

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We thought at the time of reading it that Professor Royce's 'Hibbert Journal' Paper would drop a little corrosive acid into someone's thought of immortality: and, sure enough, here it is, in a 'Christian Register' Paper by a minister, of all men, who, in an Address on 'How to make the Church a Force in the Community,' speaks like a Positivist rather than a Christian. He resolves a future life into a contribution to the general stock of 'world-will': the continuity of a man's being dwindles to nothing more than the continuity of his contribution to the sum total of the world's activity and thought. We hope we are not doing this minister any injustice; but here is all that he says about it:—

The doctrine of immortality is not altogether a question of individual survival, but of the persistence of the race from which we spring and to which we give what we have of real influence. For the real question is not the immortality of the body, of that which is subject to clocks and calendars, and which offers vital statistics for the insurance company, but rather the question, what part of a person is it that we wish to survive?

Viewed from this point, existence is a process of receiving and giving, each life accepting from the part and passing on its contribution. Each man receives and transmits the qualities which build up the social world. The persistence and continuity of the stream of human consciousness depends upon its tributaries, just as the rivers which course through these valleys are made up of the rills and water courses which feed them and make them stable.

Living after death is then a matter of giving to the world—all that we can, that we may live in the survival of our influence according as we have given to mankind. We do not think of Washington and Lincoln as dead: they live in their gift of themselves to the republic. Man thus is a significant being, not by virtue of his body or his feelings or his fortune, but by virtue of his will. And what he wills to give to the world-will determines the question of his living, not in past or future, but in the present, which is all there is of time.

We are sorry to think that this sort of thing is getting rather common; but it would never have occurred to us that it is likely to make a Church 'a Force in the Community.'

Mr. E. Hampden-Cook thinks that the Christian churches are at the bar for judgment, and probably for condemnation; and he evidently anticipates the possibility of a dissolution of partnership between the church and the world. He attributes this to the churches' neglect of the world, to, in brief, the churches' failure in social work, and their self-absorption in their own soul-saving. He says:—

In this twentieth century any church which is content to regard itself as a sort of religious club, which exists merely for the spiritual good of its own adherents—piloting them through to the haven of Heaven at death—is doomed.

There is truth in this; but there is something to say for the churches. Why should they not exist for their own sake and in their own sphere, for ethical enlightenment, spiritual uplifting, consolation and guidance? Why should not 'the world' mind its own business socially? The real truth probably is that the world is just now pleasure-mad and money-mad. It has no time for meditation, no appetite for religion, and no heart left to give to God. There are plenty of exceptions, but the majority of men and a large minority of women who do 'go to church' go as to a social function, as a propriety, or as something 'nice to do.' The strongly intellectual and the keenly independent minded do not, as a rule, go. For that the church may be to blame. Intellectuality and independence are not its strong points.

Theology seems to be looking up. Here is the first number of a 'Harvard Theological Review' whose promoters may have been encouraged to launch it by the success of the somewhat over-praised 'Hibbert Journal,' with its unexpected success. The Harvard University Professor of Christian Morals very properly leads the way with a Paper on 'The Call to Theology.' He cites with regret the remark of a distinguished railway president, on being told that a promising youth had gone in for theological study, 'Why does not so gifted a man devote himself to something that is real?' and he goes on to magnify his vocation, while he admits that even many ministers are languid over theology. He says:—

Theology has presented itself to their minds as a record of controversies which were once living fires but are now extinct volcanoes, and they turn with a sense of relief to the fertile fields of modern life. The call of the time seems to them a call away from theology.

The worthy Professor is anxious. Priests are, in his opinion, a poor substitute for prophets, and the altar is of less consequence than the pulpit, if a trained preacher be there. We must get out of the old dry-as-dust desert of theology and get into the fresh air of the open world. 'The only way out of bad theology is through good theology': and again the truth creeps out, that it is the theology of the new spirit and not of the old letter that we need.

It is 'the rational interpretation of religion' that this Professor asks for. 'The traditional, external and formal theology of the scribes speaks in a language which the present age does not understand,' he says. He is right. What the world needs, and what the world could understand, is a science of God with its roots in the soul of man.

A prominent minister in the United States, at a late 'Union Thanksgiving Service,' brought a tremendously severe indictment against the American people. Excited by the apparently inexhaustible riches of the country, it has wastefully half ruined it, by wanton assaults upon its forests, its metals, its oil and gas deposits and its mines. And now the country is threatened with a timber famine, and it is already predicted that unless a cool fit of economy

comes over the nation the middle of this century will find it nearly at the end of its metals and coals. Moreover, the water-power is decreasing. He says :—

Many centuries before the age of steam, man drove his mills by streams of falling water. We, too, as coal grows yet more dear, must return to water power, now so little utilised. But shall we find the streams which once were ours, when we go to look for them? By substituting a sandy waste, alternately hot and cold, for the damp, temperate forest, we have diminished the rainfall, and converted the quiet, even stream, fed by the gentle seeping of moisture through a million million rootlets, into a torrent which now rages unrestrainedly, now shrinks to a feeble trickle. And, like stupid Esau of old, for a scanty mess of pottage we are giving away the heritage of the children of the State to the crafty Jacobs among us, when we grant to syndicate and private company in perpetuity, rather than in restricted lease, the precious water power of our rivers.

This alarming preacher traces all the trouble to the lust for money which, he thinks, is the besetting sin of America,—a kind of financial fury, blinding men to everything else, including personal integrity and considerations of patriotism. We hope it is not as bad as this: but, where there is so much smoke there must be fire.

A much belauded book, by a very optimistic American, Mr. Charles Ferguson, 'The Newsbook,' might possibly cheer up our Cassandra-like preacher. Mr. Ferguson imagines,—and, alas, it is all imagination!—that business is going to be moralised and made artistically scientific. It is going to be a dream of high-class culture, mechanically exact and ethically beautiful, and, O! wonder of wonders! it is going to be all inspired and regulated by 'the spirit that makes a man place first the value to the world of the thing he is doing, and second the profit he is making on it.' That would indeed be a transformation. We only hope the poor preacher, wringing his hands out there, will be a little comforted by the dream.

This from an old friend, written not long before her transition, has thought and merit in it. The phrase 'Mental Presentation' is Professor Tyndall's. It meant something like imagination, or mental mimicry, or moonshine :—

*'When the free soul wanders far,
'Tis man's realities that seem—his fabled things that are.'*

If 'ceasing to be' is all
The mystery of Death, why call
This state of being, Life?

(The grim grey misery, often unto the end
With scarce a happy sunny hour, or cheering ray,
Throughout their day;
Or, the maddening strife

Of human soul, with what that soul calls sin)
Which builds the burthen of so many sunless lives.

'Tis bitter mockery, to say we live, if there is no beyond,
wherein

This striving soul a home of peace and purity may win.

If our imagination,
Or 'Mental Presentation,'
Be but a pleasing dream,

What can this struggle for existence mean?

Methinks this state of being, with all its hopes and
fears,

Its smiles and tears,
Which do so real seem,

Feels like a troubled, unresting sleep,
Those 'Mental Presentations,' the fitful gleams

Of the great real life beyond, and the last mystery, over which
we weep,

Which we call Death, the dawn waking us from these slumbers
deep.

'Tis better thus to dream
Than cause the soul to deem
There is no tender care

From an all-seeing Father's Love and Power—
No 'Love become immortal,' no Maturity
Of fair sweet Purity,
Here or elsewhere.

With only this dim earth-light in our eyes—to pause—
And then affirm, 'thus far, no further,' life can go—
Dare we to put our limits to Infinite Love, because
We cannot yet discern between God's Power and His fixed
earthly laws?

I. H. G.

As our advertisement department shows, Mr. J. Page Hopps announces three Sunday Evening Lectures at Little Portland-street Chapel on 'A Scientific Basis of Belief in a Future Life.' The announcement describes this as a 'vital subject': and indeed it is. 'The witness of the spirit,' in the twofold sense of the witness within and the manifestation without, is of exceeding value, but the appeal to science will carry weight with multitudes that hesitate about the inward teacher and the outward manifestor. If it can be shown, as we believe it can be, that a Future Life is indicated by Natural Law, an unspeakable service will be done to thinkers who can be reached only in that way.

OUR DUTY TO CHILDREN.

From an article on 'Our Duty to Child-Life,' by C. C. Lee, in 'Fellowship' (Los Angeles, California) for February, we take the following admonitions :—

It is our duty to teach the child that pain and sickness are not primarily dispensations from a loving Father, nor are they a hereditary taint from our parents, but the inevitable results of our own violation of the laws of health. That bodily death is not a hideous monster to be feared and dreaded, but that it is as natural, as necessary, as desirable as its brief counterpart—the recurring sleep so gladly welcomed. It is but a kind friend come to divest us of our outer garment, to prepare us to enter a brighter realm, where love may reign supreme.

It is our duty to teach the child that he is a ray from the Infinite, that inherent within himself is divine wisdom, power and goodness; that he should control his passions and appetites, thus keeping his divinity unsullied and pure.

It is our duty to teach the child that he is a self-conscious part of the great Whole, a point in the Being of God, a cell in the Cosmos. That his body is a unit in the motherhood of Nature; his mind an active centre of the highest self-conscious intelligence of which we can form a concept; and the soul a part of God Himself. That every rock, flower, animal and human being is his spiritual brother and that all life below his own claims his tender care and compassion, and all above his love and reverence. That all, high or low, are part and parcel of the same Nature Mother and Divine Father in whom we live, move, and have our being.

THE POWER OF MIND.—So many books on mind and 'mental science' have appeared lately that it is necessary to scrutinise a new arrival somewhat closely before deciding that it fills any want. Mr. Richard Ingalese is a well-known American lecturer on these subjects, but English readers want something more than a compilation of his lectures on 'The History and Power of Mind' (L. N. Fowler and Co., price 5s. net), published in the form in which they were delivered, and with an index and a portrait thrown in. Much is said about Occultism and Adepts (spelt with capitals), but even as to the art of self-control and guarding against undesirable suggestions, most of what is good in this book has been repeated over and over again by others, and emphasised in our own columns. Many of Mr. Ingalese's statements and illustrations are loose and inaccurate, or rest on slight foundations, while he tries to perpetuate the old theosophical dislike to mediumship, and glorifies the purely subjective and quite unverifiable results of what is assumed to be a higher form of clairvoyance. The following sentences will give an idea of the lecturer's attitude. He says: 'Spiritualism is necromancy revamped. . . . Mediumship soon becomes either possession or obsession, and both these conditions lead to insanity'; and again, 'Mediumship usually leads eventually to insanity or to the premature death of the medium.' These sweeping and inaccurate statements are sufficient to indicate that the lecturer can hardly be regarded as impartial or unbiassed, or as a reliable guide in this realm.

INTERPENETRATING WORLDS: PHYSICAL
AND ETHEREAL.

In 1900 I published a book entitled 'The Spiritual Significance,' the title being evolved from Mrs. Browning's lines :—

If a man could feel,
Not one day in the artist's ecstasy, but every day—
Feast, fast, and working day—the spiritual significance
Of life, burn through the hieroglyphic of material shows,
Henceforward he would paint the globe with wings.

In this volume, published more than seven years ago, I recorded the conviction that came to me then—largely suggested, I think, by reading Professor Dolbear's work on physics, entitled, 'Matter, Ether, and Motion'—that there are two co-existent and mutually dependent realms of the air and the ether; that the physical life is lived in the former, and that the change we call death liberates man into the latter; that man is, here and now, in an ethereal body which is temporarily clothed upon by a physical body enabling him to come into relations with a physical world; that death is simply the slipping out of this outer body by the spirit and entering on the ethereal environment; and that this ethereal environment is by far the more substantial, positive, and significant. That man's real life, indeed, begins when he enters this ethereal realm, the life here in the physical being a preparatory and experimental phase. When speaking of this last winter, in Rome, to the distinguished American sculptor, Mr. Franklin Simmons, whose clear and brilliant mind renders him one of the most inspiring of conversationalists, Mr. Simmons said that to him it was conceivable that the ethereal environment may be just as positive and substantial to the ethereal body as the physical environment is to the physical body; and that all Nature, as seen in mountains, plains, seas, and all the creations of man such as houses, cities, railroads, ships, &c., might be as absolutely real in the ethereal realm as in the physical world. Certainly it is conceivable—does it not even seem perfectly natural and logical?

'Eternal process moving on,
From state to state the spirit walks.'

To see now, in 'LIGHT' for February 15th, that Sir Oliver Lodge, than whom there is no greater living authority, also postulates the existence of the ethereal world as the next phase of evolutionary progress, is to have one's intuitive convictions confirmed.

The evidence which has been piled up since Modern Spiritualism dawned upon the world in 1848 tends to suggest, to support, and to confirm the theory that the two realms, the physical and the ethereal (or spiritual), are in absolute and perpetual interpenetration; that man while here lives partly in the ethereal, and that those who by death have entered the ethereal, still partly live here; that on each side there is perpetual co-operation in all work, all achievement. It is becoming abundantly clear that the communication between the two planes is not a matter of phenomenal occurrence under certain rarely-recurring conditions, but that it is constant; that it is being perpetually carried on; that it is telepathic; that it comes through automatic writing; through impressions, dreams, visions, and the voices of psychics, and in many ways; that, in fact, we are all more or less used as messengers to each other, and that this inter-communion has great influence on events and circumstances. In fact, we live, move, and have our being in constant relationship with the beings of the ethereal realm, although the influence from that plane is seldom consciously recognised or ascribed to its true source; but as man develops his spiritual faculties his perceptions will grow more firm and clear and unerring, and he will realise fully that spiritual things are, by their very nature, even more real than physical things, but that they are only realised when spiritually discerned.

LILIAN WHITING.

Rome, Italy.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held at the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 19TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY THE

REV. JOHN OATES

ON

'The Spiritual Teachings of the Poets—
Wordsworth, Browning, and Shelley.'

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

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

Meetings will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East (near the National Gallery), on the following Thursday evenings :—

Apr. 2.—MISS LILIAN WHITING (author of 'After her Death,' 'The World Beautiful,' &c.), on 'The Life Radiant.'

Apr. 30.—MR. JAMES I. WEDGWOOD, on 'Auras, Halos, and the Occult Significance of Colours.'

May 14.—MISS E. KATHARINE BATES (author of 'Seen and Unseen'), on 'Psychic Faculties and Psychic Experiences.'

May 28.—MR. GEORGE P. YOUNG, President of the Spiritualists' National Union, on 'The Physical Phenomena of Mediumship in the Light of the Newer Chemistry.'

AN AFTERNOON SOCIAL GATHERING will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on April 9th, at three o'clock.

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA the following meetings will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C. :—

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On *Tuesday next*, March 10th, and on the 17th, Mrs. Atkins will give clairvoyant descriptions at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

TRANCE ADDRESS.—On *Wednesday next*, March 11th, at 6.30 p.m., Miss Violet Burton, on 'The Tyranny of Selfishness.' Mrs. Annie Boddington on the 18th. Admission 1s.* Members and Associates free. No tickets required.

PSYCHIC CLASS.—On *Thursday next*, March 12th, Mrs. E. M. Walter will conduct a class for individual development, at 4 p.m., and on alternate Thursdays.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On *Friday next*, March 13th, at 3 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience relating to the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism, mediumship, and life here and on 'the other side.' Admission 1s.*; Members and Associates free. Visitors should be prepared with written questions of general interest to submit to the control.

* MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to the *Wednesday and Friday* meetings without payment.

SPIRITUAL HEALING.—On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Mr. A. Rex, the spiritual healer, will attend between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., to afford Members and Associates and their friends an opportunity to avail themselves of his services in magnetic healing under spirit control. As Mr. Rex is unable to treat more than four patients on each occasion, appointments must be made in advance by letter, addressed to the Secretary, Mr. E. W. Wallis. Fees, one treatment, 7s. 6d.; course of three, 15s.

EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY.

So much interest was aroused by a brief notice, in 'LIGHT' of October 5th last, of an article on 'Illusions of the Senses,' that we think that many of our readers will be interested in a book called 'Thinking, Feeling, Doing,' by E. W. Scripture, Ph.D., M.D., assistant neurologist at Columbia University, New York (published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London, price 9s. net). It is put forth as an exposition of 'the New Psychology'; this new psychology does not, however, deal with the deeper root of mental actions, but with the mechanism of the sense-perceptions, and especially with those points in which, like other mechanisms, it is subject to limitations which affect the correct rendering of the impressions received. It describes the results of exact observations, especially those made by the aid of special mechanical or electrical appliances for measuring and recording the rapidity with which the various mental actions are carried on.

The first lesson to be derived from the book is that our observations, and our accounts of what we have witnessed, are extremely liable to be both imperfect and erroneous to a greater extent, often, than we are willing to believe. The next is, that there is scarcely such a thing as regular, steady, sustained action; if we try to tap a key quickly and uniformly, the intervals between the taps vary with fatigue, attention, and other circumstances. Then, too, if we have to perform an action in response to a signal, the time elapsing between the signal and the response may amount to a considerable fraction of a second, and, from the examples given, appears to average about a fifth or a sixth of a second. There is also an appreciable time required to recognise colours, letters, words, &c., especially words in foreign languages. The multiplication of two figures may take a second. Rhythmic action, and steadiness of hand, can also be measured by mechanical means.

When we come to the sense of touch, some very peculiar facts are stated. One test is to lower a series of pith discs on to the palm of the hand and notice what is the lightest weight that can be felt: this is called the 'threshold of sensation for pressure.' Every sense has a 'threshold,' by which is meant the slightest stimulus to which it can react. Another test is the power of distinguishing between slightly different weights, and it is a fact well known to schoolboys that the contact of two slightly separated points is sometimes only felt as a single impression. A more remarkable fact, which will be new to many, is that 'our sensations of heat and cold come from little spots called hot spots and cold spots,' which are everywhere distinct. If a 'hot spot' be touched with a sharp pencil, a sensation of heat is felt, but that spot is insensible to pain; hence we have three sets of nerves, for heat, cold, and pain or sensation in general. Hot and cold objects, especially cold ones, feel heavier than objects of the same weight at the normal temperature.

The sense of taste is much more restricted than we imagine, true taste being confined to such generalities as bitter, sweet, sour, and a few other qualities representing chemical differences. The flavours of tea, coffee, fruits, spices, and other 'tasty' foods are really due to the sense of smell. Visual illusions are explained in considerable detail; colour-blindness, for instance, can be classed under six different degrees, and the insufficiency of the ordinary tests for colour-perception is shown, and a more efficient one described.

The author comes nearer to what we should regard as psychology when he speaks of feelings, emotions, moods, of the results of tension, expectation, and suggestion on the perceptions, and of the way in which external stimuli arouse associations of ideas. The final chapters on 'Materialism and Spiritualism' and 'The New Psychology' are rather disappointing, for they only serve to illustrate the position taken by the writer that psychology, as he understands it, is a matter of exact experiment and measurement, not of dissecting bodies of animals or 'vague speculation on mental life.' But on the whole the work is one of extreme interest and value, as showing that our sense-organs are mechanisms, and imperfect ones at that, and from their very imperfections we can learn to distinguish between the personality itself and the means it employs for communicating with the phenomenal universe.

MAN, MATTER, AND MAGNITUDE.

There is a passage in Mr. Fournier d'Albe's book 'Two New Worlds' which is full of profound suggestiveness for people who try to shake from their intellectual and reflective powers the unceasing pressure of the *status quo*. Mr. Fournier d'Albe points out that we do not know what size we are. We measure our own stature, as well as the magnitude of all objects of perception, by means of their relation to other objects. The grandfather's clock is 'taller by half than the old man himself.' The old man stands so many feet and inches in his shoes. The inch itself has a relation to the joints of the finger, or the length of a barleycorn. We never get away from this relativity.

Suppose that we, and the world in which we live, were reduced one thousand times in size to-night. The grandfather's clock would then measure only a small fraction of what we now call an inch. But inasmuch as the change in size was universal, all the relativity of magnitude would be unaltered, and we should be totally unconscious of the change. If we bear these undoubted facts in mind, we shall have no difficulty in comprehending the possible existences, within a diamond on a lady's finger-ring, of universes as populous and busy as our own, and, to the minds and vision of their inhabitants, quite as extensive as we imagine ours to be.

At the other extreme there may be universes so vast as to dwarf our own into less than microscopic insignificance; and the considerations which hold good of space may be equally sound as applied to time. That which we call sixty seconds may be a vast era in the history of the worlds which pursue their orbits within the apparent limpidity of a single drop of water. When we speak of the millions of years which have elapsed since the earth was first flung off from the molten mass which we call the sun, we may find it worth while to remember that all these ages may represent only a flash, a second, in the life history of some vast system which is at present utterly beyond the reach and compass of our intellectual powers; or to put it in another way, in the words of Mr. Myers, that which we apprehend as a stream of sequence may really be an ocean of co-existence.

These are considerations which make the same peremptory and all-compelling claim to our assent as do Euclid's axioms. When once their purport is intelligently apprehended, the mind is incapable of meeting them with a negative. The fact of the existence of what Mr. Fournier d'Albe calls the *infra-world*, or the *supra-world* (the terms are self-explanatory) may indeed be disputed; but of its possibility, and with regard to the relativity of the conception of size which lies at the root of the whole hypothesis, there can be no denial.

If, then, a simple step aside from the beaten road of everyday perceptions, into a by-path where we may pause for a moment and consider with ourselves what those perceptions really mean—if such a simple process brings us to the edge of a profound abyss of speculation, whose depths are beyond the reach of any plummet that our incarnate minds are capable of employing, what shall we say of the vast tracts which open before us when we get rid of matter altogether, and take the unfettered spirit as the subject of our thought? Surely the lesson of it all is this one—old and familiar to many a bygone generation, yet fresh and cogent as when the idea found expression from the Apostle's pen—that now we see through a glass darkly, that no source of information is so dangerous and unreliable as the untrained and uncriticised perceptions of sense, and that there is nothing in the most daring of occult hypotheses which surpasses in scope and boldness the unchallenged potentialities of physical science.

BARRISTER, LL.B., B.Sc.

'JUDAS,' by Harold Munro (Samurai Press, price 2s. net), is a powerfully written blank verse poem descriptive of the work of Jesus as viewed by one who, ardently desiring the founding of a Jewish monarchy as a perfect kingdom on earth, could think of nothing but outward ways and means of accomplishing the desired end, principally by the aid of publicity and—money. It will serve as a satire on all attempts to 'boom' spiritual matters from an outward point of view, whether for private ends or as a supposed public benefit.

'WHEN WE PASS OVER.'

The February number of the Burton Wood parish church 'Monthly Magazine' has reached us, and our attention is called to an article, presumably by the Vicar, the Rev. A. M. Mitchell, M.A., entitled 'When we Pass Over.' It is a frank, manly utterance which should be helpful to his parishioners. In it the Vicar draws attention to the energetic endeavours which most people make to keep 'death, the foe,' at bay, and says that to pass hence is deemed by many professing Christians 'the direst of all calamities. The fear, secret and unexpressed, that death ends all is manifest in our horror of it, and our life-long efforts to avoid it.' He declares that those who desire earthly and carnal immortality, who want to tarry here even in misery and, possibly, burdensome to others, are not true to the Christian creed. He says :—

For those who are something more than mere nominal Christians, for those who are 'in the Lord,' for those who are united to God by a living faith, there is no death, no king of terrors. Death is conquered, death is destroyed, death is abolished. Christ's death abolished death, it brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. Death itself has died.

'O Death of Christ
The death of Death to me.'

No death! It is a glorious, an inspiring message! Christians in heart and life do not die, they 'pass over,' pass to the further side where, as the Germans beautifully express it, 'We shall find our dreams and only lose our sleep.' Death, misnamed and much belied, is a birth, perhaps our second birth.

How firmly this thought gripped the earliest Christians may be gathered from the commemoration of departed saints. 'In the Mediaeval Offices the martyrdom or death of a saint is called his *natalitia*, that is, his birthday entertainment.' There is not much of the birthday celebration in our modern commemorations of the departed.

'When we pass over' we shall be distressed possibly at beholding the grief of those whom we have left 'on this side,' the hopelessness of those who knew us best and loved us most as they stand by the bier or gather round the open grave, the blank despair of those 'who profess and call themselves Christians,' but sorrow as those 'who have no hope.' Doubtless we shall greatly long for them to join us and share our fuller life, and who can tell how we may, all unseen, be permitted to help and cheer them on the earth plane until their passing over time has come! Those who are freed from flesh conditions, who have 'passed' in faith, would not care to live the earthly life again. The old are never found really desiring child-life once more, anxious to live their lives over again; no indeed, and so it is with those who having lived here a while, for a longer or a shorter time, and are now on the further side, they would not return to the incarnate life, of their own free choice, if such could be given them. They have found death a blessing, a sure and signal mercy of God—a cause for thankfulness, a source of gladness. Our greatest happiness springs from the vicissitudes of life, and death is the crown of the decrees of Providence. 'The passed over' can testify, doubtless, how good it is to be born into the flesh and wear it for a season, and how much better it is to be born out of the flesh so that we may enjoy a wider sphere of action, and do God service, as we could not here.

There is something to be learnt from Spiritualism. All Spiritualists are not bad, and, as we know only too well, all Christians are not good. There is a Spiritualism which is from beneath, not from above, which sends weak and overcredulous men and women to those who are of their father the devil, and the emissaries of Satan. But there is a Spiritualism which is of Christ, the practical manifestation of that much neglected article of the Christian faith—the Communion of Saints. To stand aloof from all forms of Spiritualism is unwise on the Church's part; the hour has come when the teachings of sane and devout Spiritualists must be examined, proved, and tested. Materialism is 'much too much' with us, and the doctrine of Communion, of fellowship, of oneness of life with the discarnate, as well as with angels and other spiritual beings, is very far from being the living bright reality, the help and comfort, support and stay, it ought to be as we make our 'upward climb' and tread the heavenward way.

The reverend gentleman thinks that 'to live *well* rather than to live long should be our concern on earth,' and that 'the freeing of our powers for service, the call to glorious liberty as the Sons of God, the development of character, the evolution of the human trinity of being, body, soul, and spirit,' is of far

greater importance than mere long life. He expounds a 'sane and devout Spiritualism' when he says :—

'When we pass over' we shall find death, so-called, no enemy, but a faithful friend; not a tragedy, but a transition necessary to the evolution of our manhood and all its powers. All Nature teaches evolution through transition, in other words, life through death. By the same process of transition man, who is himself a very real part of Nature, has his own evolution. Eternal life here and now, begun on earth to be evolved and perfected by the casting aside of the mortal body, the passing over from earth life conditions to the psychical plane. We can grow on the psychical plane of existence and realise there what we have dreamed of here.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF JUDAISM.

A remarkable presentation of Judaism as a spiritual religion is given by the Rev. J. Rhondda Williams in a recent issue of the 'Christian Commonwealth,' under the title of 'How a Jew invaded my Study.' The views presented are mainly those of the distinguished Rabbinical scholar, Dr. Schechter, and the complaint is made that his writings have been passed over without notice by Christian theologians who have otherwise dealt with the subject exhaustively. The suggestion is made that if the Rabbinical theology were to be vindicated, the denunciations of the Pharisees by Jesus would be made to appear exaggerated and one-sided. The multiplicity of rules and prescriptions with regard to trivial acts of conduct is admitted, but it is claimed that along with this there went 'simple faith and religious inwardness.' The attitude of modern Judaism is thus defined :—

The liberal Jew of to-day claims no finality in doctrine, except what is involved in the ancient faith that God is one and only one, and in the hope that all the world may come to acknowledge it. Synagogue has replaced temple, prayer has taken the place of sacrifice, and penitence supplied the ritual of atonement. Christians have substituted the vicarious atonement done for them by Jesus. We (Jews) maintain that God is all-merciful and all-just, that He will, therefore, judge with loving-kindness and allow for imperfections; that we do not, therefore, need a mediator and a vicarious atonement to ensure the welfare of our souls at the hands of our Father. We believe that God not only pervades the whole world, but is also within us, and His Spirit helps and leads us towards goodness and truth. By the atonement we mean not some plan by which a man is reconciled to God, but the reconciliation itself. Atonement is reversion to obedience. Sin is evil life: atonement is better life. In atonement we lay the stress on moral betterment; but this depends on renewed communion with God.

The doctrine of the one God carries with it the idea of the one humanity. The fatherhood of God implies the brotherhood of man. And so, amid all the particularism that is still left in Israel, there soars aloft the belief in the day when there will be no religions, but only Religion; when Israel will come together with other communions, or they with Israel.

Mr. Rhondda Williams' conclusion is that 'liberal Judaism is not unlike the New Theology,' and, we might add, the religious aspect of Spiritualism. 'There is a unity that lies beneath all differences,' he says, 'and we need to find it.'

A LADY, who has been a subscriber to 'LIGHT' for twenty-five years, assures us that she 'has always found the paper a true light-bringer,' and another subscriber, who writes from Canada, says: 'I get much help from your splendid journal.' Expressions of appreciation of 'LIGHT' such as these are encouraging. So also is the following from a correspondent who lives in Lancashire, who says: 'I met a gentleman in Southport on Sunday last who has been a member of the Plymouth Brethren, but is fighting his way out of that somewhat narrow system of thought, and he is taking "LIGHT." In speaking of it to me he said: "I read "LIGHT" with more interest than I do my Bible." I know you will not altogether agree with his expression, but it shows how much your paper helps those who are struggling for religious freedom. I assure you that your paper, for years, has been to me of incalculable help, and I do all I can to increase the circulation amongst my friends.'

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HUME ON MIRACLES.

Last week we commented upon a cheap reprint of a book which only glows with added lustre as time goes on. As a contrast, we turn to-day to a work of which the opposite is true.

The cheap reprint of Hume's Essays, specially notified as containing 'The famous Essay on Miracles,' reminds us of a controversy which has still some life in it, but which has long been removed to a larger arena and a different atmosphere. Hume was simply an early agnostic,—placid, narrow, slow and humorous, in many respects reminding us of Sidgwick of Cambridge; a pure critic, almost entirely content with pinning down fallacies or suggesting them. His 'famous Essay on Miracles' is a critical icicle. The writer gets into a sort of sentry box and smilingly declines to budge, and is quite satisfied with his beloved and trusted 'experience.'

He defines a 'miracle' as 'a violation of the laws of nature,' 'a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent'; a definition which has been riddled through and through by facts since Hume wrote it. The view from his little sentry box was an inviting one, and he made the most of it, but to treat it as a survey of the laws of nature was strangely absurd for so lucid a philosopher. It has always been open to Hume's opponents to turn his flank by agreeing to deny all violations of the laws of nature, while yet retaining belief in even all the wonders of the Bible, every one of which could be regarded as having a law of nature at the heart of it.

Of course, Hume ought to have said 'all the known laws of nature,' but that would have saved him the trouble of proceeding further, inasmuch as leaving room for the discovery of fresh laws of nature would have carried with it the possibility of all the so-called 'miracles.' The introduction of 'a particular volition of the Deity,' as a supposed violation of nature's laws, was a desperate throw of Hume's dice, and a really fatal one for him, for the reply is obvious:—How do you know that such a volition is not a law of nature? What if 'the Deity' is as natural as

spring rain or as a sunbeam? Indeed, what if both rain and sunbeam be, in some sense, 'volitions of Deity'?

The other suggested 'transgression of a law of nature,' 'the interposition of some invisible agent,' is still less fortunate. Why should an 'invisible agent' be inevitably regarded as outside the sphere of natural law? It may be that the supposition of an invisible agent is an idle one; but that is not Hume's point. His point is that an effect becomes a miracle and a transgression of natural law if we regard it as done by 'some invisible agent.' But the power which gives us telegraphy through space without continuity of contact of any visible material is an invisible agent; and yet we do not regard such telegraphy as miraculous: though it might have been so regarded in Hume's day, if the effect had been produced without any general knowledge of the cause.

Hume follows his definition of a miracle as 'a violation of the laws of nature,' by the assertion that 'a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws.' Has it? What experience had established for Hume was what Hume had experienced in his sentry box: and to say that this was 'firm and unalterable' was rather to measure his unconscious ignorance than to indicate his conscious knowledge. If Hume, by some 'miracle,' could have continued to this day, he would long ago have been got out of that box, and his 'unalterable' would have vanished with many apologies.

Referring to the records of so-called miracles in ancient writings, he imagines the reader saying that it is strange such prodigious events never happen in our days. To which he can only reply, 'It is nothing strange that men should lie in all ages': a rather inconsequential remark which ought to have followed some such remark as that stories of such events, as happening now, are circulated still. And, indeed, stories of such or similar events, as happening now, are widely circulated. They were circulated in Hume's time, and even he was impressed by the circumstantiality of them. His allusion to them is well worth quoting in full:—

There surely never was a greater number of miracles ascribed to one person than those which were lately said to have been wrought in France upon the tomb of Abbé Paris, the famous Jansenist, with whose sanctity the people were so long deluded. The curing of the sick, giving hearing to the deaf and sight to the blind, were everywhere talked of as the usual effects of that holy sepulchre. But, what is more extraordinary, many of the miracles were immediately proved upon the spot before judges of unquestioned integrity, attested by witnesses of credit and distinction, in a learned age, and on the most eminent theatre that is now in the world. Nor is this all; a relation of them was published and dispersed everywhere; nor were the Jesuits, though a learned body, supported by the civil magistrate, and determined enemies to those opinions in whose favour the miracles were said to have been wrought, ever able distinctly to refute or detect them. Where shall we find such a number of circumstances agreeing to the corroboration of one fact? And what have we to oppose to such a cloud of witnesses but the absolute impossibility or miraculous nature of the events which they relate? And this, surely, in the eyes of all reasonable people, will alone be regarded as a sufficient refutation.

Hume's great reliance was on 'experience.' He was never tired of protesting against any ignoring of it: and yet here he is slamming his sentry box door, pulling down his little blind, and deciding, *a priori*, apart from all evidence, that such events could only be regarded as an 'absolute impossibility.' This, however, is in harmony with the apparently reasonable but really comical suggestion on his first page, that we must balance experiments and decide the matter by a little sum in subtraction. How is that possible in all cases? and, if it were, what evidence would the process afford? Five cures would not be

invalidated by fifty failures: and things done at the tomb of Abbé Paris could not be disproved by their absence at the grave of Bill Sikes.

What Hume would have said to Sir Oliver Lodge can only be matter for pure speculation, and what would happen if we could give him 'three months hard' in our Alliance Library no one can say. But perhaps he has had it, and profited by it. Any way, *we* should greatly profit by an account of his 'experiences' since he got out of that sentry box into the open.

IMMORTALITY; HISTORICALLY AND PHILOSOPHICALLY CONSIDERED.

BY THE REV. GERTRUD VON PETZOLD, M.A.

An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on Thursday evening, February 20th, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, the Rev. J. Page Hopps in the chair.

(Continued from page 104.)

Two races who had a 'distinct idea of a future life I will just mention in passing—the Babylonians and the Persians. The Babylonians, as you know, represent the very oldest civilisation we can trace. We can reconstruct their life as far back as 4,000 years before the Christian era. Although their religion never became entirely monotheistic, they had one chief god—Merodach. Some of their ancient hymns are beautiful and are characterised by a high moral tone; indeed, not a few of them may be ranked side by side with the Hebrew Psalms. Their great national epic—the epic of Gilgames—has come down to us in fairly good preservation. There we find many stories, such as concerning the creation of man, the flood, &c., which scholars think have influenced largely the Old Testament legends of Genesis. In this epic of Gilgames we have a song called 'Istar's Descent into Hades.' It describes the love of Istar (the Babylonian Venus) for Dûzu, the Babylonian Adonis, her sorrow at his death, her descent into Hades, the trials she has to encounter, and her final return. Hades, or the underworld, is described as the lower earth, the pit, the far land. It is thought to be in the remote West. There is also a judge of this world, but that is the most we can say about it. All the rest is more or less conjecture.

Coming now to the Persians I will only remind you of their more or less legendary prophet and teacher—Zarathustra or Zoroaster, and of their two great sacred books, the 'Avesta' and the 'Bundevesta.' The Persian conception of the Deity was dualistic. There was a good God, Ormuzd,—the God of light, order, purity, and right, and an evil God, whose servants were the demons. When a man dies, according to the Persians, his body being duly exposed to the elements (this was a rigid custom) his soul is fought for by good and evil spirits for three days. After that comes the reckoning. He is confronted by his conscience, and if the good in him is found to prevail over the evil he goes to Paradise. If the evil in him prevails he sinks into the abyss, 'down into the darkness of the earth-spirit, down into the world of woe, the dismal realm, down into the house of hell.' If the good and evil in him balance each other he has to pass through an intermediate stage till the advent of the last day. The Persian religion was decidedly optimistic, and it is specially to be noted for its belief in the advent of a Messiah who was to usher in a new world when the dead should be raised, the final judgment take place, and the evil spirits be conquered by the good.

We will go on to the Greeks. They were a people possessed by a remarkable sense of beauty and an undying zest for and joy in life. They believed in many gods, and pictured these gods to themselves very much like human beings. Their earliest literature begins with the Homeric poems, the Iliad and the Odyssey. It would be profane to say a word in praise of their artistic excellency. Let us only note the ideas of a life after

death which we find in these wonderful poems. They do not distinguish between body and spirit in our sense. The soul or psyche is to them more physical than mental. It is the principle of animal life. The mental activities only exist on earth. This we gather from Achilles' famous words: 'O strange that in the house of Hades is soul and image, but not mind.'

The house of Hades is governed by Aides and Persephone. It has barren plains, and its rivers are rivers of hate and sorrow, its trees are poplar trees, the sun never pierces it. It is hated by God and men. The early Hellenic idea, then, of a life after death is fragmentary and devoid of any religious interest. It became a more living concern to the Greeks through the mysteries and the later poets and philosophers. Anaxagoras turned the idea of the soul as a mere physical thing into that of mind. The life after death seems to have been a special object of study with the mysteries, those secret societies of which the poets and philosophers speak as an initiation into divine things, but of which very little has come down to us. The great dramatists—Æschylus and Sophocles, have a high moral conception of the life after death, in which the great ones of earth will remain good and divine. But it is in Pindar that we find the religious consciousness most highly developed. The future life will be governed by stern moral laws—it will be a terror to the wicked and a blessing to the noble. Pindar says:—

Blessed is he who has beheld them (the mysteries) and descends under the hollow earth, he knows the end, he knows the divine origin of life.

The good lead a life without a tear among the honoured of the gods. The souls of the impious flit about beneath heaven on earth in murderous pains, under the yoke-straps of evil from which is no escape; but those of the pious dwell in heaven and sing about the Blessed One in hymns.

The greatest Greek philosopher was Plato. He has been called a Prophet of the Ideal and the Eternal. He was a great teacher and doctor of the soul. Life for him began with the soul and ended with the soul. He deals with the reality of the soul and the future life in almost all his dialogues. He says in the 'Republic' that if the soul is able indeed to survive the attacks made upon it by its own diseases, such as cowardice, intemperance, injustice, folly, surely it must be able to survive the attacks of the things which wear out the body. Greek culture and thought reached in Plato a height above which it could not rise, indeed it is not certain if any nation at any time has gone farther than he.

Coming now to the Hebrews, their earliest form of religion is what is known as 'ancestor worship.' The dead were not regarded as fully dead. They continued to take an interest in human affairs. They were also supposed to influence them, for which reason the living offered sacrifices to them so as to propitiate them. In the story of Rachel we read of the teraphim, which were images or statues or household gods, to whom sacrifices were offered in the house. It was the sacred duty of the son to offer worship and sacrifice on behalf of his ancestors, whence arose the custom that a younger brother had to marry his elder brother's widow so that she might bear him sons who could offer sacrifices to his memory. The early Hebrews had a horror of remaining unburied, because no sacrifice could be offered to the unburied dead. Every Israelite desired to be buried in the family grove, so as to be with his own people. From this arose the idea that the groves of the tribe or nation must form one resting place, and this came to be called by the name of Sheol. In early times Sheol was quite independent of Yahve, who was regarded merely as a tribal, a national god. Other gods were regarded as lawful rulers over neighbouring nations. Nor were there at first any moral conceptions connected with Sheol and the life of the dead. Of this life of the dead the Hebrew had a very shadowy conception. Indeed, he had no clear conception of our modern distinction of soul and body. He regarded the soul as identical with the blood of the body. Hence men avoided eating blood, they offered it as sacrifice to Yahve. Blood unjustly spilt on earth cried to God, that is, the soul cried to God for vengeance. As the

central seat of the blood was the heart, so the heart was regarded as the organ of thought; hence a man, when he thinks, is said to speak in his heart. Further, to the soul are attributed not only animal functions as hunger and thirst, but also psychical activities as joy and fear. At death the soul leaves the body; the soul also dies, but not completely; it continues to lead a shadowy existence in Sheol. In addition to 'soul' the Hebrew believed in the 'spirit' of man (originally they were synonyms), meaning 'breath,' 'wind,' signifying the principle of life. The priestly writers made 'ruach' to mean the divine element which never dies but returns to God who gave it. So far you see the early Hebrews' idea of the soul life was not very fully developed. It reached a higher stage in the sixth century B.C. when the Israelite began to develop the conception of individual retribution. In the old days it had always been 'national retribution,' a punishment of the sons for the sins of the fathers. Jeremiah was the first to preach individual retribution, as we see from xxxi., 29. Ezekiel followed, and the relation between the world and God became a personal relation. Every man is responsible only for his own doings, and will be judged by them. So far so good; but Ezekiel added, 'Every righteous man shall prosper,' and this thought gave rise to the later conflict and trouble of Job. He cannot understand God's ways, and accuses God of injustice and his friends also.

Again, the thought gleams upon his mind that on some future day God will vindicate him in the face of his enemies, and he will see God face to face. We have further gleams of the doctrine of immortality in some of the Psalms (17, 49, 73), but they are too vague for us to dwell on. The writer of Isaiah xxvi. 1-19 (which forms an independent passage) describes the future blessings in store for the righteous nations, and there we have an unmistakable statement of the writer's belief in the resurrection of the dead. The Book of Daniel, which was written a century later, goes a step further and discusses not only the resurrection of the righteous but also that of the wicked. The whole of the Old Testament gives us only cursory hints, as it were, of the possibility of a life after death, and that possibility is applied generally to Israel as a nation, not an individual. It is otherwise with the New Testament. That is saturated, so to speak, with the thoughts on the life to come. The Master's life on earth had been of such short duration, his career had been cut short in the midst, and the disciples, after having recovered from their first shock at his death, at once began to look for his return, and with this return was to come a resurrection of the dead. We know that they at first confidently expected this to happen in their lifetime, but had to go on deferring their hope. The book that is most keenly interested in the life after death is the Apocalypse. It draws the most glowing pictures of the Messiah's return, it prophesies a first resurrection, followed by a millennium of the Messiah's reign, and after that will come a general resurrection and a final judgment. The Pauline Epistles are full of allusions to the life to come, and we have various stages of development in the apostle's ideas. In the earlier Epistles, as that to the Thessalonians, he expects the Lord's return shortly. The later Epistles show the hope deferred, and in one of the last, that to the Philippians, we find the apostle grown weary of his long waiting and now hoping that through his own death he may at last be permitted to rejoin his beloved Master.

The immortality of the soul has since become too deeply rooted in our human consciousness to be ever eradicated again; it has helped to shape the thoughts and lives of countless millions of the human race, it has been attested by philosophy, by religion, by personal human experience. Surely life would be a farce and character a counterfeit if the testimony of our deepest and holiest intuitions should be capable of leading us astray.

MR. PAGE HOPPS claimed the privilege of a chairman to propose a vote of thanks to Miss von Petzold for her instructive lecture, which was seconded by a gentleman in the audience, who asked the lecturer what human experience there is of an after life.

MISS VON PETZOLD, in replying to the question, said that there are the very deepest intuitions, and our whole religious consciousness gives testimony to continuance of life. Personally she had not had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with spiritualistic phenomena, and could only base her answer on the inward intuitions of the human heart.

MR. PAGE HOPPS, in relating an experience which had happened to his wife, and which in itself was convincing proof of the truth of the phenomena of the séance room, expressed the hope that the lecturer would investigate for herself.

MR. E. W. WALLIS said that all must agree that the lecture showed wide research and deep sympathy with the idea which had been expounded, but he thought that, perhaps, there was one thing lacking. A good deal had been said about the beliefs of various people, and he had anticipated that when the speaker came to the New Testament attention would have been drawn more fully to the facts there set forth. The whole basis of the Christian claim is that after the death on the cross, Jesus reappeared and manifested to the women who visited the sepulchre, to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, to the apostles in the upper room at Jerusalem, and, if the testimony is trustworthy, his continued existence was abundantly demonstrated. He thought it was this fact that transformed the apostles from disappointed and despairing individuals to a band of enthusiastic advocates of a truth which had been brought home to them as a matter of fact, and sent them out to proclaim boldly the gospel of life and immortality brought to light. Furthermore, in the account of the conversion of Saul when on his way to Damascus, it is stated as a fact that he heard the spirit voice of Jesus. Another passage in the Revised Version goes to show that Jesus appeared as a spirit guide of the advocates of this new gospel of immortality brought to light by his return, for, in the Revised Version, it is said that when Paul and his companion would have gone to Bithynia 'the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not,' and from this it is clear that they were travelling about under spirit guidance. Paul is most emphatic on the point of spirit return and the continued existence of Jesus, and bases upon it the argument that 'if he be not risen' his own preaching was in vain, and the faith of the believers was vain.

He (Mr. Wallis) thought that any consideration of the historical aspect of the doctrine of immortality was imperfect without the recognition of the New Testament testimony to the fact of spirit return. He quite agreed that all our intuitions strongly favour continued existence, but there were hosts of people who wanted something more and who needed evidence. The materialistic thinkers of the age demanded proof of life after death, and it was to meet that demand that the spiritualistic movement had been labouring for fifty or sixty years. He did not wish to detract from the able address to which they had listened, but rather to add to it and to draw attention to what he thought was the corner-stone, which had been rejected by the builders but which must again be put into position if the temple of spiritual religion was to be completed.

TRANSITION.—'There is no death, what seems so is transition' is the heading on an announcement of the passing to the higher life, on February 27th, of Mary Jane, wife of Mr. Edward Beardsworth, president of the Southport Psychological Union. The interment took place at Blackburn on Monday last. We sympathise with all who are left behind to bear the frequent sorrows of life alone.

By describing the 'Zodiacus Vitæ' of Marcellus Palingenius Stellatus (Philip Wellby, price 2s. net) Professor Foster Watson has recalled to notice a forgotten poem, formerly used in schools as a Latin reading book, which must have had a beneficial influence on the minds of the young two centuries ago. Under titles derived from the twelve signs of the Zodiac, Palingenius sets forth the moral and religious aspects of character, wealth, knowledge, family, health, and other topics suggested by the astrological significance of the signs. At times he rises to a high key, and considers the soul and its welfare, the development of the inward self, the attainment of the wisdom of the spirit, and union with the Divine. The real significance of the book is well brought out in an appendix written by Mr. W. Gorn-Old ('Sephariel') which we commend to students of astrology in its higher aspects.

JOTTINGS.

The Bishop of Ripon seems to entertain Spiritualistic ideas regarding the next world, for he is reported to have said at Bradford recently that 'If we dream of a heaven of idleness, I venture to think that the other world will be one of ceaseless activity.'

In the course of a memorial sermon, on the first anniversary of the transition of the Rev. E. M. Evans, of Ilkeston, the Rev. J. E. H. Binney, M.A., said that those to whom the late vicar had been a friend and spiritual guide might 'be sure that he was still helping them by his prayers, and that he did not forget any of them whom he knew and cared for on earth.' This spiritualistic utterance is another 'sign of the times.' Slowly, but surely, the facts of the naturalness of the life after death, the nearness of 'the departed,' and their power to help their friends on earth are being recognised and accepted.

A lecture on Spiritualism, recently delivered by Mr. J. H. Reader Harris, K.C., in the Corn Exchange, Plymouth, is so exaggerated in its animus against our beliefs as to be really amusing. Mr. Harris stated that he 'was present at the death-bed of Home, the medium, and was unable to hear what the dying man said because of the noise made by table-rapping and furniture moving. Christianity offered communion with God; Spiritualism with demons.' We are glad to have Mr. Reader Harris's testimony, as an unbeliever, to the fact of these manifestations; but why does he ascribe them to demons?

Mr. Harris further said that the Bible 'offered no justification to Spiritualists. The case of Samuel was the only instance in which a spirit returned. The explanation of that exception was that Saul had gone astray in visiting the Witch of Endor, and that God in anger had sent Samuel's spirit back to earth. Only in this way could the surprise of the witch, who had expected a counterfeit and not the genuine spirit, be understood.' What an unworthy notion of a God who, in a fit of pettishness, could thus break His own laws! The acumen of the learned counsel is at fault; Saul had gone in disguise, and the woman had not expected the great Prophet to manifest his presence. The rest of the address is on a par with these puny trivialities. An ounce of real knowledge is worth a ton of such ridiculous assumptions.

Mr. F. T. A. Davies, of the 'Kosmon Church,' 19, Ramsden-road, Balham, S.W., has sent us a sixpenny pamphlet of fifty pages entitled, 'Faithist Essays,' dealing with 'Signs of our Times,' 'Spiritual Gifts,' and many subjects of social and economic reform, especially in the direction of the nationalisation of public services. There are brief but good essays on Spiritualism, immortality, and evidences for belief in spirit influence and return, while Faithism is expounded as the continuation of the religion taught by Zoroaster, Confucius, and other sages, and as the universal religion, satisfying the scientist, the philosopher, and the agnostic, yet capable of being understood by a child. But we fail to see why universal religion should be called 'Faithism.' There are too many labels already.

Mr. Sigurd Trier's Danish Spiritualist review, 'Sandhedsøgeren,' for February, contains an account of how, early on Sunday, the 2nd ult., he was rung up on the telephone by a young student who was staying with his parents in the neighbourhood of Copenhagen, and who informed him that he had just received an intimation by automatic writing that the King and Crown Prince of Portugal had been murdered. The intelligence had then only just been received at the newspaper offices, and was not printed in the earlier copies of the papers; no one in the house in which the student lived had seen any account of the occurrence, nor had Mr. Trier heard of it until the telephonic message came.

A Birmingham correspondent draws our attention to the fact that the one-time 'Birmingham Spiritualist Union,' which in March, 1904, became the 'Birmingham Ethical and Psychical Society,' has now further evolved and has become 'The Ethical Church,' and on Sunday last Mr. Eldred Hallas, the resident speaker (or 'pastor'?), discoursed on 'Balzac' and 'The Gods: Past, Present, and Future.' Our correspondent expresses his opinion that 'the British public require grounding in spiritual truths first and foremost, because morals permeate the whole and must follow where spirituality takes root.' Mr. Hallas was once an avowed Spiritualist and a medium. We regret his loss to the movement, but wish him success in his work for moral progress.

Replying to an 'Anti-Spiritualist' in the 'Western Daily Mercury' (Plymouth), a correspondent who signs himself 'Spiritual' writes that Spiritualism 'will be the means of averting the misery of this life, by its teaching of personal responsibility instead of vicarious atonement, and by giving everyone a knowledge of a future state. Spiritualism does what Christianity has failed to do—it gives proof of immortality.' The writer says that being only a young Spiritualist of eighteen years' standing, he does not know all about it; 'but "Anti-Spiritualist's" twelve months' inquiry has taught him all! A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. That is why our friend leads us to infer that Spiritualism is true, but of the Devil.'

In a further letter, 'Anti-Spiritualist' makes some amazing assertions. He states, for instance, that 'Spiritualism is largely responsible for such a condition of indifference as exists in the world to-day. . . . Spiritualism robs men and women of their individuality, and asks an abandonment of self-control in favour of spirit control.' In fact, he says, it is all due to 'Satan.' If so, as another correspondent points out, and if the whole plan of creation, devils and all, was divinely originated, 'the responsibility lies outside the province of the human will.' But, as the same writer adds, Spiritualists believe in a moral creation in which every atom and element plays its allotted part, and this knowledge increases their sense of individual responsibility and strengthens their moral rectitude.

The remarks made by 'Dagonet' (Mr. George R. Sims) in the 'Referee' of February 23rd, which were quoted in the last issue of 'LIGHT,' called forth two useful letters which, with the usual fairness of that journal, appeared in the 'Referee' of the 1st inst. Dealing with 'Dagonet's' idea that spirits must be miserable if they remain in touch with earthly things because they must see the sorrows and sufferings of earth dwellers, 'T.E.D.' suggests that the spirits know that sufferings on earth are transitory and will be followed by spiritual happiness, and therefore are not as distressed as 'Dagonet' imagines. 'A.F.G.' very pertinently says: 'No one knows better than "Dagonet" that this life is nothing but hell to multitudes of people, but this fact cannot interfere with his enjoyment, otherwise we would never have had his plays, poems, &c.,' and follows this up with pretty full instructions how to form the spirit circle.

We have heard of 'practical mystics,' and they sometimes crop up in unexpected quarters. Mr. Alexander Stewart Gray, the leader of the recent demonstration of unemployed labourers, who has been partially fasting for a week, appears to be of a strongly mystical turn of mind. He stated to a Press representative his belief that by fasting 'the body loses some of its grossness and becomes more spiritual, requiring little physical sustenance, and drawing most of its needs from psychic sources.' Having been engrossed in practical details, Mr. Gray found that he had lost touch with the higher realms of thought, and undertook his fast largely to allow his mind to return to a more spiritual plane. After some days of very meagre diet he said that he was astonished at the result, and that he never felt better in his life. He is also reported to have said that 'at any time when in mental trouble and doubt a week's fast may bring guidance.' We pass the hint on.

The Rev. J. Warschauer, in the 'Christian Commonwealth' of the 4th inst., states that a considerable proportion of his letters propound questions such as: 'How shall we know one another if we are disembodied spirits?' 'Where shall we be located?' 'Is the death sleep a prolonged life sleep?' After practically confessing that he knows nothing about the life after death, and admitting that some of his questioners are troubled 'not merely by uncertainty, but by a lingering dread of what the veiled future has in store,' he asks: 'Why not take one world at a time?' He suggests that the 'intense curiosity' which so many feel on this subject is 'rather idle and not altogether healthy,' and says that 'not the least' of his objections to Spiritualism is that it 'diverts healthy attention from matters of present and pressing interest to details of which we can well afford to remain ignorant for a while.' Our objection to this attitude is that it shows a lack of sympathy with those who are distressed, and our answer to it is that *with* the knowledge which Spiritualism supplies, the 'dread' of the future, which embitters so many lives, is removed, and those who know something of the world to which they are going can face the future calmly, and are ready for, and better fitted to perform, the pressing duties of the present life.

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 which may elicit discussion.

The Origin of Circles.

SIR,—Mr. S. B. McCallum ('LIGHT,' p. 108) will find that the custom of sitting in circle is a very ancient one, and was common in early Greek history in connection with the Delphic Oracles. In that strange book, 'The Hidden Way Across the Threshold,' by J. C. Street, there is an illustration of a Delphic circle, with directions given as to the elements constituting it, and the arrangements of the 'positive' and 'negative' mentalities in order to obtain the most satisfactory results. It is the absence of this knowledge of the qualities of the individuals which makes our present-day séances often such failures.—Yours, &c.,

A. WALLACE, M.D.

SIR,—Mr. McCallum asks how the practice of sitting in a circle at séances arose. No doubt, I would suggest, by instruction of the spirits concerned. As to the time when the custom arose, the earliest instance of it of which I know is to be found in Ezekiel viii. 1, to which may be added xiv. 1, and xx. 1.—Yours, &c.,

E. D. GIRDLESTONE.

Sutton Coldfield.

Man's Free Agency.

SIR,—The correspondence recently published in 'LIGHT' on 'Man's Free Agency' has been followed with the keenest interest by a number of readers on this side of the Atlantic, and the letter by Mr. Harry Pye which appeared on February 1st is richly suggestive of new points of view on the ever interesting question of heredity and environment. To Mr. Pye's statement that 'all knowledge comes from environment' many of us must take exception.

Were that true, it would preclude at once the identity, individuality and originality of the spirit, which is the basis and foundation of Spiritualism; for without it *conscious* immortality and self continuity could not exist consistently.

As it stands, Mr. Pye's statement is contrary to the established law of our universe, whether we take our bearings from our Solar system or from the construction of the highest mechanics known—viz., those maintaining life in the human body.

In both everything works from a *centre* to a circumference, from a nucleus outwardly. The circumference, or environment, or envelope, is constantly *worked upon, changed* and altered, by the power from within. The knowledge does not reside in the outside, which is only the visible vapour-matter, or outline, and the effects of which upon the centre are always conditioned and limited. That great trinity represented by the circle, and which we find in the minutest cell, contains this lesson for us. Nucleus, circulating contents, and cell-wall; centre, space between, and circumference; spirit, soul and body, or, *man* the spiritual entity, his *body* and his *environment*.

In the process of evolution, both heredity and environment play a part, but always subservient to the *individual* whom *they serve*, as stepping stones to a higher expression, a better form, a higher type; and personal consciousness with its sense of *responsibility* is the line of demarcation which divides us from the lower creations—it is that which puts the seal of divinity upon the brow of humanity, and without which a Son of God could never have said to another, 'Come, let us reason together.'—Yours, &c.,

FLORENCE MONTAGUE.

Montreal, Canada.

SIR,—The following message was received by my wife, in my presence, through the agency of the planchette some three days subsequent to an argument on 'Free Will v. Determinism,' which arose out of the letters in your issue of February 1st :—

'No action by itself is either good or bad. When the higher of two alternatives is chosen by an agent, then the action is good; and the choice of a lower one, of which the agent is cognisant, is a bad action. Now different people may have different ways of expressing it, but the fact remains the same. It is a moral judgment, and the knowledge admits of a choice, and to choose necessitates freedom. You judge actions in a different manner from what we do. Different codes of morals have existed at different times, and, as the motives

have become higher, that which was thought to be the highest spring of thought has to rank lower in the category, and the people who maintain the lower motives are considered reprehensible. Now you think that it is only these people who are bad; we do not think so. We only know of modes of progression, and whenever a person makes a good choice he is so much further on towards perfection, whether he be a savage or a thoroughly well-educated person. Motive is everything. If people are ignorant, two courses are always open to them; and though they are very low down through no fault of their own, still, if they choose bad, so much the worse.'

The message was quite unexpected, a question on a totally different matter having been asked. While the writing was in progress my wife and I were conversing on everyday matters, thus precluding the 'subconscious self' from operating. The intelligence transmitting the message signs himself 'J. M. C.,' and claims to have been a professional man in earth-life.—Yours, &c.,

E. W. MARSH.

Myddelton-square, E.C.

The Obligations of 'Determinism.'

SIR,—A popular error in respect to 'Determinism' lies in the supposition that the denial of a free will implies the denial of the freedom (or opportunity) of choice. The determinist does not deny that the individual has the power to choose, but asserts that such choice must always be the result of the interacting influence of his particular set of life experiences, his particular heredity and environment, and these he does not make himself; on the contrary, they make him. By acknowledging these two fundamental factors in the formation of human character, and especially the supreme influence of evil surroundings on the awakening consciousness of the young, and the limitation it places upon the will in after life, determinism would awaken mankind to the necessity of bringing about conditions wherein the good might flourish and the evil gradually be eliminated.

Present-day researchers have clearly demonstrated that the origin and development of crime, as well as of disease, are natural, traceable, and preventable, and we are bound to recognise our responsibilities as a community; to admit our share in the creation of a system of society that has produced in a people, capable of the highest and noblest development, the undesirable qualities of mental and physical being that are everywhere manifest; the awful list of criminal and vicious traits which some superior persons deem inevitable.

In no single instance have two human creatures exactly resembled each other, yet for even the minutest difference in mind or body there must exist a certain *cause*. The thief, *savant*, priest, convict, monarch, loafer, premier, poet, and savage give expression to certain forms of life evolving along certain lines by the action of their respective birth tendencies and surroundings; and to assert that man's 'will,' which is an outcome of certain determining factors outside of himself, can act independently of them, seems to me illogical.

Would it be possible, for instance, to imagine that a loafer possesses an uncorrupted power of choice; the power to *desire* the priceless jewel of self-respect and the blessings of cleanliness—the power to *desire* the comforts of home, wife, children, and affection, and yet rejects them, only that he shall not *work*—the most joyous and health-giving of all our physical needs? The free-will theory is not compatible with all the facts of life, for surely it were as foreign to a healthy individual having full control of the life-forces to thus dam the river of his happiness as it would be to stand at the street corner exchanging shillings for pence!

Everyone recognises the absolute insistence of the law of self-preservation, and the desire it engenders in men to so exercise their faculty of choice that it tends to mental and physical welfare, as they individually understand it; for this purpose the mind is the natural guardian of the body, sometimes restricting its appetites, and sometimes (from inability to rise to its responsibilities) sanctioning a vicious desire, but always with the knowledge that the effects of its counsel operating through the bodily organism will react upon itself, for these two are co-partners and workers and must stand or fall by each other. Therefore I contend that degenerates (such as the poor loafer or his wealthy prototype, the criminal, blasphemer, pickpocket, &c.), are creatures of circumstances, the product of bad breeding, education, and surroundings, and that not they but society must be held primarily responsible for their downfall. I base this assumption upon the following facts :—

1. That the evil tendencies in the individual and their root cause—selfishness—are disintegrating factors preventing the realisation of brotherhood, co-operation, and universal love among men.

2. That an ideal state of existence, which would yield the greatest happiness to the race, would be possible to-morrow if by some magical process the individual character of our people could become attuned to the required degree of selflessness, morality, and goodness. Therefore, by the laws of his being,

3. Every man *would* choose good because he desired it, if the will were free.

4. That every man does *not* desire good, because, in every instance, *desire* and consequent *choice* are expressions of his individual character, which itself depends entirely upon inherited tendencies and past happenings.

Determinism will awaken the slumbering sense of responsibility in the hearts of men to teach them their duties as citizens and brothers, for it is a gospel of sympathy and help, and although at first misunderstood, it gradually establishes itself as a truth. With Determinism universally acknowledged, we should no longer inflict *punishment* upon a moral invalid, a creature already a *victim*, but create an environment about him which would tend to lead him back to the paths of morality—in short, cure him.

A poet has said :—

We alter day by day :
Each little moment, as Life's current rolls,
Adds some faint impress to our yielding souls.

Perhaps when a truer knowledge of the science of life and character comes to us, our 'men of God' will understand why their ministry, and the Sabbath-day chapel, so often fail in their object, and realise that the same refining influence should exist in the factory; should be in evidence all the week where the people live and work. The masses spend seventy per cent. of their waking hours in toil, under conditions which tend to subdue rather than fan the divine spark, hence it is in this direction that the attention of the reformer should be directed; the environment of to-day is the heredity of to-morrow, and the race will become ideal only when the good influence predominates. I have nothing but respect for the noble efforts of Christian workers, but I wish they could *understand!* Few will be found to disagree with the assertion that our present-day industrial system is based upon conflict and selfishness, a state of things which our 'Captains of Industry' tell us is justified by the fact that society 'flourishes by the antagonism of its atoms.' But that is an untruth, and is directly opposed to the teachings of Jesus Christ, who taught that co-operation is the law of life and love, the essence of justice and wisdom. I give thanks that at last, after many days, strong men in the churches are breaking away from this godless doctrine, and are no longer holding themselves aloof from the 'infidel' who is doing Christ's work among the unfortunates. These pioneers are observing the duality of the term 'Christianity'—the material as well as the spiritual significance of Christ's precepts—and are beginning to see that the great mass of people want lifting out of the rut of their abandoned selves; want spiritually educating (by force, if necessary, as a child is sometimes washed against its will), and that they want the spirit of independence, self-respect, and *hope*.

Although we are a civilised and a wise people, I cannot look with calm, complacent eyes at our beautiful and over-rich country with its hideous slums; at a *million mothers* working in factories; at our women labouring stripped to the waist making iron chains, or spending twelve and thirteen hours of God's days in joy-killing, monotonous tasks to earn a few miserable pence, nor at the unnumbered millions—

Who toil that they may eat,
That better they may toil;
Who toil that they may sleep,
That better they may toil.

Life was not sent for this!

Determinism does not mean that we may not choose the right—the desire for good is generally, and should be always, the predominating factor; nor does it render needless the praise of goodness, charity, love, and self-sacrifice, for do we not all praise the sweet beauty of our English rose, admire its scented fragrance, and eulogise it in a hundred poems? How much more necessary, then, to praise the Human Spirit that hath ears to hear and a soul to expand in gratitude for its blessings! No! we can still love the good and hate the bad; but blame tends to the punishment and isolation of the wrongdoer; sympathy to understanding, fellowship, and love.—Yours, &c.,

High House College,
Purfleet, Essex.

F. G. FOSTER,

Mrs. Place-Veary's Return from South Africa.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to make it known through 'LIGHT' that I expect to arrive in England on April 18th, on board the mail steamer 'Saxon.'

You will be pleased to know that I have had a pleasant tour in South Africa and that our movement is going ahead. When I was waiting on the railway station at Port Elizabeth I looked through the periodicals for sale there, and was delighted to notice that 'LIGHT' and 'The Two Worlds' were prominently displayed.—Yours, &c.,

Queenstown, South Africa.

M. J. VEARY.

An Apology and Explanation.

SIR,—As I am the one so little 'studied in the philosophy of life as unfolded in the best literature of Spiritualism' as to quote Ouida in my letter in 'LIGHT' of February 8th, p. 71, I openly apologise to Mr. Benner, Mr. May, and other friends that, thinking the remainder of the quotation made the fact self-evident, I failed to emphasise that Ouida's use of the term 'soul' is *not* the same as that of the 'Church Magazine' which speaks of Little Puddleton as 'a parish of two hundred and five souls.' I am, it is true, little studied in the literature of Spiritualism; but if Spiritualism has anything of higher literary merit to offer than the columns (minus 'Letters to the Editor') and, especially, the leading articles of 'LIGHT,' I have a great treat in store. Speaking of the latter, I wonder if my friends read and noted that grand 'leader' on p. 126, Vol. XXVII., where, after quoting Tennyson's lines,

'He saw through life and death, through good and ill,
He saw through his own soul, . . .'

you say, 'Here is the glimpse of a great secret. . . The men and women of the markets see only the surfaces. . . They live and die, but never see "through life and death," and never see through their own souls.' It may be my lack of study, but as yet I fail to see that those men and women you refer to have much more soul or Godhead in them than the grains of sand. I fear my state would have been as parlous had I quoted from your leader; whereas, had I quoted Kipling's poor wretched Tomlinson, who 'had no soul of his own!' phew! where should I have been after the explosion? The study of the philosophy of life is doubtless good, but if it dulls our apprehension of literature—in Tennyson, in your leading articles, in Ouida, or wheresoever we have the felicity to find it—I, for one, will make shift to get along without too much of it.—Yours, &c.,

A. G. G.

Manchester.

A 'Vision' Experience.

SIR,—The following account of a 'spirit vision' may possibly interest some of your readers.

My youngest brother had been in bed for many weeks, and was so seriously ill that the medical men attending him held out little or no hope of his recovery. At the commencement of his illness I nursed him for some weeks, and, of course, did all that I could in the way of making him as comfortable as possible, but he became so ill and weak that it was necessary to have a nurse for him in the daytime. On the night of January 1st, after having seen that he had all he wanted, I said 'good-night' to him and went upstairs to bed; but late though it was, I felt that sleep was not coming to me, and I was still wide awake when the clocks were striking twelve. Presently, when all was quiet, my bedroom door opened slowly and noiselessly; I was lying looking towards the door, and quietly half raised myself to see who was coming in, and my brother appeared—the one who was then lying ill in bed on the floor below. He walked on slowly, right into the room, and, turning slightly towards me, he spoke these words to me quite clearly and distinctly: 'I am going soon now, Maisie dear, and I have come to say good-bye and to thank you for nursing me.' I was greatly surprised to see him in my room, knowing that he was utterly incapable of climbing the stairs, and fearing disastrous consequences from over-exertion, I could only say, 'Oh! Frank!' He, however, walked further into the room, and acting on my first impulse to help him back to bed as quickly as possible, I told him to 'wait a moment,' and threw back the bedclothes in order to get up, when I found that he had gone. Then it was that I *knew*—but not till that moment did I realise that it was my dear brother's spirit that came to tell me of his approaching departure for 'the other side.' I felt that he had also visited my mother and my other brother, who were in the house, although they had not been conscious of his presence. I remained awake for some time afterwards pondering over what I had seen, and a feeling of great peace came

over me; for it seemed to speak to me of the future safety and happiness that my brother was shortly to enjoy. I then saw what I can only imperfectly describe as waves of soft white, filmy clouds rolling over one another, and this strange phenomenon lasted for quite half an hour. I watched it carefully, thinking and hoping that I might be shown still more. But in about an hour's time I heard the clocks strike four, and shortly afterwards I dropped into a quiet sleep. My dear brother did not leave us for 'the other side' until the 11th of the month, ten days *after* the vision appeared to me.—Yours, &c.,

M. W. O.

Discernment of Spiritual Things.

SIR,—I was pleased to read Miss Lilian Whiting's excellent article on the 'Discernment of Spiritual Things' in 'LIGHT' of February 29th, and feel that it will do much good. While quite aware of the bad effects of a too critical, or anxious, frame of mind at the time of sitting, and that 'unless ye become as little children ye shall not see the kingdom,' I still feel that it is not well to be too sure that all we see and hear comes from our spirit friends. There may be many laws of Nature which have been lost to us or not yet discovered by mankind.—Yours, &c.,

S. B. McCALLUM.

Plymouth.

National Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to acknowledge receipt of the following contributions during February, viz.: Wombwell Society, per Mr. R. W. Spittlehouse, 8s. 6d.; result of Mr. J. J. Morse's lantern lecture at Darwen, per Mr. J. Nightingale, 15s. 4d.; Miss E. L. Boswell-Stone, 5s.; Mr. A. Colbeck, 12s. 5d.; Mr. J. C. Macdonald, 10s.; total £2 11s. 3d. The amount disbursed during the month was £5 12s. 8d.

A glance at these figures will show the need for additional subscriptions, as with the continuance of wintry weather our sick friends need more warmth and comfort. I am convinced that if the general Spiritualist public knew of the good work accomplished by this fund they would respond more generously to the appeals made from time to time, and that the lack of interest is due to want of thought and not want of heart. May I, then, commend the fund to all your readers who feel an interest in helping those who are unable to help themselves? I can assure them that any donation, no matter how small, will be thankfully received by—Yours, &c.,

A. E. BUTTON,
Hon. Fin. Sec.

9, High-street, Doncaster.

SCOTTISH SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

At the fourth annual meeting of the Scottish Spiritualist Alliance, which was held at Falkirk on Saturday, February 22nd, representatives were present from the Glasgow Association, Govan Mission, Mediums' Union, and the societies of Edinburgh, Dundee, Greenock, Falkirk, Motherwell, and Dunfermline. At the commencement of the Alliance only five societies were affiliated, but three others, viz., Govan Mission, Motherwell, and Dundee have been added, and, with a new society at Burnbank, which affiliated during the year, the Alliance is now in the strongest position yet attained. Nineteen tours with English workers were carried through during the past year, sixteen being of a week's duration, and three on the week-end basis. The financial position of the Alliance is sound, the income amounting to £16 14s. 3½d., and the expenditure to £13 3s. 1d., leaving a credit balance of £3 11s. 2½d. The following officers were elected: Hon. presidents, Mr. James Robertson, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, and Dr. Abraham Wallace; president, Mr. Charles E. H. Wann, Falkirk; treasurer, Mr. Wm. Guild, Glasgow; secretary, Mr. John M. Stewart, Glasgow; auditors, Mr. Jas. D. Duncan, Edinburgh, and Mr. George Low, Glasgow.

Spiritualism is gradually winning its way into the life and thought of the Scottish people, and as there is ample evidence of an increasing desire for amity and brotherly understanding between societies, there is a bright prospect of its future usefulness.

JOHN M. STEWART,
Hon. Secretary.

THE HIGHER MEDICINE.—Dr. J. Stenson Hooker writes thanking us for our notice of his 'Higher Medicine,' and intimating that the price of the book is now half-a-crown only.

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.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. H. F. Leaf gave an able and interesting address on 'The Life and Teaching of Buddha,' and psychometric delineations. Sunday next, Mr. Robert King.—H. B.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. E. M. Walter's address on 'A Synopsis of Personal Development' aroused an interesting discussion. The band played two excellent selections. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Miss McGrigor, of the Psycho-Therapeutic Society.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mrs. M. H. Wallis delivered a fine address on 'The Power of Spiritualism.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m. Mr. Gee. Wednesday, April 1st, at 8 p.m., Mr. Abbott will commence a course of lectures on 'The Apostles' Creed.'—W. T.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last Mrs. A. Boddington gave good addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis. Mondays, at 8 p.m., and Wednesdays, at 3 p.m., clairvoyant descriptions. Saturdays, at 8 p.m., prayer meeting.—A. C.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Mr. Snowdon Hall's practical and common-sense indications of 'How to Live the Spiritual Life' made a deep impression on his hearers; Mr. Geo. F. Tilby presided. Sunday next, Mr. H. F. Leaf on 'The Teachings of Buddha,' and psychometry.—W. H. S.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. J. Macdonald Moore delivered a lucid and pleasing address on 'Healing.' Miss Otten gave a sweet violin solo. Mr. F. Spriggs presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss MacCreddie, clairvoyant descriptions; doors open at 6.30 p.m. Silver collection.—A. J. W.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Underwood spoke on 'Spiritual Gifts.' On February 27th a tea and social evening were held. Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum inauguration; at 7 p.m., London Union speakers. Tea at 5 p.m., 6d. each. Tuesday next, at 7.30 p.m., Mr. Kelland, 'Figurology.' 11th inst., at 8 p.m., circle.—W. U.

ACTON AND EALING.—2, NEW BROADWAY, EALING, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Abbott gave an eloquent address on 'The Brotherhood of Man.' A solo by Mrs. H. Ball was well received. March 11th, at 8 p.m., healing service (special music); 15th, at 7 p.m., Mr. Tayler Gwinn; 17th, at 8.30 p.m., Mrs. Boddington, clairvoyance and psychometry.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday last, interesting morning with Mr. White; in the evening Madame Zeilah Lee gave splendid psychometrical readings to a full audience. Mr. Ball presided. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion; at 7 p.m., Mr. D. J. Davis. On the 11th inst., social evening, tickets 6d. each. On the 15th inst., Mrs. A. Webb.—C. J. W.

CHISWICK.—56, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last 'Sunbeams of Truth' was the subject dealt with. In the evening Mr. H. Wright's interesting address on 'Spiritualism the Enlightener' was much appreciated. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. J. C. Thompson on 'Religion, Reason, and Education.' Monday, at 8.15 p.m., Mrs. A. Webb, psychometry and clairvoyance.—W. P.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last, at the morning circle, Miss Sacchi gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. In the evening Mr. Spencer spoke and gave clairvoyant descriptions. Mrs. Atkins and Mr. Spencer conducted the after-circle. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., Miss Chapin. March 12th, Mr. Spencer. Wednesday and Friday, at 8 p.m., members' developing circle.—J. L.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-street, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. MacBeth Bain gave a spiritual address on 'The Healing Spirits of the Christhood.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Frederic Fletcher on 'Matter, Mind, and Spirit.'—67, George-street, Baker-street, W.—On Sunday morning last Mr. E. W. Beard's excellent address was much enjoyed. Sunday next, Mrs. Fairclough Smith, trance address and spiritual clairvoyance. No admittance after 11.15 a.m.

CROYDON.—MORLAND HALL, (REAR OF) 74, LOWER ADDISCOMBE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Miss Anna Chapin gave an address and excellent clairvoyant descriptions.

SOUTHSEA.—VICTORIA HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. D. J. Davis gave good addresses. Evening subject, 'If a Man Die Shall He Live Again?' Excellent clairvoyance by Mrs. Wilson.