

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A sermon by the Bishop of Salisbury has been sent to us, for which we are duly thankful: but what comical things these high-placed people say! Here is a wonderful little paragraph:—

The rash intruder into the unseen world thinks, it may be, of the joy of conviction and the rest given by more perfect knowledge, but neglects the attendant dangers. He does not realise that he is disobeying a plain command of God's Law (Deut. xviii. 9).

Now what is that 'plain command of God's Law'? It is simply a Law forbidding the conquering Jew to take up the wizardry or to practise the spirit-communion of the conquered race. What that really meant was probably this,—that the Jew was not to let any foreign Spiritualism compete with his own. He was to be loyal to the spirits who communed with him.

But, apart from that, what has a regulation given to an ancient Jew to do with a modern Englishman? What has the following, from this same book (xiii. 6-10), to do with a modern Englishman?—

If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him; but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

We shall do our best to draw his lordship's attention to this Note, and we publicly challenge him to do three things:—

1. To say explicitly whether he believes 'Our Father' really issued that atrocious command;
2. To say whether it still applies to us; and
3. To say why it does not apply to us, if he elects to say it does not.

We maintain that Deut. xiii. 6-10 and Deut. xviii. 9-11 stand or fall together. If a bishop is a head instructor of the people in these matters, let the Bishop of Salisbury stand up to this challenge, like a man. He shall occupy the whole of one of our issues if he likes.

A writer in 'Anubis' discourses wisely of 'Salvation: what is it?' It is all thoughtful and helpful, but we find the pearl at the end in a Note. Here it is:—

Christ came to save that which was lost. The universal Salvation that he brings is made up of all particular salvations. This is the test which determines the value of all systems which claim to represent Christianity. The test of the divinity of a religion for a nation is, that it shall bring all things needful for overcoming the evil of a nation. It must be able to solve the intricacies of its politics, and to place its affairs upon a solid footing, both at home and abroad. So when a religion is brought to a trade, the test is that it brings salvation for the trade; as for instance, it must be able to go to London tailors and Sheffield cutlers, and open modes of operation by which each industry may lay off its vile raiments, its sorders and filths, and come out of its huts and kennels, and put on beautiful garments, and enter with singings and rejoicings into the industrial palaces of God. It must come with the special remedy for the special want, the special cleansing for the special defilement, the special opportunity for the special necessity.

An Archbishop, so to speak, of industry . . . should be able to organise all obedient men, all just men of a given employment in any place; till each worker is found as a distinct leaflet in the corolla of one flower, or as a separate note in one divine symphony. So, but with even a more intense and absolute force, this ministry must be able to rescue the womanhood in each craft; nay more, to organise crafts for womanhood; to search out for her through the industrial slums, to rescue her from the industrial prison-houses, to stand between her and her enemy as an angel of defence, between her and her God as a celestial form of life and inspiration.

In this same 'Anubis' Dr. J. C. Wyman is contributing a series of Articles on 'Modern Spiritualism.' We hope these, when finished, will be published separately.

Is the Editor of 'Anubis' proud of its 'Reckitt's blue' cover, unpleasant to the eye and defiling to the touch?

'Wings of Truth' is publishing a series of Papers on 'Suggestion,' by Mr. H. H. Brown, author of 'How to Control Fate through Suggestion.' He holds that Suggestion goes on at all times, however little we may know about it or be conscious of it. 'It is,' he says, 'the universal factor in human life.' Hence the importance of the study of its laws and powers:—

All the beliefs of the past or present concerning the power of 'evil eye,' of 'subtle occult power,' of 'injurious magnetism,' 'voodooism,' and any mysterious power, even including the Holy Ghost of the religious revivals, are all simply the natural effect of Suggestion. No matter what thought is taught or claimed, there will always be some who will accept it and act under it. It is the acceptance of the suggestion that completes the work. The one can give the suggestion, the other can receive or reject. This covers all the ground; it is the limit of human power.

Thought, healing under many names is now an established fact. There is but one healing power, and that is life itself.

There is but one way in which healing is done, and that is nature's way. There can be but one fundamental principle; there may be millions of methods of applying that principle. No matter, then, whether healing is done under the name Metaphysics, Ontology, Christian Science, Divine Science, Mental Science, Magnetic Healing, Health Cure, Hypnotism, or under that which I use, Soul Culture; the principle is one.

'The Radiant Centre,' replying to a questioner, says:—

It is a common mistake among beginners in the New Thought to fear the effect of antagonistic thought. Even Prentice Mulford, in one of his little booklets, advised keeping on good terms with everyone because of the dangerous character of the thought emanating from the one angered or offended. To act on this advice would destroy force of character and make cowards of us all, for it is impossible to avoid giving offence at times, even when we act from the best and kindest motives.

Dwellers in the far East, who know more of the laws of thought than we do, have learned how to condense the astral ether about their bodies so that a bullet cannot pierce it. When it strikes this invisible but impregnable armour it rebounds, flattened, as though it had struck the hardest steel.

We have often seen that stated but are not aware that it has ever been proved. On the other hand, we believe it has often been proved that 'dwellers in the far East' who expected to find bullets acting in that way got severely disillusioned.

Our attention has been drawn to an Article in 'The Sphere' by Professor Ray Lankester, on Mr. Podmore's book. We are heartily tired of Mr. Podmore's book. Only one thing is more tiresome;—Professor Lankester's maunderings on the subject. Fancy a man, at this time of day, saying that 'not one medium exists who will venture to undergo the simplest experimental testing of his or her pretensions'! Fancy asserting that 'no supposed case of telepathy has really been brought to a test and demonstrated'! Fancy Ray Lankester ordering Oliver Lodge to recall or explain!

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS

(From many shrines).

O Thou, who art the One God and Father of us all; who art above all, through all, and in us all; quicken us, we beseech Thee, who have been dead in trespasses and sins. Give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Thyself, that we may know the hope of Thy calling and the riches of Thine inheritance, and the greatness of Thy power. May we be strengthened with might by Thy Spirit inwardly; that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that, being rooted and grounded in love, we may be able to understand the breadth and length, and depth and height of the love of Christ, and be filled with all the fulness of God. Help us, Heavenly Father, to come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, to the stature of a perfect man, to the measure of the fulness of Christ. Help us to walk with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; to put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and evil-speaking, with all malice. May we be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another. May we be followers of Thee, as dear children, and walk in love; redeeming the time; having the fruit of the spirit in all goodness and righteousness and truth; speaking to ourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord. Amen.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall (entrance from Regent-street), on the evening of

THURSDAY, APRIL 16th,

WHEN

MR. J. W. BOULDING

WILL GIVE AN ADDRESS ON

'WEIGHTS THAT HINDER US.'

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Address will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—Mr. Alfred Peters gives illustrations of clairvoyance at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., every Tuesday, at 3 p.m. No one is admitted after three. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; to friends introduced by them 2s. each.

DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES.—Mr. George Spriggs has kindly placed his valuable services in the diagnosis of diseases at the disposal of the Council, and for that purpose attends at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, Charing Cross, W.C., every Thursday afternoon, between the hours of 1 and 4. Members and Associates who are out of health, and who desire to avail themselves of Mr. Spriggs's offer, should notify their wish in writing to the secretary of the Alliance, Mr. E. W. Wallis, stating the time when they propose to attend. No fee is charged, but Mr. Spriggs suggests that every consultant should make a contribution of at least 5s. to the funds of the Alliance.

MEETINGS FOR PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT.—Meetings are held once a fortnight in the rooms of the Alliance, at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for the encouragement, and direction, of the cultivation of private mediumship. The times appointed are from 4.30 to 5.30 p.m. on the same days as are announced for the Alliance addresses at St. James's Hall, as that arrangement, it is thought, will be the most likely to suit Members who live in the remoter suburbs. No person admitted after 4.30. The proceedings are under the direction of Mr. Frederic Thurstan, who has devoted much time to a special study of the subject. Any Member or Associate of the Alliance earnestly desirous of self-development is welcome to attend, and more especially any promising psychic. There is no fee or subscription.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—Arrangements have been made with Mrs. M. H. Wallis for a series of meetings at the rooms of the Alliance, at which pleasant and instructive talks may be had with one of her intelligent controls. These sances are held every Thursday, and commence at 3 p.m., prompt. The fee is one shilling each, and any Member or Associate may introduce a friend at the same rate of payment. Friends who desire to put questions would do well to bring them already written.

GOOD FRIDAY.

In consequence of the recurrence of Good Friday, next week's 'Light' will—in order to meet the business requirements of the Newsagents—be sent to press on Tuesday, so that any communication intended for that issue must reach us by Monday morning.

The offices of 'Light' and the London Spiritualist Alliance will be closed from Thursday evening, the 9th inst., until the following Tuesday morning.

EDUCATION.—Mr. Laurence Gilbertson, F.J.I., has in the press a shilling 'Pocket Guide to the Education Act of 1902, with explanatory notes, based upon official interpretations, memoranda, and circulars issued by the Board of Education, and a copious index.' The need of some such 'guide' as Mr. Gilbertson has prepared has been keenly felt by almost all those who are interested in the Education question, and the little book should be of great service to all classes of thinkers and students. It will be published shortly by H. J. Osborn, 29, Paternoster-row, London, E.C.

MARVELLOUS MATERIALISATIONS IN CALIFORNIA.

We publish the following communication because, being personally acquainted with the writer, we have perfect faith in her absolute integrity and *bona fides*. But the narrative makes such large demands on the faith of the reader that the wonders described can hardly be accepted in their entirety without further corroboration. Can any of our Californian friends enlighten us on the subject?

Marvellous Materialisations in California.

In sending you this account of several sésances I have attended here, I will endeavour to give a general summary of the most remarkable phenomena witnessed during a period of about a year and a half up to the present time, the last sésance being held on February 16th. The mediums through whom we were privileged to see so much were Mrs. Elsie Reynolds, her son, and her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Ethel Crindle, all of whom are well-known to Spiritualist circles along this coast.

The first thing that strikes one in connection with these remarkable mediums is their ability to resist adverse conditions of various sorts, which other mediums with whom I have sat would find it impossible to overcome; such, for instance, as sceptical or hostile sitters, draughts of air (at Mrs. Reynolds' a window is often left open, with nothing but the blind half drawn down and a lace curtain over it); occasional reflections of light from the street coming in, so long as they do not strike on the cabinet or the end of the room where it is; noises from the street cars, &c., continually passing; noises of people passing the door and often talking loudly; and, above all, the chronic ill-health of the medium.

In spite of these drawbacks the sésances go on serenely. At the public circles the number of sitters varies from ten or twelve up to forty persons. The average number of forms to materialise in one evening is from thirty to fifty. The principal controls of Mrs. Reynolds are 'Dr. Bird,' the presiding chemist, who manages the building up of the forms, collecting the material, &c.; 'Mr. Munroe,' the general manager, who answers questions, keeps order, and I think assists the inexperienced spirits to come out of the cabinet; 'Effie,' a child, who is very amusing in her ways; 'Miss Lily Roberts,' a very refined and beautiful spirit girl, who sings, gives a short address, and greets the sitters with the utmost courtesy. 'Lily' is also able to materialise in a strong light, and by so doing gives everyone a chance to witness the most perfect materialisation I have yet seen. This band is always with the medium, and ensures the success of her circles. 'Mr. Munroe' appears at the opening of the cabinet, dressed in ordinary male attire, black coat, white shirt, &c., and speaks in a strong masculine voice, and sometimes invites one or other of the sitters he knows to go up and shake hands with him. He states that in earth life he was a 'preacher.' The child 'Effie' chatters away continually, exchanging repartees and sallies of wit with the sitters. Sometimes her remarks are decidedly flippant, and she is then reproved by 'Mr. Munroe,' who, however, apologises for her, saying she is the product of the average circle, and reflects what others have encouraged in her. This is true, as I have heard all sorts of foolish remarks made to her, which she returns in kind! She has once or twice, addressing me by name, said: 'I know you think I am very frivolous, but I am trying to be a more circumspect young lady.' At first this levity jarred upon us very much, but with longer experience and close observation I have come to believe that she is, to a certain extent, playing a part which contributes to making the circle a success. It is explained that she prevents the sitters from concentrating their thoughts with too strained attention on the forms as they appear. She also causes the sitters to talk to her, and in this way their voices and magnetisms are drawn towards the cabinet, and are then used by the forms for their vocal organs. She also breaks up any conditions of great emotion or sadness in the circle which would cause difficulty in materialisation, and frequently she gives out the names of spirits who wish, or are trying, to come

out, and so prepares their friends to be ready to greet them directly they appear.

One of the most pathetic scenes occurs when spirits come out expecting to meet a friend who has failed to come. They ask for them longingly, look round the circle, and then, sobbing bitterly, they retire, saying: 'They do not come; I am already forgotten!'

It is surprising how many business and working men and women attend the public circles here regularly. They seem quite used to all phases of mediumship, and speak to their spirit friends with the same confidence and utter lack of shyness as characterise the American in his everyday relations. One evening I saw a curious incident. A man was called up to the cabinet to speak to a female form who stood just outside. After conversing with her, and kissing her (she proved to be his *first* wife), he called his second wife, who was present in the circle, to come up to them. She did so, and he introduced them—the spirit and earth wife shaking hands with apparent cordiality! Another time a man's wife came and he led her across the room, a distance of about fourteen feet from the medium, and introduced her to an old friend of his; she then sat down beside him for about a minute, and finally walked back to the cabinet, escorted by her husband. We have frequently seen materialised forms cross the room and pick out their friends from among the sitters, and holding their hands gently pull them towards the cabinet. This has happened to me, and in a good light, too. By this I mean a light sufficient to tell the time by a watch with white face, and one could see all details of the sitters' clothing and ornaments.

The light varies according to the conditions and strength of the spirit manifesting, and is arranged in a box attached to the wall opposite the cabinet. In front of the box is a small pane of glass, on which is pasted a piece of blue tissue paper, for one half, the other half being covered with white. A shutter falls over this pane, regulated by a cord, which passes into the cabinet over the top. The 'control' regulates it. Sometimes all the glass is exposed. The cabinet consists only of some flimsy black material strung on a clothes-line across one corner of the room, and is open at the top.

Before each sésance, the medium requests all who wish it to come up and thoroughly examine the cabinet, floor, walls, &c., and if there should happen to be an extra door in the room in which the sésance is that evening being held, some of the sitters' chairs are always placed against it. At times when the box had been forgotten, an ordinary table lamp, with a shade made of a small sheet of newspaper pinned together, was used, and the lamp was turned up or down by the nearest sitter, according to orders from 'Mr. Munroe.' This arrangement nearly caught fire one evening, and caused some disturbance in the circle, and the control complained very much of it, as just at the time a spirit was out who can stand a very strong light. At a friend's house one night, with a private circle, a good reading lamp was used, with just the paper shade, and the room was well lighted up; and when the spirit, 'Lily Roberts,' appeared, she stood right out in front of the cabinet, and asked for the lamp to be turned up still higher. This was done, and the shade slightly tilted, to throw more light on her, giving us all a splendid view. I was next to the cabinet and quite close to her, as she stood talking, and could distinguish every detail of her features, not one of which resembled the medium's. She has large soft brown eyes, with long lashes, oval face, straight nose, and dark brown hair slightly waved, and curled into a knot low down on the neck. Her arms were bare and beautifully formed, and her drapery was of the finest gauze—altogether a charming personality. The last evening I attended Mrs. Reynolds' circle, before her departure for San Francisco, it was limited to Spiritualists and friends. 'Miss Roberts' stood as before, and asked everyone to come and shake hands with her in turn, as a farewell. She spoke to each, and accepted a bunch of roses from me, and smelt them in the most natural manner possible. It was *almost impossible* to realise that she was what is generally called 'dead'! That evening about sixty to seventy forms appeared, sometimes in pairs, a great many Indians among them, coming close to the sitters with perfect confidence. One old German spirit woman asked a

young man present to play for her. As he did so she sat down on the lap of one of the company and then on the floor, to listen; and not being close enough, she came over to the piano, leaning with one hand on my shoulder, and evidently enjoying herself. After the young man had finished she thanked him in German, and asked for a pair of scissors. When found, she cut a tiny square off her veil, and presented it to the pianist as a reward.

The figures who come out are of all sorts and sizes. Those which appear *before* the medium goes into the cabinet (she generally sits outside for a few minutes at the beginning) are more like etherialisations, but they speak. At our own house, one evening, an Indian spoke from the cabinet, asking the little white squaw (a friend's daughter) to come and speak to him. She was too nervous, so he asked *me*, as I was near the aperture, to come up. Assuring me that he would not hurt me, he asked me to turn round; and he then placed a hand firmly on each side of my waist, and in a moment lifted me from the ground about a foot, apparently without an effort. He then let me down gently, and said he was just giving me a test of his strength.

At the same circle a small baby was materialised on the floor, between the skirts of a lady friend and those of myself, to our great surprise. A woman form rushed out of the cabinet, seized the baby, and, in a shrill voice, accused *us* of stealing it. She stood holding it tightly and scolding generally. The baby turned its head to look at us, but she would not allow it. The 'control' explained that she was a young woman who had lost her child by some accident while absent, and friends took it away, and she went crazy and died in that condition, and has not woken up yet. Another form, strongly materialised, came out in a good light, and asked who had stolen her lace! She then went up to one of the sitters, a lady, and made her get up from her chair and stand up, while she (the spirit) drew about three yards of fine muslin from the waist of the lady's dress. Another time she pulled it out from the collar of a man's coat. The 'control' explained that this was done by an Indian, who assists her to materialise the strip of muslin somewhere about the person of any sitter who is mediumistic. This was done in a good light, and the woman's hands were very full of energy, and could be felt distinctly.

I may mention that I have seen, over and over again, sitters recognise their relatives and call them by name in different languages. As for myself, I attended several séances, always to come away disappointed, until quite lately, when at last, when I was in despair of ever seeing any of my own dear ones, the child 'control' one evening asked me if I had not a son in spirit life, giving his name and approximate age. I said 'Yes,' and she then said he hoped to materialise that evening. He did so, and called out from the cabinet, 'Mama! Come!' He met me just outside the cabinet, held my hands tightly while he spoke in a hurried, gasping voice, asking for his father and sister. The light was too dim to make out his face, but I felt when he kissed me that the lower half of his face had a sort of auric network drawn across it. This is observed frequently at a first attempt at materialisation, but disappears as the spirit becomes more practised in holding the form. The peculiar choking, gasping voice also seems frequently to occur with the novices. Since then my son has appeared four times; each time the voice has become clearer and stronger, and the protective netting was not required; so far he has not been able to come in a good light, but he says that with practice he hopes to do so soon. On each occasion he has given his name.

One evening the medium was brought out of the cabinet by one of her 'controls,' and though protesting in a dazed sort of voice, the form held her outside for a minute or so, giving everyone a chance to see the two together, the spirit's arm being visible round the waist of Mrs. Reynolds, who was in black clothing as usual. One night the 'control' invited three persons from the circle in turn to enter the cabinet during the séance. A chair had been placed inside; I was one who was called by name, and on going inside I sat down beside Mrs. Reynolds and took her hand, the other hand resting on her knee. Immediately a white form commenced to rise slowly from the floor just behind her, to the height of a child of about nine, and the

voice of 'Effie' came, asking me 'what I was doing in there?' At the same time I heard the sitters outside greeting by name a negro, who had stepped out, but whom I did not see. The child 'Effie' dematerialised slowly before me, and then I returned to my seat.

I must now bring this account to a close, and beg you to excuse its length on account of the facts, which I hope will be of interest to English readers, showing what can be done out in the Far West.

A. M. M.

Los Angeles, California.

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY?

Doubtless many of your readers would experience a sense of disappointment that one who has had the privilege of seeing the spirit friends 'for more than forty years,' should not have written less sarcastically about the spirit visitors, and more sympathetically about a brother medium who is clairvoyant, clairaudient, and a wonderful automatic writer in ancient and foreign languages, in addition to his far rarer phase of photography.

In reply to some of Mrs. Russell-Davies's queries: (1) 'Are there no Spiritualists or investigators able to come forward and prove,' &c.? Certainly—Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Stainton Moses, Traill Taylor, A. Glendinning, J. Robertson, C. Lacey, Dr. Hausemann, of Washington, and many others have all testified to this fact.

(2) I have numbers of spirit photographs of well-known persons, relatives and friends, both 'in focus and undraped about the head.' Two of these have been taken lately by Mr. B., and both according to promises made shortly before in my own home through a private medium.

(3) 'Why photographed spirits invariably appear loaded with wraps, &c.?' They do *not*, for nearly all those taken in America stand out quite clearly, probably owing to the purer atmosphere; but, singular to say, each psychic photographer produces effects peculiar to his own mediumship.

(4) Presumably Mrs. Russell-Davies has not yet seen any spirit prepared and ready to be photographed, otherwise she would have noticed, as many clairvoyants have, that in England a protecting aura, or mantle, is generally necessary.

(5) Then your correspondent, who apparently does not believe in spirit photography (as she uses a ?), proceeds to dogmatise: 'Never hope for a spirit photograph with the aid of a flash-light.' Why? for over 70 per cent. of those taken by Mr. Traill Taylor were taken by a flash-light.

(6) At the present time, to my knowledge, there are two ladies and five gentlemen who have already developed sufficiently to get faces or other psychic manifestations on their plates, but they are not likely to come before even the spiritualistic public if the efforts of their discarnate sitters are to be met with scorn and ridicule, or expose themselves to charges of fraud raised by people who imagine themselves qualified to pose as judges after having made but one experiment only.

As to Mr. Parkinson's productions, counterfeits are poor work, and, like a chrome, only enhance the value of the original picture. Of course your correspondent conveniently ignores the evidence of clairvoyants who see the spirits standing by the sitter; and when he knows more of the subject and perhaps develops for the phase himself, we may hope that the light from the spheres may convert the persecuting Saul into an enthusiastic and inspiring Paul.

H. BLACKWELL.

151, Queen's-road, Finsbury Park, N.

Several articles having lately appeared in the columns of 'LIGHT' on the subject of spirit photographs, I think it possible an account of my recent experience may interest your readers. I have spent many years abroad and came home a short time ago for a holiday, and being interested in Spiritualism I have naturally tried to obtain light where I could.

On the 3rd of the present month (March) I went to Mr. J. Bournell to sit for a spirit photograph. After the exposure Mr. Bournell took the plate into the dark room and after a time returned with it sufficiently developed for inspection.

On examining the plate I saw my own figure and what appeared to be a spirit form of a female. I did not recognise this form, but I possess the faculty of automatic or passive writing and was informed by this means by a spirit friend that it was her figure that appeared on the plate.

The sitting took place on Tuesday, March 3rd. Two days later I attended a séance at the residence of Mr. Cecil Husk, the materialising medium; but when I visited Mr. Bournsell I had no idea of attending a séance, either at Mr. Husk's or elsewhere. Several faces appeared, and were recognised by sitters as friends who had crossed the border. Three faces came to me; the first I recognised, the second I did not, though it came afterwards to my memory that it was the face of a friend of long ago, back in the seventies. The last face was that of my friend of the photograph! At this time the photograph had not (so far as I know) been printed off, as it was but two days after the sitting. I received the copies from Mr. Bournsell in due course.

The next séance at Mr. Husk's was a week later (March 12th). I attended, and took the picture in my pocket, but said nothing about it to anyone. Many spirit faces appeared, and, I think, all were recognised by the sitters to whom they presented themselves. The two friends whom I had recognised on the first occasion came again, the last being the one whose photograph was in my pocket, and as she appeared twice and remained long enough to converse with me, I had ample time to study her face, and I do not hesitate to say it was the face of my friend in the photograph.

After the séance I showed the photograph to all present, when several ladies, whose position at the séance enabled them to see the spirit friends who came to me, recognised the face as that of the female form which had appeared twice to me.

I offer no remarks, except to say that I have told the truth, and that if my story is worthy of a place in the columns of 'LIGHT,' well and good. I inclose, and ask your acceptance of, a copy of the photograph in question.

I shall be leaving England on April 1st to return to Trinidad, but if you or your readers should desire to put any questions I shall, of course, be delighted to answer them when they come to hand.

EDWIN ELLIOTT.

High-street, Shoreham, Sussex.

March 24th, 1903.

In regard to the letter of 'A Disclaimer,' in last week's issue of 'LIGHT,' I may say that, about six or seven years ago, Mrs. Bliss and (as Mr. Bournsell understood at the time) Mrs. Russell-Davies called upon him for sittings. If the lady was not Mrs. Russell-Davies he was in error. The enclosed photo, he believes, is the one taken of the lady at the time. Perhaps you will be able to say if he was mistaken or not. Failing this, Mrs. Bliss would remember the occasion.

Mrs. Kent, in her letter, says: 'Surely, if Mr. Bournsell is a medium for psychic photography he should feel enough interest to *insist* on his helpers on the other side producing *always* the friends of the sitter, or have the courage to say he cannot.' Mr. Bournsell has not only the 'courage,' but the *desire* to say that he cannot. If Mrs. Kent can *insist* on results *always* being as she would have them, she is indeed to be envied.

The accusation that Mr. Bournsell has 'stock negatives' of forms would be of a very damaging character if the idea were not altogether too frivolous and clumsy. This may be dismissed without further thought, as, however cleverly executed, this method could be readily detected by anyone having any real knowledge of the subject. The fact that the forms develop simultaneously with the sitter on the negative disposes of all idea of after-printing. Again, if he had separate sitters at all, will anyone say in plain English where he is going to get the hundreds of sitters for *original* (not copies) negatives, of subjects of all nationalities, to sit for the purpose, and, when taken, how is their absolute silence to be purchased? Furthermore, is it possible for ten years to go by without a single one being ever seen or heard of? It is unpalatable to argue on

these lines, but they are all obstacles to fraud, and weigh something to an unbiassed mind.—Yours, &c.,

J. G. HAIG.

207, Uxbridge-road, W.

[Mr. Bournsell is mistaken. The photo is certainly *not* that of Mrs. Russell-Davies.—Ed. 'LIGHT.']

Testimony of an Expert.

My attention has just been called to the controversy which is being carried on in 'LIGHT' on the subject of spirit photography and Mr. Bournsell, and I feel I must let you know a fact regarding the matter. I am a photographer by profession, and during last summer a box of forty-eight negatives was brought to me by a gentleman, in the ordinary way of business, to be printed, and a price was arranged. Being a Spiritualist, I thought I should do a good turn to the cause by the work. Before putting the plates in hand, however, I looked them carefully over, and you can judge of my surprise and disgust when I found that over twenty of them showed *unmistakable signs of double exposure!* I sent for a Spiritualist friend of long standing and showed them to him, and he also came to the conclusion that they were fraudulent. We accordingly sent for the owner and told him what we thought, and I refused to have anything to do with the plates. The owner told us that they had been produced by Mr. Bournsell, and that he had been charged 5s. for each plate. He insisted that they were genuine, in spite of the evidences of double exposure which were pointed out to him. And here let me say that in my opinion there can be no proof of genuine spirit photography unless the sitter takes a box of plates fresh from the makers, and puts them into the dark slide himself, and is allowed to keep possession of the slide until the exposure is actually made, then retaking possession of the slide, carrying the same to the dark room, and seeing the developer poured on the plate—which practically stops all further dodging. I may say that I have spent some time and trouble in the attempt to get spirit photography for my own satisfaction, being a Spiritualist of twenty-eight years' standing, but I have never yet had a spirit form on any plate I have exposed, though as a clairvoyant I have seen many try. In conclusion, I may add, I know that one of Mr. Bournsell's customers travelled 3,000 miles (from Australia) to investigate Spiritualism and get a sitting; but in that case even the prints were so carelessly cut that the signs of double exposure had not been trimmed off; he paid a heavy fee for sitting and negatives, but went home disgusted with the fraud, which was only too palpable. I may add that on the negative of my Australian friend was a form standing in the same attitude, and of the same size and attitude, as appeared also on one of the plates taken by Mr. Bournsell for the gentleman before referred to.

It is to be regretted that there should be such people in the movement whose one object is to make money, and if these few remarks convey a warning to some too credulous person, they will not have been penned in vain.

I enclose my card.

'ICONOCLAST.'

'ONOMATOLOGY.'

As long ago as 1852 I found myself one evening sitting opposite a young man who was an entire stranger to me even by name, and to whom—I had reason to believe—I was equally a stranger. Presently I heard the word 'Onomatology' escape his lips, and I inquired of him what was the meaning of the term. He explained that it was the Art of ascertaining a person's Christian name by examining his face. Very much surprised to hear of such a cult, I challenged him at once to infer my Christian name from my face. He replied: 'Oh, in your case the task is very easy!' and he gave the name correctly, assuring me at the same time that my face was the only source of his knowledge. As he ultimately became a bishop, we are justified, I suppose, in crediting him with having spoken the truth on that point. He was the only Onomatologist I ever met or heard of; and I mention the incident now and here because it seems to illustrate a remark made by 'A. B.' in 'LIGHT,' of March 21st, to the effect that 'the name is a channel of influence for the person or thing bearing it.' Not that it ever occurred to me to connect Onomatology with Astronomy!

E. D. G.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
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THE CONSCIOUS COSMOS.

The thoughts we lately offered concerning the conscious Cosmos suggest volumes,—suggest, in fact, libraries of fresh and, in some cases, revolutionary ideas. We hope, from time to time, to glance at some of them. There is no hurry. They belong, not to the years, but to the centuries.

The whole subject, indeed, is, at present, not for the average 'natural man.' Paul saw that, centuries ago, and it is still true. How exact this is!—'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned.' Bounded and deceived by his limited faculties, he, of course, is at present unable to believe in any other mode of life and consciousness than his own, hence at once his crass ignorance and ridiculous egotism, the one the result of the other. He is equally impervious to the belief of the real Christian, the rapture of the mystic, or the philosophy of a Herbert Spencer who assures him that there may quite well be a mode of personality, and of course a form of consciousness, infinitely higher than his own. But, at present, he 'cannot' believe it, for that truth is spiritually discerned, and he is not spiritual yet.

This is why the average 'natural' man, even though he is 'a good Churchman' is practically a heathen, with an inability to believe or 'discern' anything that has not a physical basis. The 'Fall of Man' has to occur over an apple, and the Salvation of Man has to come through shed blood. A Future Life depends upon the resurrection of the body, and Inspiration requires a printed book. He resents being told that God cannot be localised, and thinks that he must lose Him if we get Him off His 'great white throne.' He is frightened at 'disembodied spirits' and takes refuge from them by hiding his face under the bedclothes or under a surplice, and crying 'Devil!' Yes, Paul was right: 'the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned.'

The really spiritual man is prepared to hear of mind apart from body, and apart from the body's limitations. He is at least open to consider the interesting, the really tremendous, idea, that the Universe may be a vast thinking unity, that the 'music of the spheres' may be ordered thoughts, that gravitation may be a kind of universal grasp, that tides and daydawns and sunsets and the

seasons may be, in some sense, the breathings of the Cosmos, and that the myriad modes of life-manifestation, from chrysalis to Christ, may be all correlated as the comings-forth into the visible plane of affinities and affections that belong to the conscious Cosmos beyond and within them all.

It is just here that we come upon the rationale of Spiritualism in every form, the gift of Prophecy, the reception of Inspiration, the working of so-called 'Miracles,' the uses of Mental Science, and the power of Prayer:—all possibly as natural as the growth of corn or as the course of the winds, when we once grasp the idea of the Higher Natural, which is only an extension of what we call 'Law' and 'Order' into more subtle regions, and an inclusion of God in a circle where we hitherto have seen only Man.

A right understanding of all this would bring God infinitely nearer to us. He would indeed be absolutely and always near to us, and absolutely and always aware of us and responsive, because we should perceive that He is the secret of life and energy everywhere, in things minute as well as vast. Then Prayer would be natural, and might be constant, because contact with anything might be, in some sense, contact with God, for blessing or warning, approval or reproof. Every moment might it be said to one's soul:—

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet. Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

With an intenser meaning than ever, man might say, 'Thou God seest me,' ay! 'Thou God feelest me, answerest me': and it would not be blasphemy or scorn if one said,—as one did say,—'O God, if there is a God, save my soul, if I have a soul!' That might be, in some cases, a tremendously honest and prevailing prayer.

Here, again, to go no farther, we come upon a strange suggestion concerning Evolution. What if this conscious Cosmos knows, in some way, what it is about? It looks like it. How else can we account for such far-reaching processes for the achievement of such definite and orderly ends? Someone seems to plan and to provide on an enormous scale both as to means and time. Who or what was it that was reaching out after music and eloquent speech and the laughter and prattle of little children, in the first obscene noises of monkeys and savages? Truly, 'one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.' We are utterly unable to comprehend it all, but the inference is inevitable, that behind all our poor little circles of Law and Life there is a Consciousness which is Cosmic,—all comprehensive, all discerning, all mighty, and all determining; as far above us in Personality and Power as we are above the spot of protoplasm in an incipient weed, or the wisdom of a gnat that perishes on a restless wave.

NOT NECESSARILY INSANE.—The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania has decided in favour of the First Society of Spiritualists of Philadelphia, in their appeal, in the McIlroy will case, against the decision of the lower court. The Supreme Court decrees that belief in Spiritualism does not constitute insanity, and thus a valuable estate has been preserved for the cause of Spiritualism.

PLANCHETTE.—Mr. Desmond G. Fitz-Gerald writes: 'In the "Weekly Dispatch" article reproduced in "LIGHT" on p. 149, the statement is made that "in 1853 a well-known French Spiritualist, M. Planchette, 'invented' the little heart-shaped table which to this day bears his name." I have never heard of a "M. Planchette"; though the term has sometimes been used as a *nom de plume*. Still, by a curious coincidence there may have been a person of that name. But "planchette" signifies "a little board"; and the term would naturally be applied, in France, to the little apparatus in question.'

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

BY DR. W. R. WASHINGTON SULLIVAN.

An Address delivered before the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall, on the evening of March 19th, 1903; THE PRESIDENT OF THE ALLIANCE, MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, in the chair.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I trust the subject I have selected this evening may not seem too remote from the important matters which interest the Members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, or too closely connected with higher and sacred associations for discussion on this platform. If I may prefix one word of explanation or justification, I should say that my thoughts were turned in this direction by a remark dropped by one of my audience after my last lecture delivered before your Society, on 'A Spiritual Interpretation of Nature.' I quote that remark, which was overheard by one of my friends and repeated to me as I was leaving this hall—I quote it, I say, in a purely academic way, with no trace of feeling or resentment, for in these exalted matters, which do not admit of apodictic proof, every man must abound in his own sense, and the speaker must be rather the suggester than the teacher, setting forth in sincerity what he himself feels, leaving it to his audience to respond or not, as reason or inclination moves them. Evidently on that occasion I did not win universal approval, which was not to be expected, for one of my hearers was heard to remark at the close, 'What an admirable way of denying God!'

Now I do not maintain that the interpretation I put on Nature might not carry that meaning to the mind not previously familiar with Universalistic modes of thought, and I do not complain. But, because it is my conviction that the Divine Reality and Being is so much more emphatically asserted in that view, I thought I would supplement the former lecture by another in which I deal expressly with the Ultimate Reality of things known by the name, God, consecrated by so many centuries of sacred usage. I shall endeavour to unfold that view of Divinity which fits in with the theory of Nature which I tried to set before you, to which various names have been given, such as Cosmic Theism and the Higher Pantheism. I prefer that of Tennyson, in the inspired song which he composed for the once famous Metaphysical Society, of which he was the first president. I will speak then on what he calls 'The Higher Pantheism.'

Of old man has been taught that he is made in the image of God; but now it is beginning to dawn upon him that it is rather the converse which is true—that God is made in the image of man. The more thoughtful, the more reverent man is, the clearer it becomes that he has looked into the mirror of the world and seen nothing but a glorified image of himself to which he has decreed divine honours. Hence the ever-changing outlines of the Divine, the phantom forms which have passed like shadows over the face of the earth, from 'man's giant image hailed divine' to the ideal of the last and greatest of the old-world prophets, the Being whom Jesus worshipped as the 'Father' of men. In vain has man endeavoured to escape the anthropomorphic toils: the psychic law remains, long since enunciated by Socrates, that, as in body, so in mind, the parent begets in his own image and likeness, so that if horses had gods they would be equine in form; and thus the gods of men are human. Judaism and Mohammedanism vainly essayed to break through the law by the stern repression of any attempt at an artificial representation of the heavenly lord: they only succeeded in killing Art. Christians nominally adopted the Jewish law, but almost from the first proceeded to break it, and at length deified a beautiful human ideal, the Christ-figure of the Gospels, and ever since they have worshipped a humanity like his, a 'life lived in the loveliness of perfect deeds.' Another personality, described as the Father, and a more shadowy being, known as the Ghost or Spirit, are indeed associated with the earthly beauty, but more and more, as time goes by, they tend to fade into the twilight from which they

came, and 'the man Christ Jesus,' as Paul is said to have described him, is enthroned as the most high God—our very manhood is taken up into glory and made the idol of half the world.

Now, I would ask, What has modern thought, speaking through its two-fold channel of revelation, through science and philosophy, to say to such a theology? Does it acquiesce in the apotheosis of man? Does it accept the idea of 'God' at all?

Let me reply to the last question first. The word 'God,' as Renan suggests, may be 'somewhat heavy,' and, from its associations, ill-adapted to express the faith of an Age of Reason, but we may without hesitation affirm that never yet was there a deeper conviction of 'the Eternal,' to adopt the name most favoured by Hebrew seers, than among those who made the nineteenth century what it was, the most wonderful in the history of man. Never was philosophic nihilism more discredited; never was there a more rooted trust in the purpose of things—which is faith in its most exalted form; never such a sense of the worth and dignity of human life; never, therefore, such a belief in That for which the venerable name of 'God' stands as the symbol. Convinced of the reality of this religion by his almost daily association with the masters of English Thought, Tennyson declared 'There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds'—the faith, namely, that life is no blot nor blunder, that 'all's right with the world.'

If philosophy and science have not parted company with the idea of 'God,' it is not due to any inspiration that reaches them from Canterbury or Rome. I need not point out the mental estrangement of our modern philosophers and scientists from priestly religion; but it may be permissible to note the fact that in this high matter our poets have followed the philosophers instead of the priests, and sing their psalms to a 'God' conceived, not after the manner of the Church but of the Study. In Goethe, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, and Arnold, we have the hymn writers of the new faith, which speaks rather of 'the Divine' than of 'God,' and worships the Nameless and Unspeakable, whose presence is unmistakable, whose beauty shines through the transient glories of earthly things. The New Thought, or religion, in which the Churches as yet have no share, with which their pontiffs do not sympathise, does not, therefore, acquiesce in the deification of a man; nor has it faith in a 'giant shadow hailed divine'; it cannot even put 'the fairest of the children of men,' be he the Christ of the West or of the East, on the throne of the Eternal; and the old-world fancy of isolated incarnations is become an inconceivability to minds losing the capacity to see where Nature ends and super-Nature begins:—

'Draw, if thou canst, the mystic line
Rightly severing his from thine,
Which is human, which divine.'

I would now pass on to offer some suggestions in support of the new Theism, or, as the poet calls it, 'the Higher Pantheism.' It may serve as an apologia for the new belief in 'God.'

Of all the old claimants to divine honours, from Odin or Godin, the Scandinavian deity, the Spirit of the Wind, that comes and goes so mysteriously, and whom we have to thank most probably for our Saxon appellation of the Supreme, that is, God; from the remotest conceptions of ancient Egypt or India, down to the most spiritualised representations of Christianity; of all that vast Pantheon of gods, who came forth from the unfathomable soul of man, none but two remain now. One is the God who is throned in his high heaven, remote from the world; who has produced creation from nothingness, instituted arbitrary laws, according to which it hourly moves; a being dwelling in solitary, inaccessible majesty. He is, as Carlyle describes him, 'an absentee God, sitting idle ever since the first Sabbath, at the outside of his universe, and seeing it go.' No doubt this cold and repellent conception has been modified in Christian Theology, which three hundred years after Christ's death introduced the subtleties of late Egyptian and Greek speculations, substituting the triune comradeship for the awful isolation of the Most High, and

peopling His courts with vassal-spirits, or angels, borrowed from Zoroastrian sources. Then the first personality of the Triad was humanised, after the Gospel pattern, and made to interest himself in earthly affairs, and occasionally to suspend his own laws at the instance of prayer; and the process has continued, century by century, until the mediæval 'heavenly Father,' who, for all his humanity, sanctioned awful atrocities, here and elsewhere, gradually disappears in the benign and gentle Being worshipped by Bishop Andrewes, St. Vincent de Paul, or sung of by Mr. Keble; the Being who will not sanction the Inquisition, nor inflict the torment of an everlasting hell. Thus the heavenly Being evolves, 'growing in grace and truth,' like the wonderful boy in the Gospel, according to the successive stages of civilisation reached by humanity. Thus is God made in the image of man.

But you will notice that in the Christian, as in the Jewish and Mohammedan systems, the Supreme ever remains external to the Universe for which he is responsible. An impassable abyss divides them. It is a simple and obvious philosophy, suited to a low stage of mental development, making very little demand on the intellect. A savage can grasp it as readily as a sage, and it has been, therefore, and is, by far the most popular of beliefs. Indeed, the very facility with which it can be impressed on the ordinary mind is urged as a main reason why it should not be disturbed, and men of our views are solemnly cautioned by clergymen and supporters of the existing order, not to interfere with the credulity of the masses, as though truth were a thing to be afraid of; as though, putting it on lower grounds, there were any false or wrong thing in these times that could hope to permanently escape detection.

But besides its commonplace character, there has been one other great argument incessantly pressed as a reason for upholding Jehovah, Allah, or Ormuzd, and that is the phenomenon of evil, physical and moral, which a belief in an External Deity, invested with every human attribute of wisdom and goodness, intensified to an infinite degree, has rendered inscrutable. The painful contrast between the Ideal Figure in the skies and the shocking experience described as 'the travail of creation' and 'the Martyrdom of Man' has made Christians like Dr. Arnold and Cardinal Newman wring their hands in anguish and cry aloud, as Newman actually did: 'Either there is no God, or He is angry with His creatures.' Thus one sees how the two theories of the 'external God' and the wicked world have re-acted one on the other. First, the philosopher, like Augustine, pronounces that the world was made out of nothing a few centuries ago by an Eternal Personality, and then the saint, like Newman, ignorant or contemptuous of science, weeps over a world which has turned out a hopeless failure. So wicked a place must be for ever divorced from the All-Holy Being.

Mr. Winwood Reade would not appear to be dangerously out of the way when he declares, in his well-known work, that the worst mischiefs which have tormented mankind have arisen from false conceptions of God. And is not the reason obvious? God being in every scheme of thought the symbol for the Ultimate Reality, the Ground of all existence, what more fruitful source of error is imaginable than this, that in our ignorance of ourselves, and still more of the Mother Nature which gave the human brotherhood birth, we should make unto ourselves a mental image of the Great Unseen in the childhood of the world, found thereon an unchangeable belief, promulgate it as revealed truth, and condemn here and hereafter any humble soul, a Bruno, a Spinoza, who ventured to contradict it? 'Right thoughts' is one of the steps in 'the Everlasting Way,' according to the holy Buddha, and of all thoughts the highest, as they are the most important, are 'right thoughts' about 'God.'

Let me, therefore, set out now what we may rightly hold to be a more excellent way than that of Augustine (responsible for so much of the worst aberrations of Christian thought) and Newman. It is not, of course, suggested that it affords a final solution of the sovran mystery any more than its rival; but it is the way of many philosophers, of more scientists, and of saints of the Eastern world, aye, of many in the West, too; of a few divines like Clement of Alexandria and Origen; of the

mystics of Germany, like Tauler, in so far as the exigencies of unalterable creeds allowed. In this view, existence is one and indestructible, woven, like the wonderful garment of Christ, of the same material throughout, seamless and indivisible. It acknowledges one, and only one, distinction, and that is a purely subjective one, dependent on, and conditioned by, the imperfect medium of sense, that, namely, between the Reality and its ever-changing Appearances. The Reality is apprehended by that mind which sees the value of algebraic equations and solves the binomial theorem; the Appearances of Nature are the way whereby the Reality is manifest, not to mind, but to sense. But the appearance is not real, and for two reasons; first, it only exists relatively to the sense which sees or hears, and were there no human sense, only the eternal reality would remain. The colours of the rainbow are the outward splendour of the Reality and a strange and wonderful treasury stored in our brain, just as the hues of grace and beauty wherewith we adorn the object of our affection are a light born of our love of ineffable ideals. There is, indeed, something adorable in that fair and gracious presence, but what translates the vision into reality is the pre-existing love of an unearthly radiance—'the light that never was on sea or land'—irradiating the human soul. The splendours of the sky, too, are no phantoms; but what we actually see is the product of infinite vibrations thrown off by the Eternal Substance, transfigured by the scientific apparatus, the human eye.

And there is another reason why the appearances are unreal, and that is that they are transient, fleeting as the shadows at sundown, for 'the fashion of this world passeth away,' as was said by someone who had imbibed the spirit of this philosophy. They are indeed real while they last; they are no spectres thrown off by a disordered brain, but they do not endure. The law of change is at the heart of all. Worlds even now are being born, and others are passing, or have passed, utterly away. Our own planet is no exception. Even the mountains depart; the 'everlasting hills,' the symbol to the poet of enduring things, are worn and beaten by storm and tempest, or levelled by mightier forces from within.

Hence, in this system of wisdom, elaborated in the two classic lands which were capable of rising to the heights of abstract thought—in India and Greece—there is no room in all the worlds for more than the One; the Stoic and the Vedantist could not see how man could add to the Infinite, or how Nature could have more than one Soul. And so, to them, God was the All, and All was God; not that the worlds exhausted Him, or they only very partially revealed Him. Only in two out of infinite forms He might assume, is the Great Presence disclosed; that of material substance, which is the revelation to sense, and immaterial mind, the Reason of the world and of man, which is the revelation to spirit or soul. Beyond that all is darkness, or, if we will, rather an abyss of light, into which mortal mind has never gazed. These two revelations, to sense and to mind, proceed in accordance with what we are forced to call unalterable laws, because we stammer when we speak of sublime things; but these laws are the mind of the Eternal in incessant operation, the cause of things which are unwoven, so to speak, from itself, and returning evermore to their aboriginal source. The Absolute or Unconditioned 'is the Substance out of which the nebulae dawned and the worlds grew up,' of which the ancient words are prophetic: 'From the place whence the rivers of water go forth, thither do they return,' and that other intuition of wisdom: 'Dieu se retrouve à la fin de tout.'

The scheme of Evolution, at length, begins to be intelligible; the mighty procession of being and organised life on this earth takes shape in our mind. We begin with the fundamental conception of Substance, the ultimate attainable in mental analysis. At the basis of everything we recognise this *substratum* of being, like the foundation stone of a house. What is this substance, we ask? How are we to define it? Since Aristotle, no clearer description of it has been forthcoming than the old one, that it is the self-sufficing element in Nature, the thing which, contrariwise to the appearances, such as colour, weight and size, exists of itself and by itself. The qualities, or appearances, inhere in it; but it, of itself alone, exists independent of all. Upon that basic conception of substance,

ommon to every tangible thing, from a stone to a star, the majestic system of Divine Immanence, Cosmic Theism, or the Higher Pantheism, takes shape. For at once it becomes clear and indisputable that substance so conceived can only be One : there can be no other complete independence and self-sufficiency, any more than there can be two Supreme Beings. In vain do we imagine 'secondary substances' with the Schoolmen. Whence can they come in a world filled already to overflowing by the Infinite? How is addition to the All conceivable? Moreover, whence are the secondary creations to come if not from the parent Substance? The evocation of worlds from nothingness is positively unthinkable, and under penalty of disruption, the human intelligence is debarred from acquiescence in that childish philosophy. There seems, therefore, no alternative but to believe that in a world of mystery, one greater than all must be accepted, that Nature and man are actually the transient manifestation of the One, the very partial and imperfect disclosure of the awful Reality adored under the name of 'God.'

And, what Philosophy suggests, physical science confirms. More and more it shows us that earthly things run up into an original unity ; that as all bodies, whether in the heavens or on the earth, have a nebular origin, so more and more are we rendered certain that what we now call the irreducible elements are but modifications of a primordial and nameless Something on which the eye of man may never rest. It shows us how the solid, liquid, and gaseous states are interchangeable, and thereby conducts the wondering mind to the confines of the material worlds, where it is linked with the Great Reality of which it is but an imperfect and momentary apparition.

And so to the scoffer who asks in derision whether a tree is God, it would be sufficient to reply, 'Is the branch the tree?' No: but its substance is one and identical with it, and even if it drops off and dies, it does but pass, by a natural process, into some other form of that primordial Reality from which it and the parent trunk originally sprang. The hand is not the man, nor is the brain ; but the identity of human nature is stamped on it, and even when divided from its body, its genuine origin is recognised. But objections like this, borrowed from physics, and the still graver obstacles suggested by philosophy, which seem to imply the overwhelming of the individual in the All, and the obliteration of his personal will, however difficult they may be to meet, cannot impair the undoubted truth suggested by Evolutionary Science that, *de facto*, the universe is the outcome of an homogeneous matter or substance ; and the equally indisputable fact that the postulate of an Infinite and Eternal Substance leaves no room for the existence of others which are not Itself, and still less for their production out of nothingness. Consequences are the scarecrows of fools, it has been said, and in the prosecution of a philosophical inquiry, such as the present, they are the last things to be considered. This is not the time to weigh them, or it might be shown, I think, that the submergence of the individual in the All, the loss of the man in God, and the restrictions on his volition, are not so serious in their results as objectors anticipate. I only appeal to one undoubted fact, that the holy and despised man, the saint of Ethical Religion, the blessed Spinoza, is now recognised for what he was, the fairest flower of the Philosophic School since Plato, the most adorable figure in post-Reformation days. I reverence the memory and teaching of that poor and humble man, wisest and best of his age, and feel with Renan as I pass the spot where his statue stands at The Hague, that 'probably God has never been seen nearer than from this place.' Reverently and with hearts deeply moved may we join the great Schliermacher in 'an offering to the manes of the holy and excommunicated Spinoza. The sublime Spirit of the Universe penetrated him ; the Infinite was his beginning and his end, the Universal his only and his everlasting love.'

Indeed it is so ; for the man who has read and thought himself into this noblest of creeds will never see a sunrise, or the glory of departing day, with the same eyes. Nature herself will be taken up and transfigured in the wondrous light in which the sage and saint saw it from his humble home—the instant revelation of the Divine, its beauty, as it were, the veil

before the Eternal, growing slenderer year by year, as the mind awakens to deeper consciousness of august things. Everything seems to be invested as with an unimaginable sanctity, and a strange emotion subdues the soul to worship, arousing feelings impossible to explain. The very sounds of Nature take on a new significance. Shelley hears the skylark, and, like the seer in the vision, 'straightway he is in the spirit.' That simple voice is like a sudden note struck in a hall of song, revealing by its echoes the depth of music which the earth silence drowns. The little creature seems to rouse the very soul of things by its heart-piercing call, and the Universe is felt to be bound together in a harmony which one earnest voice can waken into conscious meaning. The mysterious song fills the poet's soul as with a sense of swelling triumph :—

'All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when the night is bare,
From one lonely cloud

The moon rains out her beams and heaven is overflowed.'

And yet the sense of exaltation dies away, on a note inexpressibly sad, in memories haunted by a nameless sorrow :—

'We look before and after,
We pine for what is not ;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught :

Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.'

Ah ! too well we know that deep and strange emotion that flushes cheek and brain and almost stops our breath. The sweetest moments of life are tinged with some lingering, indefinable regret, as though in some glory of Nature, or an hour of love, we had seen the ineffable Reality, had felt its very presence, and were filled with an irresistible longing for the far-away and unattainable. Why do tears start to our eyes when our joy is keenest in poetic words? Why do Nature's fairest scenes, unclouded by any human sorrows, awaken such irresistible pathos? Is it not because we have felt the great Presence and are disturbed with the joy of thoughts utterly beyond the power of speech to articulate? In these rare moments we have seen embodied, as it were, the Ideal of all fair things we have ever dreamed, and the sense of impotence to reach the fulness dimly outlined by the breaking clouds mingles its pang of sadness with the deep and overpowering joy. 'The things that I have seen I now can see no more.' 'The glory of the sum of things' has flashed across our sight and gone. We have caught a transient glimpse of the Great Unseen, and come near to the mystery of things, the blending of earth with heaven, the passing of the human into the Divine, 'the light in which there is no darkness at all,' the Oneness which knows no division,—

'The God on whom we ever gaze,
The God we never once behold ;
Above the cloud, beneath the clod,
The Unknown God, the Unknown God.'

Dr. Washington Sullivan closed amid great applause, and after he had replied to a few questions from the audience, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to him for his very able and very eloquent address.

TRANSITION.—Mr. Thos. G. Newman, the editor of the 'Philosophical Journal,' of San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A., passed to a spirit life on Tuesday, March 10th. We extend our sincere condolences to Mrs. Newman and family.

WIMBLEDON.—A correspondent would be pleased to hear from Spiritualists residing in Wimbledon who would be interested in the formation and carrying on of a spiritualist society there. Address 'P. S.,' c/o 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

'THE OVERTHROW OF HELL.'—Two new articles by Leo Tolstoy, author of 'Resurrection,' entitled 'The Overthrow of Hell and Its Restoration' (a dramatic dialogue between Beelzebub and his angels) and 'An Appeal to the Clergy of All Countries,' will be issued shortly by the publisher of 'The Free Age Press,' Paternoster-row. Price 1d. each.

REMOVAL.—We are requested to announce that Messrs. J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., Limited, whose advertisement appears from time to time in 'LIGHT,' have removed to 52, Mortimer-street, Cavendish-square, London, W.

GOOD AND EVIL.

It is scarcely worth while splitting straws with Mr. Girdlestone from a distance of eight thousand miles; but I must confess that I cannot understand his quarrel with my very tentative suggestion that we human beings, at any rate, can only become conscious of any state by some experience, greater or less, of its opposite (see 'LIGHT,' January 17th). How could we know Joy without knowing Sorrow? or Rest without having known Fatigue? or Health without having known the lack of it?

That Mr. Girdlestone appreciates the force of this axiom is proved by his remarks in the issue of 'LIGHT' of January 31st, where he says:—

'There is nothing like starvation to make men appreciate food; does it not seem to follow by parity of reasoning that prolonged absence of joy and still more the experience of positive pain increase a man's very capacity for joy?'

Quite so, and may it not also follow 'by parity of reasoning' that the knowledge and even experience of Evil shall increase a man's consciousness of, and capacity for, Righteousness? We are both talking of men and not of angels and archangels—one knows nothing of *their* plane of perfection, nor of the methods through which it has been attained.

Mr. Girdlestone considers my suggestion less intelligent than his own, which appears to be that evil exists in order that it may be 'shown and known whether a man be good or bad, and morally strong or weak, by the nature of his choices where he is free to choose between competing motives.'

I do not criticise his supposition adversely, but it appears at least equally reasonable to suppose that the *raison d'être* of evil may be to make poor blundering human nature conscious of goodness and holiness in the only way apparently possible on this plane; namely, by making men conscious of the absence of goodness and holiness, a state which we designate as Evil. How infinitely less should we know of Light if we knew nothing of Darkness!

But if this assertion does not commend itself as axiomatic to any reader, it would be useless to write pages in support of it. I will only, therefore, add that my words were addressed to those readers who do not require a lengthy demonstration of *a priori* facts of human experience. To them, I threw out a suggestion based upon these facts, which has helped me personally. If Mr. Girdlestone finds it easier to suppose that evil exists in order that he may know a good man from a bad one, he is quite within his rights in considering that a more intelligent supposition.

It is only fair to add that he does postulate choice and responsibility as factors in the problem (and these are necessarily included in my view of the matter), but the words I have quoted form the peroration and the clinching part of his argument. Also when he speaks of 'presenting evil as well as good to the will of each individual man,' I should like to suggest that evil and good, as we know them, are not like pounds of butter, always identical in weight, shape, and appearance; but are rather stages in each individual's evolution. As we grow in the consciousness of holiness, our landmarks of evil, or the 'not good,' must shift from time to time and our standards become more stringent.

The whole question is, by what methods humanity may come to a fuller and fuller consciousness of ever-developing goodness? And I still consider it intelligent to suppose that, for human beings at any rate, the fullest consciousness of any state must apparently come through the realisation of what its absence means for us.

To realise our own shortcomings in the light of some nobler soul's achievements, is surely a familiar and salutary experience with most of us? Every time we do this, the double realisation of our evil through their good and of their good through our evil, takes place; but it does not strike ordinary minds that this means a 'vicious circle' nor the unedifying and trivial discussion of the 'relative priority of hens and eggs.'

Calcutta.

E. KATHARINE BATES.

February 22nd, 1903.

A BUDGET OF FACTS.

The Swedish anti-materialist periodical, 'XX:e Skulet,' continues, according to Princess Karadja's promise, to give 'historical facts' calculated to shake down the walls of the Jericho of materialism. The second of the series is the account, by Princess Eugenie of Sweden, of the appearance of the 'White Lady' of the Royal Castle at Stockholm in March, 1871, three or four days before the death of Queen Louisa, wife of King Carl, the present King's predecessor. The third 'historical fact' is the dream of Colonel C. af Forsell. Seven years to a day before the battle of Leipzig, namely, on October 13th, 1806, Colonel af Forsell dreamed that he was in a remarkable battle, in which he plainly saw the troops, the artillery, and some projectiles that were strange to him; the sun went down behind a city with walls and towers; and something seemed to say to him, 'the fate of Europe is decided.' This dream he told at various times to many notable persons, including King Carl Johan of Sweden. This was in 1811. On October 13th, 1813, the Colonel was at the battle of Leipzig as adjutant to the Crown Prince, and there he recognised the scene of his dream, the masses of troops, the burning villages, the towers of Leipzig, behind which the sun set, the artillery, the Congreve rockets (which he had thus seen in use in dream before they were invented),—everything exactly as he had dreamed.

The Baroness Barnekow gives an interesting account of séances with Mr. Craddock, at which 'Sister Amy' appeared to her and her sister, Miss Lind-af-Hageby, and among other phenomena showed them a 'spirit light' which she held in her hand, saying that it was made of phosphorus taken out of her (the writer's) body, after which she raised her arms above the sitter's head, and the light disappeared. 'Now,' said 'Sister Amy,' 'I have restored to you the phosphorus I borrowed.' This appears to be a valuable contribution to the question of 'spirit lights.'

J. B. S.

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.

'Power of the Mind over Diseases.'

SIR,—I should like to make a few remarks on the article which appeared in 'LIGHT' of March 21st, entitled, 'The Power of Mind over Disease,' and which was a synopsis of a lecture given by Dr. Forbes Winslow to the Psycho-Therapeutic Society. Treating of dipsomania, insomnia, and hypnotism, Dr. Winslow says of the first that the patient 'must be pre-ceived to the suggestion that a glass of pure water must be a glass of bad Scotch whiskey.' Now why should the doctor suggest whiskey at all? It is quite unnecessary. I have had many dipsomania cases, several of whom I have never spoken or written to, or had any communication with whatever, they having been placed under my care by friends or relatives, and in both men and women some have responded to my *first absent treatment*. The suggestion, however, was not bad Scotch whiskey, but a higher one, that of the 'living water of which he that drinketh shall never thirst, but be in him a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life,' and the disgusting suggestion of an emetic is obviated. By mental treatment I give them confidence in their ability and power to control themselves, and the evil habit is overcome without hypnotism, which is a real danger to many, as I know from personal experience, for I can give instances of persons who are now suffering from hypnotic suggestion of years ago. In insomnia lately I had a new experience. Occasionally I treat my patients to sleep a certain time, and one night did so to sleep from 12 p.m. to 7 a.m. Next day the patient, living at the seaside, came to town, and saw me, and said in the course of the interview, 'Mrs. Lewis, I had the greatest difficulty in getting up this morning; when the servant called me at six o'clock it was almost impossible for me to get out of bed, I was so sleepy.' And then I had to say why. My experience in the susceptibility of patients to treatment is the reverse of Dr. Winslow's. I find women in almost all cases more amenable to treatment than men. But I quite agree with him when he says 'that most mental cases can be treated absolutely by suggestion.'

BELL LEWIS.

22, University-street, W.C.

Physical Mediumship.

SIR,—In closing her letter to you in 'LIGHT' of March 21st, Mrs. Elnor Oldham seems inclined to question the veracity of the assertion that Mr. Taylor has nineteen Indian guides or controls, but I would like to tell her that some friends of mine, some years ago, took a young lady with them to a séance at which Mr. John Taylor was the medium. They were quite content, but in a little time the young lady begged most earnestly to leave as she felt so nervous; 'the room is full of Red Indians,' she said, and when asked to count them she said 'there were nineteen.' They had none of them heard of Mr. Taylor's 'band' before.

I have myself seen, clairvoyantly, one of them standing within two yards of me, apparently guarding the door, at a séance held with the same medium (but not the same kind of séance), arranged by the Manchester Spiritualist Alliance, in a private room at a public restaurant.

The physical manifestations at Mrs. Oldham's must have been the poorest I have ever witnessed or heard of. I have seen a very large dining table rise up at Mr. Taylor's command and remain on one side, *with no one touching it*, and Mr. Taylor standing erect by my side; and I have also seen a table stand on one side *away from Mr. Taylor*; and no one in the room, however strong and however willing, could force it down.

I have seen, and many hundreds of others also have seen, the table keep time to the tunes we sang. I stood once at John Taylor's side at Boscobel House when a large table rose with a chair placed on it, on which Florrie Cook was sitting, and a gentleman stood behind her on the medium's hands (but the medium did not grasp his ankles). Florrie, to the great amusement of all present, exclaimed 'Oh, I'm going up!' while the fact was she *was* up, being within a few inches of the ceiling. I have sat between twenty and thirty times with Mr. Taylor and have never had any cause to doubt his veracity or integrity.

With regard to the last séance mentioned by Mrs. Oldham, where two people sat with their legs 'hooked' round the medium's legs, I may say that once when Mr. Taylor's legs were bound with a rope, which his controls had themselves asked for, the table rose up with *three gentlemen on it*. Can Mrs. Oldham's friend manage that?

I should really have liked to see the second manifestation at the first séance at Mrs. Oldham's house. Mr. Taylor must be cleverer even than I thought him if he can grasp the ankles of a person who was standing on the palms of his (Mr. John Taylor's) hands. How on earth could it be done?

I have certainly sat with Mr. Taylor when, as at the test séance, there were few or no phenomena produced, but when there have been I have almost invariably been in my customary place next to the medium, and I should very easily have detected any movement on his part, as his séances are invariably well attended and some of them are packed to overflowing.

May I call Mrs. Oldham's attention to the following sentence in 'LIGHT,' of March 21st (p. 140). 'The suspicious attitude of the circle was enough to account for the failure after séance No. 1 (2 in this case), if failure there was.' We cannot 'command success' but we can give such good conditions as to deserve, and in most cases, secure it.

KATE TAYLOR-ROBINSON.

Tweed Green,
Whalley Range.

National Union, Ltd., Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—Kindly allow me to acknowledge with hearty thanks, on behalf of my committee, the following contributions to the Fund of Benevolence received during March, and to call attention to the change in my address. I regret that the contributions, both for last month and this, have been insufficient to meet the expenditure in regular grants and occasional relief. I shall be very glad to receive and acknowledge any amount, however small, in aid of this charitable work. All donations should be sent to

Yours, &c.,

'Morveen,' (MRS.) M. H. WALLIS,
6, Station-road, Hon. Financial Secretary.
Church End,
Finchley, London, N.

Amounts received: From Mr. Percy Smyth, collected at Chiswick, 3s.; Mr. T. Coulson, 5s.; Mr. J. Bowring Sloman, £1 (per 'Two Worlds'); J. Fraser Hewes, Esq., £1 1s.; 'E. L.,' 2s. 6d.; 'N. H.,' 5s.; 'W. P.' (Cardiff), 10s. 6d.; Mrs. A. A. Squire, 2s.; Mr. E. W. Wallis, 10s.; Mrs. M. H. Wallis, 10s.; 'E. H.,' 3s.; Mr. G. Heppleston, £1.—Total, £5 12s.

Mr. C. E. Williams' Seances.

SIR,—Having read in your paper the account of sittings with Mr. Williams, I think it would have been more satisfactory if 'X. Y. Z.' had furnished a few more particulars as to the first séance.

He mentions that fingers were linked in the 'usual manner.' May one infer by this that Mr. Williams' two hands were held by the sitters; if so, how could he possibly put on beards, drapery, &c., without detection? If one hand were free, as at the third sitting, it might have been arranged, but that is not the usual way of linking.

I believe all Spiritualists are agreed that fraudulent manifestations should be exposed, but one must be quite certain that this is the case, as such accounts are apt to militate against other mediums who sit in darkness to gain similar phenomena, and who may yet be perfectly genuine mediums.

I have not seen much of materialisations, but understood that spirit forms at times slightly resembled the medium, and that even under test conditions.

REDMONT.

SIR,—I read with great interest the account of four séances given lately by Mr. C. E. Williams.

I have since read the letters sent by his friends 'Bidston,' 'Veritas,' and others, to 'LIGHT.'

If it be true that Mr. Williams has already been detected in fraud and that he had been exposed in Spiritualist papers, it is surprising that anyone should write on his behalf, and personally I consider that Spiritualists ought to be greatly indebted to 'X. Y. Z.' for drawing the attention of the public to this medium. Whether 'X. Y. Z.' and his friends are Spiritualists of many years' experience or not, of course I do not know, but if they really are earnest Spiritualists and have also had experiences in the various phenomena which occur with a *bonâ fide* medium, they would be more likely to discern between the true and the false than if they were neophytes; and if one of the phenomena which occurred with Mr. Williams as medium consisted in a spirit striking its head against a gas shade and another of a spirit striking a lady across her nose in wrenching its hand away from a person who grasped it, it is no wonder that 'X. Y. Z.' and his friends consider the whole affair to have been the work—not of spirits—but of *man*, and that man Mr. C. E. Williams.

'A SPIRITUALIST, BUT NOT A DUPE.'

The Pains and Perplexities of Life.

SIR,—The theory which Mr. Vernon Leftwich advances as to God not being Almighty is a very ingenious one. The same theory is advanced in a book by a Mr. Gould, 'The Meaning and Method of Life,' and if my memory serves me right he thoroughly believes in the Devil working to overthrow God. But though ingenious, the theory of a non-Almighty God does not appear to me to be thinkable.

Of course the 'misery, privation, and suffering' before us are terrible, but Mr. Leftwich would surely not make God responsible for what, after all, is largely the result of our own thoughtlessness!

We are surely put on earth to work out our own salvation, and we could not expect God to be interfering in what may seem, to our finite minds, injustices, but which after all may be the ordeals through which we must go in order to be at one with the Infinite.

Lewisham.

ALFRED E. BAX.

SIR,—In reading Mr. Vernon Leftwich's letter under the above heading I am very surprised to find that he derives comfort in postulating a non-Almighty God. We are told that God made man in His own image, &c. 'V. L.' is certainly returning the compliment.

How can we imagine a God *not* Almighty? Surely this is making confusion worse. God, to be a God, must of necessity be all-powerful.

To the orthodox, sorrow, poverty, and pain may well seem inexplicable. But if we regard the world as a school consisting of many classes, in which souls of various ages are learning just the requisite lessons—some painful, some the reverse—our earthly life as one day in this school, to which the soul returns again and again until the lessons are all learnt, then light begins to illumine the darkness.

What is man but a spark of the one Life which we call God, evolving slowly, but surely, through the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms? In its present state, as men we have grown into the divine Sonship, being joint heirs with Christ, and, like our Elder Brother, destined to become perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect.

In some of the earlier stages of evolution, pain is necessary

to quicken our growth and to teach us that we are not working in harmony with the divine law. The child has to learn that fire burns, and although the lesson is a painful one it is not an evil, seeing that, but for the pain, the body might easily be consumed. So, too, when we older children are ignorantly working against the law, pain follows, not because it is the Divine will that we should suffer, but to teach us to work with the law. When we work in harmony with the law we shall find that suffering will cease. 'The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ,' says one of the great apostles of the first century.

We men of to-day are becoming of age, able to act for ourselves. Shall we become fellow-workers with the Divine in His scheme of evolution by taking our own lives in hand and shaping them in accordance with His law? Or shall we become drags upon the wheel, to be forced onward by the law which is slowly moving all forward? For Spiritualists there can be only one answer.

Ripon.

'Seeking the Truth.'

SIR,—Referring to Kate Cording's letter which appeared in your issue of March 21st, I venture to say that 'all theories and speculations about God and the after-life' will ever remain 'not proven' to her so long as she follows what she describes as 'an instinctive longing in [her] secret soul to drop the curtain upon all things not material,' for by this act she closes the avenue of knowledge and the gate of illumination. It is not correct to ascribe such a longing as this to the *soul*, it belongs rather to the outer mind or astral region. The truth can be known, but those who would know the truth must be prepared to lift and remove or penetrate all curtains or veils that separate them from things not material—that is, from things spiritual—for the truth is to be found 'behind the veil.' The truth must be sought not 'without,' in the material and illusory, but 'within,' in the spiritual and real. 'The curtain' that is upon all things not material must be removed therefrom. 'We speak that we do know,' said the Christ, and it is the promise of the Christ to those who adopt his method—which is the method of *inward* purification—that they 'shall know the truth.' I do not know of any who have adopted this method—whatever they may call themselves—who are merely 'guessing at the truth.' We can know, but we can only know 'without' what is 'within.' He who hath, to him it shall be given.

If any seekers after truth will read the 'Life of Anna Kingsford,' by Edward Maitland, they will find in that work a record of the lives of two persons who—having adopted the Christ method—were rewarded by Divine Illumination, and 'illumination is the light of wisdom whereby a man perceiveth heavenly secrets, which light is the Spirit of God within the man showing unto him the things of God.' I also recommend them to read that truly divine book, 'The Perfect Way,' by Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland. Before I read that book I was a seeker after truth, but when I had read it I said, 'Lord now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace,' &c. 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? . . . Come and see.'

SAML. HOPGOOD HART.

SIR,—Will you allow me, through your columns, to thank the many kind people who replied to my letter in 'LIGHT' of March 21st on the above subject? About eight people also called upon me in reference to the matter. I am pleased to find that there are plenty of private circles, and those who hold them have offered to admit me into them and sent me most friendly invitations. Others besides myself, I discover, have the same disgust at the idea of prying into the unseen world with the help of paid mediums. I dare say they are honest, but I, for one, wish to have nothing to do with Spiritualism if obtained by such means. One thing struck me about the people who wrote and came here, they seemed so anxious to hold communion with departed relatives—uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, &c. Well, I do not feel a very burning desire to meet the spirits of my dead relations, and I cannot quite see that English family life in this world is the ideal thing that would cause us to yearn intensely to renew it again before we ourselves pass over to the great majority. Be that as it may, the subject is deeply interesting, and after the encouragement I have received I mean to look into it more closely—not to make a religion of it, for I have already a religion, vague, and sweet, and undefined, yet good enough, if I can only live up to it, to carry me through time and eternity. The spirits could neither give it nor take it away, and it is as far removed from 'orthodoxy' as the east is from the west. Yet they could help, perhaps, to make the mystery of existence more clear, and I will seek their help and comfort if I can.

Several have asked to join a circle should one be formed

here. I am very willing to form one, but only of a few earnest souls who would persevere and come regularly, and I would be pleased to receive such as friends. To all who wrote and called, my very best thanks.

KATE CORDING.

Fellowship Cottage,
31, Trinity-street, Islington, N.

SOCIETY WORK.

[AS WE SHALL GO TO PRESS EARLIER THAN USUAL NEXT WEEK, CORRESPONDENTS ARE RESPECTFULLY REQUESTED TO TAKE NOTICE THAT WE SHALL BE UNABLE TO PUBLISH ANY CONTRIBUTIONS UNDER THIS HEAD IN OUR NEXT ISSUE.]

GLASGOW.—2, CARLTON-PLACE.—On Sunday last, Mr. McNeill gave excellent clairvoyance—all recognised—and in some cases he gave predictions.—D.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—ATHENÆUM HALL, GODOLPHIN-ROAD.—On Sunday last, Miss MacCreadie gave splendid clairvoyance, nearly all the descriptions being recognised. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Porter and Mr. Mitchell, of Australia.—P. H.

PORTSMOUTH.—ALEXANDRA HALL.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Ronald Brailey gave an interesting address on 'Celestial Habitations,' and in the evening spoke on 'The Tragedy of Life' to a crowded audience, many standing. The clairvoyance at each service was very good.—E. R. O.

CATFORD.—24, MEDUSA-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last there was a good attendance to hear Mr. W. Millard's trance address on 'Progress of the Inner Life—How Attained,' which was much appreciated. Meeting every Sunday at 7 p.m.; séance follows.—R.

CARDIFF.—24, ST. JOHN'S-CRESCENT.—On Sunday last, at 6.30 p.m., a successful first Sunday service of the Canton Spiritualists' Society was held. Mrs. Preece delivered a fine address on 'We come not to Destroy, but to Fulfil.' Mr. John Hill presided. Clairvoyance every Tuesday at 8 p.m.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD.—On Sunday last Madame Katherine St. Clair answered written questions from the audience. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. A. Boddington will speak on subjects from the audience. On Wednesday next, at 8 p.m., Mr. Rogers on 'The Rationale of Spiritualism.'—W. T.

NEWCASTLE PSYCHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY.—On Sunday last Mr. Bennett gave us 'A Night with the Phenomena,' which was enjoyed by a large audience. Eleven delineations were given, which were acknowledged to be wonderfully correct. At the after-meeting Mrs. Pickles gave a number of good clairvoyant tests. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. Stevenson, of Gateshead.—S.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday last the morning public circle was largely attended, and many received convincing proofs of spirit presence. Mr. Long's evening addresses upon 'Problems of Death' are of great educational value, and are much appreciated. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 6.30 p.m., address by Mrs. John Checketts, 'The Mystery of Suffering.'—J. C.

PLYMOUTH.—13, MORLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Kelland's lucid and spiritual exposition of the text referring to the preaching to the spirits in prison by Jesus was much appreciated by a large audience. Mrs. Kelland gave very successful clairvoyance. The week evening circles were well attended, Mesdames Kelland, Pollard, and Evans being the mediums.—E.

FINSBURY PARK.—19, STROUD GREEN-ROAD (FIRST FLOOR).—On Sunday last Mr. T. Brooks conducted the meeting and earnest and thoughtful addresses were given by Messrs. Thompson, Jones, and Beavor. Mrs. Jones (under influence) summarised and commented upon the thoughts which had been expressed. Meetings on Sunday next, at 7 p.m., and Wednesday, at 8 p.m.—T. B.

HACKNEY.—MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD.—On Sunday last, our president, Mr. H. A. Gatter, gave a helpful and instructive address on 'The Wonders of Spiritualism,' to a large and attentive audience. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Alfred Peters will deliver his second lecture upon 'Ancient Religions.' On Good Friday, at 5 p.m., the usual tea and social will be held.—H. J. E.

CLAPHAM ASSEMBLY ROOMS, CLAPHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. and Mrs. Boddington dealt with 'Spookism.' On Saturday last a farewell social was held to bid God-speed to one of our earnest workers, Mr. Swan, who said that his association with Clapham Spiritualists would stimulate him to propagate our gospel in Canada. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Howes. On Good Friday, instead of Thursday, the 9th inst., Mr. Ronald Brailey will give psychometry. Tickets, sixpence, will admit to both the social and the psychometry.—B.