at High Beech, Epping Forest, on Sunday, August 17th, and it is hoped that the metropolitan Spiritualists will be present in large numbers and hold a grand mass meeting under the banner of 'Union with Liberty,' for mutual benefit. Tickets for adults 9d., and children 6d. each. There will be a general assembly at 11 a.m.; afternoon meeting at 2 p.m.; tea at 4 p.m.; and mass meeting at 5.30 p.m. Trains are noted on tickets.—HENRY BROOKS, Secretary.

'COMPELLED TO CHOOSE.'

In his article on 'Karma,' in 'LIGHT,' of July 26th, 'Lux' gave us an interesting glimpse of Eastern ideas regarding Fate, but in his illustration of the good and virtuous man who was unable to swim, and was drowned in his vain attempt to save his wife from a watery grave, it seems to me that he is hardly fair to the people of the West in suggesting that we should make God a party to the transaction. The average Western would, I think, be more inclined to say regarding the man in question: 'What else could he expect, seeing that he could not swim? It was very natural, but very foolish of him to attempt to rescue his wife, unless he preferred to die with her rather than to live without her.' The man's 'goodness and virtue' have nothing to do with the case. The physical laws of nature are neither moral nor immoral—they are simply *umoral*. The real point is the man's inability to swim!

As an illustration of Western thought on the question of Fate the following article, contributed to the 'Sunflower' by Mr. Lyman C. Howe, a well-known Spiritualist lecturer of Fredonia, N.Y., U.S.A., is interesting and appropriate. Discussing the question 'Is man a free moral agent, or is he governed by fixed laws?' Mr. Howe argued that:—

'The recognition of an endless chain of cause and effect in the order of nature eliminates chance and miracle from cosmic problems. To assume that any department is an exception is to ignore the unity of nature and introduce an irresponsible factor which invalidates all the claims of consistency and universal relationship and mutual influences in the cosmos.

'If a portion of matter be exempt from the action of causation, there can be no reliability in any exegesis of cosmic processes. If a part be without law, or cause, the whole may become so at any time, or there must be an eternal division and insulation of each department, between which there can be no interchanging; for how can that which has neither cause nor effect exert any influence upon anything?

'If nature is reliable, if we can depend upon her methods as indicated in the relations of cause and effect, there can be no place in her domain for chance. Then is man a free moral agent? Is an agent free? To say he is, is to say that somewhere in the realms of nature are effects without causes: an agent that is not responsible to anybody or anything.

'It is generally held that man is a result of antecedent causes, and every molecule in his organism is constantly influenced by conditions impressed upon it by the long line of ascent from primitive protoplasm to a reasoning soul, and by all the circumstances attendant upon its pilgrimage and at present active. How then can man be free? But there is one consideration that is usually overlooked in discussing this question. Man himself is a cosmic pivot, having involved in his being the totality of all impressions, a concentration of all the causes that have attended his inception and progressing evolution. He is not, therefore, a dependent puppet, the helpless plaything of his present environments. He is more than they all. He can mould and master circumstances, but he cannot master himself. He is the representation of countless ages of causation energy, stored in his occult constitution. They impel him to respond to the appeal of circumstances, and the action thus evoked is dependent upon millions of dynamic centres in his marvellously complex and delicately adjusted organism.

'Another mistake common to this subject is the confounding of will with volition, and the assumption that because we have a choice and can direct our action for good or evil, we are therefore free. The reverse is true; for our choice is always governed by desire, and desire is the expression of antecedent cause and ruling conditions.

'We cannot choose to do what we do not desire to do; and we cannot desire without the influence of causes that make up the impelling impulses which dominate our consciousness. If our desires are not caused, by what means do they originate? And now can anything in which there is no element of causation, act as a cause for any result?

'Again, it is held that this is a dangerous doctrine which makes us mere machines, and attaches no responsibility to human life and conduct. The reverse is true. If we are entirely free to choose and act independent of antecedent or circumstances, without regard to causes within or without, then we are responsible for nothing. In proportion as we are conceded to be free, we are irresponsible; and in the ratio that we are held by fixed causes "fast in fate" are we responsible to those causes.

'If men are "free moral agents" why apply penalties for

crimes and rewards for virtues? In our whole system of jurisprudence, and all the religious warnings and appeals, this law is unconsciously recognised, and applied!

'No! we are never for one moment free, in the least or the greatest of all actions and achievements. But we choose our course of conduct, and execute that choice with varying degree of success. We are not free to choose. *We are compelled to choose.* A million influences may combine to decide the choice, but when made it always obeys the dominating desires ruled by the totality of the cause that concentrates upon that moment, and that sum total of conditions which echo down the ages and centre in the consciousness, each echo being a voice of command and exercising its function to determine the will and its action.'

Surely none but the least philosophical among Western thinkers can fail to recognise the 'law of consequences' (I will call it Karma if 'Lux' wishes), or seek to hold the Deity responsible for 'permitting' an ignorant man to drown—however good or virtuous.

Ignorance and folly—or shall we say in this case unwisdom?—necessarily produce their crop of painful results, and Western thinkers recognise that it is so without 'impeaching or "justifying" God, or in the faintest way casting doubt on the Divine justice or benevolence.'

WESTERNER.

EXPERIENCES OF A BLIND CLAIRVOYANTE.

AS TOLD BY HERSELF.

In addressing myself to such of the English public as may be interested in the cause of Spiritualism, my aim is to answer to the best of my ability some of the many questions put to me by those whose acquaintance I have made since coming to London.

As a beginning it may be well to state that I was born totally blind. Perhaps my earliest clear recollection is that of an event which took place during my fourth year of age. I well remember going with my mother to a celebrated oculist in New York. The operation which he performed on my eyes resulted in nothing more nor less than a long illness. During my slow convalescence, almost my only pleasure was found in the companionship of two little spirit children, giving the names of Danny and Fanny. To be sure, no one around me either saw or heard them; but, while this surprised, it did not trouble me.

At the age of six I made a discovery which, from a psychic standpoint, altered the whole course of my life. Up to this time I had never supposed myself to be in any way different from ordinary children, but having one day offended a little playmate, she took a childish revenge by saying, 'Oh, you old blind bat.' On appealing to my mother for explanation of these words, her slow, sad answer came in words which I shall never forget. She said, 'My little daughter, Nellie meant that those around you can see with their eyes, which you never have done, and never will in this world.' From that hour I grew, as it were, from child to woman. I comprehended slowly but surely that I was in some strange way shut out from that which made life to others. Even when, at the age of eight, I was sent to a school for the blind, the idea, while mingling with those like myself, never for a moment left me, that I must ever live in a world of my own.

About this time I became affected by what I now know to have been trance conditions. I suffered, however, so much physically that my parents called in a physician. As I grew no better, however, one doctor after the other dosed and drugged me until I wonder I am yet alive to tell the tale. At last my father called in an old medical gentleman, who, after listening patiently to what must have appeared a record of queer symptoms, remarked to my father, 'My dear sir, I will tell you frankly that I know no more of your little girl's trouble than you do,' and when asked to prescribe he refused point blank. After this my so-called illness was left to take its course.

It was not until my twelfth year that my powers of clairvoyance began really to develop, and with the Editor's permission I will in a future communication tell how, taught by a wise spirit, I began at this time to distinguish colours.

ANNA J. CHAPIN.

31, Upper Baker-street, N.W.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.

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THE UNANSWERED QUESTION.

A writer in 'The Metaphysical Magazine' gives a somewhat cynical and rebellious answer to the question he puts into the mouth of the Sphinx:—the minute but immense word—*Why?* 'This voiceless Sphinx, sculptured in the image of man, looks out upon the vastness of limitless space and typifies by its vacant stare, man's hopeless wonderment at the Colossal Enigma of Creation.' But we greatly doubt whether that was the intention of its creator or desirer. It is rather for us, that that time-stained and crumbled mouth asks the question of all the ages. It is the pathos of its desolation and its melancholy, and the patient persistence of its stern but pathetic grandeur, that translate its expression into the everlasting and unanswered question—*Why?*

Perhaps, too, there is something in the contrast between this massive face and the little people who come to see it and decide about it. It seems to belong to another race, another imagination, almost another world. It half mocks, half warns, the swarming pleasure-seekers and egotists of this later day. 'Egotists'! Mr. Turner, the writer of this semi-scornful Study, lays great stress on this. Man, in his swaggering egotism, has done his best to make very literal the ancient mandate—to go in and possess the earth, and to make awfully true the ancient saying, 'Thou hast put all things under his feet.' 'Under his feet,' with a vengeance, and under his gun:—so much so that he shows his 'godlike superiority' by turning the slaughter of beautiful creatures into 'sport'; and, out of sheer wantonness of enmity, 'brings down' the happy birds that make half the joy of coast and sea: and then consigns the birds to oblivion and allots to himself immortality and heaven!

All men, says Mr. Turner, hold first that man is the highest type of material things: that he is more God like or spiritual divine than other physical creatures. . . . They pile up their theories of the origin of man and of species, of his physical evolution, his spiritual progression, his doom, his reward. The conclusion they thus reach may satisfy their vanity, but—what does it prove? It may chiefly prove man's vanity.

The mystery of life is deeper and more complex than any philosophy or creed, based upon human egotism, has given us. We talk of the 'inferior creation.' Are we quite sure that birds and beasts and even insects, with their incomprehensible faculties, are essentially below us? Is it even certain that they are below us in social civilisation? Is London more sane, and better ordered, and more of a

brotherhood, than a beaver village or an ant-hill? As to this last, Mr. Turner acutely says:—

Let us compare the boasted social achievements of man with the harmonious association of the communal aggregations of 'inferior creatures.' Let us consider the ground-ants. Among these there is surely little distress. Extreme accumulation by the few, ribaldry and sinful abuse of their physical bodies, have no place in their household; nor does the damning curse of poverty stalk in among them. But why? Do they not toil, as does man, for their daily bread? True, their effort to procure food is not continuous for three hundred days or more in the year, as is man's; but does not this give evidence of better management—a more natural adjustment of system to divine law?

Was it wisdom, inspiration, or accident that put the unanswered question into the face of an exaggerated man? It seems to say: 'Who am I? What am I? What is to become of me?' Perhaps also it says: 'See what I can do. See how I endure!' And already all the mighty splendours, of which it seemed to be the symbol or the key, have shrivelled to the fragments of a ruin or are buried beneath the sands. Is *that* the true human symbol, after all? In one sense it is. Forth from the hiding-place of the ruling forces came Man: and back to these will he return when he has carried his load, and spun his portion of the mystic web. In his vanity and his ignorance, he fancies he is master of the house, and that all things are for him,—as a fly, on the shining gilding of a coach, might fancy that the warmth and glitter and movement were all for it. What if it would be nearer the truth to say that he is but a bubble on a flowing river, or a local ripple on a boundless sea?

Behind the scenes, it is almost certainly true that nothing is known of high and low. The moth is as the man. Both are manifestations of life: both emerge from the infinite ocean of being, each with its own place and power, and both utterly insignificant compared with the unfathomable and incomprehensible whole. For Man, it may well be granted, there is in store some place and path that may lead him far on in the infinite grades of life: but his great need is humility; and his next greatest need is the insight that gives sympathy. At present, Man is, for the most part, a terror. He is chiefly aware of his power,—and he uses it. He uses it to oppress and to kill,—and to oppress and kill even his own kind with relentless fury, or, worse still, with calculated skill. He is insolent with the creatures that share the earth with him, and he even ruthlessly invades the territory of the children of the air and sky. He can kill a competitor, defile a river, and shoot a lark. He makes the whole creation groan and travail until now.

Mr. Turner pushes these sorrowful truths home, into a novel and startling hypothesis. He says:—

It is man who promises himself a better world to live in after he has surrendered his physical body to the command of Death. He pictures to himself an eternal dwelling-place with 'walls of jasper and streets of gold.' Consider now the effect of the introduction into such a world of man-made statutes legalising the right to individual property in its surface. According to the conjectures of man, has not this eternal dwelling-place been receiving mankind into its confines for time indefinite, just as the earth is being peopled by the advent of the newly-born? If during all this time man there has been free to follow the precepts of civilisation as it is on earth, may it not be said in all reverence that some men are now monopolising the source of all the gold and jasper? Aye! For the privilege of building themselves a home along the streets of gold, will not those who are yet to make their homes in that Eternal City be compelled to pay high tribute to men who have gone before them? Might it not, in fact, be necessary that they pay toll before they are permitted to pass within the walls of jasper?

Let us hope that this, at all events, is not true.

EXTENSION OF PREMISES FUND.—Mr. H. Withall, the honorary treasurer of the London Spiritualist Alliance, acknowledges with thanks the receipt of £10 from 'A Subscriber to "LIGHT":' £2 from H. C. Campbell, Maritzburg, Natal, South Africa; 10s. from 'S.' and 5s. from Miss Ethel Johnson.

THE FRENCH PSYCHIC PRESS.

Two interesting instances of apparently spontaneous lucidity are recorded in the 'Revue des Etudes Psychiques,' for July. The seer is Mlle. Uranie Randone, the recorder M. Henri Carreras. The latter was given a big Havanna cigar by a friend, but as he had given up smoking he put it aside, remarking to his wife that he would smoke it on the occasion of the birth of his first child, whose advent was shortly expected. A few days afterwards he met Mlle. Randone, who remarked to him, 'I dreamt of you last night. I can't quite remember the dream . . . It was about something you were going to do because you had a son.' Three days later (during which time he did not see Mlle. Randone), the young lady again remarked that she had had an odd dream: 'I had returned from your house, where I saw you stretched in a chair in your drawing room, smoking a big Havanna cigar. I was surprised because I know you do not smoke, and I asked why you did so. You replied: "I smoke because a little boy has been just born to me." Is it not strange!'

M. Carreras affirms that his wife had not seen Mlle. Randone since the cigar was given to him. This same lady described suddenly to M. Carreras and a friend, Dr. Mendes, a scene in which the latter had a few hours before taken part, and the operation on a finger which he had performed. All the details were exact except that there were three men present at the operation and the seer only saw two.

The 'Revue du Monde Invisible' (June number) contains an interesting article by Colonel de Rochas on the subject of the present condition of psychic science. He expresses his agreement with the view, which he states is now generally adopted, that suggestion can only take effect when the will of the subject is not in opposition. He regards thought-reading, when no external means are used for conveying the suggestion, and it is *purely* mental, as a very exceptional faculty. In the course of his paper he refers in turn to the various phases of psychic experiences with 'regard to the exteriorisation of sensibility,' and he points out that the radiations seem to act like external nerves, that is to say, they seem to convey sensation much as the nerves do; moreover, they have the property of condensing in certain substances, so that any action performed on these substances is felt by the sensitive. (This fact is related in some way, we may presume, to the *rapport* which is established by a medium with a departed spirit through contact with some article that has been worn in earth life.) Colonel de Rochas suggests that the exteriorised emanations may be the channel of telepathy. (If this is so they must be capable of very wide extension indeed.) Of the fact of levitation he asserts that there is historic proof. And in connection with materialisation he affirms that he has had with Eusapia Paladino ocular demonstration of its reality. A bas-relief of a materialised profile was obtained in a plastic substance, whilst M. Camille Flammarion was holding the medium at the distance of about one yard from the substance thus impressed: but he has never himself witnessed a complete materialisation. He concludes by testifying to the great interest which attaches to Madame d'Espérance's book, 'Shadowland.' 'Everyone,' he says, 'who desires to know the actual facts about psychic science ought to read this book.' 'The studies of late years have resulted in the establishment, by historic proofs or by direct experiences, of the fact that man's active and passive faculties can operate outside his visible and material body, by the exteriorisation of sensibility, the exteriorisation of motricity, and the exteriorisation of thought.'

The May-June number of 'Annales Psychiques' contains several articles of interest. One on 'Experiments in Thought-transference,' by Dr. Charles Binet-Sanglé, with illustrations, adds the evidence of another learned professor to the fact of telepathy.

Two medical men were present on the occasion, and two subjects were experimented with; one as transmitter (O—), the other as receiver (M—). They appear to have been well harmonised, for the experiments were very successful. These were mainly in four directions—1. Transmission of sensations; 2. Transmission of images; 3. Transmission of verbal sounds; 4. Experiments in clairvoyance,

or transmission of thoughts. In the last-named experiments success lay in the direction of the clairvoyant's appreciation of character, profession, &c., *i.e.*, in such details as were known to Dr. Binet-Sanglé; the details of action which were unknown to him being incorrect. For this reason the fourth class of experiments is not called clairvoyance but is classified as thought transmission.

The first class of experiments is curious. Certain strong-flavoured substances being tasted by O—, M— at once expressed the sensation which such a substance would produce, having received this sensation from O—. Images were equally successfully transferred, being drawn first by Dr. Binet-Sanglé, and then transmitted mentally by O— to M—. Parts of sentences were received in the same way.

Dr. Binet-Sanglé comments at length on these experiments, suggesting that nerve currents pass through the covering of the brain, as Röntgen rays traverse other solid substances. He points out the great value such a fact as thought-reading might have in criminal cases if an expert thought-reader were used to detect crime. Whilst such revelations could not be taken as legal evidence, they might greatly assist in the discovery of the direction in which such evidence could be found. He regards the transference of thought as a rare phenomenon. Perhaps its rarity is chiefly in appearance; many cases of thought-transference probably occur which cannot be proved scientifically, however.

The article that follows on Home's mediumship will be read with interest by those unfamiliar with the details of his life and work.

Professor Otto von Schren's discoveries on 'the life of crystals' is discussed at length by Dr. Hahn. Professor von Schren has convinced himself by close observation that crystals have a structural system of growth analogous to that of plants and animals; that some crystals are at certain periods of their existence capable of spontaneous movements; that the crystal is, in fact, individualised, having a veritable life in the biological sense of the word, with processes of nutrition and reproduction.

A long article on the young woman of Grèses is also included in this number; giving the Mother Superior's and the doctor's opinion of this unhappy case. The girl is possessed by the idea that she is the slave of an evil spirit; but from the doctor's account it seems probable that the misery is caused by suggestion on the part of those who have the care of her, who are kind and religious people, but who with the best intention have, by too much insistence on the power of the devil, rivetted the chain of this mental bondage upon her mind. At least, so thinks the doctor.

H. A. D.

MADAME FLORENCE MONTAGUE.

It was with deep dismay I heard of the probable early departure from our shores of that highly-gifted lady, Madame Florence Montague. How helpful, sympathetic, and ennobling her teaching has been! a kindly leading light through seasons of sorrow, loss and adversity, into a sunshine of the spirit, which, if it has not raised us from earth, has certainly raised us above our troubles and perplexities, and lifted us nearer the realisation of Heaven. I wish to urge that every possible opportunity (in the limited time remaining) may now be given for meetings, more especially those well-known and highly prized Wednesday evening sittings—not only in the interest of those still in town but also for the many who are now abroad, and who might not otherwise know of our loss till too late.

J. D. S.

MISS MACCREADIE desires to inform her friends and clients that she will be out of town until the first week in September next.

DEPARTURE OF DR. SILVA.—Dr. Silva called at the office of 'LIGHT' on Tuesday last to bid us farewell prior to his departure for Lisbon on August 1st, whence he will return to Brazil, where he wrought so many remarkable cures before he came to London. The doctor's book of testimonials contains forty-four from persons in London cured of different diseases by the laying-on of hands, including, among others, cases of heart affection, arthritides, rheumatism for thirty-seven years, blindness of many years' standing, deafness, paralysis, stiff joints, spinal complaints, epilepsy, deranged condition of gastric juices, asthma, nervousness, useless hand, lameness, loss of voice, dyspepsia, pain in head, internal troubles, loss of vitality, skin diseases.

IS MAN NATURALLY IMMORTAL ?

The idea that immortality is 'conditional,' and not inherent, is being forced to the front in certain directions, and a variety of ingenious theories are advanced in its support. The Rev. Dr. Parkhurst, of New York, has declared that, in his opinion, there is no immortality for all men ; that there is no warrant in the Bible for the belief that all men will live for ever ; that immortality is something that must be gained or developed ; that its development depends upon character ; upon the growth of conscience ; upon the building up of the moral nature of man ; upon the evolution of true manhood and womanhood. Mr. B. F. Underwood, writing in the 'Philosophical Journal,' says :—

'The question arises according to this view, which is an old one, whether men like Socrates, Aristides, Timoleon, Themistocles, Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus developed the capacity for immortal life. Does the boon depend upon intellectual and moral merit? Are all men of intellectual ability and high character combined, likely to be immortal? Or must there be added to these qualities the right religious faith? Or may those without extraordinary or unusual powers of mind, but of fine moral fibre, hope for immortal life? What is the real criterion, according to Professor Parkhurst, beyond the incomplete statement to which reference is here made?

'Viewing the subject without reference to Scripture or theology, purely in the light of reason, it would seem that if man is an immortal being, the fact is due to attributes of mind possessed in common by all who have human characteristics. If one man is immortal, naturally it would seem that all other men are immortal ; for, continued life after the dissolution of the body would seem to depend upon something indestructible which man possesses by virtue of his being a man. It does not seem that immortality is something to be developed. How can it be developed unless it exists potentially in the human mind?

'It is an old truism that from nothing, nothing comes. If man does not possess the attributes of immortality, or the capacity for it originally, by virtue of his intellectual and moral nature, how can there be a development of it by experience?

'Dr. Parkhurst's views would seem to imply that immortality is a special gift to certain individuals conferred by means of a miracle or the exercise of power not in accordance with any laws or methods known to the student of nature.

'Should it be true that immortality depends primarily upon character, a large number of those who count themselves among the probable recipients of divine favour may be among those who will never realise immortal life, and among the favoured ones may be multitudes who have not classed themselves with those particularly deserving of such an exceptional destiny. It may be, indeed, that the majority under this rule who will be blotted out of existence are among those most confident of their worthiness. And the majority of those who will continue to live may largely be of those so occupied with the duties of life that they have had but little time to give to the consideration of this subject.

'The doctrine of immortality, maintained on natural grounds, seems to imply that as the activity of human life is part of the phenomenal manifestations which we know comprehensively as force, so human life itself, or the real man, belongs to the eternal, noumenal order of being, and is immortal, not by special gift or acquirement, but by virtue of self-existence, regardless of its limited duration as a personal force in the phenomenal world.

'If man, in his essential nature, came into being by physical reproduction and birth on this planet, there seems to be no logical reason, from the nature of his constitution, for the conclusion that man is immortal, though the usual moral reasons for immortality may remain unaffected.

'If the human soul, however, is a part of the Divine Immanence, or a "spark" from the Infinite Life, then reproductive and evolutionary processes need not be considered in the discussion of immortality, for, by parity of reasoning, the soul did not originate in these processes which are but phenomenal manifestation of that divine nature or of that noumenal order to which the soul itself belongs. Natural immortality implies that,

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,
The soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar."

'Who can disprove this? The materialistic theories of immortality with the conception of *beginning* have no validity.'

Spiritualists are interested in this question because the

facts with which they are familiar seem to indicate that personal survival is natural and universal, because man is a spirit, and spirit is indestructible ; that once the stage of human self-consciousness is attained the Ego persists as an individual, and is capable of growth in knowledge, power, self-realisation, and the expression of the Divine possibilities of his nature, which are the birthright of all ; that, however low in the scale, however ignorant or depraved the individual may be, sooner or later, here or hereafter, the sweeter and holier qualities of his divinely human intelligence will be called out and consciously employed, even though the upward pathway be one of tribulation and pain.

'SPIRITUALISM' AND 'MATERIALISM.'

An attempt is being made by a Cardiff minister to reconcile various antagonistic systems of thought, in a series of sermons devoted to that object. On Sunday, July 20th, the Rev. Tyssul Davis, B.A., who is a pastor of the Unitarian Church, essayed the office of peacemaker between Spiritualist and materialist. He discovered ground common to the opposite faiths in the three following principles :—

1. The existence of matter not perceptible by the senses, yet made known by its effects.
2. The materiality of thought.
3. The oneness of that indestructible, eternal substance of whose manifestation spirit and matter are positive and negative poles, upper and lower aspects, convex and concave sides.

Speaking upon the first point he cited facts from material science to justify certain psychic phenomena. Hydrogen could pass through sealed iron jars. Etheric matter, the medium of wireless telegraphy, could pass through the most solid and dense objects, through the very fabric of the globe. X-rays, or radiant matter, passing through opaque and ponderous barriers, had made opacity a myth. Assuming that no psychic phenomenon took place without matter, could not a finer and more subtle matter than ether, but matter in which the human being could function, do what the grosser was capable of, and Jesus enter into the upper room without opening the door? If radiant matter could penetrate brick walls, why not the X-rays of human vision, the medium of clairvoyance?

The passage of the subtle human body through a stone wall was the same kind of fact as the passage of ether through solid walls in wireless telegraphy, and could be accepted by the materialist as a material fact, though a fact dealing with matter not discoverable by the senses.

A second bond of union could be found in the concession to the materialist of the materiality of thought, though when he insisted that thought was the result of molecular changes in the nervous matter of the brain he placed the cart before the horse. It was like the popular idea that in telegraphy the electric current passed along the copper wire, whereas it was a vibration passing along the etheric rope involved in that copper wire. Instances from magnetic healing and hypnotism were given to show that man does not feel with his nerves but with something behind and involved in them.

If the materialist would but cease to limit matter to what is only the gross aspect of it ; if he would but realise that all truth is never given to one class of students, he might learn from the student of psychism much that would widen his range of vision, and add to the greatness of his conception of life.

By quoting the theories of physicists it was further shown that in the resolution of matter back to atoms, which are but vortices of ether in motion, the materialist was left on the threshold of the unseen, his seeming solid world vanished, the faded phantom of a vast realm of spirit.

While gratefully accepting the facts of material science, and the facts of Spiritualism, and seeing in them facts of the one nature in whose seamless robe there was no rent, the preacher gave reasons why he could not be a materialist or a Spiritualist. As a Unitarian, whose guiding principle is the unity of all truth, the facts of materialism and of psychism had to be gratefully garnered into one science. Many were the varieties of intellect, but the spirit of truth, the heart of humanity was one, because God is One.

THE 'APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE.'

TREATMENT BY DR. SILVA.

I enclose herewith, for the Editor's inspection, a letter received from Miss Yearsley this morning, and also her receipt for money received by her from me. From the former I give some extracts relating to her treatment by Dr. Silva :—

'Dear Mrs. Oldham,—I beg to thank you and all the kind friends for subscribing, and helping me to go to London to see Dr. Silva. I am more than delighted to tell you that, after having visited Dr. Silva the first time, I felt much better. The third time I went I was able to see a small vase Dr. Silva handed to me; and before I came home I could distinguish a lady from a gentleman in a photo; and was able to follow the poster bills on the walls, after having been to eight different doctors, and all thinking my case was hopeless, except one, a healer in Manchester. Dr. Silva has been kindness itself, and I hope God will prosper him to live long, to do others good, as he has for me, and I think He will. If you will send particulars for the hospital subscription I will get as many friends as I can, hoping to help more when I can see better myself.'

When she left London she told me she could see the words 'Koko' and 'Hair' in the advertisement of Koko for the hair. The two middle words she could not distinguish but the doctor told her to practise a little every day. This I think very wonderful in only one week's treatment. She went twice every day, and it has been quite gratuitous on the doctor's part. *He hopes to return in seven months* and will then treat her again, and in the meantime will do so at a distance.

I told her of the balance still in hand, and that if the friends who had subscribed did not wish the money back, I would keep it to help other deserving cases, or to form the nucleus of a fund to establish a psychic home or hospital; and she said that if I did she would go round for subscriptions by telling her own experiences. Her uncle, who did not believe in Spiritualism, does so now, because Dr. Silva benefited him by treatment. I am more and more convinced that if people are to be convinced of the truths of Spiritualism, it must be through practical demonstration of its power over disease, mental and bodily, from which rich and poor alike suffer. Christ's teaching would have had little effect without his works. He went about doing good, healing the sick, &c., and did not require a 'legal status' first. Some Spiritualists seem to think they ought to follow the example of other churches (whose principles and doctrines they condemn) by founding unions, federations, and so on, instead of striking out a course for themselves, founded on faith in spiritual help and guidance.

I saw a most suitable house at a nominal rent at the seaside a fortnight ago, and it occurred to me that it was an excellent place in which to start a psychic hospital or home. It could be taken on lease, so there would be little outlay except for furnishing; and paying patients might be received and a certain number of free ones nominated by subscribers. A powerful healer and a small staff would be required, and a certain sum guaranteed yearly, and the thing started. Could not the small sum I still hold, £3 12s. 6d., form a nucleus for this fund? My largest subscriber, whom I consulted, is quite willing that any balance due should remain in my hands to help deserving cases, and if the others are also willing, I would open a bank account called 'Psychic Hospital Fund,' hoping that in a short time subscriptions would come in enabling arrangements to be made for starting on a small scale. A postcard would oblige. I paid Miss Yearsley £2, viz., return fare to London, 30s.; and 10s. for other expenses for the week. I beg to thank those who so kindly responded to my 'appeal for assistance.'

60, Clarendon-road, ELNOR OLDHAM.
Whalley Range, Manchester.
July 22nd.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—Field day in Battersea Park on Sunday next, August 3rd.; great open-air meeting at 3 p.m.; speakers, G. T. Gwinn, J. Adams, D. J. Davis, H. Brooks, Percy Smyth. Other workers invited. Service at Henley Hall, at 7 p.m., several speakers.—HENRY BROOKS, Hon. Sec.

'GREAT' NAMES AS CONTROLS.

Much ridicule has been cast upon the unlucky medium who, in all good faith, has claimed to be controlled by, or to have received a message from, some entity professing to be the spirit of 'the great' So-and-so. To the superficial mind, it appears ridiculous that a man of exalted intellect such as, let us say, Shakespeare, should condescend to speak through the organism of, possibly, an uneducated mill-girl, and much is made of the fact that he has apparently lost the faculty of speaking sensibly, or at any rate, does not think it necessary to do so. We have had accounts of supposed utterances from the great masters of English composition, who could no longer frame a sentence in grammatical form; and I think it may be of interest to inquire whether this claim on the part of the control to be such-and-such a person is quite so ridiculous as, at first sight, it appears. No one will dispute that the person who expected to pour a quart of liquid from a pint measure would be looked upon as a promising candidate for a lunatic asylum. So the measure of a message from the unseen world is, and always will be, the measure of the medium's capacity. It is probably true that there never has been a message or utterance which has not been more or less tinctured by the personality of the medium through whom the communication was made. Bearing this in mind, the limitation becomes intelligible. Yet mediums have been solemnly advised by those who ought to have known better, never to divulge the name of the controlling spirit when such happens to have been a well-known name in earth-life. Why? what is a little ridicule, compared with the advancement of truth and light? And I do not believe that personation is practised by any but the lowest of earth-bound spirits, who invariably furnish sufficient evidence of their status to ensure discouragement and rejection, and who, moreover, cannot control any medium not on their own particular plane. I happen to be acquainted with a well-known medium who has received several messages from the spirit of the late Queen Victoria, from Christopher Columbus, from Gounod, from St. John of the Cross, and from Gladstone. I know also that this lady has not the intellectual attainments of any one of these persons, and probably only the intellectual capacity of the first named; yet I do not, for an instant, question her *bona-fides*, or see cause to dispute the truth of her conviction that the persons she saw clairvoyantly, and from whom she received the various communications, were the persons they *claimed* to be, and *appeared* to be. At first sight, no doubt, it seems improbable that the late Queen should come to any medium not of 'her set,' not of her 'rank,' not in sympathy with her earth-calling, and who probably has not two ideas in common with any Queen, as Queen, living or dead. But, I take it, we may compare 'rank' and 'station' with the coloured sea weeds with which the soldier-crab decorates his borrowed dwelling, and that when a spirit is freed from the physical body, it goes forth a 'nude soul' on an equality with all other souls; the only pre-eminence in the spirit spheres being *spiritual* endowments, even mental or intellectual culture going for comparatively little. This proposition once granted, it remains only a question of selection, and if the lady in question happens to be the fittest as a vehicle of communication, where is the wonder? We do not yet know the laws which govern psychic communications, or the qualities in the medium which the spirits find most adaptable; but we *do* know, or ought to know, that in casting off the body a man or woman, however eminent or distinguished on earth, casts off also everything of eminence or distinction which is not essentially spiritual, and hence indestructible. I cannot help feeling that this is an instructive thought, more especially as it bears out the Scripture which says 'The first shall be last, &c.' I can picture the state of a spirit first learning its isolation and self-dependence after a long earth life of perpetual adulation and artificial environment, taught from earliest years that it is in a sense semi-divine, that in it inhere, in some mysterious way, virtues not common to humanity, but far superior, its very blood sacred, and not to be contaminated by union with any less noble or select;—how it must feel its terrible isolation! It must perforce have to commence, in spirit life, to learn the

numerous lessons which can only be learned by friction with its fellows, and to unlearn all the vast mass of false conception which it has imbibed in a false and mischievous earth training. I pity such souls most sincerely, and can quite readily conceive of their seizing the first chance of 'getting a message through' without reference to aught except the adaptability of the medium selected. I imagine it to be true that, however many 'stars,' 'garters,' 'crosses,' or other decorations may be hung about a human body, the soul is still the measure of the man or woman bearing them, and as such adventitious accretions are what constitute 'nobility' and 'eminence' on this plane, I fail to see upon what any claim to either 'nobility' or 'eminence' is based in the hereafter, by reason of the former possession of these toys. As these views do not appear to have been broached by any other writer, I advance them for the consideration of your readers, feeling sure that here we have the true solution of a problem which has long vexed the minds of many. My contention is simply that on reaching the next phase of his being, Lord Tom Noddy finds himself on a level with plain John Smith, and in proportion as his earth life has been lived under false conditions, and his mind corrupted with false ideals, he will be worse off, and have more both to learn and unlearn. Let us also remember that the medium may be immeasurably superior, in a spiritual sense, to the most 'illustrious' spirit controlling, and here we have the key. This will be called democratic, no doubt, but if the whole teaching of Spiritualism is not democratic, I have not assimilated it aright. It either *is* or *is not*. If it *is*, and we hesitate to so proclaim it, we are untrue to our ideals, and cannot expect to progress.

PASQUIN.

PRE-EXISTENCE: MORE ASSERTIONS.

Your correspondent 'T. H. E.' drew attention in 'LIGHT' of July 12th, to certain assertions by Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, regarding the alleged 'consent' of the pre-existent soul to the limitations of the human life conditions; and an article in a recent issue of the 'Banner of Light,' contributed by a lady, is open to similar objections. As a cautious truth-seeker I am looking for evidence that will convince my 'intelligence' that, before I was born, it (or I) consciously 'selected' my future parents, and 'determined my race, sex, size, and moral and spiritual endowments'; for if what this lady affirms is true, that is what I must have done, although I am totally ignorant of the choice. Let me give the lady's own words:—

'With the intelligence which is its innate prerogative, the soul, seeking expression in material form, selects first its parentage, said parents inheriting the privilege of becoming its progenitors; it therefore determines its own race, sex, size, or moral and spiritual endowment. . . . It voluntarily yields itself to the sway of physical laws, even those of heredity; for the victory over them to be attained, it stoops to conquer. The conditions and circumstances of mortal life are emphatically made "by us" not "for us."'

Commenting on the above in a subsequent issue of the 'Banner of Light,' a writer pertinently asked if the lady was aware of the 'implications involved in this view of the origin of human careers and destinies?' and said further:—

'Whatever may be the intelligence of the spirits who voluntarily make choice of such parentage and conditions as should lead them to the commission of crimes and inflicting injuries on their fellow-beings, they must be utterly regardless of the welfare and rights of others, if they choose to become insane, criminals, drunkards, and degenerates of every description. For the sake of gaining a certain individual experience they are willing to sacrifice on the altar of their selfishness the happiness of all other people with whom they come in contact. This theory would be subversive of all our human systems of ethics and destroy our native intuitions of right and wrong in human relations and conduct. . . . It carries the individualistic idea to extremes at the expense of the solidarity of humanity and the unity of the universe.'

This criticism seems to me to touch the crux of the whole question; for, if each soul selects its parents and pre-determines its sex and moral and spiritual endowments, and one is voluntarily 'born in the slums' for the purpose of

gaining a certain individual experience of vice and villainy, while another selects its parents so that it may be endowed for murder, and still another comes here that it may know what it feels like to be murdered, 'that it may sound the whole gamut of life's experiences from the lowest bass to the highest treble,' as another reincarnationist puts it, our 'whole intuitions of right and wrong in human relations and conduct' must indeed be erroneous and stand in need of a thorough revision.

Those who make reckless assertions regarding reincarnation should give heed to Mr. G. R. S. Mead, who, writing in the 'Theosophic Messenger,' says:—

'Those who know the verity of reincarnation in the Theosophical Society can be reckoned almost on the fingers of one hand. "Knowing" in this case is not "believing," it is not "feeling sure," it is not "being convinced of the truth of"; but it is the definite possession of an extended consciousness, exercisable at will. These have every right—nay, it is their duty—to state what they know, what is a permanent fact of consciousness for them, as a definite truth of their cosmos. But, in my opinion, all others who do so are not strictly honest either with themselves or others. . . . You may reassert the assertions of others with all intensity, but so at best you will be nothing but a loud screaming parrot, and the "men" who hear you will stop their ears to escape deafness. The voice of truth is a "still, small voice," and has no need of formal dogmas.'

SCRUTATOR.

DO ANIMALS REASON?

At a conference held on July 24th at the Royal Botanic Gardens, in connection with the Nature Study Exhibition, Lord Avebury, speaking on the subject of animals and plants, said:—

'Animals were perhaps more interesting objects of study than plants, but plants presented greater facilities for study. Almost all children were born with a love of natural history and of collecting. He would not underrate the pleasure and interest of collecting, but he confessed that to him plants lost half their interest when they were gathered, and animals when they were killed. Many persons kept pets, but how few studied them? Descartes regarded all animals as unconscious automata; Huxley thought the matter doubtful; his lordship's own experiments and observations had led him to the conclusion that they had glimmerings of reason, but the subject was still obscure. He had often been told that dogs were as intelligent as human beings, but when he had asked whether any dogs yet realised that two and two made four, the answer was not confident. The whole question of the consciousness and intelligence of animals required careful study. Then there was the life history of animals—scarcely one was fully known to us; indeed, he might say not one, for some of the most interesting discoveries of recent years had been made in respect to ants and bees. Many problems were opened up by flowers, and leaves and seeds were almost equally interesting. There was a reason for everything in this world, and there must be some cause for the different forms of leaves. Some had been explained, but for the differences in the leaves of ferns, for instance, seaweeds, and many others, no satisfactory suggestion, so far as he knew, had yet been offered. The problems suggested by every field and wood, every common and hedge-row, every pond and stream were endless, and most interesting.'

'Lord Derby had said that, considering the marvellous discoveries of the last hundred years, we could not expect so much in the future. From this view he differed, thinking that we might reasonably expect even more, because of the improvements in apparatus, the greater number of students, and the hints furnished by every fresh piece of knowledge. We seemed to be on the threshold of great discoveries. There was no single substance in Nature the properties of which were fully known to us. There was no animal or plant which would not well repay the devotion of a lifetime, and he often grieved to think how much happiness his fellow-countrymen lost from their ignorance of science. No one with any knowledge of science could ever be dull. No one would sit and drink in a public-house if he knew how delightful it was to sit and think in a field; no one would need excitement in gambling and betting if he knew how much more interesting science was. Science never ruined anyone, but was a sort of fairy godmother, ready to shower on us all manner of good gifts if we would only let her. The study of Nature was not only most important from a practical and material point of view, and most interesting, but it would also do much to lift us above the petty troubles, and help us to bear the greater sorrows of life.'

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.

The Mediumship of Mr. J. J. Vango.

SIR,—With reference to your correspondent's letter concerning Mr. J. J. Vango, I take this opportunity of further corroborating the wonderful accuracy and prevision of 'Sunflower,' who last winter described me regularly (for some weeks) as in a new surrounding, and greatly worried over a very large and thick book, the leaves of which appeared rather small for the size of the cover, and a peculiar style of book in many other respects.

I could not imagine *then* how such a volume could enter into my existence, especially as my business did not involve the use of any books, being quite outside my province. I was, and still remain, astonished at the accuracy of 'Sunflower,' for about two months afterwards I obtained a berth with a new firm, and the very book described is now hourly, nay, almost continually, in use by me, it being of the utmost importance in conducting business, and causing me at times no little worry.

F. V. B.

Miss Cook and 'Katie King.'

SIR,—I have just seen in 'LIGHT' for June 7th, a letter signed 'A. J. Rotteveel,' asking for an explanation of an apparent contradiction in a statement made by the late Florence Marryat in her book, 'There is no Death.' I can only say that my sister, Mrs. Corner, was married in April, 1874, and returned to her parents' house, Captain Corner going to his parents' house, and leaving next day for a voyage.

Katie King gave her farewell séance on May 21st. I was present at the séance with the rest of my family and other friends. The account of the séance was published at the time in the 'Spiritualist' newspaper. Mrs. Corner resided with her parents till June, when her husband returned from sea. Katie King was never seen or heard from after May 21st. It would be impossible for Captain Corner to have made such a statement as that alluded to, so I conclude that Miss Marryat must have been mistaken. It may be as well to note that in the extract Katie King's name is not mentioned, so possibly Captain Corner was referring to some other spirit.

KATE S. COOK.

Oakfield,
Near Usk, Mon.

A Sitting With Mrs. Giddins.

SIR,—A really wonderful test of identity in a sitting with Mrs. Giddins on Sunday evening, July 13th, may interest your readers.

I had the grief of losing twenty-eight years ago, in Karachi, Scinde, an only child. She was but a little more than a year old when she passed away, but was extraordinarily intelligent and affectionate. Between her and her parents was a deep bond of love. I spent a good deal of my spare time playing with her in a long verandah, and her particular treat was to be carried horizontally behind my back and across my crooked arms as if she were a walking-stick, with her face downwards, whilst I kicked an indiarubber ball up and down the verandah. She appreciated the absurdity of being carried about in such a position, and used to scream with laughter as the ball flew about from side to side of the verandah. Her mother was at first rather alarmed lest I should injure her, but when she saw that no harm came she would remark with an amused smile that a more ridiculous father and daughter did not exist. We lost that child, to our unspeakable grief, and for twenty-eight years no word or sign of her has come across the gulf.

On Sunday, July 19th, the first anniversary of a still greater loss, I sat with Mrs. Giddins, and 'Opinima,' her control, suddenly described a little girl who was trying to climb my knee. This little one wished me to know that in earth life I was fond of carrying her up and down, and especially (this was said more than once with *great emphasis*) *face downwards!*

I must note here that since my dear wife passed away there is no living person in this world (save possibly the Indian 'ayah' and 'bearer' who were in our service in 1874—if they should be still alive) who ever heard of this little peculiar incident.

Several equally remarkable tests indicating that 'Opinima' was in some mysterious touch with my lost wife, were also given, and before the sitting ended 'Opinima' said twice, with very earnest emphasis, 'But you are well-

pleased, are you not, with that test about your little daughter whom you used to carry face downwards?'

I was, indeed, well pleased, and I feel it a debt I owe to Mrs. Giddins and her very kindly control 'Opinima' to place on record a quite out-of-the-way test. I can state positively that there was no thought of the incident in my mind. It is probably long years since I recalled it. So it was emphatically not a case of thought-reading.

I enclose my card.

W. G.

Mr. Cecil Husk.

SIR,—The many friends of Mr. Husk will be glad to know that he has quite recovered from his long illness and is again, with the assistance of his powerful spirit helpers, giving the wonderful manifestations which bring so much comfort to those who attend in sympathy and sincerity. At a recent séance I was delighted to recognise my dear old father; also a friend who passed over some ten years since, and to be greeted by a sweet little spirit 'Bright Eyes,' who thereby kept a promise made to me in New York. On another occasion I went with a gentleman just arrived from the States, who was welcomed by his spirit son, and the father and son together sang, 'Scatter Seeds of Kindness,' to the great pleasure of all present.

When in Washington, in February last, I attended a séance at Mrs. Keeler's, and my friend then sang the same verses, accompanied by his materialised son, who stood by his side in the centre of the room.

Mr. Husk looks better and stronger than for some years, and the voice of 'John King' is as rich and sonorous as of old.

H. BLACKWELL.

P.S.—It is of course desirable to write beforehand for permission to attend Mr. Husk's séances, as the space is limited.

Kenworthy Propaganda Fund.

SIR,—There must surely be a good many people who would be glad of an opportunity of supporting the activities of John C. Kenworthy. He has started publishing his own works, and seems now in need of a little capital to further the enterprise. The sum of £150 is *urgently wanted now*, though, of course, more may be wanted altogether.

The present proposal is that those who can should each subscribe something at once, on condition that the aggregate sum subscribed reach at least £200; that the amount be given (or lent free of interest) on the only condition that the funds so raised be administered by J. C. Kenworthy himself, or someone deputed by him.

I wish especially to mention that Kenworthy has been put to some expense by the fact that he was committed for trial at the recent Stafford Assizes for writing an article in the 'Midland (Weekly) Herald' in which he commented on the case of an acquaintance of his who had been remanded for trial on a very grave and distressing charge. Mr. Kenworthy's article pointed out, for the sake of the accused man (who, I understand, was lying ill and broken down) and of his friends, how little evidence there was of the man's guilt. The article also contained some comments on the police proceedings in the case. I understand that the accused man was thereby much helped in mind and body, and I am pleased to say that he has been acquitted.

On Mr. Kenworthy's own trial the prosecutor and judge insisted on the legal aspect of the charge. They were very good-humoured, but seemed to lightly ignore what appeared to Mr. Kenworthy and myself the real human issues of the case. Mr. Kenworthy went into the witness box and insisted that his motives were not to prejudice the jury in favour of the prisoner, but to remove the strong adverse prejudice which existed in the public mind in the neighbourhood. He found this man, of high character and religious position, and his family, broken down by the shock of popular prejudice; and he did what he had done from conscientious motives. He admitted that he might be ignorant of the letter of the law, but he appealed to what was higher than the law—considerations of equity and human necessities.

The jury found him guilty, but expressed the opinion that the offence was a trivial one; and the judge simply bound him over on his own recognisances in £100 not to repeat the offence.

As Mr. Kenworthy's activities are not lucrative, and as he has for years devoted his life to public ends, will subscribers please say if their subscriptions are to be considered as loans or donations?

Early replies will be gladly received by

ARTHUR ST. JOHN.

32, Well Walk, Hampstead,
London.

National Fund of Benevolence.—Change of Secretary.

SIR,—Having acceded to the request of the Executive of the Spiritualists' National Federation to accept the position of hon. financial secretary to the National Federation Order of Benevolence, as successor to Mr. J. J. Morse (which appointment has since been confirmed by the council of the Spiritualists' National Union), I ask your kind permission to urge upon your readers the need of further financial support of this Fund. I have only one subscription to acknowledge for July (Mr. A. Janes, 15s.); and would earnestly remind all intending subscribers that to maintain this benevolent work more help is required.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Faithfully yours,

(Mrs.) M. H. WALLIS,
Hon. Financial Secretary.

62, Station-road,
Church End, Finchley, London, N.
July 28th, 1902.

SOCIETY WORK.

MANOR PARK.—TEMPERANCE HALL, WHITEPOST-LANE.—On Sunday last, Mr. Adams gave a very stirring address, which was much appreciated by the audience. We sincerely hope Mr. Adams will repeat his visit at an early date. On Sunday next, Mr. Gwinn.—A. JAMRACH, Hon. Sec.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD (NEAR SEVEN SISTERS CORNER).—Mr. Belstead gave an interesting and thoughtful address on 'Spirit Identity.' He read several extracts from the book on that subject by Stainton Moses, comparing them with similar experiences of his own, and drawing the conclusion therefrom that truth is universal. On Sunday next Mr. George Cole.—W. L.

CLAPHAM COMMON.—OPEN-AIR WORK.—A useful and interesting afternoon was spent on Sunday last. An opponent endeavoured to show that no Spiritualist should call himself a Christian. Mr. H. Boddington and Mr. MacCrae, in reply, proved that the Spiritualist has actually more right to the title if the Bible is to be accepted as an authority.—Cor.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Fielder (from Battersea) gave an uplifting address on 'Via Crucis,' answered questions, and gave a selection on the Japanese violin, which was much appreciated. A large after-circle was held. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., Lyceum. Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle. 'LIGHT' on sale.—COR. SEC.

PORTSMOUTH.—ROYAL NAVAL TEMPLARS' HALL, CHARLOTTE-STREET, LANDPORT.—On Sunday last, we were privileged to listen for the first time to the inspirers of Mr. E. W. Wallis, who discoursed on the subjects 'Spiritualism: What it Means,' and 'The Many Mansions Hereafter.' In the evening we had a full hall and an enthusiastic audience, who were as pleased as they were encouraged. We hope to have other visits from our brother.—H. R. B.

FULHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—At a meeting at 35, Cologne-road, St. John's Hill, S.W., on July 22nd, a constitution was proposed, discussed, and ordered to be submitted for confirmation to a meeting on July 29th, at 23, Homestead-road, Fulham. On the 5th inst. a meeting will be held at 3, Bettridge-road, Fulham, at 8 p.m. The society hope in the near future to secure suitable premises in which to hold regular services, but in the meantime the meetings will be held at members' residences.—W. T.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. J. Leeder, of Nottingham, delivered a trance address on 'Is Prayer of any Use?' in a very logical and able manner, and held the attention of his hearers throughout. The many marks of appreciation which came from the audience showed how much the discourse was enjoyed. Mr. F. Spriggs, vice-president, ably fulfilled the duties of chairman. Speaker for Sunday next, Mr. J. W. Boulding, subject, 'A Sermon from Shakespeare.' Doors open at 6.30 p.m. Commence 7 p.m.—S. J. WATTS, Hon. Financial Secretary, 26, Osnaburgh-street, Regent's Park, N.W.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET.—An exceedingly fine address was given by Mr. Cole last Sunday evening on 'The Nature of the Spirit World,' in which he clearly showed that the quality of mind will determine our particular sphere, and the people we find ourselves with. Mrs. Hodder kindly sang a solo. Mr. Inison presided. On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 3.30 p.m., conference of the London Union of Spiritualists; several speakers in the park; tea at Henley Hall at 5 p.m., tickets 6d. each; at 7 p.m., several speakers will address the meeting. On Tuesday, at 7 p.m., Band of Hope, and on Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., public séance.—YULE.

CATFORD.—24, MEDUSA-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. W. Millard gave a good trance address on 'Spiritual and Precious Adornments.' Meetings at 7 p.m., prompt; a séance will be held at the close.—W. K.

HACKNEY.—MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey gave an address upon the 'Master Mind'; questions were asked and satisfactorily answered, and convincing clairvoyance was given at the close. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. D. J. Davis; clairvoyance by Mrs. Webb.—H. A. G.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, S.E.—The morning public circle continues to be well attended and instructive. On Sunday evening last, the closing address upon 'Seers and Prophets,' was given by Mr. W. E. Long. It was a review of the whole brilliant series. During the discourse the speaker dwelt solemnly and impressively upon the heavy responsibility of mediumship, showing that through it, as the open door of the spirit world, may come inspirations for good or evil; prayer, and purity of life and motive, being the only safeguards against the latter. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; and at 6.30 p.m., an address by Mr. W. E. Long upon 'Immortality.'—J. C.

PECKHAM.—THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION, CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday last the morning circle was well attended. In the evening an address was delivered to a good audience by the secretary of the mission, on 'Is Death the Goal?' dealing with the subject in a rational manner from the Spiritualist's point of view. The after-circle was the most successful since the start of the mission. A lady friend has developed as a high-class clairvoyante. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 6.45 p.m., address by Mr. Ray; at 8 p.m., public circle. No subscriptions; free seats; all welcome; 'LIGHT' always on sale.—VERAX.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last, Mrs. M. H. Wallis spoke upon 'Helpfulness' and gave a forcible and telling address to a crowded audience. We trust that all present may be aroused and that action may take the place of that lethargy and indifference which has proved the curse of our cause. Mrs. Wallis may be sure that many of her hearers are thankful for her earnest words. Clairvoyance followed the address, each description being recognised. Our social evening, July 21st, was a very pleasant and successful affair, thanks to the friends who rendered assistance so freely. Madame Cope, Mr. Ernest Cherry, and Mr. Fred Frampton, in particular, may be mentioned in connection with the entertainment. On Sunday next, Mr. Edward Whyte will be the speaker.—A. J. C. (Cor. Sec.)

CLAPHAM ASSEMBLY ROOMS, FACING CLAPHAM-ROAD STATION ENTRANCE.—On Sunday last, a scientific explanation of 'Psychometry' was given by Mr. and Mrs. H. Boddington, who traced the soul's relationship to all things material and spiritual. Miss Hughes kindly rendered two solos. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. H. Boddington, subject, 'Evil Spirits.' On Friday, at 8.15 p.m., Mrs. Boddington, psychometry. Bank Holiday Monday, at 8 p.m., Cinderella social, single tickets, 1s.; double, 1s. 6d. *Special Note.*—This Hall will be closed Sunday, August 17th, when we join the united societies' outing to Epping Forest.—B.

EAST LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' ASSOCIATION, STRATFORD CENTRE, WORKMEN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last, our vice-president, Mr. G. W. Lear, presiding, made an acrostic of the word Spiritualism as follows: 'Spirituality, Progress, Intuition, Reform, Inspiration, Truth, Unity, Aspiration, Light, Immortality, Science, Morality.' His encouraging remarks upon each of the words were much appreciated. In an enthusiastic address our president, Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn, urged his hearers to not merely believe, but to show the world that they rejoiced in the knowledge that 'there is no death.'—W. H. SUCII, Secretary.

NORTHAMPTON SPIRITUALIST HALL, ST. MICHAEL'S-ROAD.—On Sunday, July 20th, two services were conducted by Mr. T. Timson, of Leicester, whose addresses gave much pleasure to large and deeply interested audiences. Our hall has lately been rebuilt, has a seating capacity, including gallery, of two hundred, and is now one of the prettiest in the Midlands. It is held for the society by six trustees, and the use of it is granted by the Spiritualists to other progressive societies on week evenings. Instead of having to endure all kinds of inconveniences as sub-tenants we now have a fine hall, with a well appointed suite of committee, class, or séance rooms, as the fruit and evidence of the earnest labours of the pioneer workers for the cause. Great credit is due to the committee of this, the parent, society (which was established fifteen years ago, and formerly met in the Old Fellows' Hall, Newland) for their devoted and successful labours. President: Alfred Ward. Committee: Samuel Jones, H. Rathbone, G. Adlard, and L. Ward. Secretary: George T. Roch.