

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We are quite aware that the word 'supernatural' has its uses, but we must do our best to get rid of it. It is really a word born of nescience, not of science, limiting, as it does, the sphere of the natural. The Spiritualist especially ought to insist that everything in the Universe, seen or unseen, spiritual or physical, is natural. He must stand with the scientist, and claim him. His case turns upon experiments, and he appeals to law. In like manner, he must stand with the modern theologian, and bring his human ghost as well as the Holy Ghost into the realm of primary realities.

The same remark applies to the word 'Miracle.' If anything is miracle, everything is. Time and repetition make no difference. It is but an illusion that suddenness takes a phenomenon out of the sphere of law, or that it is more wonderful because it happens only at intervals or only once. The chief thing we need to be persuaded of is—the extreme limitation of our senses as to the realm of Nature. Next to that, we need to grasp well the truth that we are in a *Universe*, and that, as a *Universe*, it is one.

A writer in 'The Metaphysical Magazine' contributes a thoughtful Paper on 'The relation of Love to Life.' Everybody, he says, wants love, everybody sings its praises, 'yet more people are in trouble about it or about some supposed-to-be essential demonstration of it, than from almost any other cause of trouble.'

The honest truth is that love is still to be liberated from its selfish and sensuous attachments. Love, as an ideal, is self-denying, and is the servant of all. It is a soul-fervour, and its symbol is rather the cross than the crown. 'Love based upon sense is only selfishness and soon turns to hate, because of the innate limitation of all the actions involved, both in the faculty and the sentiment. It is reversed at every sensuous turn.'

Suicide is nearly always a result of entangled and misappropriated love, or of love missed or misdirected. Wisely, this writer says:—

It is for such reasons as these that so many people become tired of life. Love has been killed out of all the little acts of life until it will not appear in any; and then the disappointed pessimist destroys his life that he may go where he can love. It may be done here just as well if we go about it in the right way. We need not die in order to realise the qualities of soul-life. Begin now and love something, some one, some feature of life's action. Study out its qualities and insist upon seeing its beauties. They are there no matter how forbidding the appearance at first sight. Set pessimism aside and allow the soul to prompt the mind until it finds the reality that is present.

'Deep down in the mud and scum of things, always, always, something sings,' writes Emerson, the most optimistic thinker of modern times. And Emerson is right. Love prevails always, everywhere, and it only needs the joyous tones of the singing soul to demonstrate its holy beneficence in every field of life, in every pleasure, and in each duty that falls upon our shoulders.

A late number of 'Mind' contains a fine Paper on 'Living,' by Mary Russell Mills. The concluding section, on 'The Most High God,' is very brilliant and lofty in its great generalisation. It carries us right up to the thought of God as not only manifest but as living and enduring in all things. 'God in the sod, in the plant, in the animal, in the man, groaning, sorrowing, toiling, groping his way back unto his own.' It is the consciousness of this that is the true consciousness of spiritual religion, and that makes God and man at one. It is this that unifies all things, and that suggests how all things can be working together for good:—

Henceforth all the objects and experiences of life, shrunken and shrivelled into insignificance, must, if they are to exist at all, be lifted up and receive the revivifying touch of a new meaning and dignity which this light alone can give them. From that height the soul looks down on the world-process with the interest of complete certitude. It sees the end so clearly that all the steps toward it, however feeble or halting or slow they may appear, are beheld through the medium of a joyous and moveless confidence. It sees its own personality as but a small portion of the whole, of no more importance than any other, and looks at it with precisely the same interest it feels in all others. It is being moulded and guided by the great beneficence and wisdom that pervade it and all else; it is animated by so much of the Universal Spirit as it gives place to; and the freed soul, no longer that personality, but only a dweller in, or *with* it, for purposes of utility, is glad of every experience of every sort, that shapes it into a truer channel for the onflowing of the divine life. It is content with life's work. It is one with the Worker. It is enwrapped and filled with an unending serenity. Yet its ministry has no chill of indifference, but the touch of infinite tenderness, of deific efficiency. Such a soul is one with its fellows as it could not be until it rose above them and itself, and knew itself and them as one with their Source and Purpose. To voluntarily rise to this height is the privilege and duty of every soul. To have entered into the wonder of this Ineffable Beauty but once, is to have seen the way of life. To abide in it is to have passed from death unto life.

Perhaps the German Emperor is the only person left who thinks the Japanese are 'The scourge of God,' in a sinister sense: and probably he is already a good deal penitent that he said it. The wonderful successes of the Japanese may account for the world's growing good opinion of them, or perhaps, for once, nearness is 'lending enchantment to the view': but, in any case, they are being ethically and æsthetically put on rather a high plane. The German Emperor, in his usual florid way, said, 'One must not draw the conclusion from Japanese victories—victories of a heathen over a Christian people—that Buddha was superior to our Lord Christ.' Upon this a sharp American paper says:—

What are these people that the Kaiser calls the scourge of God? Pagans? Yes, frankly so. They are so frankly

pagan that we cannot help admiring them, when we remember how much 'infidelity,' and 'free thought' and atheism and agnosticism is hypocritically concealed among us. They are open, however, to all good influences, ready, like the Christian apostle, to prove all things and to hold fast that which is good. 'There is truth in all the faiths,' says Nathan in Lessing's play. 'Let us judge their followers by their lives and not by their creeds.' And so the Japanese believe some of the doctrines of Confucius, some of the principles of Shinto, some of the precepts of Gautama, some of the truths of Christianity.

The Japanese have been the most exclusive, but it is probable that they will rapidly become the most cosmopolitan, people in the world.

This little poem, 'The hushed house,' by Madison Cawein, has touched us, for its simplicity, its tenderness, and its pathetic lesson. It appeared in 'Harper's Magazine,' and we feel sure our readers will welcome it in 'LIGHT':—

I who went at nightfall,
Came again at dawn;
On Love's door again I knocked—
Love was gone.

He who oft had bade me in
Now would bid no more;
Silence sat within his house,
Barred its door.

When the slow door opened wide
Through it I could see
How the emptiness within
Stared at me.

Through the dreary chambers
Long I sought and sighed,
But no answering footstep came;
Naught replied.

Then at last I entered
Dim a darkened room;
There a taper glimmered gray
In the gloom.

And I saw one lying
Crowned with helichrys:
Never saw I face as fair
As was his.

Like a wintry lily
Was his brow in hue;
And his cheeks were each a rose
Wintry too.

Then my soul remembered
All that made us part,
And what I had laughed at once
Broke my heart.

DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS AND SPIRITUALISM.

Everybody is familiar with the names of William and Robert Chambers, the eminent publishing firm of Edinburgh, who did so much for the diffusion of useful knowledge by the issue of 'Chambers' Encyclopædia,' 'Chambers' Information for the People,' 'Chambers' Journal,' and other popular works; and the name of Dr. Robert Chambers must be still remembered by many in association with a book of which he was the author, and which created great sensation when it made its first appearance—'Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation.' Few, however, are aware of the fact that Dr. Robert Chambers not only took an interest in Spiritualism, but made a personal acquaintance with it and with many of its early adherents, including Mrs. Milner Gibson, Professor and Mrs. De Morgan, Mr. and Mrs. W. Howitt, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Newton Crosland, and the celebrated medium, Mr. D. D. Home. Of his interviews and experiences he made careful memoranda, which have been placed in our hands, and which we propose to publish in our next issue, believing that the views of such a notable man as Dr. Robert Chambers will be of profound interest to our readers.

METAPSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

Every reader of the admirable translation of Dr. Maxwell's recent work, 'Metapsychical Phenomena' (the French edition of which, under the title 'Phénomènes Psychiques,' was reviewed in 'LIGHT' during January, 1904), will acknowledge that it is the most important psychical study which has appeared since Mr. F. W. H. Myers' book, 'Human Personality.' It is at once less exhaustive and less exhausting than that, now almost classical, work. This will make it more attractive to readers who have not the time to read Mr. Myers' book; and the translation is so fluent and easy that the charm of Dr. Maxwell's style is not lost, neither are the enjoyments and comprehension of the reader diminished by the fact that this work is a translation. The book will be equally valuable to the student who accepts the spirit hypothesis and to the student who does not. No serious investigator who wishes to approach experiments with an intelligent understanding of the conditions to be observed, or who wishes to start with the advantage of knowing what experienced investigators have already learned concerning those conditions, should miss the opportunity of perusing this record.

The two most interesting chapters, to the majority of readers, will, perhaps, be the additional chapter by the translator, Mrs. Finch, consisting chiefly of notes made by Dr. Maxwell, Professor Richet and Dr. X., of experiences with a psychic, a friend of Dr. Maxwell's, and the preceding chapter on 'Psycho-Sensory Phenomena.' Into the latter has been inserted an exceedingly interesting experience of Professor Richet's with a sensitive, Madame X. Apart from the fact that Professor Richet vouches for the truthfulness of Madame X. (who is, moreover, a valued friend of my own), the incident here recorded bears its own hall-mark as a strongly evidential case of what will be diversely denoted as spirit communication or veridical hallucination, according to the point of view of the reader. If it is denoted as a veridical hallucination it will have to be admitted that it involves access on the part of the sensitive, Madame X., to facts not only unknown to her, but unknown to anyone with whom she was acquainted. The case is a remarkable one, and deserves to be most seriously considered by psychical students.

I do not feel competent to comment at all adequately on this (to me) fascinating book. If I were asked what I had to say about it, I should reply in two words, 'Read it'; and I should feel that those two words, if acted on, would be worth far more than any other comment I could make.

There are a few, perhaps, who may be impatient of the fact that, whilst the writer records with much ability and impartiality astounding facts which, as he admits, often seem to support forcibly the spirit hypothesis, he still expresses himself as at present unconvinced of the truth of that hypothesis. For my part, this seems to me no cause even for regret. The work he is doing by his patient and candid study will probably be more effectual on that account. Many of his readers will find themselves led unavoidably into convictions concerning the spiritual nature of man and the continuity of human individuality, as well as the persistence of the ties of affection and friendship, which the writer himself is unable to affirm, and they will recognise that these convictions are the result of an impartial consideration of facts, not of skilful special pleading.

Dr. Maxwell's own attitude towards those whose conclusions differ from his is so admirable, and his open-minded readiness to be convinced so satisfactory, that it is really quite unnecessary to be impatient with the caution and reserve he displays. There is a French saying, 'Reculez, pour mieux sauter.' The expression of his convictions as to the interpretation of the facts, whatever they may be when he is prepared to make it, will carry the more weight in proportion to the conscientious reticence he now shows.

I am only expressing what will be the feeling of many readers when I say that I feel that English students owe a debt of gratitude both to Dr. Maxwell himself and to his excellent translator.

H. A. DALLAS.

A HINDU REPLY TO MISS WARD.

[The following letter has been much abridged. As it reached us it was far too long, and we had no alternative but to reduce it considerably, but we think that we have retained the most salient passages.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

As an immediate disciple of the Mahatma Agamya Guru Paramahansa, and one of his lecturers in the anti-theosophical movement now on foot here, I am in a position to reply to Miss Ward's communication in your journal of May 13th.

For the accuracy of a certain inspired extract from a private letter Miss Ward declares she can personally vouch. Will Miss Ward give the name of this extraordinary correspondent who sends an unsigned statement so completely at variance with facts?

The great agitation which our movement created in Benares is ludicrously misrepresented by Miss Ward's correspondent, and it is high time that theosophical calumnies of India's greatest scholar and Mahatma, and their inaccurate teachings, both here and in England, should cease. We are, therefore, forthwith determined to make the public fully aware, through the Press and by lectures, of the corrupt position Theosophy really holds, and when we have thoroughly presented our objections as Hindus, and fully informed the West on the question, our work, as far as Europe is concerned, will be over, and the public can then take what course it likes. But, in India, English people may rest assured that we intend to persist in our war of opposition till the small theosophical influence which yet remains has been completely swept away.

We will deal as briefly as possible with the inaccuracies contained in Miss Ward's letter. First of all, concerning the statement to the effect that only the illiterate attended our meetings, we presume that the sprinkling of decent people referred to, at the first lecture, are the four or five college students (Theosophists) who came apparently for the purpose of making a disturbance. They were expelled by the influential majority, and the Theosophists were afterwards forbidden admission by public notice, the magistrate being informed by us. In India all religious feuds lead to excitement, and the presence of police officers at meetings is a very ordinary matter.

The Government authorities were quite happy to give us all assistance, and the statement that the police closed our meetings is from *beginning to end quite false*. Our three first lectures were held in the Town Hall, a building capable of accommodating four to five thousand people, seated and standing. This hall was *crowded*. The lectures, delivered in various languages, proceeded daily for one week, and then intermittently for three weeks in various localities, and all were largely attended. The loose statement contributed to 'LIGHT', that the meetings were attended by the illiterate only, is grossly absurd. The whole of Benares had risen against Theosophy; the Arya Samajists, the Hindu merchants, and the priests on the Ganges bank, simultaneously held their anti-theosophical meetings.

No theosophical teacher has been found to come forward to defend their position or demonstrate their learning, and this although we have continually attacked them in the Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras papers. Why has not Miss Ward's correspondent thought fit to strike at us openly in India, where the society has been given every opportunity? We can only conclude that it is because of their inability to justify their position before the Hindus, who know very well that they have no real learning nor influence at their command.

The present Hindu movement against Theosophy is not the outcome of animosity or personal bias, but the effect of a righteous indignation on the part of orthodox Hindus against the long course of wrong teachings emanating from the theosophical leaders. Mrs. Besant has greatly outraged the susceptibilities of our countrymen by giving publicity to statements that are direct insults to our judgment and ancient philosophical literature, and we were also informed of many serious complaints against the *un-Hindu way* in which her college is carried on. The following are some of the preposterous statements by which she hopes to attract the credulous Hindus: (1) She claims to see by her supernatural powers that she was a Brahmin in her last birth (this is a particularly offensive statement to a Brahmin mind); (2) that her Theosophy is *pre-Vedic*; (3) their teachers are on the invisible plane; (4) a grotesque interpretation of the Vedanta theory of reincarnation; (5) her attack on the Indian priesthood; (6) her pretensions to expound our deepest philosophy without knowing Sanskrit (the language in which our sacred books are written).

As to H.H. Mahatma Agamya Guru Paramahansa, we are not surprised to find that Theosophists have at last broken their long silence by abusing and belittling this greatest of all Indian sages. Here in India he is universally respected. No

one would breathe a word against him, knowing as they do his life's work dedicated to the support of truth and knowledge. H.H. Mahatma Agamya is the first of philosophers, Yogins, and Sanskritists, and thousands of priests are ready to act under his control. We are sorry to find that theosophical leaders have confused our important inquiries, and intend to defend their side by depreciating our great Gurus. By so doing they are to the Hindus like atheists who abuse God. Dogs will bark in the absence of the tiger, but they dare not face him! Mrs. Besant has known our Mahatma since she first came to India, and she will remember that ten years ago, when she was persecuted by a fanatical lecturer, who followed her from Multan to Karachee, and so agitated her that she could not lecture, she appealed to a certain 'pleader,' who called on H.H. the Mahatma, and requested him to use his influence to stop such mischievous actions. This our Mahatma did, and subsequently Mrs. Besant lectured unmolested. This he did because she was an Englishwoman, though he always refused to meet her. She cannot pretend to ignore that in Benares, on the occasion of the lectures, Mahatma Agamya instructed his disciples to work calmly, and not to resort to personal attacks, and when later a fanatical president began to use abusive language, and was complained of, immediate steps were taken by ourselves to prevent his further attendance at our meetings. But we do not consider ourselves responsible for the public abuse Mrs. Besant was subjected to in all public places in Benares, and by every class, during the campaign. Indian Theosophists know very well that if the calumny which appeared in 'LIGHT' had been published in an Indian journal, the whole country would have been speedily roused to the greatest indignation, and the name of Theosophy would become an abomination. Only in England do the English Theosophists dare to vilify India's holy men, because they are aware of the public ignorance of the matters. Our Preceptor is far too great to require fame by attacking an insignificant society. He is fighting for the truth, and for the respect of his country's religious belief. We shall leave any further vindication (if required) of his character and name in the hands of his English disciples, who will be able to impress the English people with the truth of our statement.

GOVINDA RAO MYSORE, B.A., LL.B.

Address: High Court, Bombay, India.

Since the above reached us another letter has come to hand from Mrs. J. Stannard, who requests us to lay before our readers the copy of a telegram which she has received from the Benares magistrate in answer to her inquiry whether the police had put a closure on the anti-theosophical meetings in that town, as stated in Miss Ward's communication which appeared in 'LIGHT' of May 13th. The magistrate's reply was: 'The police did not stop anti-theosophic meeting.' Mrs. Stannard says that the original of this telegram is in the hands of a London gentleman, whose name and address she gives us.

EXPERIENCES OF FATHER GAPON.

In the current number of the 'Strand Magazine,' Father Gapon, the Russian revolutionist, has begun to tell the Story of his Life. Speaking of the loss of his wife, he narrates the following experiences:—

'I believed then, and I believe now, in the spirit of God; but since the death of my wife, and the period of stupor that followed that terrible loss, I had to live through some experiences that are responsible for an addition to the number of my earlier beliefs. One of these experiences was, indeed, the fulfilment of a dream my wife had a month before she died, when she saw, or thought she saw, herself being buried, and told me all about it immediately afterwards. She entered into all the details of who would speak and officiate, and how I would act, and so on, and all this was fulfilled to the letter.'

'Another experience was this. One night I had been working late, and at about 1 a.m. I lay down on a couch, but did not, as I believe, fall asleep. Suddenly I saw the form of my dead wife enter the room, come near to me, and bend as though to kiss me. I jumped up, throwing off the coverlet, and, as I stood, I saw through the door a kind of wraith in the corridor. I rushed out, and found that the curtains in the adjoining room were burning. No doubt through the negligence of a servant, a lamp before the icon had burst and set fire to the drapery; and as the house was of wood, and it was summer, if I had not come in at that moment there might have been a calamity.'

'A third experience I may mention was a dream in which I saw myself hunted and seized by a figure which, as I felt, was my Fate. Since then I have believed in predestination, and in some connection between the living and the dead.'

'UNRECOGNISED SPIRIT FRIENDS.'

'TWO VIEWS OF SPIRITUALISM.'

In the correspondence column of 'LIGHT,' June 10th, there appeared a short letter, entitled 'Missing Friends,' which tentatively suggested incalculable scope for spiritualistic research.

This letter appealed to me forcibly, and after careful consideration I submitted to the Editor a scheme for work along these lines; the result being that with his approval I am permitted to invite the co-operation of my brother and sister Spiritualists in testing its practical utility.

It is within the experience of all who attend séances that innumerable entities from the spirit side of life are from various causes attracted to the circle, the chief reason being that many of them are vainly seeking for friends still in the body; and the incentive of their hitherto fruitless quest being the continuity of that love whose 'holy flame for ever burneth.' Sometimes also the pangs of awakened conscience do not permit the disquieted spirit to rest in peace until some earthly wrong is righted; or perhaps some unseen guardian (possessing an extended range of spiritual vision) is filled with anxiety respecting some impending danger menacing the beloved one left behind, to whom a solicitous warning might prove helpful.

In many cases both Christian and surname are submitted to the circle, together with personal details tending to assist recognition, such as the type of malady causing the spirit to pass over, and his mundane occupation, or environment. Again, he may make sundry affirmations concerning other members of his family, as well as portraying to clairvoyant observation his physical form, objects and scenes calculated to determine spirit identity.

To work my scheme three distinct things are necessary: (1) That such details given by communicating spirits be carefully recorded at séances; (2) that a kind of 'psychic bureau' be established, where authenticated records are systematised; and (3) that some public channel be available wherein periodical lists of unrecognised spirit friends are published as deemed advisable.

For the first of these I invite records from any Spiritualists to whom unknown spirits, giving coherent and detailed information, are persistently coming, at the same time courteously requesting that points of special interest be stated as clearly and concisely as possible; and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed where a reply is desired.

As regards the second, it is my intention, after receiving such details, to enter them into a book for permanent reference; whilst for the adequate fulfilment of my third requirement, permission is granted me by the Editor to publish from time to time in 'LIGHT' a list of the names, and brief details, thus given by spirits anxious for identification.

Should any of these prove familiar to the readers of that paper, I will, upon hearing from them, forward all the particulars submitted to me; or should be pleased, at a personal interview, to permit a perusal of the original letter, and, where practicable, bring my two correspondents together, provided that the elements of ultimate success present themselves.

As the establishment of spirit identity essentially constitutes the basis of Modern Spiritualism, assuredly the latent possibilities of such a scheme can but appeal to every progressive investigator; for good results would not only yield to the sceptical conclusive proof of conscious continuity surviving physical dissolution, but also enable us to minister sympathetically to the psychic needs of desolate wanderers from beyond the borderland.

EFFIE BATHE.

16, Loveday-road, Ealing, W.

TRANSITION.—Mr. William Oxley, of Manchester, passed peacefully to spirit life on Thursday, June 29th. Mr. Oxley was an ardent Spiritualist for many years, and in 1881 published a work entitled 'The Philosophy of Spirit, illustrated by a new version of the Bhagavat Gita,' which he followed, in 1889, with a 'history of the various Messianic claimants,' entitled 'Modern Messiahs and Wonder-Workers.' He has also published a series of volumes, for circulation among his personal friends, entitled 'Angelic Revelations,' containing records of communications from the other side.

In the article from the 'Banner of Light,' quoted in 'LIGHT,' of June 17th, a distinction is made between 'Spiritists' and 'Spiritualists,' a distinction which I have seen made at various times in your columns, and in a sense generally unfavourable to the category designated as 'Spiritists.' These latter, according to the article in question, confine themselves to a belief in communion with the spirit world, without regard to 'ethics, religion, and human progress.'

I had considered these two denominations as intended to represent two opposing doctrines—reincarnation and anti-reincarnation. Perhaps I am mistaken in this respect, and, if so, I should be very glad to have the error rectified. Is not the French word 'spirite' the equivalent of the English word 'spiritist'?

However this may be, I can assert that the opinion stated above is absolutely not in conformity with the reality, as regards *Spiritisme*, in the Latin countries. The words *spirite* and *spiritisme* were adopted by Allan Kardec about fifty years ago, to avoid all confusion between the Spiritualists who believe in a future life without admitting communication between our world and the world of spirits, and those who accept and practise this communication. The whole of the French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese literature has adopted these terms, and we very rarely meet with the word 'spiritiste,' which is only used, I believe, by those who are unfamiliar with our doctrines and our vocabulary.

As to the moral, religious, and philosophical aspect of *Spiritisme*, it is presented in the most complete and philosophical manner in the works of the illustrious propagandist, which are now spread abroad throughout the world.

To give an idea of the scope of the doctrine recognised by Allan Kardec, I cannot do better than simply copy the titles of the principal volumes. The first is 'Spiritualist Philosophy—the Book of Spirits, containing the principles of the *spirite* doctrine of the immortality of the soul, the nature of spirits, and their relations with men; the moral laws, the present life, and the future life, and the future of humanity.'

Next comes: 'Experimental Spiritism—the Book of Mediums, containing the theory of all kinds of manifestations, the means of communicating, the difficulties and obstacles.'

Then: 'The Gospel according to Spiritism, containing the explanation of the moral maxims of Christ, their concordance with Spiritism, and their application to the various positions in life.'

Two other works conceived in the same spirit are: 'Heaven and Hell, or Divine Justice according to Spiritism,' and 'Genesis, Miracles, and Predictions, according to Spiritism,' in which are discussed and explained the principal points of difference between the current doctrines and those proclaimed by the spirits and passed through the crucible of reason.

Of these works, one only—'The Book of Spirits'—has been translated into English, by Anna Blackwell, if I am not mistaken, and it is a great pity, for they all bear the imprint of admirable science and logic.

But from these titles alone one may take account of the powerful philosophy which distinguished Allan Kardec, and it will be understood how his books have spread abroad in profusion and made numerous adherents in all countries.

If Spiritism had not had as its principal aim the development of morality and human progress, which still left much to be desired after a score of centuries of mutilated Christianity, it is very improbable that it would have spread as we have seen during the last half century. Note also that this progress must be much greater than can be stated, the fear of ridicule or even of persecution preventing large numbers from declaring themselves openly. But the constant dissensions among sects of all denominations are a proof of the work which is being accomplished, and the admitted urgency of a complete transformation in the direction of ideas, moral, social, and religious. The theories in vogue even now among the ruling classes have been battered in on all sides, and their only safety against the invasion of materialism is the support which they would obtain from the spirit doctrine.

It is evident that, in addition to the social question, of which the solution is very problematical, the unrighteous wars instigated by so-called Christian governments tend to drive away the masses from the official religions which have such sad results.

Please excuse the length of this letter, on a subject which would call for development at even greater length.

LOUIS GARDY.

Geneva.

[The word 'Spiritualism' has different significations in French and English. In French, as M. Gardy observes, it stands for spiritual religion. In England and America it is often used equally for those who appreciate higher spiritual truths and for mere phenomena-hunters; but many of our adherents think that a distinction ought to be made, and that those interested in the phenomena only should be called 'Spiritists.'—ED. 'LIGHT.']

BABYLONIAN MAGIC AND RELIGION.

Mr. William Loftus Hare, the author of 'The World's Religion Series' now being published in sixpenny booklets by C. W. Daniel, 3, Amen-corner, E.C., has certainly the art of packing a large amount of information into a very small compass. His 'Babylonian Religion' (No. 4 of the series) is a survey of the ancient religion of the Euphrates Valley, and presents the subject with a precision that one might fail to obtain from a perusal of the original works from which this attractive little summary has been compiled.

The subject of the book in question has a peculiar interest for occult inquirers, because it illustrates the close connection between religious ceremonial and magical practices, and between the modern idea of spirits and the ancient conception of life underlying the sensible world. This conception goes back to the most ancient times. Mr. Hare says:—

'The primitive systems of religion called Animism, Fetishism, Shamanism, and Totemism, all presuppose a belief that every sensible object in nature encloses, or is possessed by, a *spirit* which is the *life* of the thing. In the ancient Chaldean magical tablets the spirits are known as *Zi*; every perceptible object in nature, and, if we mistake not, every word also, had a *Zi*.'

The early Chaldean system was an adoration of these spirits, who were thought to cause evil and good, to guide the movements of the heavenly bodies, and to regulate all the processes of life in Nature. We may regard this as an early expression of the conception that all force is a manifestation of life-force, but the notion of a supreme unity does not appear to have been part of this primitive idea. There was, instead, a general grouping of these spirit influences into good and evil forces, which were constantly in conflict, like the *divs* and *feroers* of Zoroastrianism, or the angels and demons of more familiar religions. As in all other systems, the aid of the good spirits could be invoked, and the bad ones could be propitiated or exorcised.

Among these spirits, certain ones were fixed upon for special honours, either from the fact of their ruling the heavenly bodies, especially the sun and moon, or the earth itself, or because they had dominion in countries or cities; or again because, with a deep psychological insight, they were held to represent the Collective Spiritual Entity of the people. As Mr. Hare says:—

'The truth is that every nation and man is led by a *dominant affection*, to which, in religion, he tries to give expression. Man is a sensitive creature, and in the region of his mysterious sub-consciousness he is drawn to, or repelled by, powers that are to him his Gods. These gods live in the race, in the common mind, and they are real to the individual mind. No matter how little or how much a race has evolved towards perfection, they are the great *Ideals* of which the individual has a vision, either clear or confused. Consequently to speak slightly of the Gods of Babylon is to only play lightly with the nomenclature left to us by the ancient devotees.'

An interesting feature of this work is the comparison of the Creation scheme of the Pentateuch with that given in the Babylonian tablets, with an explanatory diagram showing the firmament, the earth, and the waters above and below.

A JAPANESE PRACTICAL MYSTIC.

'La Nuova Parola' for June contains a highly interesting interview with a Japanese Professor of Experimental Psychology in the University of Tokio, Mr. Yujiro Motora. Speaking of the predominance in Japan of the materialistic current of thought received by contact with the West, Professor Motora says that, among the people in general, Spiritualism lives and survives in its lower forms; that, even among the educated, materialism has not conquered—it is only a varnish which has a tendency to tinge the whole of scientific thought, because material science is part of the need of the age; but it does not represent the inner sentiments of the Japanese mind.

The Japanese, continues the professor, are not so much given to purely abstract conceptions as are the Indian races. The Japanese reconcile science and metaphysics; but the point of contact is not in abstraction, but in reality. This arises from the fact that they do not assume a sharp antithesis between the subjective and the objective, and they do not dispute which of them is the real, because they recognise the reality that resides in each. The apparent antagonism merely arises from the conditions of man's normal waking consciousness. Unaware of the special nature of these conditions, and unable to place itself outside of them, Western philosophy has assumed that they are absolute bases of reality, and has been built up entirely upon them. Therefore it has become spiritualist or materialist, idealist or positivist, according as it gravitated towards one extreme or the other, but in any case it has been the prisoner of its own illusion.

In the East, the professor went on to say, methods are known by which it is possible to so radically change the psychological condition of the individual that he is enabled to recognise the relativity of the opposition between subjective and objective. These two extremes are reconciled in a higher condition of consciousness, a higher form of life, which may seem to be at once a negation and a sublimation of the human personality. This is not the 'subliminal consciousness' of which science speaks to-day, but a more profound and complete activity, which concerns the most inward portions of our nature, and which is capable of solving the highest problems.

The professor goes on to describe the 'Zen' monasteries, belonging to a Buddhist sect of that name, to which anyone who is so inclined can retire for temporary meditation, and for the development of these special faculties, which is mainly produced by entering upon a calm mental state, not exactly passive, but in which the attention is not devoted to any one thing, but is evenly distributed in all directions, producing a sort of void and 'waiting.' The spirit obtains entire repose and a satisfaction of the thirst for the ideal. The professor has himself experienced this, and from that moment things assumed a different aspect, and problems were transformed, as though a veil had fallen.

An interesting feature in this retirement is that it is sought by scientific and practical men, by statesmen and generals; and it is said that the force which accumulates within them by practising the 'Zen' methods is of effective service to them in practical life. This is frequently the case with officials, and with several generals who have taken part in the present war. In fact, Professor Motora is convinced that their success is partly due to this cause. As Lord Rosebery said of Cromwell, a practical mystic is a power in the world.

MYSTICISM IN ART.—From Herr J. Deml, Editor and publisher of the 'Studium,' of Babice-Lesonice, Austria, we have received a series of illustrations, being studies from sculptures and other works of art by Franz Bilek, a young Bohemian artist, who illustrates 'Life' and its purpose in a series of highly mystical conceptions, starting from the sense of our blindness with regard to the higher truths, and passing through the range of human experience, the lessons brought to us by wife and child, the search for beauty, truth, and knowledge, until the completion of our spiritual evolution has taught us to say, 'I believe' and 'I know.' Bilek's works have been exhibited in Vienna, Munich, Leipzig, Hamburg, and now at Berlin, having been received with great favour by Continental critics. His art has been compared to that of William Blake, the illustrator of Dante, and his philosophy to that of Swedenborg. The studies are published in a series of paper portfolios, each containing about seven or eight illustrations, at 4frs. each part.

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A POOR SUBSTITUTE.

The Editor of the 'Open Court,' in his June number, gives us a brief paper on 'The Immortality of the Soul,' in reply to Mr. Thaddeus B. Wakeman, who also contributes a Paper on the same subject; but his reply will not, we should say, greatly disturb Mr. Wakeman. The Editor sums up Mr. Wakeman's contribution in an amusingly curt way. 'His verdict,' he says, 'is very direct and simple. Quoting Haeckel, he denies the possibility of the occurrence (a spirit test), and hence refuses to consider the argument. There must be an error somewhere, and thus the case is disposed of.'

That looks unreasonable, but it is quite a common case. 'It is not possible; therefore it is not true,' is pretty much the verdict of the world with regard to experiences beyond the customary and the conventional. But the Editor of 'The Open Court,' while he deprecates this, and professes to have 'a mind to let,' comes to much the same conclusion. Personal persistence after bodily death is quite as obnoxious to him as it is to Mr. Wakeman or to Haeckel. It is true that he discerns something beyond the physical. Thought, he says, is exceedingly real but it is not physical. 'There is no thinking without brain, but the brain is only the material condition in which thinking is realised. The thoughts themselves are not material.' That is promising, and we read on expectantly, and, at first, are not disappointed. 'Soul,' he says, 'is the meaning and purpose of some living substance. It is not the substance but that unsubstantial something which gives character to it, and anyone who declares that it is non-existent because it is purely formal and relational, and not material, would be driven to the paradoxical conclusion that the non-existent is more important in the material world than all the innumerable concrete material objects.' That again is hopeful, and we venture to draw the conclusion that the real self is the thought-self—the thought-self that uses the physical instrument and that can survive it: and, for a moment, we think we have got the Editor of 'The Open Court' safely to land, especially when he adds, 'so we are not annihilated in death, and shall continue in the life of the generations to come.'

Alas! that is fatal, for it turns out that this persistence of ours is only persistence of influence, and not of a thought-self at all. According to the Editor we shall continue to live only as ideas, emotions and all the rest of it in those we have influenced. What he calls 'the soul' of Christ is not a real Christ, but is only the sum total of his influence in history. 'In the same sense,' he says, 'a

father and a mother live on in their children, a teacher in his pupils, each one in the memory of his friends, martyrs and heroes in their cause, &c. And this immortality is not an illusion, nor a mere phrase, but a living power exercising a decisive influence upon the actions of mankind.' We do not think so. The 'decisive influence' may be so, but we contend that to call this 'immortality' is an abuse of established words. 'Whatever a man does,' says the Editor, 'lives after him according to the nature of his deeds, and these deeds, the traces which they produce, the memories which they leave, the effects in which they are perpetuated, are nothing foreign to him, but in them dwells the quintessence of his soul. It is he himself.' We beg his pardon. A man's deeds are not 'himself.' A man's deeds are his deeds, and the man remains apart when his deeds are done. He can reflect upon them. He can regret them. He can try to undo them or to atone for them. He is disciplined, educated and unified by them. No: it won't do to try to palm off such thin conjuring tricks upon us. 'A man's a man for a' that'; and we verily believe that only a dose of the Wakeman preconceived prejudice prevents the Editor seeing it.

But there is still hope. The Editor of 'The Open Court' tells us that he once took a course of Psychical Research, though without result, but he still looks that way. 'I deem it wise,' he says, 'from time to time to study critically the work of others and see whether they have furnished the world with new facts that would necessitate a revision of our present views. Their views may be untenable from the standpoint of science, yet our own view may also stand in need of emendation, or at least modification.' This is a sensible attitude, and we hope it will in time bring conviction to a thinker we should like to win.

As for Mr. Wakeman, he seems to be hopeless—more hopeless even than Mr. Podmore who, at all events, does continue to flutter round the rose. Mr. Wakeman's Paper is on Dr. Funk's book, 'The Widow's Mite,' which he impudently calls and treats as a 'practical joke,' simply because it tells the story of a spirit-test which, if true, would upset all Mr. Wakeman's little apple cart philosophy. Dr. Funk has called in and consulted 'forty-two experts, chiefly professors of physics and psychics in our leading universities and colleges, commencing with the voluminous Professor James of Harvard.' But Mr. Wakeman dismisses the lot with a gay wave of the hand. Why, he asks, did not Dr. Funk make a preliminary inquiry of a biologist, Professor Haeckel for instance? Then he quotes Haeckel 'on this very point,' to the effect that it is 'perfectly absurd to expect a personal immortality,' because 'the soul of man has been recognised as the totality of brain functions.'

Mr. Wakeman entirely gives himself away in citing Haeckel as the authority on this subject. It is notorious that he belongs to the past, and is hidebound with conclusions concerning matter which have had their day. All he can do is to collect and republish his old writings, and add restless references to insights he neither desires nor understands.

MARRIAGE.—'The Sunflower' says: 'Marriages are composed of three kinds—the sensual, the worldly, and the spiritual—the love in connection with them comporting with the attained soul status of the individual and is as sweet to the first-named as to the last. The first-named, however, are the most general, being based on physical affinity—as the sense consciousness dictates. The next are effects of environment, convenience, circumstance or convention. The last-named are those of the heart—soul affinities attracted to each other regardless of material conditions, and constituting the minority. If all marriages were of the latter order the human race would soon realise what is meant by "Peace on earth, good will to men."'

A MAORI SEANCE.

Mr. Thomas Everitt has called our attention to a book which he has in his possession entitled 'Old New Zealand' by 'A Pakeha Maori,' that is, by one who did not belong to the Aborigines, but was a European settler to whom, as to all foreigners residing amongst them, the term 'Pakeha' was applied. The book (second edition) was published in Auckland in 1863. The author, apparently an Englishman, remarks that 'contact with the British settlers has of late years effected a marked and rapid change in the manners and mode of life of the natives, and the Maori of the present day are as unlike what they were when I first saw them as they are still unlike civilised people or British subjects.' Whatever the Maori may do now it is clear from the extract which we subjoin, and which the writer declares to be 'in every particular literally true,' that at one time they held seances, conducted by a 'tohunga' or priest, for communication with their departed friends:—

A young chief, who had been very popular and greatly respected in his tribe, had been killed in battle; and, at the request of several of his nearest friends, the *tohunga* [priest] had promised on a certain night to call up his spirit to speak to them, and answer certain questions they wished to put. The priest was to come to the village of the relations, and the interview was to take place in a large house common to all the population. This young man had been a great friend of mine; and so, the day before the event, I was sent to by his relations, and told that an opportunity offered of conversing with my friend once more. I was not much inclined to bear a part in such outrageous mummery, but curiosity caused me to go. Now it is necessary to remark that this young chief was a man in advance of his times and people in many respects. He was the first of his tribe who could read and write; and, amongst other unusual things for a native to do, he kept a register of deaths and births, and a journal of any remarkable events which happened in the tribe. Now this book was lost. No one could find it, although his friends had searched unceasingly for it, as it contained many matters of interest, and also they wished to preserve it for his sake. I also wished to get it, and had often inquired if it had been found, but had always been answered in the negative. The appointed time came, and at night we all met the priest in the large house I have mentioned. Fires were lit, which gave an uncertain flickering light. The priest retired to the darkest corner. All was expectation, and the silence was only broken by the sobbing of the sister, and other female relations of the dead man. They seemed to be, and indeed were, in an agony of excitement, agitation, and grief. This state of things continued for a long time, and I began to feel, in a way surprising to myself, as if there was something real in the matter. The heart-breaking sobs of the women, and the grave and solemn silence of the men, convinced me, that to them at least, this was a serious matter. I saw the brother of the dead man now and then wiping the tears in silence from his eyes. I wished I had not come, for I felt that any unintentional symptom of incredulity on my part would shock and hurt the feelings of my friends extremely; and yet, whilst feeling thus, I felt myself more and more near to believing in the deception about to be practised. The real grief, and also the general undoubting faith, in all around me, had this effect. We were all seated on the rush-strewn floor; about thirty persons. The door was shut; the fire had burnt down, leaving nothing but glowing charcoal. The room was oppressively hot. The light was little better than darkness; and the part of the room in which the *tohunga* sat was now in perfect darkness. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, a voice came out of the darkness. 'Salutation!—salutation to you all!—salutation!—salutation to you my tribe!—family, I salute you!—friends, I salute you!—friend, my pakeha friend, I salute you.' The high-handed daring imposture was successful; our feelings were taken by storm. A cry expressive of affection and despair, such as was not good to hear, came from the sister of the dead chief, a fine, stately, and really handsome woman of about five-and-twenty. She was rushing, with both arms extended, into the dark, in the direction from whence the voice came. She was instantly seized round the waist and restrained by her brother by main force, till moaning and fainting she lay still on the ground. At the same instant another female voice was heard from a young girl who was held by the wrists by two young men, her brothers. 'Is it you?—is it you?—truly is it you!—*ae!* / *ae!* / they hold me, they restrain me; wonder not that I have not followed you; they restrain me, they watch me, but I go to you. The sun shall not rise, the sun shall not rise, *ae!* / *ae!* /' Here she fell insensible on the rush floor, and with the sister was carried out. The remaining

women were all weeping and exclaiming, but were silenced by the men who were themselves nearly as much excited, though not so clamorous. I, however, did notice that two old men, who sat close to me, were not in the slightest degree moved in any way, though they did not seem at all incredulous, but quite the contrary. The spirit spoke again. 'Speak to me, the tribe!—speak to me, the family!—speak to me, the pakeha!' The 'pakeha,' however, was not at the moment inclined for conversation. The deep distress of the two women, the evident belief of all around him of the presence of the spirit, the 'darkness visible,' the novelty of the scene, gave rise to a state of feeling not favourable to the conversational powers. Besides, I felt reluctant to give too much apparent credence to an imposture, which at the very same time, by some strange impulse, I felt half ready to give way to. At last the brother spoke—'How is it with you?—is it well with you in that country?' The answer came—(the voice all through, it is to be remembered, was not the voice of the *tohunga* but a strange, melancholy sound, like the sound of the wind blowing into a hollow vessel,)—'It is well with me—my place is a good place.' The brother spoke again—'Have you seen—, and—, and—?' (I forget the names mentioned.) 'Yes, they are all with me.' A woman's voice now from another part of the room anxiously cried out—'Have you seen my sister?' 'Yes, I have seen her.' 'Tell her my love is great towards her and never will cease.' 'Yes, I will tell.' Here the woman burst into tears and the pakeha felt a strange swelling of the chest, which he could in no way account for. The spirit spoke again. 'Give my large tame pig to the priest, (the pakeha was disenchanted at once,) and my double-gun.' Here the brother interrupted—'Your gun is a *manatunga*, I shall keep it.' He is also disenchanted, thought I, but I was mistaken. He believed, but wished to keep the gun his brother had carried so long. An idea now struck me that I could expose the imposture without showing palpable disbelief. 'We cannot find your book,' said I, 'where have you concealed it?' The answer instantly came, 'I concealed it between the *tahuhu* of my house and the thatch, straight over you as you go in at the door.' Here the brother rushed out,—all was silence till his return. In five minutes he came back *with the book in his hand*. I was beaten, but made another effort.—'What have you written in that book?' said I. 'A great many things.' 'Tell me some of them.' 'Which of them?' 'Any of them.' 'You are seeking for some information, what do you want to know? I will tell you.' Then suddenly—'Farewell, O tribe! farewell, my family, I go!' Here a general and impressive cry of 'farewell' arose from every one in the house. 'Farewell,' again cried the spirit, *from deep beneath the ground!* 'Farewell,' again from *high in air!* 'Farewell,' once more came moaning through the distant darkness of the night. 'Farewell!' I was for a moment stunned. The deception was perfect. There was a dead silence—at last. 'A ventriloquist,' said I:—'or—*perhaps* the devil.'

I was fagged and confused. It was past midnight; the company broke up, and I went to a house where a bed had been prepared for me. I wished to be quiet and alone; but it was fated there should be little quiet that night. I was just falling asleep, after having thought for some time on the extraordinary scenes I had witnessed, when I heard the report of a musket at some little distance, followed by the shouting of men and the screams of women. Out I rushed. I had a presentiment of some horrible catastrophe. Men were running by, hastily armed. I could get no information, so went with the stream. There was a bright flame beginning to spring up at a short distance, and every one appeared going in that direction: I was soon there. A house had been set on fire to make a light. Before another house, close at hand, a dense circle of human beings was formed. I pushed my way through, and then saw, by the bright light of the flaming house, a scene which is still fresh before me: there, in the verandah of the house, was an old grey-bearded man; he knelt upon one knee, and on the other he supported the dead body of the young girl who had said she would follow the spirit to spirit land. The young girl had secretly procured a loaded musket, tied a loop for her foot to the trigger, placed the muzzle to her tender breast, and blown herself to shatters. And the old man was her father, and a *tohunga*. A calm low voice now spoke close beside me, 'She has followed her *rangatira*,' it said. I looked round, and saw the famous *tohunga* of the night.

THE first volume of 'The Annals of Psychical Science,' consisting of the numbers from January to June of the present year, has just been issued, bound in pale blue cloth, at 6s. It contains important articles describing Professor Richet's researches, a defence of Mr. Stainton Moses, a plea for spirit intercourse by Mrs. Finch, &c.

SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION, LIMITED.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE AT BURNLEY.

The third annual general meeting of the Spiritualists' National Union, Limited (formerly the Spiritualists' National Federation), was held on Saturday last, the 1st inst., at the Co-operative Hall, Hammerton-street, Burnley. There was a good attendance of members and, judging from the various reports presented and the spirit of the meeting, the Union is in a more prosperous position than at any previous time. There has been a gratifying increase in the membership and a larger number of local societies are represented in the Union than has hitherto been the case.

During the past year the Union has lost three of its staunch supporters in Mr. Richard Fitton, of Manchester, one of the promoters; Mr. William Greenwood, the esteemed honorary treasurer for five years; and Mr. Alfred Smedley, of Belper.

Certificates have been granted to over eighty speakers and mediums (without examination), but whether they certify to ability, efficiency, or morality, or constitute their possessors 'official' or 'representative' speakers and mediums, does not appear, and the value of the certificates is therefore very problematical.

The general balance-sheet shows an income of nearly £150 during the year, and the Union possesses a balance in hand of over £80.

The propaganda work of the Union during the year was not particularly extensive or successful. Two Sunday meetings at Bolton, two meetings at Manchester, and two at Bradford, a series of meetings in North-East Lancashire, and a similar series in the Sheffield and Rotherham districts, were supplemented by visits by the president, Mr. J. J. Parr, to ten societies without fee or reward other than the consciousness of having served the cause. The funds still available for this work amount to £44 6s. 2d.

The National Fund of Benevolence, of which Mrs. M. H. Wallis was the honorary secretary, received £90 14s. 4d. in 130 donations, and disbursed £93 4s. 6d. in 159 grants of amounts varying from 2s. 6d. to 30s. The working expenses during the year amounted to £1 7s. 10d. The recipients of the grants, who reside in all parts of England, desire that their grateful thanks should be conveyed to all contributors to this fund, and the present secretary, Mr. W. Phillips, of 22, Bellott-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, appeals for the generous support of all Spiritualists.

There were about 200 persons present at the meeting, 109 of them being representative or associate members, the total membership of the Union being upwards of 230.

The president, Mr. J. J. Parr, in his opening address, expressed his pleasure at the satisfactory increase in the membership, and the number of societies represented in the Union, and referred to the publication of a list of speakers and demonstrators certified to work under the Union's auspices, and said that the Council 'naturally desire that those holding the certificates of the Union shall receive first consideration from societies affiliated with the Union, but at the same time it has no power to say who shall, or shall not, be engaged.' He looked with satisfaction on the progress of the cause and the broadening out of the minds of the leaders of religious thought. After a warm eulogy of the valued workers who had been translated by death to a higher sphere, he said that he trusted the subjects to be discussed would be thoughtfully dealt with in a brotherly spirit.

After a unanimous vote of condolence and sympathy with the relatives of Mr. R. Fitton, Mr. W. Greenwood, Mr. A. Smedley, Mr. William Oxley, Mrs. Butterfield, and Mr. James Booth, had been passed, the minutes of the last meeting were read, and also the credentials of the Rev. T. Grimshaw, from the National Spiritualists' Association of America; and Mr. Grimshaw was invited to a seat on the platform. A letter from Mr. J. C. Macdonald, expressing his regret at inability to attend, was received, and the secretary was instructed to send a sympathetic letter in reply.

A letter of greeting from Mr. J. J. Morse, on behalf of

Miss Morse and himself, was read, and received with applause. In it Mr. Morse expressed the hope of being again able to participate, in person, in the advantages and pleasures of the National Union's annual gathering. He thought that organisations should not be so rigid as to exclude the spirits from their councils, as without their manifestations through mediums Spiritualism would lose its distinctive character. He was pleased that the certification plan had not resulted in the disasters prophesied by some, and was confident of its still greater success when certain additional methods were associated with it.

The annual report of the Council, the reports of the Propaganda and Fund of Benevolence Committees, and the treasurer's report and balance-sheet, were all adopted unanimously. In reply to a question it was stated that the Fund of Benevolence was instituted to help distressed *Spiritualists*, and was not confined to mediums—but included, as far as the limits of the contributions allowed, all needy and deserving mediums and workers. The auditors reported that they found everything in perfect order, and the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, Mr. J. Adams (London); Vice-President, Mr. J. C. Macdonald; Treasurer, Mr. A. E. Button; Secretary, Mr. Hanson G. Hey; Council, Mr. J. J. Parr, Mrs. Greenwood, W. Phillips, J. Venables, H. Holgate, W. E. Long, W. Mason, Alf. Kitson and Mr. R. H. Yates.

Much time was expended in the reading of a Model Trust Deed by Mr. Tallent Bateman, the Union's solicitor, which, however, had to be postponed, and it was finally resolved that it should be printed and sent to all the members before the next general meeting.

It was decided that three members of the newly-elected Council should meet and confer with three representatives of the Lancashire Mediums' Union, and members of other Unions, with a view to secure closer co-operation; and also that in future a list of the names of the members of the Union should be printed and issued along with the annual report, and that no names of members should appear upon the list whose subscriptions have not been paid on March 31st.

The National Union accepted the invitation of the London Union of Spiritualists to hold the next conference in London. Votes of thanks to the officers and the Burnley friends for their kind hospitality closed the meeting.

On Sunday, the 2nd inst., at 10 a.m., a consultative conference was opened by Mr. J. J. Parr, President of the Union, and after Mr. W. Mason, speaking on behalf of the local societies, had cordially welcomed the visitors, Mr. E. W. Wallis read a paper entitled 'Some Thoughts on Mediumship,' in the course of which he made some suggestions regarding development, and referred to the alleged danger of obsession. He recommended sensitives to go through a preliminary course of reading and study, and to seek the advice of experienced Spiritualists. Speaking of the value of table movements, raps, and materialisations, he urged more co-operation with spirit people; more attention to the fitness of sitters, and deprecated the practice of holding promiscuous dark circles. He earnestly urged the cultivation of mediumship of all phases for the highest good.

A large number of speakers participated in the discussion which followed, and many interesting and useful comments and suggestions were made.

In the afternoon, at 2 o'clock, Mr. W. E. Long, in an earnest speech, dealt with the subject 'Our Devotional Attitude, is it all that is to be Desired?' and answered the question with an emphatic negative, and proceeded to examine the reasons for such an admission: (1) The peculiar nature of the services usually held by Spiritualists, in which a number of men and women who had received a revelation from the spirit world meet to proclaim the good news of immortal life; (2) the difficulty of holding communion with friends in the spirit world through the agency of the spiritual gifts or senses. Mr. Long said these two distinct purposes, now often held together, should be separated, and suggested that much of the present confusion that destroys the spirit of devotion in our midst would be avoided if the communion were held in the morning and the revelation or teaching were given at the evening service. The

members of each church should take part in that communion, inquirers being invited to be present to hear the messages and descriptions of their spirit friends, and to attend the service for revelation in the evening. 'Let Spiritualism be preached as the religion of our lives, by its mediums, with an earnest example of devotion and fervour, and the people will follow, to the mutual benefit of all, and our meetings will become a sanctuary for prayer, praise, peace, and power of life.'

The interesting discussions which followed the papers, both morning and afternoon, were well sustained and very useful. The speeches were all brief, to the point, varied, and thoughtful. There was no lack of speakers; in fact many who desired to speak had to be disappointed owing to the lapse of time, and a high tone was maintained throughout.

At the close of the afternoon session a resolution was unanimously adopted that credentials and a letter of introduction to the Spiritualists in South Africa should be given to Mrs. Ellen Green, to take with her when she goes to the Transvaal in the autumn of the present year. Several speakers paid high tribute to Mrs. Green's work as a medium, as speaker and clairvoyante, and to her worth as a woman. Mrs. Green made a bright little speech in acknowledging the recognition of her services to Spiritualism and the honour conferred upon her.

In the evening the hall was comfortably filled, and after an invocation by Mrs. M. H. Wallis, fine addresses were delivered by the chairman, Mr. J. J. Parr; by the president elect, Mr. J. Adams, of the Union of London Spiritualists; the Rev. T. Grimshaw, of St. Louis, U.S.A.; Mr. Lewis Firth, a young speaker from Halifax; Mr. J. Young, president of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists, and Mr. W. E. Long, of the Camberwell Church of the Spirit. Mr. Aaron Wilkinson gave several clairvoyant descriptions, which were readily recognised, and a resolution with regard to the proposed Act of Parliament with reference to the unemployed, proposed by the chairman and seconded by Mr. W. Johnson, was passed unanimously. The conference was one of the most successful and harmonious yet held by either the old Federation or the new Union.

SPIRITUALISM IN SHAKESPEARE.

Signor N. R. d'Alfonso, of Rome, has republished two articles on 'Spiritism according to Shakespeare,' in which he shows 'that Shakespeare was in possession of a doctrine of the apparition of spectres, which might be called *psychological spiritism*,' and which he illustrates in the actions of his personages.

The first of the two studies is on 'Macbeth.' The author shows how Macbeth, a brave warrior, but 'a man of mediocre physical constitution, with a great tendency to superstition and egotism,' is profoundly impressed with the speedy fulfilment of one of the predictions uttered by the witches—that he will be Thane of Cawdor, and thus conceives the idea of securing the other—the succession to the throne—by the murder of Duncan. But, courageous as he was in battle, he is weak and timid in committing a crime for his own personal interests. This crime, the author proceeds to show, is not the expression of his own full and free will; there is a division in his personality, the one portion opposing the other. He has not sufficient strength of mind to cause the portion which is supported by his conscience to overcome the one which is aided by his wife; and the division gives rise to a first hallucination, that of the dagger.

The author holds that when a division of personality arises from any cause, there is a liability to illusions and hallucinations, denoting that the primitive Ego has partly lost control of the entire personality. This tendency to hallucination becomes more acute in proportion as the higher portion of the nature ceases to control the lower portion; hence we have the repeated apparition of Banquo, which vanishes every time that the higher nature summons up force to assert itself, and cry, 'Unreal mockery, hence!'

The case of Lady Macbeth is even more striking. Her original force of character has become weakened by the troubles

that arose on her husband becoming king, and by the fear of the vengeance or machinations of those around the throne. The degeneration of the organism makes itself especially apparent during sleep, hence the somnambulism and the remorse manifested during that state. The result is more directly fatal than in the case of Macbeth himself, who, 'like several of Shakespeare's characters, moves in a sphere which resembles madness, and even confounds itself with that to some extent, without being real madness.'

In the essay on 'Hamlet,' the appearance of the ghost to the two watchers, who were afterwards joined by Horatio, to whom the ghost seemed to be trying to speak when it vanished at cock-crow, is discussed on the basis of predisposition by reason of the disturbed and apprehensive state of public feeling. Hamlet is, of course, even more predisposed to intercourse with spectres, being profoundly affected by the loss of his father and by his mother's re-marriage, both of which events threw him a great deal into himself. Horatio's account of the apparition augments his belief that his father's death was due to his uncle, and being greatly desirous of hearing what the spirit had to say, he was in the necessary psychic condition for seeing and hearing the supernatural. The author's treatment of this theme is not, to our mind, as thorough as in the case of Macbeth, and he seems to have more difficulty in reconciling the visions with purely internal psychic processes. Perhaps Shakespeare did not intend them to be so reconciled.

'IDEAS' OF A CONJURER.

An interview with a public conjurer, reported in the 'Daily News,' for June 24th, is of interest to Spiritualists from two points of view—first, as to how ideas come into the mind; secondly, as to the impossibility of performing feats such as the displacement of objects (so common in séances) without the aid of elaborate apparatus. On the first point the conjurer said:—

'I don't know where the ideas come from. I certainly am merely the instrument that receives them. And the receiver must constitute himself the recorder, or the ideas evaporate. It is strange, but the memory, so reliable in other respects, cannot retain these ideas. If one comes when I am walking along the street I must write it down at once. If one comes in the middle of the night, I must get out of bed and make the necessary notes. I learnt of the necessity for these memoranda from bitter experience. An idea came to me definite and complete, but when I tried to recall it later I had forgotten it. Afterwards I got into the way of making notes; but one night when an idea came I decided to jot it down in the morning, and meanwhile to impress it deeply on my memory. Next morning it had gone. I have thought and thought, but it won't come back. When two ideas come into my mind at the same time I simply cannot receive them simultaneously.'

We may add that this experience is common to all receptive individuals. It seems as though when an idea arises by reasoning, by the mental combination of previous ideas, giving rise to a new thought, the memory has the power to retrace this process at will; but that when a new idea arises spontaneously, 'from nowhere,' as people sometimes say, it is often not remembered on coming out of the passive or impressionable state. Therefore all such sensitives should be careful to note down their ideas while they are still in the mind.

The second point is stated as follows in the interview referred to. The conjurer is asked:—

'Can you, without changing your position, move that coat to a different peg?'

'No (he replies), not without an opportunity to make preliminary arrangements. You surely don't suppose tricks can be done without accessories. Do you know that when I go from city to city I take with me fifty-two pieces of baggage, weighing 7,500lb.?'

The conjurer is puzzled by the report of the 'Indian rope trick,' in which a man, performing in an open field, has thrown up a rope, which remained erect, and a boy climbed up and disappeared. Like many others, he can only explain this by collective hallucination, 'by hypnotising the audience into a conviction that they had seen it done.'

A MEDIUM'S TESTIMONY.

Among the many remarkable mediums in America who give evidences of their clairvoyant and other powers of psychic perception from the public platform, Mrs. Maggie Waite takes a high place for the clear and convincing descriptions of spirit people which she gives. In a recent issue of the 'Light of Truth' Mrs. Waite relates a number of incidents which have occurred in her mediumistic career; among others the following, which will be of interest to the readers of 'LIGHT.' Mrs. Waite says:—

'A gentleman by the name of William McKay, an inmate of the Soldiers' Home for a number of years, came to me early one Monday morning (March 16th, 1893), paralysed. In this condition he had been for a number of years, and all medical aid seemed to be of no avail. He came to me for a reading. After the reading I noticed him moving his fingers a little on the paralysed side. He remarked to me: "Madam, you are a healer." I told him no, that was not my power. He said: "I have not been able to move a finger for many years," and I told him if I could help him once I could do it again; and told him to come again the next day. I again held his hands, and the fingers moved more readily than they had on the first occasion. This commenced to arouse both his and my curiosity. We made an appointment for him to come again the following evening, and in the presence of over twenty members I treated him. On that occasion he went through what appeared to be an awful agony, the veins stood out on his forehead, the lips turned purple and the perspiration trickled down his face and a large lump moved slowly around his heart. The witnesses were fearful he would die on my hands, when slowly the lump commenced to move down the paralysed side of his limbs, and in a few moments he jumped to his feet with the words, "My God, I am cured." He walked across the floor without the aid of his crutches, screaming with joy. What I am now about to say may seem incredible, yet it will be proven authentic by writing to L. V. Molton, who was one of the witnesses, and who was at one time the attorney for the U.S.A. He still lives in Grand Rapids. On a Sunday evening William McKay was a cripple; on the following Thursday, just four days later, in the presence of over four hundred persons, he made the statement I have just made with tears streaming down his face, and then danced the "Virginia Reel" with Mrs. Winch, one of the oldest Grand Rapids mediums at that time. In gratitude for what I had done Mr. McKay made out an affidavit, which can be seen by anyone who goes to the office of this paper. The physicians of Grand Rapids claimed it was personal magnetism, and though it was marvellous the effects would wear off. About two years ago I was greatly surprised on answering the door bell to see standing there, hale and hearty, Mr. McKay. He then told me I had certainly cured him forever, as he had never had another stroke since. Now I didn't know I really possessed such a power and never used it, although I have been repeatedly asked to do so. This, I claim, was through spirit power.'

The following experience is the one which gave Mrs. Waite faith in her own psychic powers and impelled her to take up the work of public mediumship:—

'While I was sitting to develop this psychic power that I had since childhood, a number of influences came to me, but I could not make up my mind at that time that it was spirit power, but one came that proved beyond all doubt that the so-called dead can and do return to us under favourable conditions, and retain intelligence after dissolution has taken place.

'What purported to be the spirit of a little girl entranced me while I was sitting in my own home. She said her name was Maude Phillips and that she passed to spirit life when she was five years of age, with diphtheria. She also said her father and mother were living in Sacramento, a place I had not visited up to that time. She said they lived on Jay-street and gave me the address, which I have now forgotten. She said her father's name was Henry and her mother's name was Maude, and that now there was another baby in the home called Maude. She desired me to write to her father and mother and to tell them not to be so sad, that she was still living and that she didn't want her mother to cry over her pair of shoes, which were in a green box in an old-fashioned dresser drawer. I wrote as requested, never dreaming I would get a reply to my letter; but as time passed on every word of what she told me was proven authentic, as I got a letter from her father soon after, informing me that they had had a child named Maude who had died several years previously and that now there was another baby of the same name in their household. He said his name was Henry and his wife's name also was Maude,

but he said what puzzled him was that I should know about the little shoes, which were in a green box in the old-fashioned dresser drawer, as nobody outside himself and wife knew about it. He said his little girl had passed away with diphtheria and that her mother often cried over those little shoes. He said he would be in San Francisco in a few days and would call upon me for further information, which he did. His answer spurred me on to prove through my own instrumentality in my feeble way the continuity of life.'

Like most sensitives, Mrs. Waite had to suffer for her fidelity to her convictions, for, she says:—

'Upon entering the field of Spiritualism my mother disinherited me, giving me the choice between Spiritualism and herself. Being an only child, it was hard for me to make this choice, but the gates between the two worlds had swung open, and the veil was swept aside, proving to humanity that when a man dies he lives again.'

THE BAILEY SÉANCES AT MILAN.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

The results of the séances held early in last year with Mr. Bailey, at the rooms of the Society for Psychic Studies at Milan, are at last published in 'Luce e Ombra' for June. The following are the conclusions arrived at by the Committee of Investigation:—

The committee for the experiments with the medium Bailey, having met for the purpose of drawing up its conclusions with regard to them, while it deplores:—

(a) The strange obstinacy of the medium, who would never allow himself to be completely stripped; (b) that conditions of darkness had to be put up with at the critical moments of the *apports*; (c) that on account of the limited time allowed for the research, and from the nature of the phenomena, no method could be applied by which the process and nature of the same could be scientifically determined; is on the other hand obliged to state:—

I. That during the whole course of the seventeen séances, in the searches made on the person of the medium by different individuals and by various tests, there was never anything met with that could justify the hypothesis of fraud; that, even if an approximate explanation could be found for some of the phenomena, there were others, such as the *apport* of living birds, the instantaneous disappearance of another bird, &c., for which it does not appear possible to furnish any probable explanation.

II. That, on the other hand, the hypothesis of suggestion becomes inadmissible in consideration of the number of spectators, the changes made in them, and in their arrangement, as well as of the material traces which remained.

In view of these facts the committee, while reserving its opinion as to the archaeological value of some of the *apports*, considers itself justified in coming to a conclusion, on the whole, in favour of the objectivity of the facts, and calls the attention of science to these phenomena, which are not thoroughly explained by the laws of matter at present known.

With regard to the physical constitution of Bailey, the committee refers to the declaration by Dr. Francesco Ferrari, given below.

(Signed)

ANGELO BACCIGALUPPI.	ANGELO MARZORATI.
ACHILLE BRIOSCHI.	ODORICO ODORICO.
DR. EMILIO CLERICETTI.	GIACOMO REDAELLI.
ORESTE CIPRIANI.	DR. EUGENIO GRIFFINI.
DR. FRANCESCO FERRARI.	

DR. FERRARI'S REPORT.

I had occasion to examine the medium Bailey during his stay in Milan, on account of a cold. I did not find any abnormality: he is a man of middle height; blond; skeleton and muscles regular; rather thin. Although I carefully examined the lungs and heart, I only found them normal; also the stomach and other organs were in excellent condition. I do not remember noticing any special deformity on the body, except a slight depression of the sternum like that found in shoemakers. He told me it was a congenital deformity. I found the reflexes, the sensibility to touch and pain, perfectly normal in every way. On the whole, he appeared to me a very average man, and in good condition.

(Signed) DR. FRANCESCO FERRARI.

'Luce e Ombra' publishes further notes and criticisms, which we must leave for consideration in another issue.

SPIRITUALIST GARDEN PARTIES.

Notwithstanding the unfavourable outlook on Saturday morning last, a number of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance availed themselves of the invitation so kindly given by Mr. and Mrs. André to spend the day at their delightfully situated home at Tonbridge, Kent. Lunch and tea were partaken of on the lawn, and music, boating, and rambles amid the charming scenery, were much enjoyed by those present, and in the evening 'Clairibelle' kindly gave some successful clairvoyance and psychometry. After a cordial vote of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. André for their generous entertainment, the party returned to town by the 9.19 p.m. train. Many thanks are also due to the members of the party who helped to entertain, especially to Mrs. Steed-Sykes, Dr. Berks Hutchinson, Mr. Wreitch, and 'Clairibelle.'

Our friends are requested to notice that the garden parties announced in 'LIGHT' are open to any Member or Associate of the Alliance. The party referred to in last week's 'LIGHT' as to take place at the residence of Miss Clapp, Cargreen House, Cargreen-road, Norwood (near Norwood Junction), on the 11th inst., is deferred till Wednesday next, 12th inst. Particulars as to time, &c., may be obtained from Mrs. Walter, 50, Wesley-road, Leyton, N.E.

 'THE OCCULT REVIEW.'

'The Occult Review,' for July, contains various expressions of opinion which concern Spiritualists; but it seems to us that some of them are couched in a form which makes them appear more antagonistic to our views than is warranted by the arguments adduced. This is particularly the case with Miss M. Bramston's article on 'Automatic Romance.' This writer takes up Professor Flournoy's view with regard to the various phenomena presented by Hélène Smith, namely, that they constitute a highly varied 'subliminal romance.' This opinion Miss Bramston extends to cover not only Mrs. Piper's communications, given under the names of Phinuit, George Pelham, and the 'Imperator' group, but even the 'Spirit Teachings' of Mr. Stainton Moses, writing of them with what is intended for dry sarcasm, but which reads merely like petty spite. 'Stainton Moses,' she says, 'admired the style and substance of "Imperator's" communications. Perhaps we all admire unduly our own automatic romances.' So much, in fact, does the writer admire the idea of an automatic romance that in narrating her own experiences she ascribes to her own unconscious invention a very pretty story of ostensible 'spirit return.' We cannot see why she should prefer to believe that the character she calls 'Blanco Paul' was only an invention of some unexplored portion of her own mind, rather than that he was the 'boy friend who had died at seventeen,' as he professed to be. She admits that 'the real Paul had a beautiful character, and the characteristics of the automatic Paul were not unworthy of him.' She further admits that 'the spirit of his teaching was admirable, and often morally and spiritually helpful to the supraliminal personality of his automatic disciple.' So that her own 'lower' consciousness is helpful to her 'upper' one! This seems to us to be the 'credulity of incredulity' pushed to an extreme.

Mr. Alfred Fellows writes on 'The Evidence for Ghosts,' ending up by saying:—

'But the man who does not believe in ghosts because he has never seen one, or treats all ghost stories as mere lies, or meaningless hallucinations with or without some striking coincidence, should nowadays be treated, kindly but firmly, as an intellectual troglodyte, and given to understand that his views cannot be accepted in the twentieth century by those who are capable of seeing the light when it shines on them.'

Mrs. Chesson narrates some interesting 'Occult Experiences,' and Mrs. Spoer (Miss Goodrich-Freer) continues her account of the 'charms' so universally in use in 'the Nearer East.'

The Editor, in his 'Notes of the Month,' gives 'a personal explanation,' defining more precisely his own point of view, which he says has been misunderstood. He combats the idea that any one explanation of psychic incidents 'is to be regarded

as a general explanation which will fit all and every ghost story or narrative of haunted localities.' Though 'all psychic phenomena are doubtless in a manner related,' yet 'in the scheme of the Cosmos the convenience of the modern scientist was not taken into consideration. . . . When will science realise that the only true scientific attitude is that the conclusions arrived at should be strictly in accordance with the weight of the evidence, whether it points to spirit return or not?' 'The duty of the true scientist,' he continues, 'is to start without any bias at all—to take the facts as he finds them, and to follow them towards the light.'

 TELEPATHY.

A well-authenticated instance of telepathy is recorded in C. L. Graves' 'Life of Sir George Grove' at p. 160. Grove received the story from Tennyson; and Tennyson, who considered that he had every reason to believe it, heard it from the hero himself.

'There was a certain Mr. Phillips, a rich attorney and a member of the Corporation of Shaftesbury. Every year the Corporation had a haunch of venison given them by the Duke of Westminster, or some large landowner in the neighbourhood, and it was their rule to devour it at an inn some three or four miles distant from the town. Phillips was a great gourmand and very full of fun, and these occasions were thought a great deal of. At one of these dinners, just as the venison was brought in, Phillips got up and said: "I must go." There was a universal protest at this, but he was firm and said that something was drawing him home—he could not tell what. The horse was accordingly put into the trap and off he went. When he got to his house in Shaftesbury, he found his wife sitting in the parlour, with her jaw dislocated, in floods of tears, and with the bell-rope in her hand. She had gaped and put out her jaw. She then pulled the bell, but the bellrope had come down in her hand, and she had no alternative but to fling herself into a chair and think of her husband—which brought him home.'

FAITH NOT BELIEF.—Miss Louie Stacey, M.R.B.N.A., has written a bright little shilling book, published by Stead, Danby, and Co., 4, Kensington High-street, W., entitled, 'Faith which is not Belief.' Her presentation of the subject may be summed up in the following brief outline: Mankind is one big 'I want.' What makes him want? Life, or, as Miss Stacey calls it, 'God push.' She advises us to trust our desires, provided they are right ones, and see if by this means we cannot arrive at Faith. The want is a prayer, and so is all effort. That which we want, we trust and hope that we shall obtain. When we have got a little farther, by constant work towards an end, we believe that we shall be able to accomplish it, and presently we know that we have obtained the power we sought. Not until then can we call our belief *faith*. 'Faith is like a rock, and is spoken of as the rock of faith. The rock cannot be moved. The belief is a very changeable substance. Mankind is a bundle of beliefs, and he changes his beliefs as he grows from a baby into a man. When he has proved his beliefs, nothing can persuade him that he has not proved them.' This, according to the author, is faith, and the man who has attained to this 'shall rest in the freedom which the knowledge of truth has brought to him.'

'BROAD VIEWS' for July is strong on reincarnation. Mr. Sinnett contributes a gravely elaborate article on 'Former lives of living people,' in which he narrates some dramatic happenings about ten or twelve thousand years ago, and brings us by easy stages to 'a period about 5900 B.C.' Mr. Robert Calignoc tries to answer the question, 'Did Tennyson believe in Reincarnation?' and thinks that the poet regarded the idea as satisfying ideals and aspirations, as forming an antidote to pessimism, and as explaining the feeling, when we 'muse and brood, and ebb into a former life,' that 'all this hath been before.' The same theme crops up in a review of Schuré's book, 'Les Grands Initiés,' in which it is shown that 'the belief in the immortality and reincarnation of the soul was fundamental in the initiations of Brahma and Buddha, in the Hermetic and Orphic mysteries, and in the philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato.' Mrs. A. P. Sinnett writes on 'The Foundations of Astrology,' showing that the influence of solar magnetic forces is recognised by astronomers, and asking why the nervous and magnetic systems of the human organism should not be still more responsive. Mr. Alfred Fellows, in 'A Vegetarian's Apologia,' pleads for a sane reasonableness on the part of vegetarians and the outside world alike—a 'common-sense allowance' all round.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.

The Psychic Timbre in Music.

SIR,—I have been much interested in Madama Bianca Unorna's article on this subject and can bear out much of what she states.

We hold a mission circle of three members, including the medium. As one of us is required almost constantly at the organ it was difficult for the player to hear what was going on. I therefore added an extra manual to operate some specially soft reeds. Although there are several rows of reeds, they have been voiced very soft and smooth. Conversation can now be carried on readily between the player and the controls or the other member of the circle. The timbre is reedy, something like an oboe but sweeter and with more volume, and with a celeste effect.

This addition has been found to be a great acquisition and our spirit friends are so pleased with it that we should find it difficult to get along without it.

A joss stick or a little incense, as well as coloured fairy lamps, we find advantageous.

Harmony amongst the members of a mission circle is of course absolutely essential, and we are obliged to exclude strangers.

CHARLES RÉNEE.

A Startling Occurrence.

SIR,—As a great many of your readers are aware that I lecture on 'Finer Forces and Colour,' I think it may be of interest to you to know of a startling occurrence that has just happened in my flat in London. I am renting it furnished, and have been troubled frequently by sensing and seeing a low brick-red colour, the result of passionate vibrations; and although I could 'clear' the atmosphere, the effect was persistent. A few Sundays ago a friend of mine suggested that I should sit with her and my husband. It was done in somewhat a playful manner, which I give as a warning to those who do not know the subtle psychic forces around us. We sat in the dark, and I immediately became conscious of a luminous mist forming from the ground. I sang, almost unconsciously, an old Eastern song learnt in India. My friend saw the mist forming, and I was conscious of a terrible tightening in my throat, and it appears I sank back on the sofa unconscious. My husband and friend were so alarmed that they turned up the lights and dashed water on me, but I went through the agonies of a man having a bayonet stuck in his throat and described myself as an Arab being killed by a soldier. When I was brought round I trembled very much and spoke Arabic and again saw the scene. The pith of my story is this: *hanging on our door* is a flag, one of the Mahdi's flags taken at Omdurman by my brother-in-law, Captain Wilson. We have investigated the matter and find that the torn flag is soaked here and there with blood. It is inscribed in strange characters. My brother-in-law will not part with the flag. Can any of your readers suggest a method by which we could ease the trouble of the departed? I will not sit again for many reasons. One is that in my own work I have been told not to do so. I think this true story, authenticated, should interest believers and unbelievers, and I particularly wish to add that I fully believe that only in a reverential spirit should we approach these manifestations of unseen forces.

FLORA NORTHESK WILSON.

10, Cheniston-gardens, W.

Dr. J. M. Peebles and Vivisection.

SIR,—In reading the memorable lecture on 'Immortality,' by Dr. Peebles, recently delivered before the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, I have been very much pained to see that the Doctor quotes the evidence of one of our foremost vivisectioners—Ferrier. We do not need the help of the vivisectioner to learn the truths of our nature nor that of animals, and above all, it is disappointing to find a Spiritualist willing to share the knowledge gained by relentless experimentation; which knowledge could, as every Spiritualist knows, be gained in other ways.

I find myself wondering whether the Doctor has ever read Professor Ferrier's accounts of the ways in which he has obtained his information; whether he has ever considered the prolonged suffering of the animals; whether he has reflected on the effect on the operator of this kind of work, and whether he has compared in his mind the vivisectioner with the psychic. I think not. I think, also, that Dr. Peebles

knows little about animals, and I am very sure he cannot realise their relation to their Maker. It is not possible truly to reverence God without reverencing His works, for His works are Himself; and those who reverence the works of God will understand that to torture and destroy one section of these for the benefit (!) of another section is to commit a folly and a sin, based on ignorance and the unconquered selfishness of the natural man.

As we have in us the germs of higher things, so have the animals. It would task a thinker to find a dividing line between these dear and lowly children of the Universal Parent and ourselves. Many of them are indeed far in advance of us in the highest of all powers or attributes—love. We have probably as much to learn from animals as they have to learn from us, but we shall not learn it by 'passing our days in fetid laboratories (dans les salles nauséabondes), surrounded by groaning creatures, in the midst of blood and suffering, bent over palpitating entrails.' (Ch. Richet, M.D.).

E. M. BEEBY.

A Dream Interpreter Wanted.

SIR,—Can any of your readers kindly inform me whether there is any lady or gentleman who can interpret dreams? If so, can they give me his, or her, name and address?

'DREAM.'

SOCIETY WORK.

Notices of future events which do not exceed twenty-five words may be added to reports if accompanied by six penny stamps, but all such notices which exceed twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns.

FOREST HILL.—99, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD.—On Sunday last, at the circles, satisfactory clairvoyant delineations were given. On Sunday next, at 6.45 p.m., Mr. T. B. Frost, of Fulham, will give an address, clairvoyant readings and messages.

BRIGHTON.—COMPTON HALL, 17, COMPTON-AVENUE.—On Saturday and Sunday last, very successful meetings were held by Nurse Graham, the hall being very crowded on Sunday evening. On Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Oaten will deliver inspirational addresses at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m. Hall open for inquirers on Tuesdays from 3 to 5 p.m. All welcome.

MANOR PARK.—COLERIDGE-AVENUE.—The old Manor Park and East Ham Spiritualist Society having become extinct, a new society has been formed under the old name, but with new officers. Meetings will be held as follows: Sundays, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., public service; also on Fridays at 8 p.m. Members and friends of the old society especially invited.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last addresses were given by Messrs. Garrens, Wright, and F. Clark. Excellent clairvoyant descriptions were given in the after-circle. On Saturday, July 8th, a garden party will be held at the Spring Hotel, Ewell. Train from Clapham Junction, 3 p.m., Balham, 3.5 p.m. Tea tickets, 1s.—H. Y.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. J. W. Boulding's brilliant address on 'All is Good, Good is for All,' met with many marks of appreciation. Miss Laughton kindly officiated at the piano. Mr. W. T. Cooper ably fulfilled the duties of chairman. Sunday next, Miss MacCreadie, clairvoyant descriptions. Doors open at 6.30, commence at 7 p.m., sharp.—S. J. W.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. Robert King delivered a splendid educational address on the 'Occult Significance of Sound,' his remarks being received with close attention. A number of interesting questions were well answered. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Ronald Brailey, address and clairvoyant descriptions.—H. A. G.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Wednesday, June 28th, Miss Melton gave good clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Millard, of Catford, presided, and Madame Zaidia answered many written questions from the audience, and gave clairvoyant descriptions, which were mostly recognised. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., Miss Bixby, clairvoyance and psychometry.—VERAX.

CHISWICK.—AVENUE HALL, 300, HIGH-ROAD.—On Saturday last we had an enjoyable outing on the water, having tea with Mr. F. W. Thurstan. On Sunday morning last a good circle was held, and in the evening Miss Porter gave an elevating address on 'Angel Messengers of Light.' On Monday last Mrs. Imison gave great satisfaction with her spirit descriptions. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. G. H. Harris; at 8.30, circle. Monday next, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Podmore, clairvoyante.—H.