

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)" 1

I read with interest some pronouncement of Dr. Elliott Coues on ghosts in the "Religio-Philosophical Journal," which I quote:—

Aside from any question of mere subjective hallucinations, which constitute the vast majority of popular ghosts, I understand the genuine post mortem apparition to be the spiritual body of a deceased person, sustaining and conveying his consciousness in the same manner that the physical body sustains and exhibits our mental qualities. For, just as with the physical eye we can only see one another's physical bodies, so is the spirit.

A premonition of an apparition which is presently to be perceived is usually given by a sensation technically called the "ghost chill." This is a symptom of a change in the magnetic state of the body, during which change the threshold of consciousness is shifted to the extent of rendering possible a conscious perception of somewhat ordinarily invisible. The change is almost always very brief, usually lasting a few seconds, during which the manifestation occurs. With the return of the individual to ordinary consciousness the apparition necessarily disappears, usually leaving the percipient in grave doubt as to whether or not he has been the subject of an hallucination. This doubt, however, may be done away with by subsequently ascertaining through ordinary channels of information that an occurrence—say, the death of the person whose spiritual body has thus appeared—took place at a corresponding time, and under circumstances of which the percipient was made aware during the transitory apparition. No other explanation of such an occurrence appears to me to be equally simple and reasonable, and I am, therefore, bound to accept it until a better one can be devised.

Since childhood I have found myself possessed of an organism in which the threshold of consciousness is capable of that shifting which I have described. On several occasions, when the occurrence has taken place, I have been aware of the presence of the spiritual bodies of deceased persons, which gave to me information not otherwise obtainable, and conveyed to my mind a conviction of their identity. But I do not indulge the hope of being able to admit anyone else into my consciousness to such a degree that the evidence mentioned would satisfy their own minds. The evidential value of these experiences is wholly personal, and seldom, if ever, transferable, because, unlike experiments in physical science, psychological occurrences cannot be reproduced at will, and are, therefore, not subject to the ordinary processes of verification.

"Subjective hallucination" sounds Psychological Researchy. A ghost, being spirit, may and does make itself manifest to the senses of the inner being by methods that are subjective. A ghost that appears to me alone, though others, without my sensitive development, are present at the time, is no less a ghost though it pleases a Society to call it a Hallucination. It chanced only that I have developed powers which do not belong to everybody. I can "sense" the presence of people about and around me, and sometimes I can bring them, or they are brought, within the ken of my bodily senses. Why are they to be dubbed Hallucinations? There is a definite connotation to that word which involves the idea of deception of the senses.

In my judgment it is quite misapplied in the sense that is sought to be attached to it—a sense and meaning that convey a false impression—by the Society for Psychological Research. I know nothing more misleading than this application of the word. These appearances are *not*, in any proper sense of the word, "Hallucinations," and to call them so is to throw on their origin a doubt which pre-judges the question. They are as real as, probably more real than, the people who throw this doubt upon them.

If there be any doubt as to this, and I can conceive none in any *experienced* mind, though it is quite natural in the mere theoriser who has not the experience, it may be pointed out that the ghost produces sensations definitely physical—"the ghost chill" of Dr. Coues—and that this physical sensation is not of singular but of general occurrence. If it be objected that such sensation is a mere result of a mental fancy, it may be rejoined that this "ghost chill" is one of the first, most common and regular phenomena observed at an ordinary table séance. A cold wind blowing over the hands of the sitters and sensation of cold in the spinal column are ordinary occurrences at a séance. There is a quality in these "abnormal sensations" which makes strongly for their objective reality. The presence of a "ghost" produces in a mild degree the sensations which its more objective presence produces in a more marked manner. It may present itself to the intelligence only, and then it is called subjective—a Hallucination—and I fail to see why it is evidentially the worse for that. Frequently it communicates provable facts and identifies itself by methods which seem to me even better than mere corporeal resemblance to a dead body. I can understand that a physical counterpart may be made, and that I may be left in doubt as to whether it has any more real relation with the being that it represents than a picture or a bust may have. Probably it has, but not certainly. The proof seems to me to come in precisely when we pass from the material to the spiritual plane: when the accidents of matter are dropped and the realities of spirit are faced. A flash of the inner being, the soul of my friend, is convincing; a bit of information that appeals to my mind is worth more to *me*—but not to *all*—than the most careful physical likeness of his body.

For I imagine that my friend has carried his "self" with him into the next state. He has certainly left his body here, having no further need for it. I do not know much about that next state, but all analogy points to its being not much different from the one just quitted. What new powers may be developed I do not exactly know, but I am fairly safe in assuming, as a result of experience, that they are a development of existing powers and possibilities active or latent in this life. There is no solution of continuity in what we call "Nature," and I presume that the soul which has survived the change that has dispensed with its body will find itself dealing with Nature still. It will be, in Darwinian terminology, adapted to its surroundings in an adequate manner as it was in this

particular phase of its existence. What its powers then may be I frankly confess I do not know: but I gather that they are the development of those which I know here, the outcome of the education of earth on a spirit that did not begin its training here.

And so, if, I being a spirit conditioned, as I must be, here, and he, a spirit, otherwise conditioned—both of us spirits—if he can come close to me, spirit to spirit, recognised by my inner sense, it is to me a better and truer evidence of what I want than any physical evidence that I can get. I have seen much evidence of that kind. I realise how very striking it must be to an inexperienced mind. I think even that I do not attach to it sufficient importance as regards its effect on the minds that we have to deal with. But, admitting all that, the real proof of the life to come from one who has passed to it, the real evidence that will stand test, is not to be had from any physical presentment but from the message of soul to soul. This latter is called "Hallucination." I should rather apply the word to the former, without defending a curious misnomer or casting a shadow of doubt on the reality of the materialised presentation of spirit. Minds are so various that there must be various methods of conviction. And I can conceive none more startling to a mind trained on materialistic methods than to be confronted with the body—real, palpable, tangible—of a friend "in his habit as he lived." If he will pursue the quest, and ask what that means, I should think he would become a good Spiritualist. If he is content to take that presentation and make no further inquiry, to seek after no solution, then he will do what so many have done before him, and the search for knowledge will not be advanced by *him*. I think myself that Spiritualists are often perplexed and rent by the fact that they have to face both ways. All these phenomena have a meaning and they have to expose a sturdy front to the materialist who denies them *in toto*, as well as to the insidious friend, so representing himself, who explains them away. At the same time they have to discount the surface explanation and to lead those who can mount to a higher platform of knowledge. The task is a little difficult and sometimes lands one in seeming incongruities. They exist only on the surface and are apprehended only by superficial minds. I have seen lately several remarks in the Press that "Spiritualism is dead: nobody believes in it." Yes: it is dead to the man who says so. It has passed into a plane of thought which the "Star" man does not touch. It has even got out of the reach of the "Pall Mall." It puzzles the "Times." And yet it is more alive than ever it was: more energised by the vitality of spirit: more elevated in its influence and less dragged down to the plane of matter that it was once necessary to reach. Spiritualism is the same: the people that it reaches are better than they were. That is all. To continue this higher influence, to foster this noble aspiration, to spread abroad what has been the privilege of the few, this is the problem of the future.

ASSEMBLY OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

On Tuesday next, at 7.30 p.m., Mr. R. J. Lees will deliver an address to the members of the London Spiritualist Alliance and their friends, at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, on "The Redemption of Spiritualism." We hope to see a large attendance.

ONLY by soul itself
Is soul perceived—when the soul wills it so
There shines no light save its own light to show
Itself unto itself; none compasseth
Its joy who is not wholly ceased from sin,
Who dwells not self-controlled, self-centred, calm,
Lord of himself. It is not gotten else.
Brahm hath it not to give.

—EDWIN ARNOLD, "The Secret of Death."

THEOSOPHY.

[A PAPER READ BY MR. MORELL THEOBALD BEFORE THE LITERARY SOCIETY AT LEWISHAM, NOVEMBER 12, 1891.]

It is one of the most difficult things in the world to define Theosophy. It *should* be the wisdom of God, if rightly named. By one of its disciples it is defined as the knowledge of that which is *unknowable* to our present faculties; he recommends, as a commencing study, an acquaintance with Hypnotism (modern and ancient). Clearly, then, it cannot be for common people. Its beliefs and teachings have been set forth in very different ways by its "Fellows."

We have it expounded by its founders, Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, by Mr. Sinnett, and by Dr. Wyld, who calls it "Spiritual Dynamics"; but these expositions vary so much as to be in some cases flat contradictions of each other; and latterly we have Mrs. Besant, whose advance to this platform from Materialism and Atheism is to be welcomed, even if her exposition of the cause she has newly espoused is in flat contradiction to that of older disciples.

But it seems to me that if we want to understand a science or a religion, or a blending of the two, as is Theosophy, we should go back to its inception. Dr. Wyld, when he knew a little more of Theosophical teaching than he did when he expounded it from a Christian standpoint, left the Society, as many others who were fascinated by its first glamour have done. The founders of Theosophy (so-called) were Madame Blavatsky, a Russian lady of noble family, and a very remarkable woman, and Colonel Olcott, an officer of the American army—a man of pure mind, a man, I may add, personally known to me. These two met for the study of Spiritualistic phenomena in 1874: such phenomena as you are all familiar with and form different opinions upon, according to the degree of your enlightenment on the subject. The initial raps in all forms which could not be traced to any *seen* personality came before them freely: objects moved without contact, and finally alleged spirits appeared before them, speaking with the direct voice, and convincing both of their reality. In 1874, then, these two were Spiritualists, pure and simple. But there was more of the Orient blood in *her* than in *him*; and although they were Spiritualists in 1874, in 1875 we find them founding the Theosophical Society. To teach Spiritualism? Oh, no! they had got beyond that; the Spiritualists were all wrong! Madame Blavatsky, by some occult learning, had found out (what Spiritualists *also* know) the marvellous possibilities of the human spirit—of the *Ego*. Electing to elevate this power above all others, she turned her back upon Spiritualism, and referred its phenomena to the work of our own *double*, and to a power they subsequently called "shells" or "astral bodies."

A good deal of foggy writing has resulted from these creations. The Abbé Constant, writing under the pseudonym of Eliphaz Levi, says:—

After death the divine spirit which gave life to man returns alone to heaven, and leaves on earth and in the atmosphere two corpses—the one earthly and elementary; the other aerial and astral; the one inert already, the other still animated by the universal movement of the soul of the world. This second corpse in a bad man haunts the world, and by-and-bye dies out for ever.

We are now introduced to pure Buddhism, which is very ancient and very imaginative. But let us recede a step. Colonel Olcott, who was now, at the time I am speaking of (in 1875), educated by Madame Blavatsky, gives a very interesting personal occurrence which probably constituted a turning point in his life, and culminated in his proselytising expedition to India. He had learnt (truly, as we think) the possibility of the *double* of a man appearing at a distance to others, during his lifetime: he believed he was being taught by unseen teachers or Mahatmas, introduced now by Madame Blavatsky. What more natural than that he should long to see one! Colonel Olcott thus relates the first visit he received from one of the Mahatmas, and I have myself heard him repeat it to me, with all the enthusiasm of his nature:—

The time came when I was blessed with a visit from one of these Mahatmas in my own room at New York—a visit from him, not in the physical body, but in the "double."

When I asked him to leave me some tangible evidence that I had not been the dupe of a vision, but that he had indeed been there, he removed from his head the *puggri* he wore, and giving it to me, vanished from my sight. That cloth I have still, and in one corner is marked in thread the cipher he always attaches to the notes he writes to myself and others: Koot Hoomi.

Unfortunately, we have since heard of these ciphers worked in a manner *not* occult, but under Madame Blavatsky's direction. For three years after this Colonel Olcott remained in New York, receiving, as he says, visits and instruction from other Mahatmas, some fifteen in all. Now the Colonel goes to India, and we find him expounding his Aryan teaching to the Hindus. He joins Mr. Sinnett, who also is a vice-president of the Theosophical Society, whose book, the "Occult World," introduces us again to Koot Hoomi, who is again acting in conjunction with Madame Blavatsky; and this little Theosophical group seem to be educated and directed by this mysterious occult person. This person has been unveiled on more occasions than one: notably by Mr. Arthur Lillie, of the Royal Asiatic Society; by C. C. Massey; and by the Society for Psychical Research through Mr. Hodgson. With the dismissal of Koot Hoomi the credit of Madame Blavatsky, of course, suffers. I do not propose to hold a brief for Madame Blavatsky. If there is any truth in the exposition of her by Madame Coulomb, she still remains a very clever woman, and if there is no truth, the mystery only deepens. The foundations, however, of Theosophy here appear to be a little uncertain: and even the existence of the Adepts is considered by many as unproven. The Theosophists, who are wise in their generation, do not now appeal to their phenomena, though where the Society would be without them it is difficult to say: but we now find a predominance of theory and a paucity of fact. Let us examine the two together.

For centuries Western culture has refused to follow Eastern occultism, even when our youth has been fed and nurtured amid the brilliant imagination of the "Arabian Nights" entertainment. Indian fakirs and attenuated ascetics command no sympathy here: perhaps not so much as they ought! From these sources Madame Blavatsky draws forth the stupendous power of the *double* to teach us Theosophy: I put aside the marvels, to which they do not now cling as a necessary part of their teaching, and ask plainly what *has* Theosophy to teach? and although we are told it is a knowledge *unknowable* to our present faculties, that only whets the appetite for inquiry.

No one (certainly not Madame Blavatsky!) has expounded Theosophy to the uninitiated mind so well as Colonel Olcott. He is good enough usually to leave religion alone, although he claims for Theosophy that it is the basis of *all* religions, and possesses the key to unite all. He says, as to religion:—

It is most strictly a personal affair. Every man makes his own religion and his own God: *i.e.*, if he has any ideas about religion or about God, they must be his own and not somebody's else. Man's religious experience is, personal, measured and limited by his own personal, psychical, and theosophical capacity.

And he adds:—

It is simply tyranny to try and force a particular religion upon any man.

But the Colonel is all for a scientific inquiry into *man*. That is in fact *religion*: so that it does not belong to the affections (as we thought), but to the intellect! And we may remark here that Spiritualists often present to us the same confusion of thought.

And now we come to Theosophy—pure and simple—which turns out to be an exposition of old Hindû philosophy; entering on its scientific side into definitions and conditions of spiritual existence, and states, and changes, for myriads of years, absolutely unprovable. Yet Colonel Olcott claims for Asiatic teachings this inestimable advantage, that they *prove* their propositions experimentally. Let us try and understand how.

The first teaching is simple: man has three divisions of selfhood:—

1st. The gross physical body (I give English and not Hindû names here).

2nd. The psychical (we call it soul), still material but less perceptible.

3rd. The spiritual, or imperceptible and transcendental.

We can go so far with them—body, soul, and spirit. These, however, are divided into sub-sections: the first is provable and will be acknowledged by many, if not all of us—I refer to the *double*. This is what Colonel Olcott says about it:—

When they talk of the *double* or *Mayavi Rupa*, or *Sukshma Sharira*, they produce the thing itself. They will leave their

physical bodies in *Samadhi*—a state of lethargy—at some distant place, force the *double* out through its pores, and to that transferring their consciousness with all its train of intellectual and intuitional cognitions and feelings, visit and make themselves visible to you (as Koot Hoomi is said to have done frequently).

And the humour of the Colonel is rich as he proceeds to introduce the *double* to Mr. Herbert Spencer, asking:—

Can we not imagine what this new-born self would say to the heavier body before it? Let it speak! (Mr. Theobald here read from Olcott's "Theosophy," pp. 136-7.)

Well, this something that comes out of the body is, say the Occultists, the soul principle, the responsible entity, that which acquires the certainty of Divine wisdom. *This* becomes the true Theosophist: this becomes an Adept or Mahatma (great soul), and is well understood in India. But it is only a few selected individuals can reach to this transcendental state, or to the hidden wisdom even by which it can be understood. We who are outside can only look on and wonder. But if this sublime height is attainable it seems to me we should press towards the mark of this high calling!

How is this state to be attained? Plainly put, by drawing the soul out of the body to disentangle it from the illusions of bodily senses: the soul or astral body must be evolved by ecstatic trance.

Of this state (called Yoga) there are four stages.

In the first stage there is the fight with the animal nature: then it goes on in another stage to perfect knowledge: in the third it continues, and the mystic then overcomes primary and subtle forces, *i.e.*, he vanquishes nature-spirits:—

Elementals, so that neither fire can burn, water drown, earth crush, nor poisonous air suffocate his bodily frame. He is not now dependent upon his five senses: he has developed spiritual hearing that makes the most distant and most hidden sounds audible, a sight that sweeps the area of the whole solar system and penetrates the most solid bodies along with the hypothetical ether of modern science: he can make himself as buoyant as thistledown or as heavy as the giant rock: can subsist without food for inconceivably long periods, and, if he chooses, can arrest the ordinary course of nature and escape bodily death to an inconceivably protracted age. He makes miracles his playthings—can walk on water without wetting his feet, and rise from the ground and be self-suspended in the air. In a further stage (the fourth and deepest) you may tie him in a sack and bury him for weeks together, and when dug up and handled in a certain way he will return to consciousness.

Before we dismiss this fantastic teaching (as it will appear to the Western mind) let us ask at what expense does the Adept obtain all this superiority?

Colonel Olcott gives a few cases, from which we take one only:—

At Lahore I met the son of a native gentleman who was an eye-witness to the burial of a *Sadhu* (holy man): he was buried alive for forty days, a perpetual guard being kept over the spot. English officials saw him buried and exhumed. When uncovered the man's body was shrunken; the tongue, which on burial had been turned back into the throat, had become like a piece of horn; eyes, ears, and every other orifice of the body had been stopped with plugs of butter. Upon returning to consciousness he said he had been enjoying the society of saints, and was ready to be again buried!

We have read of Christian ecstasies who, escaping from the body, have penetrated the inner world and seen divine things: but if I could believe all that is said of Indian Ascetics I should conclude it was an attempted anticipation of powers that are real, but which belong to the *future* life, at the expense of the *physical* body, which is adapted for *this* world's work; and all such self-effacement rendering life here *utterly valueless* from a moral or any *other* point of view.

As to the moral or religious side, I have indicated that according to the *founders* there is none insisted upon. Neither Madame Blavatsky nor Colonel Olcott would press any creed upon the acceptance of their disciples; and yet they profess to be engaged in a search for religious truth, and without distinction of race or creed to form a nucleus of *Universal Brotherhood*.

The aspiration after universal brotherhood is not new, nor is it confined to Theosophy, unless it be in one particular, *viz.*, that we hear in its exposition nothing of the *Fatherhood*. The *Egos* are their own teachers to all intents and purposes. There is no higher appeal from man than himself. He himself in *Karma* works out the laws of cause and effect

All causes go back to himself, and their effects (lived out) constitute, and are called, *Karma*, and may extend for ages through a myriad incarnations.

The Adepts are the supposed teachers of this Oriental philosophy, and they are hidden amid the wilds of the Himalayas. It takes years to approach them, even in their double; yet filtered through *Gurus* comes a teaching which, so far as I can see, is the chief differentiation (albeit much insisted upon) from other and varied religious beliefs. I refer to the doctrine of Re-incarnation.

This doctrine of Re-incarnation is really the pivot upon which all Theosophic teaching turns, and upon which all are agreed.

It is not like the following contradictory teachings:—

There is no God, personal or impersonal ("Theosophist," May, 1882).

He who knows not the supreme God knows not the circle of time (Thibetan book).

There is one Unique Ruler Who created all things—without beginning or end.

Every man makes his own self and his own God (Colonel Olcott).

The highest reward . . . is annihilation.

The most fearful punishment . . . is annihilation.

All these are teachings put forth by different Theosophists.

The doctrine of Re-incarnation teaches that the immortal *Ego* or Spirit is re-born again and again until it has exhausted all the lessons of mortality, or paid the price, to the uttermost farthing, for all its failures in earth-life. It is associated further with a curious wandering about in space of the perishable part of man's composite nature, of which it appears, from the Theosophic dissection, there are four, viz. :—

1. The body (physical), called by them *Rupa*.
2. Life—the vital principle, designated *Prana*.
3. The Astral body (or double), *Linga Sharira*.
4. The animal soul (seat of the passions), *Kama Rupa*.

It is impossible for me, in the time to which I am limited, to follow up all the mazes into which we are now introduced. Theosophists admit that they are difficult for a Western mind to follow; but we can grasp one plain statement of fact, viz., that we have to be re-incarnated over and over again: it may last for millions of years. *This statement is made without a shred of evidence that will bear close examination*: but speculation is rife, and one statement after another is built thereon, until the devotee imagines he is building on a sure foundation, instead of upon theories formed out of Oriental imagination, probably derived from one of those Mahatmas whose mortification and abuse of his body has suggested to him re-incarnation as an appropriate punishment!

As this doctrine is the chief distinctive teaching between Theosophical and Western modes of thought, and one on which all are agreed, let us look for a moment on what the argument rests.

It is alleged that we have at times a reminiscence of a former life; and that if we have existed previously on this earth a probability is raised that there may be more lives to follow. This probability is sought to be established by its necessity, in order to account for what may be termed the problem of moral evil—the inequalities of character and opportunities which, without some explanation, reflect upon the Divine justice in His government of the world. There is a little discrepancy in this reference to anything like a Divine personality; as recent expounders would refer more to a power *in ourselves* making for righteousness.

But supposing for a moment the theory of Re-incarnation *did* furnish an explanation, it by no means follows that it is the *only* explanation to be given, nor even that it is a true one.

[After reference to a thoughtful paper of Mr. Shorter's and to criticisms of other writers, which space compels us to omit, Mr. Theobald proceeded.]

If the doctrine were true, its most natural sequence would be that we have some remembrance of our former life. But *do* we remember? Is there not universal testimony to its absence—to a blankness behind which we cannot pierce? Yes; but there are *exceptional* experiences to be accounted for; and a disbeliever, if he admits exceptions, is wise to endeavour to account for *them*.

Mr. Shorter has put this reminiscence theory forward so well that I will borrow from his argument. Referring to an

alleged memory of a previous life, he says: Not only are these experiences exceptional, but they take place under conditions which are exceptional and abnormal, such as disease, nervous prostration, or mental exhaustion. Sir Walter Scott, when thus suffering, relates how, when with a few old friends, he was strongly haunted by a sense of pre-existence. It seemed to him that nothing happened for the first time. The place, the company, the topics discussed, all had taken place before. The delusion was as complete as that of a mirage in a desert. Again, Dickens, in his "Notes from Italy," tells us that his first sight of Ferrara, from the balcony of his hotel, appeared as a scene witnessed before, in all its details. How are we to account for these experiences—rare yet real?

Dr. Wigan contends that mind is dual in its whole construction (Theosophists would admit this), corresponding to the duality of the brain. The two hemispheres of the brain usually act together—harmoniously—but not always. In certain states of abnormal action each cerebral hemisphere may act separately. If an impression is now produced on only one hemisphere of the brain it leaves a faint impression, so that when a full impression is made subsequently on the whole brain the first faint impression will seem like a *memory*.

Dr. Wigan gives an illustration. He was present at the funeral of the Princess Charlotte. He shared in the general feeling of pain which this melancholy occurrence occasioned. He had passed a sleepless night; had stood many hours, and was worn out with hunger, emotion, and fatigue, and would have fainted but for his interest in the scene. As the ceremony proceeded there came over his mind a strong conviction that he had witnessed the scene with all its circumstances before: the same funeral pall, the same building, the same company, grouped in the same way, and had heard the same "Miserere," and even the same observations addressed to him by his friend, Sir George Naylor. Whatever the explanation may be, one thing is certain—it was *not* the memory of a pre-incarnate life. Such an event had no parallel. The "Miserere" of Mozart is a limiting mark, and to suppose all this had exactly happened before in some prehistoric time would involve a complex of impossibilities.

Another possible source of such experiences is psychometric. Professor Denton, from experiments extending over many years with sensitives, details more than a hundred. From these it would appear that a small piece of limestone rock, a meteoric stone, a Roman brick, or any object with which the psychometer has been placed *en rapport*, will at once bring before him a revelation of the object to which that specimen belonged, with its accompanying environment.

Nature would thus seem to be a storehouse in which is recorded the history of our globe and its inhabitants—a book that can be opened.

Professor Hitchcock contends for this same universal photographic influence in Nature: and Tupper has put forth similar ideas. With all these influences, then, around us, it would seem to be the very fatuity of ignorance and egoism to determine that because we know not the source of an impression, therefore it must be the reminiscence of our own pre-incarnate personal life.

There remains one other source of these psychical experiences to be accounted for, more subtle yet more real, as I think; and it is to Spiritualists we must look for the key.

Again I will borrow from my friend Mr. Shorter's exposition.

We have each of us an attendant spirit, and in point of development not greatly in advance of us. The spirit and the man are so intimately associated that what is in the memory of the man enters into that of the spirit, and the memory of the spirit enters into that of the man, and they are so blended that the man knows not other than that it is his own. Apply this to the matter in hand. The spirit has but to vividly recall a scene or incident of his earthly life, and it is straightway *reflected* upon the memory of the man as an object is reflected in a mirror. It seems to him to have originated in himself, to have been a veritable experience of his own; it is not an experience of his present life; it must, therefore, be the reminiscence of a pre-incarnate life. I believe this to be the general explanation of those psychical experiences erroneously ascribed to reminiscence, and so emphatically appealed to as evidence that we individually have a plurality of lives. The doctrine of Reminiscence, then, we think, is a misinterpretation of

obscure experiences which admit of more rational explanation: and the ancient but worn-out theory of Re-incarnation is superfluous. It is, as a thoughtful writer in "LIGHT" says, a mental *ignis fatuus* which may seem to lead to a desired haven, but in the end will leave you in the quagmires of doubt.

We all admit the existence of inequalities in human lives: but if, as Theosophists contend, the body and bodily state is nothing, and the spiritual life is the real man, we may be permitted to hope that in apparently the most unfortunate conditions and circumstances of this life are to be found the very best tests and conditions for discovering the noblest qualities of life; and that thus these inequalities do not really exist; or, if they do, they are transient and superficial—"And things are not what they seem."

But from the Theosophical standpoint, claiming it to be a special privilege to mortify the flesh, and looking upon that as one of the conditions favourable to advancement in spiritual life, their reference to the inequalities of the present life comes with doubtful consistency.

Professor Salavief (the Herbert Spencer of Russia) has been impressed, says an Indian paper, with a sense of the importance of Hindu thought in connection with pure speculation, by the light thrown upon it by the Theosophical Society and by Madame Blavatsky; and adds:—

While we Englishmen in India have been in contact with the remains of old native culture for a hundred years without having detected its significance, it has been reserved for the indomitable old lady just mentioned to put an entirely new face on Oriental philosophy.

Yes; she has endeavoured to revive the obsolete; and for a time it again lives, as a nine days' wonder.

The Theosophical Society, then, is really the creature of Madame Blavatsky's brain, nurtured by Oriental philosophy; and is founded ostensibly for the purpose of discovering all the laws of nature and disseminating the same. This is the invitation held out to *scientific* men. We can leave them to deal with it.

The invitation on the moral side proffers universal brotherhood. It may lead through a mazy path to that universally desired haven; but *One*, whom they call an Adept, appeals to Western thought on simpler lines, which all can understand; he teaches us also to choose the road of self-sacrifice; but not so to mortify the body as to prevent us working as brothers among brothers for universal brotherhood. He reveals to us (as no occult study in *this* life can reveal) the Fatherhood of God. That is the true link of brotherhood. He hints, too, of the boundless possibilities of the *Ego*, and of the many mansions of thought and work in the spirit world, saying, I have many things to teach you: ye cannot bear them yet: but what ye know not now ye shall know hereafter.

If Adepts are to be our teachers, we will choose *this* one, whom we know; and choose to work on the lines laid down by him, and wait for the fuller spirit-light. Boundless are the studies into the realm of spirit, but they cannot be fully entered into here; they belong to the *spirit-world*. Side lights—real but rare—are permitted, and are obtainable here to the reverent searcher.

Some of us have talked with the angels; and we know they are not astral bodies only, nor shells, nor doubles of our own personalities. And they bid us work and watch and pray, and commune with us in a more practicable form, and upon a more certain basis, than Theosophy can offer to her most advanced disciples. They speak of, and discover to us, *growth* in the spirit-world, which leaves no room for the doctrine of Re-incarnation. We know, through them, of spirit-progress such as the poet Longfellow portrayed when he wrote a true interpretation to every mother's intuitions; and with consummate spiritual knowledge—in thoughts that breathe and words that burn—penned the following lines, with which I conclude this address:—

She is not dead—this *child* of our affection,
But gone into that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

Not as a *child* shall we again behold her:
For when, with raptures wild,
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a *child*.

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the *soul's expansion*
Shall we behold her face.

A GREETING FROM A FAR LAND.

We have received the following letter from Doctor L. E. Calleja:—

"M.A. (OXON.)"

DEAR SIR AND FRIEND,—As you may see, I have changed my residence from Morelia to this city.

No. 561 of your good paper has opportunely come to hand, and I thank you very much for sending me it, and also for your acceptance of my idea of establishing the "Popular Circle for Philosophical and Socialist Studies," in which enterprise you have encouraged me by publishing some few lines in your paper.

Excuse my incorrect English and please publish this letter with the object that all English Spiritualist journalists may be notified of myself and my work, and if they think it is a philanthropic action, they may send to me their papers, as you have done.

I think I could stop here, but I must confess that I feel my hand is impelled by one of my best spiritual companions, who counsels me to solicit the co-operation of my English Spiritualist brothers.

I am a practising doctor in this country, being 38 years old, and have never succeeded in economising money for the sake of my ideas, because in Mexico fanaticism dominates the whole mass of the inhabitants. You know that most Christians (Catholics equally with Protestants) think that we Spiritualists are "Antichrist." In consequence they persecute us in all ways and with all their efforts.

I have obtained many interesting cures through magnetism and hypnotism, but they have caused a great deal of damage to my business instead of attracting to me reputation and profit.

In this Mexican Republic we have some three or four Spiritualist papers, having but little circulation, and that only among their subscribers. I think it would be better to publish many short leaflets and distribute them gratis among poor people. This is my idea, but, unfortunately, I cannot perform it practically, because I have no money to buy a little printing outfit.

I know a case of a Mexican Protestant writer who, having no means for publishing his religious writings, solicited the aid of his American brothers, and they sent him a little printing outfit. Could I be so fortunate as that my English Spiritualist brothers should wish to help me in the same way?

I find I am myself well able to prepare and publish writings in the Spanish language, and also can translate from English, French, and Italian some of the many good things that I frequently read.

Please accept the best wishes of your most devoted friend,

Calle de Aldama, DR. L. E. CALLEJA.
3, Toluca, Estado de México, México.
November 15th, 1891.

A REMARKABLE DREAM.

The following remarkable dream is taken from the recently published Canadian Journal* of the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, extracted from letters written home while Lord Dufferin was Governor-General of the Dominion in 1872-8:—

"You remember that I told you that a poor manservant of ours was drowned at the Mingan. As we knew nothing about his people we were unable to communicate the news of his death to them, so D. ordered any letters that might arrive for him to be brought to himself. The first of these which we have just received was from a servant girl he was attached to at Ottawa, and was dated exactly seven days after the day of the accident. In it she said: 'I had such a dreadful dream on the day of my arrival at my new place. I dreamt that you and Nowell (Lord Dufferin's valet) were upset in a boat together, and that Nowell was saved but you were drowned.' As the spot where the accident occurred is an uninhabited region on the coast of Labrador, more than five hundred miles distant from Ottawa, without either telegraphs or posts, it was impossible that she should have the news of her lover's death when this letter was written."

PRAYER as a means to effect a private end is theft and meanness. It supposes dualism in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action.—EMERSON.

*"My Canadian Journal." By the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava. (John Murray, Albemarle-street, 1891.)

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
ADELPHI, W.C.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

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All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be addressed to "The Manager" and *not* to the Editor.

Light:

EDITED BY "M. A. (OXON.)"

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12th, 1891.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

MR. J. N. MASKELYNE AND SPIRITUALISM.

In such notice as the book seemed to require—Dr. Weatherly and Mr. J. N. Maskelyne on "the Supernatural (?)"—we referred to some previous records of Mr. Maskelyne. We hope we did this with no show of unkind feeling, for we recognise the virtue of advertisement, and Spiritualism has been to Mr. Maskelyne a very happy hunting ground. If there be any gratitude in man he ought to have for it a very true affection. It has been to him by no means a stony-hearted step-mother. It has nourished him, given play to his undoubted talents, and within its sheltering arms he has waxed and grown fat. If he had returned in any measure the benefits he has received—for without Spiritualism he would have fallen very flat—we should have had nothing to say to him and his show. It is a very good show: as Artemus Ward said of his, "moral, amosin' and instructiv'." We do not wish to interfere with it if he will confine himself to conjuring and leave us alone. But it seems that he cannot: and his memory is so short that the statements which he thinks it necessary to put forward to-day are not in harmony with what he was forced into some years ago.

We have before us a penny pamphlet entitled, "One Thousand Pounds Reward. Maskelyne and Cook: an Exposé of the Falseness of their Pretensions. By 'Iota.' Proofs corrected by Mr. Maskelyne." This "Iota" may be identified with Mr. Algernon Joy, an honourable gentleman and a Spiritualist of long and wide experience. We believe that the pseudonym is an open secret and that the authorship has never been disavowed. Mr. Joy, in order to test Mr. Maskelyne's powers, offered £1,000 if he would submit his pretensions to "expose the tricks of Spiritualist mediums" to a fair test. The pamphlet reproduces the correspondence, in the course of which the evasiveness of Mr. Maskelyne stands out in conspicuous rivalry with that of "the elusive wild beast," as Professor Lankester playfully described Slade and mediums in general. The wriggle was worthy of the accomplished plate-spinner and conjurer: and nothing came of the challenge, as nothing could. It was Mr. Maskelyne's business, as an adroit showman, to persuade a friendly audience that he exposed mediums' tricks. He was not, and could not be expected to be, too scrupulous as to his methods. They were fair from his point of view, but they did not touch the real point which he persuaded his audience to believe that they covered. Exposure there was none, and when it came to a money

test—the worst possible in our opinion—Mr. Maskelyne broke down, as he would in any attempt to reproduce the physical phenomena of Spiritualism under the conditions which are imposed upon mediums. They have not the stage, the confederates, the apparatus of the Egyptian Hall. They do not want two tons of "properties" to reproduce what Mr. Maskelyne counterfeits. Theirs is current coin; he is but a psychical smasher.

This, however, is unimportant. Mr. Maskelyne has a right to select his own methods of making a living, and, so far as money goes, he has chosen well. We are concerned only, in our reference to this pamphlet, with certain admissions that Mr. Maskelyne has made in the course of his reply to his challenger. An offer of £50 had been made to Mr. Maskelyne "to show the Davenport cabinet trick." It is not necessary to quote the correspondence in order to show how "the wriggle" came in: but, in the course of a letter dated July 1st, 1873, Mr. Maskelyne used these words:—"In accepting this challenge, I wish you distinctly to understand that I do not presume to prove that such manifestations as those stated in the report of the Dialectical Society are produced by trickery. I have never denied that such manifestations are genuine."* It is not important that Mr. Maskelyne denies the action of departed spirits in such manifestations as he seems to be aware of. If he has kept himself posted in the later developments of Spiritualism, in what we know of the inherent powers of the human spirit, he must be aware that he cannot ride off on that side issue. He "does not deny that such manifestations are genuine." That is the point on which we fix attention.

In a subsequent letter, dated 131, Liverpool-road, Islington, July 6th (of same year), after various evasions Mr. Maskelyne guards himself thus. He is being brought to book and feels it necessary to be cautious. This is his backdoor of retreat. "I have never stated that you cannot produce some phenomena in a genuine manner. I have done this, or assisted in doing it myself, and tell my audience so at every performance."* We fear he has fallen from grace, for we have not heard any such avowal, but the admission stands, *valeat quantum*.

His correspondent fastens on this admission. "You seem to me to say that most of the so called phenomena are humbug, but some few genuine; that the genuine ones are produced by trickery exactly as your own stage performance is." To which Mr. Maskelyne replies: "How genuine phenomena can be produced by trickery I am at a loss to know. If you understand me thus, my remarks must be a contradiction." Precisely so; a patent shuffle. If Mr. Maskelyne had not used Spiritualism for trade purposes we might have come to his rescue by pointing out that there were really some phenomena occurring at the Egyptian Hall which he felt unable to explain, and that he was really very much puzzled as to what was "genuine" and what was not. But that knowledge could only be gained by him under difficulties which he would not face. In an unhappy moment he became a parasite on the body of Spiritualism, and, if he is well advised, he will shake himself free and stand out as the capable conjurer that he is. For the superficial phenomena which constitute for him Spiritualism will not serve his purpose much longer, and he is really dexterous when he devotes himself to his vocation.

Some forgotten letters to the "Pall Mall Gazette," which had (naturally) interviewed Mr. Maskelyne may fitly be reproduced here. Exactly what in those interviews (April 18th and 20th, 1885) is to be attributed to Mr. Maskelyne and what to the inventiveness of the reporter we cannot say. The fact remains that Mr. Maskelyne has never contradicted any statements therein made. He smiles blandly in one of those wonderful "Pall Mall"

* The italics are ours.

pictures, which we have always suspected to be within the law of libel, over his utterances and hints no disavowal.

To him replies a correspondent well known to our readers by his initials, "C.C.M.:"—

SIR,—It may be interesting to compare Mr. Maskelyne's statements to your reporter with certain admissions of his in a published correspondence with a Spiritualist in the year 1873. The occasion was a pecuniary "challenge," which, as usual with such futile methods, came to nothing. On July 1st, 1873, Mr. Maskelyne, in the course of a letter to his correspondent, wrote as follows:—"In accepting this challenge I wish you distinctly to understand that I do not presume to prove that such manifestations as those stated in the report of the Dialectical Society are produced by trickery. I have never doubted that such manifestations are genuine; but I contend that in them there is not one iota of evidence which proves that departed spirits have no better occupation than lifting furniture about," &c. (It should be explained that "the manifestations stated in the report of the Dialectical Society" were distinctly "mediumistic," the committee of that Society which made the report having been appointed for the express purpose of investigating and reporting upon Spiritualistic phenomena. The report, with the evidence at length, is published.) Interrogated by his correspondent as to what he meant by "genuine phenomena," he being generally understood to ascribe them all to trickery, Mr. Maskelyne, in a postscript to his next letter, said:—"How genuine phenomena can be produced by trickery I am at a loss to know. If you understand me thus, my remarks must be a contradiction, and I must look to them." The proofs of this correspondence are stated to have been corrected by Mr. Maskelyne himself. It is apparent from it that Mr. Maskelyne, in denying the "Spiritualistic phenomena" altogether, referred to the Spiritualistic character of the phenomena, some of which he admitted to be genuine; or in other words only disputed an explanation of them to which many investigators who have become convinced that the facts are inexplicable by known agencies are quite uncommitted. On July 6th, 1873, Mr. Maskelyne wrote:—"I have never stated that you cannot produce some phenomena in a genuine manner. I have done this, or assisted in doing it, myself, and tell my audience so at every performance; yet I am not a medium; but I know that, if I were scoundrel enough, I could soon become one, and should have no difficulty in humbugging Spiritualists to an alarming extent." I confess I understand no more than did his correspondent what Mr. Maskelyne meant by his own "genuine phenomena" (not produced by trickery). Perhaps he will explain.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

April 18th, 1885.

C. C. M.

Mr. Maskelyne's reply does not advance us. But here is his rejoinder:—

SIR,—In the letter you publish to-day signed "C.C.M." the writer infers that the statements I made to your reporter in his interview with me do not agree with what I stated in 1873. I quote from your report of the interview, and ask "C.C.M." to point out any discrepancy, as I fail to see any:—

After my twenty years' experience in investigating Spiritualism I have never seen anything take place which I could not reproduce and account for, except the gyrations of a table upon two occasions. On one of these, without the presence of a medium, by myself and a few friends, we produced movements of the table—a heavy one—which we could not accomplish afterwards by exerting all the muscular force at our command.—I am, Sir your obedient servant,

Egyptian Hall,

J. N. MASKELYNE.

April 21st, 1885.

This is "C. C. M.'s" rejoinder:—

SIR,—I think if Mr. Maskelyne had noticed the date—the 18th—of my letter which you were good enough to publish on Tuesday he would not have seen occasion to ask the question he puts to me in your paper this evening. I wrote and posted that letter before the appearance of the second part of your reporter's account, which I naturally supposed to be concluded. Had that been so, a very misleading impression of Mr. Maskelyne's attitude towards the phenomena really in question would have been produced. The public have been repeatedly told that Mr. Maskelyne is able to exhibit, by his own ingenuity, all the manifestations associated with the term Spiritualism, and have generally believed that he at least professes this ability. They are likely to be far more struck now by his personal experience of facts of this nature, which he declares to be quite beyond the resources of his art, as well as by his earlier admission that he had "never doubted" the great array of facts included in the report of the Dialectical Society to be genuine, than by the history of his adventures as a professional exposé of "mediums." I am glad to have elicited a repetition, at first hand, of testimony which will be very surprising and unacceptable in some quarters. I only regret that Mr. Maskelyne's "twenty years' experience in investigating Spiritualism" has had, by his own account, to be latterly conducted by deputy. Otherwise he would not, I must suppose, have offered explanations, which I can affirm positively to be entirely erroneous, of such phenomena as Slade's and

Eglinton's slate-writing. But it is enough for the present that he has added his testimony to some facts of the gravest scientific importance, which have been systematically denied and derided. Mr. Maskelyne is not singular in this respect, other distinguished experts of his profession, as Bellachini, of Berlin, and Jacobs, of Paris, having given similar evidence—the former, by-the-bye, to Slade's slate-writing. It may not be irrelevant to add the little-known fact that the celebrated Robert Houdin admitted, after full personal investigation, the existence of a genuine faculty of clairvoyance, or at least of facts admitting no other explanation.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

April 23rd, 1885.

C. C. M.

This finally, referring to Mr. Maskelyne's letter of the 21st, concludes what we think it worth while to reproduce:—

SIR,—If it is not too late to reply to Mr. Maskelyne's question as to the discrepancy between his statements to your reporter and the earlier admissions quoted by me in the letter you published on the 21st inst., I should be glad if you would allow me briefly to do so. I wrote and posted my letter, dated the 18th, before the publication of the second part of your reporter's account, in which the passage quoted by Mr. Maskelyne in reply to me occurs. That passage contains an admission from his own experience of one, at least, of the most discredited phenomena. I alleged no "discrepancy," but suggested that Mr. Maskelyne's views had not been completely represented in relation to the whole subject, as appeared to be the case when I wrote to call attention to his very important admissions in 1873. It may now be assumed that he still allows "the manifestations stated in the report of the Dialectical Society" to have been genuine. If genuine, they are of such extraordinary interest for science that perhaps you will let me quote verbatim from the report, which alleges "that motion may be produced in solid bodies without material contact by some hitherto unrecognised force operating within an undefined distance from the human organism, and beyond the range of muscular action." The term "mediums" may be misleading, but it will be time enough when the existence of the special human organisms which condition such phenomena is generally recognised to decide how they should be designated.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

April 25th, 1885.

C. C. M.*

In what we have written our sole and only desire has been to put before the public plain facts. It is almost an insult to ordinary intelligence to class stage performances with those of which too much has been made in ordinary discussions of Spiritualism. But if we must needs condescend to Mr. Maskelyne's limited interpretation of that much misunderstood term, we avow that he has not reproduced any one of the so-called physical phenomena of Spiritualism under the same conditions as they have repeatedly been observed in the presence of mediums.

THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE" ON SPIRITUALISM.

In a notice of the book to which we have devoted some attention—Dr. Weatherly and Mr. Maskelyne on "The Supernatural (?)"—the "Pall Mall Gazette" *more suo*, i.e., talking in italics as is its wont, describes Spiritualism as a subject "in which no sane person now believes" and Theosophy as a subject "at present very much on the nail." The slang of the "Pall Mall" is ineffable and untranslatable, but we gather that the writer intends to imply or insinuate that Spiritualism wanes while Theosophy waxes. The measure of the knowledge of the writer may be taken from his language. Who is sane? Not the man who pens such stuff. He is ignorant and has cultivated slatternly modes of thought and expression that deprive his utterances of any value. At no time has Spiritualism commanded so large a measure of intellectual support. If the writer does not know this he should leave the matter alone. By writing as he does he only shows his ignorance and may join appropriately in the Dogberry aspiration: "Oh that somebody would write me down an ass." But it is not worth while. Wisdom will be justified of her children and, we suppose, the antithesis of wisdom will reap the discredit of such scribble, which is worth notice only because it appeals to ignorance and prejudice. We have learnt to expect better things of the "Pall Mall"; but the book seems to have fallen for notice into prentice hands.

*We learn from "C.C.M." that the above letter was sent to the "Pall Mall Gazette" in consequence of the non-appearance of that dated 23rd, and in substitution for the latter, which "C.C.M." presumed to have been found too long for publication. Probably by editorial inadvertence, both letters were thereupon published.

I WAS ABRAHAM LINCOLN A SPIRITUALIST?*

This question has often received an affirmative answer, but never on grounds so authoritative as are given in this volume. In his preface the publisher gives ample evidence of the good faith of Mrs. Maynard; as an instance of the unqualified endorsement of her mediumship we may quote "Brick" Pomeroy, the well-known lawyer and writer, who says: "Mrs. Maynard is one of the most remarkable mediums to be found. I have known her for many years: she is a woman against whom *not one word of reproach may be truthfully uttered.*" As the narrative is largely autobiographical, though copiously supported by testimony, it was not out of place to separate Mrs. Maynard, by direct testimony to her trustworthiness, from the notoriety hunters who trade on Spiritualism for a publicity that they would not otherwise obtain.

In a very modest preface to her book Mrs. Maynard very properly disclaims any attempt to commit the distinguished persons who figure in her narrative to any active complicity in her beliefs. "I never asked, nor was I told, their views on the subject of Spiritualism." She was received at the White House with every consideration; Mrs. Lincoln making no secret of her own beliefs, the President treating her with unvarying kindness, and even interrupting Cabinet Councils in order to seek the guidance which came through her lips.

Miss Colburn—afterwards Mrs. Maynard—was a medium from her childhood, and seems to have inherited the gift from her mother. An instance of home mediumship may be adduced:—

One evening in the winter of 1845, in the town of Bolton, Conn., where my father's family resided, we were sitting about the large old-fashioned kitchen-table, which was lighted by means of oil lamps, in common use by all country people of those days. The room was a large square one, having in one corner a door, which led to the rooms above, its only fastening an iron latch, which held it in place. While the murmur of conversation was going on, we were suddenly startled by a sound which resembled the noise produced by hurling a heavy log down the stairway against the door here mentioned. There was no mistaking the locality, as the sound was sufficiently loud to shatter the door, which it would have done had it been caused by means which the noise indicated, and by any object capable of making so crashing a sound.

Not one of the half-dozen persons seated at the table moved for some few seconds following; their startled, white faces testifying to their consternation. Before any one had spoken the sound was repeated with equal force, and seemed to jar the entire room. This time, my mother, who was a fearless woman under ordinary circumstances, pale and trembling, took up a lamp to investigate the matter. She had scarcely risen, with face toward the door, when the noise was repeated for the third time. Not hesitating, but with blanched face, holding the light aloft, she threw open the stair-door; not a sound, not an object answered her look and voice. Utter silence reigned in the chambers above. Father was absent at the time, and our nearest neighbour was more than a quarter of a mile away. However, my sisters, who were grown to womanhood, followed by myself, went with my mother throughout the entire building, to find no intruder of any sort, nor could we find any evidence of the cause of the peculiar noises. As we returned to the kitchen the large clock on the high mantel-piece struck eight. . . . Three days later, while the matter was the subject of constant conversation, we received news of the death of my father's mother, who had died at Stafford Springs, at eight o'clock on the evening of the day of our strange experiences. The time elapsing between the stairway noises and the striking of the hour, we afterwards ascertained, was the exact difference between grandfather's watch and our clock; we, therefore, knew that at the time of the stairway noises grandmother had passed to the Great Beyond,

and that the period of departure was precisely ten minutes before eight o'clock. My grandfather, from this time forward to that of his death, was a member of our household.

Miss Colburn's lot was cast in the stormy days of the War of Secession. The chief interest of the book is in the relations of the medium with President Lincoln and the influence that invisible guardians exerted upon him through her instrumentality. Her first interview with the President is thus recorded:—

The friends I had made in Washington were determined I should not leave that city, and it was decided that my brother should take my mother back to Hartford with him, with all her household effects; that I should resign my position in Albany; and that my friend Miss Hannum should join me in Washington. This programme was carried out.

The day following my brother's departure for home, a note was received by Mrs. Laurie, asking her to come to the White House in the evening with her family, and to bring Miss Nettie with her. It was almost with trembling that I entered with my friends the Red Parlour of the White House, at eight o'clock that evening (December, 1862).

Mrs. Lincoln received us graciously, and introduced us to a gentleman and lady present whose names I have forgotten. Mr. Lincoln was not then present. While all were conversing pleasantly on general subjects, Mrs. Miller (Mr. Laurie's daughter) setad herself, under control, at the double grand piano at one side of the room, seemingly awaiting someone. Mrs. Lincoln was talking with us in pleasant strain when suddenly Mrs. Miller's hands fell upon the keys with a force that betokened a master hand, and the strains of a grand march filled the room. As the measured notes rose and fell we became silent. The heavy end of the piano began rising and falling in perfect time to the music. All at once it ceased, and Mr. Lincoln stood upon the threshold of the room. (He afterwards informed us that the first notes of the music fell upon his ears as he reached the head of the grand staircase to descend, and that he kept step to the music until he reached the doorway.) Mr. and Mrs. Laurie and Mrs. Miller were duly presented. Then I was led forward and presented. He stood before me, tall and kindly, with a smile on his face. Dropping his hand upon my head, he said, in a humorous tone, "So this is our 'little Nettie,' is it, that we have heard so much about?" I could only smile and say, "Yes, sir," like any schoolgirl; when he kindly led me to an ottoman. Sitting down in a chair, the ottoman at his feet, he began asking me questions in a kindly way about my mediumship; and I think he must have thought me stupid, as my answers were little beyond a "Yes" and "No." His manner, however, was genial and kind, and it was then suggested that we should form in a circle. He said, "Well, how do you do it?" looking at me. Mr. Laurie came to the rescue, and said we had been accustomed to sit in a circle and to join hands; but he did not think it would be necessary in this instance. While he was yet speaking, I lost all consciousness of my surroundings and passed under control. For more than an hour I was made to talk to him, and I learned from my friends afterward that it was upon matters that he seemed fully to understand, while they comprehended very little until that portion was reached that related to the forthcoming Emancipation Proclamation. He was charged with the utmost solemnity and force of manner not to abate the terms of its issue, and not to delay its enforcement as a law beyond the opening of the year; and he was assured that it was to be the crowning event of his administration and his life; and that while he was being counselled by strong parties to defer the enforcement of it, hoping to supplant it by other measures and to delay action, he must in no wise heed such counsel, but stand firm to his convictions and fearlessly perform the work and fulfil the mission for which he had been raised up by an overruling Providence. Those present declared that they lost sight of the timid girl in the majesty of the utterance, the strength and force of the language, and the importance of that which was conveyed, and seemed to realise that some strong masculine spirit force was giving speech to almost divine commands.

I shall never forget the scene around me when I regained consciousness. I was standing in front of Mr. Lincoln, and he was sitting back in his chair, with his arms folded upon his breast, looking intently at me. I stepped back, natur-

* "Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?" By MRS. NETTIE COLBURN MAYNARD. (Philadelphia: Rufus C. Harknft, 1891. Price 4s. 6d.)

ally confused at the situation—not remembering at once where I was; and glancing around the group, where perfect silence reigned. It took me a moment to remember my whereabouts.

A gentleman present then said in a low tone, "Mr. President, did you notice anything peculiar in the method of address?" Mr. Lincoln raised himself, as if shaking off his spell. He glanced quickly at the full-length portrait of Daniel Webster, that hung above the piano, and replied, "Yes, and it is very singular, very!" with marked emphasis.

Mr. Somes said: "Mr. President, would it be improper for me to inquire whether there has been any pressure brought to bear upon you to defer the enforcement of the Proclamation?" To which the President replied: "Under these circumstances that question is perfectly proper, as we are all friends [smiling upon the company]. It is taking all my nerve and strength to withstand such a pressure." At this point the gentlemen drew around him, and spoke together in low tones, Mr. Lincoln saying least of all. At last he turned to me, and laying his hand upon my head, uttered these words in a manner that I shall never forget: "My child, you possess a very singular gift; but that it is of God I have no doubt. I thank you for coming here to-night. It is more important than perhaps anyone present can understand. I must leave you all now; but I hope I shall see you again."

It is not often that the current stories of the interest shown by exalted personages in Spiritualism are capable of verification. They are true enough, for there is that in this subject which commands interest and acceptance from the prepared mind. And the intellect that is daily grappling with what Lord Beaconsfield used to call "affairs" is prepared for the unexpected, and is not much hampered by the trivialities of life. It would be a surprise to the average *dilletante* mind to know how keen the interest is among commanding and governing minds in what the dawdler finds susceptible of an explanation adequate to his powers of comprehension in a passing glance.

We may quote one more record of a séance with the President and then pass on to one of another type:—

One morning, early in February, we received a note from Mrs. Lincoln, saying she desired us to come over to Georgetown and bring some friends for a séance that evening, and wished the "young ladies" to be present. In the early part of the evening, before her arrival, my little messenger, or "familiar" spirit, controlled me, and declared that the "long brave," as she denominated Mr. Lincoln, would also be there. As Mrs. Lincoln had made no mention of his coming in her letter, we were surprised at the statement. Mr. Laurie rather questioned its accuracy; as he said it would be hardly advisable for President Lincoln to leave the White House to attend a spiritual séance anywhere; and that he did not consider it "good policy" to do so. However, when the bell rang, Mr. Laurie, in honour of his expected guests, went to the door to receive them in person. His astonishment was great to find Mr. Lincoln standing on the threshold, wrapped in his long cloak; and to hear his cordial "Good evening," as he put out his hand and entered. Mr. Laurie promptly exclaimed, "Welcome, Mr. Lincoln, to my humble roof; you were expected" (Mr. Laurie was one of the "old-school gentlemen"). Mr. Lincoln stopped in the act of removing his cloak, and said, "Expected! Why, it is only five minutes since I knew that I was coming." He came down from a Cabinet meeting as Mrs. Lincoln and her friends were about to enter the carriage, and asked them where they were going. She replied, "To Georgetown; to a circle." He answered immediately, "Hold on a moment; I will go with you." "Yes," said Mrs. Lincoln, "and I was never so surprised in my life." He seemed pleased when Mr. Laurie explained the source of our information; and I think it had a tendency to prepare his mind to receive what followed, and to obey the instructions given.

Mr. and Mrs. Laurie, with their daughter, Mrs. Miller, at his request, sang several fine old Scotch airs—among them, one that he declared a favourite, called "Bonnie Doon." I can see him now, as he sat in the old high-backed rocking-chair; one leg thrown over the arm; leaning back in utter weariness, with his eyes closed, listening to the low, strong, and clear yet plaintive notes, rendered as only the

Scotch can sing their native melodies. I looked at his face, and it appeared tired and haggard. He seemed older by years than when I had seen him a few weeks previously. The whole party seemed anxious and troubled; but all interest centred in the chief, and all eyes and thoughts were turned on him. At the end of the song he turned to me and said, "Well, Miss Nettie; do you think you have anything to say to me to-night?" I said, "If I have not, there may be others who have." He nodded his head in a pleasant manner, saying, "Suppose we see what they will have to tell us."

The séance of a different kind is this:—

Among the spirit friends that have ever controlled me since my first development was one I have before mentioned—known as "old Dr. Bamford." He was quite a favourite with Mr. Lincoln. His quaint dialect, old-fashioned methods of expression, straightforwardness in arriving at his subject, together with fearlessness of utterance, recommended him as no finished style could have done. This spirit took possession of me at once. As I learned from those in the circle, the substance of his remarks was as follows: "That a very precarious state of things existed at the front where General Hooker had just taken command. The army was totally demoralised; regiments stacking arms, refusing to obey orders or to do duty; threatening a general retreat; declaring their purpose to return to Washington. A vivid picture was drawn of the terrible state of affairs, greatly to the surprise of all present, save the chief to whom the words were addressed. When the picture had been painted in vivid colours, Mr. Lincoln quietly remarked: "You seem to understand the situation. Can you point out the remedy?" Dr. Bamford immediately replied: "Yes; if you have the courage to use it." "He smiled," they said, and answered, "Try me." The old doctor then said to him, "It is one of the simplest, and being so simple it may not appeal to you as being sufficient to cope with what threatens to prove a serious difficulty. The remedy lies with yourself. Go in person to the front; taking with you your wife and children; leaving behind your official dignity and all manner of display. Resist the importunities of officials to accompany you, and take only such attendants as may be absolutely necessary; avoid the high-grade officers and seek the tents of the private soldiers. Inquire into their grievances; show yourself to be what you are, 'The Father of your People.' Make them feel that you are interested in their sufferings, and that you are not unmindful of the many trials which beset them in their march through the dismal swamps, whereby both their courage and numbers have been depleted." He quietly remarked, "If that will do any good, it is easily done." The doctor instantly replied, "It will do all that is required. It will unite the soldiers as one man. It will unite them to you in bands of steel. And now, if you would prevent a serious, if not fatal, disaster to your cause, let the news be promulgated at once, and disseminated throughout the camp of the Army of the Potomac. Have it scattered broadcast that you are on the eve of visiting the front; that you are not talking of it, but that it is settled that you are going, and are now getting into readiness. This will stop insubordination and hold the soldiers in check; being something to divert their minds, and they will wait to see what your coming portends." He at once said, "It shall be done."

After the circle was over, Mr. Laurie said, "Mr. Lincoln, is it possible that affairs are as bad as has been depicted?" He said, "They can hardly be exaggerated; but I ask it as a favour of all present that they do not speak of these things. The Major there," pointing to an officer of that rank who was in their party, "has just brought despatches from the 'front' depicting the state of affairs pretty much as our old friend has shown it; and we were just having a Cabinet meeting regarding the matter, when something, I know not what, induced me to leave the room and come downstairs, when I found Mrs. Lincoln in the act of coming here. I felt it might be of service for me to come; I did not know wherefore." He dropped his head as he said this—leaning forward in his chair as if he were thinking aloud. Then, looking up suddenly, he remarked, "Matters are pretty serious down there, and perhaps the simplest remedy is the best. I have often noticed in life that little things have sometimes greater weight than larger ones."

It was at this séance that Mrs. Belle Miller gave an example of her power as a "moving medium," and highly

amused and interested us by causing the piano to "waltz around the room," as was facetiously remarked in several recent newspaper articles. The true statement is as follows: Mrs. Miller played upon the piano (a three-corner grand), and under her influence it "rose and fell," keeping time to her touch in a perfectly regular manner. Mr. Laurie suggested that, as an added "test" of the invisible power that moved the piano, Mrs. Miller (his daughter) should place her hand on the instrument, standing at arm's length from it, to show that she was in no wise connected with its movement other than as agent. Mr. Lincoln then placed his hand underneath the piano, at the end nearest Mrs. Miller, who placed her left hand upon his to demonstrate that neither strength nor pressure was used. In this position the piano rose and fell a number of times at her bidding. At Mr. Laurie's desire the President changed his position to another side, meeting with the same result.

The President, with a quaint smile, said, "I think we can hold down that instrument." Whereupon he climbed upon it, sitting with his legs dangling over the side, as also did Mr. Somes, S. P. Kase, and a soldier in the uniform of a major (who, if living, will recall the strange scene) from the Army of the Potomac. The piano, notwithstanding this enormous added weight, continued to wobble about until the sitters were glad "to vacate the premises." We were convinced that there were no mechanical contrivances to produce the strange result, and Mr. Lincoln expressed himself perfectly satisfied that the motion was caused by some "invisible power"; and when Mr. Somes remarked, "When I have related to my acquaintances, Mr. President, that which I have experienced to-night, they will say, with a knowing look and wise demeanour, 'You were psychologised, and as a matter of fact (*versus* fancy) you did not see what you in reality did see,'" Mr. Lincoln quietly replied, "You should bring such person here, and when the piano seems to rise, have him slip his foot under the leg and be convinced (doubtless) by the weight of evidence resting upon his understanding."

When the laughter caused by this rally had subsided, the President wearily sank into an armchair, "the old tired, anxious look returning to his face."

This never-to-be-forgotten incident occurred on the fifth day of February, 1863.

No doubt remains on our mind that the President of the United States was guided, and knew that he was guided at a very critical period, by unseen and unknown spiritual agencies, who directed his actions—as in the Emancipation Proclamation, and as they did with the Czar of Russia in a similar matter—to the greatest good of the greatest number which it is their mission to press on in this world of ours. The book should be widely read.

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES RECEIVED.

- "The Faith Doctor." By EDWARD EGGLESTON. (Cassell and Co. 1891.) [To be noticed presently.]
- "Yule Tide." Cassell's Christmas Annual. [Artistic in its plates, well printed, and very readable.]
- "The Queen" Christmas number. [A wonderful shillingworth. "Love's Secret" is a most dainty drawing.]
- "The Newsagent." Christmas number. 1d. [Contains much useful information for journalists and readers.]
- "The Great Republic." By THOMAS LAKE HARRIS. Second edition. (E. W. Allen, 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C. 1891.)
- "Literary Opinion." [Full of interest. A portrait of Christina Rossetti from a drawing by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, is a welcome change from the prevailing type of smirking face which most periodicals present in gaudiest colours as appropriate to Christmas.]
- "The Coming Day." By JOHN PAGE HOPPS. 3d. [Among other articles is a notice of a Symposium "Where are the Dead?" conducted by eighteen writers, all ministers. Dr. Clifford's is the broadest, and most rational, contribution to the discussion.]
- "The Strand Magazine." [A tremendous *tour de force*, costing over £10,000 to produce and using up over 200 tons of paper for the issue. "Ghosts" are treated and illustrated by Irving Montagu. We shall recur to this remarkable six-pennyworth, unparalleled in our experience.]
- "The Victorian Magazine." (Hutchinson and Co., Paternoster-square, E.C. 6d.) [A new competitor for public favour. High class literature is to be the main purpose. Mrs. Oliphant is to contribute a serial story; there are to be some hitherto unpublished essays of De Quincey; also some articles on "Music and Musical Instruments," and on some "Famous Frenchwomen." The programme is very attractive.] We shall notice the magazine which reaches us as we go to press.

DARWINISM AND THE "FALL OF MANKIND."

I think I noticed that the writer of a letter in the last number of "LIGHT" asserts that Darwin in his "Origin of Species" and "Descent of Man" has disproved the *mythus* of the Fall of Man.

I have lent my copy of "LIGHT" to a friend (whom I wished to read that splendid address given at the last meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance), so I must crave forgiveness if I am misinterpreting that letter. My only reason for referring to it is that it suggested to my mind that the bearing of the doctrine of Evolution upon the *mythus* in question might be an interesting topic for your readers.

My opinion used to be that Darwin's teaching has about as much or as little to do with the question of the spiritual fall of man as Newton's doctrine of gravitation has to do with it. I have made the practical study of Animal Evolution part of the serious business of my life for many years, and especially latterly, in preparation for writing my "Biology of Daily Life"; and I have been forced to change this opinion. The Fall has left distinct traces even on man's bodily history.

Swedenborg's law of correspondence holds good up to the last syllable of the scientific record. And just as in the rock-pools on the seashore when the wind ruffles their surface we are shown in miniature the effect of that same wind in lifting up the waves of the ocean, so in the history of animal evolution (whether in the long geologic records of that evolution, or in marvellous epitome of that long record of development which the embryology of individual organisms reveals) we are presented with a diminished and imperfect, but so far faithful, picture of the great movements of spiritual life.

If our spiritual explorers and teachers would only remember the dictum, "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual but that which is animal (psychic), and afterwards that which is spiritual,"* and act upon it they would be saved from many barren speculations and consequent bigotries and controversies.

The science of Embryology, yet in its own early infancy, has already shed a clear light upon the history of Evolution. This science seems to "wear upon its baby brow the round and top of sovereignty," for some of the deepest and most perplexed questions are now decided by its authority. I do not mean to inflict upon your readers a sermon founded upon Eccles. xi. 5, but may I be permitted to point out one very hopeful sign of the times? Now, when we are learning how "the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child," we are also attaining a fuller knowledge of "the way of the spirit," and may without presumption claim to know something "of the works of God Who maketh all."

My purpose in this communication is to show that a verifiable proof of the doctrine of the Fall of Man is described in the writings of Charles Darwin. Of course, it must be only, as I said, "a diminished and imperfect picture" of spiritual realities, that the best science of the outward and visible can present. We can, however, see that the evidence of a Fall is distinctly written in the record of human evolution, and actually noted by the illustrious interpreter of that record.

I gladly admit that the Miltonian notion of the grandeur and dignity or even pomposity of the original of mankind is completely disproved by modern research, but then that notion has scarcely attained to the dignity of a *mythus*. It has never grown beyond the dimensions it acquired in the perfervid imagination of that great poet. John Milton's eminently respectable and imposing personages—his Lord Protector Adam, and beautiful and twining Eve (alas, as unlike the veritable Mistress Milton as Milton's "Paradise Lost" is unlike the grand and simple story of Genesis!)—have too long usurped the place of the Scriptures of truth. But a fall from a state of ignorant and unstable sinlessness (like that of all morally blameless brute animals) following upon the acquirement of the knowledge of Good and Evil so magnificently symbolised in Genesis by the eating of the fruit of a tree named of such knowledge is a necessary postulate, or rather corollary, of Darwinism. It is as demonstrably a part of the history of man's mental evolution as the gradually altered shape of the pelvis to suit a

* 1 Cor. xv. 46, "First" (*πρῶτον*) not in order of existence or of being, but of becoming, and therefore of historical research and discovery, and "afterwards" (*εἰτετα*), the gate of all true knowledge being an Incarnation, we pass from without into the interior.

more and more upright posture, or the gradual enlargement of the brain to accommodate or promote his increasing intelligence is a part of man's bodily evolution.

I can only find space for one quotation, but this one is as good as a thousand, because it exhibits a principle which underlies the whole Darwinian doctrine. The following quotation will show two things. First, the belief in Darwin's own mind of this fall as a fully verified fact; and secondly, by the note to a later edition of his book in which he actually quotes the remarks of a writer who calls attention to the unintentional support he gives to the Jewish tradition, Darwin's recognition of that support:—

If we look back to an extremely remote epoch, before man had arrived at the dignity of manhood, he would have been guided more by instinct and less by reason than are the lowest savages at the present time. Our early semi-human progenitors would not have practised infanticide or polyandry; for the instincts of the lower animals are never so perverted as to lead them regularly to destroy their own offspring, or to be quite devoid of jealousy.

At the word "perverted" this note occurs:—

A writer in the 'Spectator' (March 12th, 1871, p. 320) comments as follows on this passage: "Mr. Darwin finds himself compelled to reintroduce a new doctrine of the Fall of Man. He shows that the instincts of the higher animals are far nobler than the habits of savage races of men, and he finds himself, therefore, compelled to reintroduce—in a form of the substantial orthodoxy of which he appears to be quite unconscious—and to introduce as a scientific hypothesis the doctrine that man's gain of *knowledge* was the cause of a temporary but long-enduring moral deterioration, as indicated by the many foul customs, especially as to marriage of savage tribes. What does the Jewish tradition of the moral degeneration of man through his snatching at a knowledge forbidden him by his highest instinct assert beyond this?"*

I may add that no comment is made upon this by the author. He simply gives the quotation.

JOHN H. N. NEVILL.

Vicarage, Stoke Gabriel, S. Devon.
December 2nd, 1891.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Georgia Magnet.

SIR,—Many years ago I witnessed an exhibition of mysterious force very similar to that of Mrs. Abbott at the Alhambra. It was at a lecture, given by a man who called himself a Phreno-Mesmerist, in a large well-lighted room. After a number of curious "manifestations," a very little boy of about four years old, chance-chosen from the crowd in the body of the room, was taken up to the platform and mesmerised. The lecturer then invited "any heavy gentleman present" to come up and "test the force." The rector of the parish, who was seated beside me, said: "I weigh over fourteen stone, I'll test the force." He mounted the platform, and seated himself, as requested, on a plain, solid arm-chair, taken up for the purpose from the room. The lecturer placed himself and the mesmerised child behind the chair, and applied his fingers to each side of the child's head,—on the organ of "resistance," I think he said. Instantly the child seized the back of the chair, with the heavy man on it, violently tilted and jerked it to and fro, and finally "tossed it up clear off the floor." The rector got up, came down, and silently reseated himself by me. Presently he said: "I came here to expose what I judged from the printed handbills must be a mischievous humbug, but I am fairly beaten. In another moment that baby would have flung me, chair and all, off the platform." The child was well known to him as attending the infant school of the parish. Everyone in the room could have seen that no hands but the child's touched the chair, and that the lecturer's two hands were visible all the while on either side of the little boy's head.

M. B.

A Rejected Letter from the "Daily Telegraph."

SIR,—I sent the following letter to the "Daily Telegraph" lately, in answer to its article on the feats of Mrs. Abbott, which article was hopeful that the conjurers might elucidate the mystery. Of course I did not expect the letter to be inserted. The "Telegraph" has no room, like the "Times," for such vagaries. Still, I was hopeful of doing something towards teaching our teachers, even from my own limited

* Darwin's "Descent of Man," p. 46, second edition, revised and augmented.

experience. I think it quite probable you may not think this worth printing, yet here it is:—

To the Editor of the "Daily Telegraph." SIR,—I am glad to find Mrs. Abbott apparently exercising, in a diversity of ways, the old phase of Spiritualism practised by the late D. D. Home and others, of making objects light or heavy by request, expressed aloud or otherwise to unseen intelligent beings present, endowed with peculiar powers. Mr. Home used to ask "spirits" to cause a table to become heavy; and then those present were unable to raise it. He would also ask them to make the table light, and it would rise by a touch.

During the war of 1870, the well-known physical medium, Mdlle. Huet, of Paris, was in England. I went to one of her séances; and, having seen the phenomena I have mentioned accomplished by Mr. Home, I, being, I believe, no physical medium myself, asked that lady kindly to permit me to try Mr. Home's experiments under her auspices, a request to which she cheerfully consented. So I requested her *chères esprits* to make the table light, and it rose with the slightest touch of my fingers. I then asked the same agents of force to make the table heavy, and I could not move it in any way, although I tried with all my might. The behaviour of the table on this occasion seemed to give pleasure to the party assembled.

I have no doubt that the young man condemned to death some years ago for the murder of an old lady at Babbacombe, and who is alive now, because the drop would not drop, was saved by a spiritual being or beings using the same methods as those elicited by Mr. Home, Mdlle. Huet and Mrs. Abbott. And it has led me to believe that there were at least some extenuating circumstances, in his case, that were unknown perhaps to the judge and jury.

A CLERGYMAN.

The Unity Law.

SIR,—"Leo" says that if $x + not\ x = 1$, then x must equal $not\ x$. I confess myself unable to see any law, of numbers or of logic, according to which the second equation follows from the first. The first belongs to an extremely matter-of-fact branch of science; so much so, that I should hesitate to mention it in an Occultist journal, were it not important that mediums should learn to correct immediate perception by matter-of-fact law.

The danger of Occultism is that it may lead us to fancy we know more than we do about the unseen world. The function of mathematics in Occultism is to recall us to the consciousness that much of our supposed knowledge is illusion. But to fulfil this purpose, the laws of sequence must be observed as strictly and as carefully as we observe them in our monetary calculations. It is a grim study and leads the student by a stony, thorny, up-hill path; which has, however, one recommendation: there are no disappointments or disillusionments at the end; and the very few gems we gather are well worth selling all else on earth for.

MARY E. BOOLE.

SIR,—I quite feel with Mrs. Boole that "Leo's" generalisation will not hold as a conclusion from the premises. "Leo" says:—"to say that $x + not\ x = 1$ is to have said also that $x = not\ x$." But if we remember that 1 is divisible to the same extent as it is multipliable, or in other words, that it is as easy to divide 1 by a high number as to multiply it by a high number, surely it is not apparent how this should follow. To say that $a + b = c$ is not to have said that $a = b$. So that I feel I have not quite caught what "Leo" intends to put forward. Possibly "Leo" would kindly explain.

G. W. A.

Mozart.

SIR,—The world of music will for a few days be directing its attention to the life and work of Mozart, who died hundred years ago (December 5th, 1791). Such a pure and clearly defined example of "genius" is hardly to be matched in the whole range of remarkable, talented, or able men. It is fortunate for psychology that Mozart himself, at the pressing instance of a friend, wrote a brief sketch of his method of composition. The Mozart supplement to the "Musical Times" of December 1st publishes some very interesting matter, but nothing of so much importance to us as the letter referred to, and which is given below nearly in full:—

You say you should like to know my way of composing, and what method I follow in writing works of some extent.

I can really say no more upon this subject than the following, for I myself know no more about it, and cannot account for it. When I am, as it were, completely myself, entirely alone, and of good cheer . . . it is on such occasions that my ideas flow best and most abundantly. Whence and how they come I know not, nor can I force them. These ideas that please me I retain in memory, and am accustomed, as I have been told, to hum them to myself. If I continue in this way, it soon occurs to me how I may turn this or that morsel to account, so as to make a good dish of it—that is to say, agreeable to the rules of counterpoint, to the peculiarities of the various instruments, &c. All this fires my soul, and provided I am not disturbed, my subject enlarges itself, becomes methodised and defined, and the whole, though it be long, stands almost finished and complete in my mind, so that I can survey it like a fine picture or a beautiful statue at a glance; nor do I hear in my imagination the parts successively, but I hear them . . . all at once. All this inventing, this producing, takes place . . . in a lively dream . . . What has been thus produced I do not easily forget, and this is, perhaps, the best gift I have my Divine Master to thank for. When I proceed to write down my ideas, I take out of the bag of my memory what has previously been collected. . . . For this reason the committing to paper is done quickly enough, for everything is already finished; and it rarely differs on paper from what it was in my imagination. At this occupation I can therefore suffer myself to be disturbed. . . . But why my productions take from my hand that particular style which makes them Mozartish, and different from the works of other composers, is probably owing to the same cause which renders my nose large or aquiline, or, in short, makes it Mozartish and different from those of other people. For I do really not study or aim at any originality; I should, in fact, not be able to describe in what mine consists, though I think it quite natural that persons who have really an individual appearance of their own are also differently organised from others, both externally and internally.

In this surprisingly great artist we have a highly organised medium who, while accomplished, through hard study and good training, in his art, was undoubtedly subject to inspiration and control, and who, while conscious of an operating external influence, retained in full power his own individuality, did his great work, and in spite of present psychological teaching, enjoyed in all respects his freedom of will.

December 2nd, 1891.

M. A. I.

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

17, MAIDEN-LANE, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.—Mrs. Ashton Bingham will be glad to welcome investigators into Spiritualism at her séances every Thursday, at 8 p.m. prompt, Mrs. Mason, medium, at the above address.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Mrs. J. M. Smith, of Leeds, Psychometrist, &c., will give an inspirational address on Sunday, December 27th, at 7 p.m.; clairvoyance at 11 a.m. Monday, 28th, séance, to which Spiritualists are invited. Mrs. Smith will extend her visit to January 3rd. Societies and friends desiring her services please write, care of Mrs. Audy, 28, Gowlett-road, East Dulwich. Sunday next, at 7, Mr. Clarke. Morning, open discussion.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—On Sunday last we had a good meeting, and Mr. Portman's controls gave an excellent discourse upon Sympathy. Mrs. Mason's guides followed with good clairvoyance, also answering many interesting questions, and giving good advice upon health. Sunday, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. Pursey, with organ recitals and sacred solos. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason. Saturday, at 8 p.m., select circle. Mrs. Charles Spring will give a special séance on Monday, December 21st, at 8 p.m., in aid of the Lyceum Children's Second Annual Christmas Tea Party and Organ Funds. Tickets, 1s., may be had of Mrs. Mason, conductor.—J.H.B., Hon. Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—The "Ghosts" number of the "Review of Reviews" occupied our attention on Sunday last. It is a healthy sign of the times when one of the leading journalists makes such a prominent feature of the hitherto tabooed subject of ghostly visitants. The prominent "Caution" will tend to discourage the readers, as the curious will desire to learn of the dangers they are warned against. On Sunday evening next, "Joan of Arc—the Medium of History" will be the subject of discourse at 7 o'clock. We are making an effort to increase our library, and any books or papers for the reading table will be thankfully accepted.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Perrin delivered a trance address on "Progress in the Spiritual Spheres." There will be no meeting until December 20th, when the association having secured a more commodious hall situate at No. 86, High-street, Marylebone, W., Miss Florence Marryat has kindly consented to deliver an address at the opening meeting, at 7 p.m., subject:—"There is no Death." The chair will be taken by T. Everitt, Esq.; doors open at 6.30. A public meeting will be held on Monday evening, December 21st, at 7.30 p.m., Dr. Gale presiding. A tea meeting on January 3rd, tea at 5 o'clock. Admission 9d. each.—K. MILLIGAN and C. WHITE, Secs.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION, ATHENÆUM HALL, 73, TOTTENHAM COURT-ROAD.—Last Sunday Mr. Read in reading the documents supplied by Mr. Bathell exposing the errors of Theosophy, and throwing light upon the true character of the Mahatmas, created a deep impression. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Richard Harte, Esq., F.T.S., will lecture on "Occultism, What is it?" Those who wish to really get at the truth concerning Theosophy should attend. We are making a great effort to unravel the tangled skein and separate the truth from the falsehood in this matter. Before the lecture Mr. Read will read "The Vision of Aphrodite," an inspirational poem by myself.—A. F. TINDALL, Hon. Sec.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Assistance given to inquirers, copies of "LIGHT," leaflets on Spiritualism, and list of English and foreign members sent on receipt of stamp.—Address, J. Allen, 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex, or W. E. Robson, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Manor Park branch of the above Society will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace, as follows:—Sunday, 11.30 a.m., for students and inquirers; Thursday, 11.30 a.m., inquirers' meeting; Friday, 8 p.m., for Spiritualists only, the Study of Mediumship; and at 1, Wini-fred-road, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Tuesday, 8.15 p.m., experimental séance; first Sunday in each month at 7 p.m., reception. All meetings free.

FOREST HILL, 23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD.—On Thursday, December 3rd, Captain Pfoundes gave us an address on Re-incarnation. An interesting discussion followed, much information of a valuable character being thus obtained, and the absurdity of this doctrine shown by indisputable arguments. On Sunday, December 6th, Mr. Veitch, of Peckham, gave an excellent address on Spiritualism, treating it as a religion, and a most favourable impression was made on all present. At the close of the public meeting we held a members' meeting. The treasurer's report showed that for the two months, October and November, the receipts had been about £8 10s., and the expenditure had been about £11, and that there was still a balance in the treasury of £2 15s. It was decided to hold a concert on Wednesday, December 30th, at 7 p.m.; refreshments to be provided. Price for concert and refreshments, 6d. Sunday, December 13th, at 7 p.m., Mr. Lees. Thursday, December 17th, Captain Pfoundes, at 8 p.m., class for psychology.—H. W. BRUNKER, Sec.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—On Sunday and Monday, December 20th and 21st, Mrs. E. Hardinge Britten will pay a farewell visit previous to her resigning public speaking. It being the last time we shall be favoured with a visit from our esteemed worker, the committee have arranged to take a larger hall on this occasion, viz., the "Lorraine Hall," St. Mary's-place, Northumberland-street, for the Sunday services at 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., and on Monday at 7.30 p.m., at our own place, Cordwainer's Hall, 20, Nelson-street. All friends from the adjacent towns and country villages are cordially invited to join with us and make our meetings a complete success. For the convenience of friends from the country, &c., a cold lunch and tea will be provided in the Society's hall, 20, Nelson-street, at very moderate charges, after which a fact or experience meeting will be held at 2 or 2.30 p.m. Societies would oblige if they could send word to the secretary, R. ELLISON, 14, Alexandra-terrace, Gateshead, something like the numbers coming, so that we may know how to provide.—R.E.

THE TESTIMONIAL TO MRS. MELLON.

The committee of Newcastle Spiritualists who were appointed to manage the testimonial to Mrs. J. B. Mellon met on Friday evening, the 4th inst., when the treasurer, Mrs. Hammarbom, reported that the sum of £13 10s. 2d., the amount subscribed, had been duly paid over to Mrs. Mellon on the eve of her departure to Australia, viz.: Tuesday, December 1st. A cordial vote of thanks was passed to the editors of the different Spiritual papers for their kind assistance in advertising the same, and also to Mrs. Hammarbom and the secretary for the labour they have had in connection with it.

Amount already acknowledged, £12 19s. 2d.; Mr. W. Gray, 1s.; Mr. E. Sawyer, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. Harrison, 2s. 6d.; A friend, Southport, 2s. 6d.; total, £13 10s. 2d. The above amount has been paid over to Mrs. Mellon.—J. HAMMARBOM.