

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

With that thoroughness which characterises the American people, congresses of all kinds are to be held during the World's Fair at Chicago, in the present year. Of the Psychological Science Congress we have spoken more than once: now we refer more particularly to what may be called the Religious Science Congress. Of this the "Religio-Philosophical Journal," for March 18th, says:—

Next September will be held in this city the "parliament of religion," a great international religious council the object of which will be to compare and discuss the differing views of distinguished representations of all the great religious faiths of the world. The sole pre-requisite is a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, whether his especial apostle be called Gautama, Mohammed, Moses, or Christ. Favourable replies to the invitations sent out have been received from all quarters of the globe, and eminent teachers of Moslemism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism and Buddhism, as well as celebrated Catholic prelates and Protestant and Jewish divines will take part in the proceedings. The subjects to be treated include such topics as "Origin and Universality of Belief in God"; "Man, his Nature, his Dignity, his Imperfection, his Place in Nature"; "Essential Expression of the Relation Between God and Man"; "Systems of Religion"; "Sacred Books of the World"; "Religion and the Family"; "The Religious Leaders of Mankind"; "Religion and Social Problems"; "The Present Religious Condition of Christendom"; "The Religious Union of the Whole Human Family"; "Elements of Perfect Religion as Recognised and Set Forth in the Different Historic Faiths." The coming parliament should tend to break down the barriers that have hitherto separated the great divisions of the human family which hold in common the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Whatever else may be the result of the projected gathering, it is likely to quicken the spirit of toleration and remove mutual prejudices.

We hope the anticipations of the "Religio-Philosophical Journal" will be fulfilled, and that the sometimes fatal result of further estrangement may not be the outcome of this as of other great councils.

"Cheiro" sends a small manual of "palmistry." It seems hardly possible that palmistry should have been practised for so many generations, especially by the gypsies, without there being "something in it." At the same time we seem to be a long way off knowing what that "something" is. If this small guide-book of Cheiro's be used it is possible that the result obtained may be very different from what would be got if some other system—say that of Desbarolles—had been used. What is wanted in palmistry, as it used to be in Spiritualism and in all such studies, is that a series of careful observations should be made and the results of these observations collected and collated until some sort of law is evolved; then we may be able to get at the philosophy of the thing. At present we are certainly very much in the dark. That so sensitive a portion of the

body as the hand should be one of the outward and visible signs of the indwelling soul is a very reasonable supposition; but in what way that soul is thus represented is not as yet clear, and books on palmistry throw comparatively little light on the matter. Cheiro's book is good as far as it goes.

In another column of "LIGHT" will be found a portion of an article on psychometry taken from the *Theosophist*. That the things are as the writer states there can be no question, though some people are vastly more susceptible to the auric influence than others. "I do not like thee, Dr. Fell, the reason why I cannot tell," is only the common-place expression of a subtle spiritual principle. But Mr. Old might have gone farther. There are cases in which the presence of a certain person in the vicinity of another so prostrates that other that illness almost immediately ensues. The aura of some persons acts as a positive poison just as that of others is full of beneficent power. There is, too, another point of interest in connection with this subject. When one person comes near another who is in a worse state of health, or may be, to use a common expression, in "lower spirits" than the first, there is a corresponding loss of something on the part of the first person which is at times called "vitality." This we presume Mr. Old would explain by saying that the auric vibrations of the first person have lost energy in lengthening or shortening, as the case may be, the auric vibrations of the second, and we should not like to say Mr. Old would be wrong. Where the human personality ends is not quite so simple a thing as it was once thought to be.

In a letter from a correspondent we find the phrase "Spiritualism of a very high order." There does seem some objection to this expression, though it is frequently used. Spiritualism, that is, the science which treats of the existence of intelligences outside and independent of us, can in itself be neither high nor low; its effect on its votaries may differ enormously, but that is not a difference in Spiritualism but in spirituality, which is not the same thing. Spiritualism may debase or it may ennoble, but it is still Spiritualism. There may be high developments, or low developments, but the developments are still those of Spiritualism. In fact it is quite possible to discuss the finer philosophy of Spiritualism and yet make no spiritual progress. In such case there would be what is called a "high order of Spiritualism" side by side with a low spirituality.

We print elsewhere a letter from Mr. Tindall, who claims even greater gifts than Mr. Stead. Such gifts as those asserted to be his by Mr. Tindall are so striking that we hope he will do what Mr. Stead has done, give exact chapter and verse, and dates, for every assertion he makes, and submit these asserted facts to the consideration of a competent authority. Without that such assertions are a long way worse than useless—they are actively pernicious. But Mr. Tindall is doubtless willing to submit to such an examination.

Mrs. E. H. Britten sends us an account of the Fox girls which will be read with interest and pitying sympathy by all who have any feeling for suffering humanity, but especially by those who know the meaning of the "martyrdom" of these poor girls. Mrs. Britten's narrative does more than point out the cruelty which these young creatures suffered; between the lines one may read that there is a martyrdom in what the world calls "sinning" which is as real and perhaps more worthy than that which is buoyed up by the hope of a small but immediate glory.

MARGARETTA FOX KANE.

By Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten.

In view of the recent decease of the last of the Fox Sisters—Margaretta Fox Kane—and whilst I read, in extracts from some of the New York papers, evidences of the lavish cost and interest bestowed on the dead form, the title of which might have fed, clothed, and kept her alive for months—I wish to say, from personal knowledge, a few words concerning one whose name has been as widely shadowed by the ignorance of her censors as by the evil fame which the unhappy woman's lapses from the path of right have incurred.

Whilst the three Fox Sisters are always associated together as the triune propagandists of "Modern Spiritualism," the paths in life of the two younger, from that of the elder sister, Leah Fox Underhill, have been so widely divergent that I deem it most erroneous to classify them thus. I have known and been intimate with the whole Fox family since I commenced my investigations in Spiritualism in 1856.

Mrs. Underhill was removed, by her happy marriage with a wealthy and highly respected New York gentleman from much of the public effort, or I should say drudgery, which her sisters were compelled to endure, though she was ever to them as a refuge and a pitying guardian angel—in short, in all her relations of life she was one of the best and noblest of women. The two young sisters, who were many years her juniors, were driven from their humble peasant home, and the seclusion of a lonely village, by howling mobs, followed by insults and execration from strangers, threats of prison discipline from the authorities, and of eternal condemnation from their religious teachers. And all this for no fault or act of their own! Think then of the position in which these unfortunate children—not either of them even in their teens—were then placed. Dragged before fierce antagonistic public audiences; subjected to constant rude examinations before committees of their own sex; taunted, reviled, and threatened with lynch law when they even appeared openly in the streets; day and night forced to meet companies of hostile, scrutinising investigators; hurrying from town to town, always in hotels or strangers' houses, and all the while the subjects of powers of which they actually knew as little as the crowds that surrounded them! What kind of a life or education was this for two young country girls under fifteen years of age! I have seen them, and sat with them, at some of their evening circles, when, with the life ebbing out of their thin fingers, heavy eyes, and pale, weary faces, by the expenditure of their magnetic forces, they have sat monotonously counting over the alphabet to the spirit rappings, hour after hour, year in and year out, sometimes all day, not unfrequently all night also. They had no youth—no enjoyments appropriate to their age and sex—and no other compensation for a restless, homeless, and too often thankless life than the petty fees that afforded them and their good, faithful, and most excellent mother the means to procure daily bread. As long as that good mother lived, the poor girls' tendencies to recuperate wasted life and energy by immoderate indulgence in stimulants were duly and firmly restrained. When she—the good

angel of their lives—passed away, and the untrained, weary, weary workers were travelling and labouring in the midst of strangers, with every prompting from within and every temptation from without, who can wonder that champagne suppers at one, two, and three o'clock in the morning led them into those forms of irresistible dissipation that at last became their habit, their conqueror, their ruin! Margaretta's life in especial was a strange and terribly trying one. I may or may not write of what none know better than myself, in my forthcoming book of biographies, but I say to every cold carping critic of these two poor creatures' exceptional lives: "Put yourselves in their place and see how much better you would have acted."

Nor let the bigot, the sceptic, or the denouncer point to the martyrdom and ruin of these two lives and say, "Behold the fruits of Spiritualism!" To any who dare to say this, I answer back, "Behold the fruits of Christian priestcraft!" that which for eighteen centuries has stamped out with fire, sword, blood, and destruction all who have been gifted with the same divine spiritual fire that animated the Founder of Christianity—enabled him to work his miracles through spiritual gifts, and at last made him declare, as in the last chapter of St. Mark, "that all who believed in him should prove their belief by doing the same spiritual works that he did." And what has been the consequence of neglecting the repeated charges of the alleged Founder of Christianity? Why, this: That whoever obeyed his charge in any age has been done to death by those calling themselves his followers, until at last, when the gates of the spiritual world are opened, and the spirits of the mighty dead, proving themselves "alive for evermore," construct a telegraph between Heaven and earth that shall take the priesthood out of the hands of men and place it in charge of God the Spirit and His ministering angels, the people themselves—especially those called Christians—are so ignorant of spiritual gifts that now, as in all past ages, they hunt the telegraphists to death, and the two first poor, ignorant, and helpless workers of the great heavenly battery fall in their tracks martyrs to the world's ignorance and the burden of the heavy gift entrusted to their unconscious care. Side by side with the martyrs of all ages—the reformers, who have ever been in the van of the world's progress, and who have been rewarded for their noble work by death at the hands of the race they have most benefited; in a word, with all who have suffered or perished by the savage inhumanity of man to man, should we place poor Kate and Margaretta Fox; and when the world scoffs and rebukes, nay, even reviles, the faults into which their all too hard lives have betrayed them, let humanity remember that the tiny tap, tap of the spiritual telegraph that first sounded through the poor little ignorant, helpless, and un instructed Hydesville children, Margaretta and Kate Fox, was the first blast of the trumpet-call that now, in the chorale of millions of spirit voices, re-echoes the solemn words, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."

REV. J. PAGE HOPPS.—We shall commence the publication in next week's issue, of a short series of articles by Mr. J. Page Hopps, entitled "Death a Delusion, or Some Personal Experiences on the Borderland between Sense and Soul."

MENTAL HARMONY CLASS.—Mr. Edward Maitland (President of the Esoteric Christian Union), has kindly consented to give a course of six lectures on "The New Gospel of Interpretation," at The Studio, 8, Wharfedale-street, Earl's-court, on Tuesdays, at 3.30 p.m. Tickets may be obtained of Miss J. M. Smallbone, Miss A. M. Callow, Hon. Secs. of the Mental Harmony Class, 6, Blandford-road, Bedford Park; and Miss Ethel Forsyth, Hon. Sec. of the Esoteric Christian Union, 37, Chelsea-gardens, S.W.

HE who empties himself of all selfish ambition becomes filled with the power of a divine life; he who gives up all, finds all again in God.—PROFESSOR CAIRNS.

THE PHENOMENA AND PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUALISM.

The following excellent article appears in "the Harbinger of Light":—

Though Spiritualism is undoubtedly progressing, especially in continental nations, the growth is principally from the intellectual and philosophical side; there has been no extension of phenomena, either in kind or quantity, and though some startling manifestations have been produced in Italy which have had the effect of arresting the attention of several scientific men, there has been in other directions a decided diminution of physical phenomena which were prevalent a few years since. This is doubtless due to the more general acceptance of such phenomena as a fact, by which the necessity for its demonstration is removed; and the question which now concerns men's minds is its *origin*. Most of the phenomena manifest intelligence, and in cases of writing or trance-speaking, or any species of telegraphy, the intelligence uniformly claims to be a disembodied human spirit. This is usually convincing to the medium and to those who accept the teaching intuitively, but to those who approach the matter from an intellectual plane something more is needed; the theory of an exalted condition of the medium's mind, or of the absorption and reflection of the thoughts and ideas of members of the circle, holds good up to a certain point, and proof of a discrete intelligence is reasonably demanded; though this does not necessarily imply that the professed spirit should give its name and prove its identity. The display of high intelligence and exhibition of knowledge, manifestly outside the powers of the medium and sitters, as in the case of the automatic writings received by Mrs. B. F. Underwood, is good evidence that the communicating intelligence is what it professes to be, especially when it is remembered that the case is not an isolated one, and that the investigator, meeting with such an experience, can find solid testimony of similar results with very little searching. Unfortunately at this point, with many investigators faith takes the place of reason, and instead of analysing the communications on their merits, the name of the communicating intelligence is demanded. If some prominent name is given, the matter then is branded *first-class* and passed on, not on its inherent merits, but on blindly accepted authority; and herein lies one of the greatest weaknesses of Spiritualism, which does more to impede and dishearten intelligent inquirers than any one thing.

We are advised by letter, and orally, of communications being received in this and the neighbouring colonies from Eusebius, Plato, Socrates, Moses, Daniel, and Jesus Christ; but we have rarely seen or heard anything equal to what in our judgment might be reasonably expected from such exalted individuals. It is not unreasonable to believe that all these and many more equally prominent teachers do take an interest in the progress of humanity, and influence more or less directly susceptible individuals, but it is unreasonable to imagine that these exalted minds should attach themselves to persons of mediocre development, and speak or write through them matter certainly inferior to that emanating from the advanced minds of the present day, and generally deficient in elevating impulse.

The value of a communication is in its inherent truth; if it contains illuminations either in fact or idea, no name either great or small can add to or detract from its value. Even when in the estimation of the recipients the quality of the matter is equal to the name, it is wiser to present it on its merits and wait till these are acknowledged, before the name is divulged. When we were told by a correspondent at Broken Hill, during the period of the strike, that Phidias, the Greek sculptor, with several of his relatives, accompanied by the Prophet Ezekiel, was communicating at some newly formed circles there, though we did not doubt the sincerity of our correspondent, the inherent improbability of the spirits referred to selecting such a time, place, and persons, made it impossible for us to accept the alleged fact: whilst the simple statement contained in the letter that the communications were beyond the capacity of the medium's normal powers, also some physical phenomena, described as occurring, would have been quite credible unaccompanied by the great names. If we, with a knowledge that spirits do communicate, find it impossible to accept the statement as to identity, how ridiculous such statements must appear to one who is not yet convinced that spiritual communication is a fact, especially when, as in so many instances is the case, the matter will not bear fair analysis. Our experience goes to show that when great minds in the spirit-

world do communicate with mortals, it is—with very rare exceptions—mediately. Spirits occupying a plane midway between them and humanity act as their agents, and modify their teachings to meet the comprehension of earth's children.

How unreasonable it is to assume that great minds who, when in the body, towered above the mass of mankind, should, after two thousand years of development in the spirit-world, come back in *propriâ personâ* to teach an A B C class, to which an ordinary circle may be likened. As well might the most eminent professor in our universities take charge of the rudimentary class in a State school: his talents would be wasted. There are millions of spirits occupying planes above that represented by the average investigator of circles who are ever ready to respond to any earnest call, and, where the essential conditions exist, are quite capable of imparting all the truth the investigator can assimilate.

THE PSYCHOMETRY OF DAILY LIFE.

The "Theosophist" for March has a further and last instalment of Mr. Old's excellent papers on Psychometry. There are certain portions of this last paper on psychometry in its relations to daily life which are admirable. We gladly make some extracts, together with Mr. Old's explanation from the occultist point of view:—

As I have already said, the frequency of psychometric impressions is not so much a cause of wonderment to the student of nature as the fact that they are not of more general observation than we find them to be. It may be, however, that general attention has not been sufficiently called to the facts which enter by means of the psychic sense into our daily life. They may be known to occur, but the connection between them and the workings of a hidden principle of our nature remains unnoticed. Take some of our common experiences by way of illustration. A person is walking along the streets and, by some mysterious twist in the direction of his thoughts, the memory of some acquaintance steals unobserved upon the horizon of the mind, growing in intensity until it usurps the entire field of mental perception. A turn in the street brings our subject face to face with the object of his thoughts. Or, again, and by a similar involuntary process, an absent person becomes the subject of conversation; and that person shortly makes himself visible, and is generally greeted with the familiar recognition, "Talk of angels," &c. Then, too, we have the curious, but well-known, effects of transmission of thought and feeling by the overlapping of the physical auras, as is the case when persons sit or stand near to one another. One may be mentally following a certain train of events, or rehearsing some familiar tune, and the other, as if by infection, makes comments in a spontaneous manner upon one or more of the events in review, or may catch up the refrain of a song or a passage in the tune which is being silently rehearsed. The same remark upon a certain subject or thing may find voice simultaneously with both. These effects may be reproduced at will by merely walking in the wake of a person with the mind as nearly a blank as possible; or by sitting or standing in a place immediately it is vacated by any one. But this is a process of mental pick-pocketing not to be encouraged; and save as an experiment between friends it would be immoral and reprehensible. The common occurrence of letters crossing one another from persons whose correspondence has for some time ceased is another fact illustrating the psychometry of daily life. Another instance is that commonly known as "Breaking a dream," in which the full memory of a dream of the past night is suddenly awakened in us by the sight of some included incident or person. To these we may add the thousand sympathies and antipathies in regard to certain colours, metals, scents, and sounds, by which almost all of us are in some degree pleased or offended without adequate reason. But it may be objected that these illustrations are only matters of coincidence. This is true enough, but it is right for us to remember that coincidences make a *law*, providing they are numerous enough; and the mere fact that they do not universally obtain proves nothing but that the conditions for the working of the law are not present. But here, as in all natural phenomena, the law is best illustrated by abnormal cases, and to these recourse can always be had.

What explanation have we of these phenomena? What are the conditions obtaining in the human constitution in cases where the normal range of sense-perceptions is exceeded?

Occultism teaches us that there exists a state of matter outside and above the highest conditions known to science, which practically constitutes another plane of existence, known as the astral plane, to which the subtle body or astral double in man is related, and of which it essentially consists. This astral matter, as forming the link between the physical body and astral matter, exists in differing degrees of intensity, and in varying quantity in every person. When it prevails in excess, or again when its rate of vibration is abnormal, it has the effect of throwing the physical body into similar abnormal conditions, which admit of its responding to the lower, or sometimes the more interior, degrees of vibration in the astral matter, and thus to record impressions from the astral plane. This astral matter moreover surrounds and inter-penetrates every body, human and otherwise, in different states of activity, and this envelopment is called the aura of a body. Every planetary body has its own aura, which consists of the aggregate of auric emanations of the innumerable molecules constituting such body. The earth, like every other planet, has such an astral aura—a self-luminous and semi-transparent substance, which receives all the psychic impressions that are constantly being exhaled from the earth, and which, in its turn, has the power of reacting to produce effects. To perceive in oneself the auric influence which continually emanates from every object around us, either as a general impression of our environment or as a special perception of the record attaching to some particular objects, requires this extreme sensitivity, flexibility, and general equilibrium of temperament. In a word, the power to sympathise must be strong within us before we can forego our individual predilections sufficiently to perceive things as they are in themselves. The psychometry of natural life becomes familiar to us in the working of the soul-sense, sympathy. Nature is nothing less than one vast expression of the psychometric sense. Everything around us seems to speak of an artless sympathy, a selflessness which, in man, finds imitation only in the best and noblest lives. The psychometric sense brings man into direct relations with all nature, and by means of it he enters into the consciousness of the least as well as greatest expressions of the One Life. Differences of form, of grade, and state of being hinder not where the power to sympathise is strong and its motive pure. To the extent that a man possesses this power of feeling with others, to that extent he lives; and to the degree that he is able to respond to the highest and best impulses of the best and highest minds, to that degree he lives well. Indeed, the perfectibility of the human soul seems to rest upon the inherent property to appreciate, and afterwards to imitate, all that is most pure and noble in both the natural and ideal worlds.

In Memoriam.

WILLIAM STAINTON MOSES.

EXTRACTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE WITH MRS. STANHOPE SPEER.

August, 1880.

I have been occupying myself in writing the next number of "Spiritual Notes." I think I have done the whole of it so far as the Notes go, and have also contributed a review of Mr. Massey's translation of Zollner. It is a very good book, and useful to put into the hands of critical inquirers, just as Mr. Crookes's "Researches" is. There are some very astounding facts recorded, more wonderful than any absolutely on record in any book of repute that I know of.

"Imperator" has been writing about the general state of matters, and the combined apathy and licence which characterise the age as a transition epoch. He also spoke of the impossibility of anything like united action in such an age.

I have been asking about the "Teachings," but get no very direct reply. They will not take on themselves any responsibility of advice as to printing. They leave me to judge of that, but they say that the first part can be ready at any time, as they only need a final revise, which can be given easily. The second part will take longer. I should fancy that it would be well to publish them in two parts, or, at least, to print a portion first, and be guided by the sale as to printing any more at present. I am very undecided as to what is best to be done, but probably to publish at Christmas would be best.

I had a good deal of writing yesterday, and a very interesting communication it was. The whole "force" seems to have been active. They are vigorously denunciatory of scepticism as the "note of the present age," and seem to think that it is eating out the life from us, as indeed it is. Men go to think that it is "good form" to believe as little as possible, and even to minimise what they do feel inclined to believe. Imperator was severe on "The Extremes of Rome and Infidelity."

I have had a long talk with Mentor about your stone. It is, he says, a creation (as all, I suspect, are); not exactly like the other, not quite so large. He is very emphatic in his charge to take care of it, and seems to fear that you may lose it if you wear it.

A long communication from Imperator on mediumship, very solemn and very emphatic. He gets increasingly awe-inspiring and unearthly. He denounces as a pest that craving after mediumship, and fancying little indications of it, and vain-glorious self-deception, which is, he says, a great hindrance to the cause, and a fruitful source of lying and fraud. He was very impressive.

January 8th, 1881.

I am sending "LIGHT" to T. in hope of interesting him. I think the general tone of the paper decidedly good, though it is susceptible of improvement in general make-up and plan. Mr. Howitt's stories of Scotch second sight are very good. There is room for a good deal of collection of such. I have sent six good instances of psychography, and have also sent an "Epitome of Current Opinion" from the American papers. "LIGHT" will have material enough for a long time to come. I liked Mr. Page Hopps's paper. All he writes is cultured and intelligent, though I don't agree with his views on Spiritualism.

I have had very little writing. They say I am in no state to warrant it, and that they cannot give a satisfactory message, or one the accuracy of which they could guarantee in my present state. I don't much wonder, for I feel worn, and am good for nothing.

Bedford, September 23rd, 1881.

The President [Garfield] is gone at last. Poor man, how he suffered. I had a very curious spiritual experience in connection with his death. I had gone to bed on the evening of the 19th full of expectation that he was near the end, and with my mind a good deal occupied by the thought. On awaking on the morning of the 20th, I was aware of some spirits who were trying to communicate—Epes Sargent, B. Franklin, and others. This was by my watch 5.50 a.m. They said in effect, "The President is gone. We were with him to the last, and all our efforts to keep him were unavailing. We tried hard, for his life was of incalculable value to his country," and more to the same effect. I asked why they came to me. They said that my mind was full of the subject, and that they were interested about me. They gave me the impression of grave danger impending over America in consequence of this death. They also talked about his treatment, and then left. Now there was nothing in all this inconsistent, in the mind of a man who knows nothing of spirit, with natural order. I went to bed full of expectation that I should hear of his death. Between sleeping and waking I dreamed that he was gone. The reflections made were such as would occur to me. That would be the scientific explanation. As a matter of fact the whole thing took place as I tell you, and I have no doubt at all that these spirits, seeing further than we, and used to talk to me, did what they say they did, and told me of it. We take the "Daily News" here. When I came down to breakfast, I turned to it, and found, to my surprise, a not unfavourable bulletin. (We now know that the doctors were not alarmed half-an-hour before death.) I was convinced, however, that he was dead, and went off to the station to get a second edition which I knew would be published. There was none, and no rumour of any kind. I came home, and went again at 12.30; found that a vague rumour was circulating. A passenger from London had said that he had heard that the President was dead. That was all. I went again as soon as I thought the evening papers would be in, and at 4.30 p.m. got a "Globe" with the intelligence.

[I very well remember Mr. Stainton Moses telling me this story at the time.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

MYSTERIOUS MUSIC.

Hester M. Poole, in the Boston "Psychical Review," gives the following interesting account of music revealed through clairaudience. The psychic is a man eminent for his attainments in mechanical science, with a national reputation, and is said, moreover, to be a friend of Herbert Spencer, and the last person in the world to become the victim of imagination:—

About six years ago, this gentleman, by whose permission this narration is given in the "Review," began to hear chords and strains of the most exquisite melody. Passionately fond of good music, which had been his one relaxation from absorbing cares, he had listened to the best singers and orchestras of this country and the Old World. Yet these subjective harmonies exceeded by far anything he had ever conceived. They were heralded by long, soft, sweet chords like those which a number of bugles might produce. Other instruments joined, weaving in their sinuous, heart-piercing melodies, until the volume of sweet concerted sound flooded the overpowered senses almost to the point of producing unconsciousness. The rapt listener instinctively feels that, were the ecstasy too much prolonged, on its wings the soul would fly away from the senseless body. This music is not precisely like anything he has ever heard from visible orchestras. It sounds more like the violoncello and the organ than anything else. Beyond description grand, noble, majestic, like so-styled sacred music, it is never heard gay or trivial, save that sometimes it is a little like the richer, lofty tones of a heavy opera. Following the first few strains of the orchestra are voices, forming a full chorus and taking all the parts, male and female. Sometimes there are duets, sometimes solos, again responsive services from one side and then another. At times there is a tenor of remarkable sweetness and clarity "like nothing I ever heard or dreamed," said he, "a voice to be recognised among a thousand."

The music comes to his inner ear, though apparently, like external music, unannounced and unexpected. It is of short duration—a few moments, at the longest. Once the prolonged ecstasy almost tore his heart out. He walked about, went upstairs, and tried in various ways to throw off the spell. It continued to follow him at intervals, throughout the day. "The air seemed full of it," he explained. "It seemed as if everybody must hear it. It overpowered every sound and movement in space." At such moments his face is illuminated, glorified. The outer world is lost. For the time, he is a bundle of sensitive nerves,—a sensitised plate,—on which are recorded the harmonies that, emanating from the Great Artist, throb ceaselessly through interstellar spaces. The majority of us, poor, plodding, sense-bound mortals, only get the jangle and the jar of the rudely broken chords, while he pulsates in unison with its thrilling rhythm. At first my friend felt that, solid-headed as he is, he must be the victim of self-hypnotisation. Gradually, from a variety of reasons, he has grown to conclude that he is for the time intromitted into the sphere or the principle of harmony.

The very evening before these words were written, I happened to be talking with him, when suddenly it became evident that his consciousness was momentarily lost. With closed eyes and a rapt expression upon his rugged features, we knew that he was listening to that which few mortals are ready to hear. Grasping his hand, I felt a tremor through every quivering nerve. We hastened to arouse him to

—"the jar and fret

Of this rude world that men call earth."

"Did you not hear it?" asked he. "It seemed as if you must. It was all there was in the universe." Latterly he has grown, not only clairaudient, but clairvoyant. Matter recedes, it disappears. Gazing into limitless space, he sees a shining golden vista peopled with angelic forms and glorious faces luminous with "the light that never was on sea and land." They are the singers draped in flowing robes of grace and beauty. Love on earth and in Heaven, and peace, good-will, and joy are the themes which are felt, but are untranslatable into mortal language.

One night, not many months ago, this gentleman with the enchanted auditory nerve went with two friends to spend an hour with Mrs. Hollis-Billings. This lady, well known to a large circle of persons of intelligence and refinement, is noted for having, under good conditions, the "independent voice," in a darkened room. After sitting a few moments, the intelligence,

whoever or whatever it may be, began to talk. Of the three visitors the gentleman himself and one of the other two were all there were in the world then who knew of his clairaudient experiences. Yet "Ski" at once divulged the secret.

"Do you know who has that delightful tenor voice?" asked he.

"No; can you tell me?" replied the astonished visitor.

"Yes! he was an Italian named Porpora," returned the voice. "He has tried to make many persons hear him sing. You are the only one with whom he has succeeded."

After returning home the visitor looked up the records and found that Porpora was an Italian of the seventeenth century, eminent as a composer and musician. His name is familiar to all lovers of classical music. This gentleman often hears a voice of great flexibility, sweetness, and power, which to his ear sounds like that of the lamented Parepa Rosa. Once when listening to Campanini, whom he greatly admires, he heard this voice join in, making a perfect and exquisite duet. When Campanini rested a few bars, these dulcet tones warbled a response.

THE DUTCH PAPERS—GHOSTS IN JAVA.

The "Spiritualistisch Weekblad" gives from private correspondence the following account of some manifestations in the residency of Sourabaja —

Mr. B. is manager of the Pandje-Pandje sugar factory at Sitoebondo, and has two children, a boy and girl, aged respectively six and ten years. It appears that both children are mediums, the boy a clairvoyant, and the girl a trance and physical medium. When these gifts developed is not known, but, a few months ago, the family, consisting of Mrs. and Mr. B. and the two children, were sitting quietly talking, when the boy suddenly called out, "There is the man again with the turban on his head and the dagger in his belt. Papa, he is striking you!" At the same moment a slipper from Mrs. B.'s foot flew through the room and hit Mr. B. on the shoulder. Bottles of seltzer water and one thing and another which were on the table or in the neighbourhood moved violently through the apartment and fell noisily on the floor. On certain occasions when the family were at table the little girl went into a trance, to the alarm of her parents, who feared she was becoming seriously ill, but at the same moments a rain of small stones fell from the ceiling, or came from elsewhere—whence they actually came they really did not know and could not find out. They called a doctor to the children. He came and searched everywhere. He even climbed on the roof, although he had found no holes in the ceiling. The throwing or falling of the stones continued, and the discomfort of the family increased. The doctor was uneasy, the more so as the boy maintained that he again saw the armed and turbaned man, and on each occasion foretold what was to happen. The doctor determined to keep the children a few days under observation, and obtained permission to take them with him to his own home. But he brought them back next day, as the result was more than he could put up with. When he, as a first effort, sought to give the boy a soothing powder, it was struck out of his hand and into his face, while sixteen door and window panes were shattered to pieces. The boy had warned him, and had called out, "Step back, doctor; you will get a blow in the face." It goes without saying that these incidents have caused considerable excitement among the European residents at Sitoebondo.

Number 3 of the Dutch "Sphinx" continues the study of De Quincey's experiences, and the report of the Milan phenomena with the medium Eusapia Paladino. Other matter relates to the Rev. M. J. Savage's communication to the Boston "Psychical Review," regarding the apparent perception of spirit forms by animals, and there is an appreciative notice of the Rev. H. R. Haweis' article in the "Fortnightly" on "Ghosts and their Photos." "Sphinx" also calls attention to the recent conversion of Liébeault to the "fluid theory" of mesmerism, as evinced by his latest work, "Etude sur le Zoomagnetisme," and reproduces for its readers the following striking example of second sight:—About a year before the death of the Grand Duke Constantine a national festival was celebrated in Warsaw, and accompanied by solemn religious services. In the midst of one of the latter functions a young man close by the entrance to the choir suddenly sprang from his seat and, with folded arms and bowed head, gazed fixedly at a spot on the floor to which the attention of those present was naturally directed. When the music ceased, some of the worshippers surrounded the motionless man and asked what was the matter with him. He appeared to wake from a somnambulist condition and called out, "I see before me the coffin of the Grand Duke Constantine." A year passed: the revolution drove the Russians out of Warsaw, and Constantine died. His funeral was celebrated in the same church, and the coffin laid in the middle of the choir on the spot which the seer had previously indicated.

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Light:

EDITED BY "M. A., LOND."

SATURDAY, APRIL 8th, 1893.

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.

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MEDIUMSHIP.

The address given by Mr. Lees is of considerable importance. Nevertheless it seems after all to treat of a part of a much wider subject, namely, that of the general conditions of communication with the world outside this. Mr. Lees may be right in saying that the number of "mediums" is small, and if the whole world is to be divided into the people who are mediums and those who are not, the dictum of Mr. Lees is doubtless correct. But the question presents itself, Is it right to divide the inhabitants of this planet? It is submitted that the division is not justifiable. To say that certain persons are true mediums and that others are simply "mediumistic" or "sensitive" is not to put the true state of the case; to draw this distinction clearly, a hard and fast line must be made, cutting off exactly and definitely those that are mediums from those that are not, and this has not and cannot be done. Indeed, who would take the responsibility of saying as to two people, "This one is a medium, we must safeguard him; this one is only mediumistic, let the unseen agencies do what they like with him"? In fact the question of the dangers of incipient mediumship seems to cover the whole question of what is called lunacy. How, for instance, unless through the obsession which can only come about when the path between this world and its spiritual counterpart is open, can the case of delicately nurtured women using the foul and obscene language they use in asylums, be accounted for? And yet these unhappy creatures not having attended sciences and their mediumship not having been discovered, the outside world pities and looks for some hereditary taint; while the Spiritualist says they are undoubtedly mediumistic, so explains, and does no more. Even supposing it to be right and necessary to cultivate the mediumship of any individual, it is manifestly an equally serious duty incumbent on those who know, to look after and help those sensitives who cannot help themselves because these only know vaguely, while the more pronounced mediums understand more completely the dangers surrounding them.

Now as to the medium as such. Should he be safeguarded and helped as Mr. Lees points out? It is not quite easy to answer this question. General experience shows that strength of all kinds is got by the struggle of the individual himself and is not got by the help of others.

It would seem, therefore, that the medium who "covets earnestly the best gifts" should fight for them himself, that is if the medium is to be of any importance to himself. If he is only to be a conduit pipe from the unseen to the seen, then this safeguarding may be valuable; but then the safeguarding must always be there, for such a pipe may easily be damaged, and if the guardianship be for one instant relaxed the feeble cry of the exotic product of continued guardianship will be of no avail against the ever watchful and unsparing enemy. Let it not be supposed that this is condemnatory of Mr. Lees's opinions. We have but pointed out some difficulties connected with the subject which his address could not well cover.

There is still another consideration. Is not the spiritual energy of the whole human race, that is of the cultured portion of it, rising? This does, from many circumstances, appear to be the case; and if it is so, and men are getting more and more in touch with the spiritual world which is co-existent with this, the medium will become of less and less importance, his spiritual gifts will be only a little if any greater than those of other men, and his danger will be proportionately less as he will better know how to help himself. That this development should be the goal of all whose spiritual life is not confined to the consideration of phenomena is much to be desired, for it means nothing less than the wish for intuition or commingling with the purer entities which can only come about in the absence of that most perfectly adjusted yet still material "instrument" the medium.

"WHAT IS LIFE?"

The following from the "Literary Digest" has been translated and condensed for that journal from a paper by Luigi Luciani, in the "Revue Scientifique":—

Which of the two aspects of life is the true one? That which appears as a physiological phenomenon, or the other one which manifests itself in us as a psychical phenomenon? Here we pass beyond the limits of science, and enter the world of metaphysics.

The soul is a property of matter, say the materialists; matter is a form or an instrument of the soul, answer the idealists and Spiritualists. Each of these affirmations has its special advantage and a character of relative truth. The language of the materialist must always be preferred by science, because (as Huxley has judiciously observed), connecting the phenomenon of life with other phenomena, it invites the thinker to make researches into the physical conditions which accompany life, contributes to the progress of positive knowledge, and tends to make us exercise over the moral world a control analogous to that which we exercise over everything which is in relation to the physical world.

On the other hand, we cannot despise the advantages of different kinds offered by the language of the Spiritualist. The artist and the moralist will always prefer the language which covers all visible nature with a poetic veil, speaks to the feelings, provokes altruism, and stays the invasion of pessimism. When Francis of Assisi—according to the legend—speaks to the animals, and, addressing the wolf, affably calls him *brother wolf*, notwithstanding all the materialism which the love of science imposes on us, we feel—why deny it?—a little moved by his ingenuous goodness. And when, in his "*Cantico delle creature*," he addresses the sun and the moon as *brother sun* and *brother moon*, notwithstanding the somewhat childish nature of this language, we feel as though we had been transported to the heights of poetry, and we appreciate better the dignity of our nature.

Yet, as well with materialism as with Spiritualism (it cannot be too often repeated), we are beyond the boundaries of science. To the question "What is life in itself?" I, a physiologist, have this answer only: observed from an exterior point of view it is *matter*; felt internally, it is *soul*. The close mixture, or rather the confusion, of the real and the ideal in nature; that is life in its most elevated form, that is the great mystery which art will always have to celebrate, and which science will never be able to explain,

THE DIFFICULTIES AND DANGERS OF INCIPIENT MEDIUMSHIP.

Address delivered by Mr. R. J. Lees, on March 28th, to the Members and Friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance:—

Until recently we have been engaged, as Spiritualists, in fighting to maintain our footing among the many reforms with which our generation will be credited in the future. In this struggle our position has been a peculiar one, subjecting us to fierce opposition on either side; religious bigotry and scientific prejudice have both been levelled against us, and so we have been called upon to show our powers rather than the excellence of order and method. We have been called upon to storm a fortress, to assert our right to be reckoned with, by sheer force of arms, to demand a hearing for our cause by its tremendous weight of evidence; and I think I am not speaking wildly when I say that we have gone a long way towards obtaining our object. If the public Press—secular and religious—is to be taken as any gauge of public opinion—and I think it is a fairly safe indicator—we may now rest to some extent from the fierceness of our struggle and take time to consider such internal features of our work as will enable us to remove many of the causes of failure in the past, and guard our work from many of the dangers which threaten its welfare in the future. It is for this purpose that I ask your attention to-night, while I merely indicate some weak spots in our armour as they appear to myself, and possibly suggest some ideas as to how I think they may be got rid of. I have no intention of elaborating a scheme, I only aim at dimly sketching an outline, leaving to other and more competent hands the duty of filling in the details.

The great hope, ambition, and aim of almost everyone who takes up Spiritualism is to become a medium, and when one is compelled to submit to the inevitable and acknowledge he has no gift in that direction, an equally ardent desire comes over him to discover the quality and develop it in another. If the glory of mediumship is not to be personally possessed the next best thing is to get the credit of having developed it in another—sorry credit indeed in most cases—and often the after-consciousness of the fact is but cold comfort. In this undue eagerness for mediumship lies the root and danger of our movement, but we must go back a step before we can grapple with and effectually check the evil. Let us begin at the beginning.

Hitherto the door of the séance-room has been left too much ajar, and every casual passer-by has been invited to enter and take a seat. I have known persons who have attended more than one séance to stay behind, or seek out someone from whom they could ask what it all meant. Amongst the five millions of people in London there are always plenty who are looking for new forms of excitement, and there is another large class who would scorn to be without some personal acquaintance with a subject which is so frequently discussed in the novel and in the newspaper; to these curiosity hunters nothing could be more acceptable than that we should continue to advertise séances with the regularity of auction sales; they can pay their shilling or half a crown, and witness the performance, without any question being asked. It is not an expensive evening since the whole *modus operandi* has been learned, and henceforth they consider themselves quite competent to form and direct a circle, either for a harmless hour's amusement, or perhaps to follow up its more serious study.

There are a multitude of reasons why this state of things should cease to be, and for this end it would be well to take a leaf from the book of the Theosophical Society. I have long held the opinion that no persons have any kind of right in the séance-room unless their minds have been prepared for the demonstration by a course of suitable reading upon the subject. Please not to misunderstand me; I have no wish to close the séances, I hold no brief for the discontinuance of phenomena, but I do insist that we owe it as a duty to a sacred cause not to cast our pearls before swine by attempting to force a demonstration upon a mind which has not been prepared to receive it. Some will tell me that by such methods we should make but slow progress. It may be so, but while slow it would at least be sure, and since the race is not always to the swift, I am not by any means sure but that my tortoise would outrun the present hare. If Spiritualism were nothing more than a society craze or an evening's amusement one could afford to smile at the simple ignorance of many of those inquiring about it, but when we recognise the consequences which may ensue, I

must confess that I frequently shudder as I read letters from persons desiring to know more about it. From such letters I will give you a few extracts.

One willing and anxious soul writes:—

“Where can I learn Spiritualism, and what will it cost?”

Another—

“Kindly give me the necessary information about the manner of getting spirit photos.”

A third—

“I have tried for automatic writing and succeeded, I think; now I want the writing direct, how shall I do it?”

A fourth is similar—

“Will you please send me information about spirit-writing? I should like to procure a slate if I knew where to do so and the price.”

Surely such inquiries as these justify me in saying that we ought to insist on inquirers knowing something of the theory of Spiritualism before they are introduced to its practice. I know full well that such a course would prevent many from going into the subject at all for the present, and that is just the object I have in view, for the person who refuses to grasp the question intelligently is better outside our ranks than within them. What we stand most in need of is the increasing and enlargement of the brain-power we have been hitherto favoured with in spite of our difficulties, and not alone the increase of our numbers at the expense of our intellect. Spiritualism is not for promiscuous public demonstration, but it is a science which can never be understood unless pursued systematically upon a proper basis. The importance of adopting some such safeguard as this is more vital than many will be prepared to admit in the development of mediumship, and is a step we shall be compelled to take before we can bring our communications up to a satisfactory state.

Having suggested the most patent primary source of our difficulties let me now advance to the consideration of mediumship itself. Here I would say at once that I do not believe that mediumship is anything like so common as is generally supposed. We may most religiously follow the injunction of Paul and “covet earnestly the best gifts”; we may fix our longing eyes and hopes upon D. D. Home, J. J. Morse, W. Eglinton, or Florence Cook; but after all we shall have to learn that such mediums, like poets, are born, they can never be made; and as one century cannot be expected to be so fruitful as to reproduce, at all events in this little island, such a bountiful crop of natural exponents, you and I will have to be content with following a long way after these ideals of what we wish to become. But perhaps we may find some consolation for our disappointment when we consider that mediumship ought really to be divided into two classes—the natural and the cultivated. If we bear this in mind we shall clear away other difficulties from our path, and begin to see things with a clearer vision. Natural mediumship, given an opportunity, will unmistakably show itself. It needs but little care or development, as the friends behind seem to have a firm grip of the reins before we know it. It is with developed, or, may I say, cultivated mediumship that we have to deal, since it is upon this we mostly have to depend for our intercourse with the other world, and it is here where all our danger lies.

The presence of supposed mediumship is generally detected in the first or second sitting. Most of the company sitting round the table are entire strangers to the subject, they have never seen a table move and somewhat impatiently await the commencement of the fun, in spite of the caution which has been given by the gentleman who directs the proceedings—that any undue excitement will prove a hindrance to the phenomena. This gentleman has probably been qualified for his position by attending one séance and reading one or two numbers of a Spiritualist paper, so that his authority is undoubted! He is certainly not quite perfect, but let him but discover but one medium and he will become, as he thinks, a leader. It is a burning shame and a public scandal that it should be so. This is a great and dangerous difficulty in the way of our progress and one that will have soon to be cleared away.

Of course, a medium is necessary for communication, but has not the worthy director learned that in a promiscuous assembly of seven or eight persons there is certain to be one, at least, with undeveloped powers? He has a dozen round him, therefore all he has to do is to discover the prize and throw back the curtain which divides the worlds. At the end of half an hour some lady complains that she feels more like going to sleep than

anything else, and he anxiously persuades her to give way to it, in an undertone informing the friend on his right that she is a trance-medium. Instantly all eyes are directed towards the a trance-medium. Instantly all eyes are directed towards the lady, and someone else is not quite sure if she did not see something like a spark over the head of the trancing center. This thing like a spark over the head of the trancing center. This is more gratifying still to our director. He never expected to find a clairvoyant in his small company, and from this moment his honors become divided. In spite of all assurances that it will not hurt her, the trance-medium refuses to go to sleep; presently she suffers a chill which shakes her like a fit of ague, and is assured that it is no use resisting, for the spirits have more power than she has and they will control her against her will if she does not yield. This only serves to excite her, and the result is an attack of hysteria, the results of which are visible for several days. Nevertheless she will go on with her development, for is it not a great thing to be a trance-medium? In the meantime our clairvoyant feels confident she has seen several more stars and one or two suggestions of light of an indefinite shape; but the attention of the circle has been attracted to more stirring events and the development of the seer is left to take care of itself. About the same time that the trance-medium is entering upon her hysterical phase, two other members of the community are visibly affected, a gentleman announcing himself as a physical medium by very pronounced efforts to break the table with his hand, and a third lady giving equally distinct evidence that she is a writing medium of no mean order. It is not to be wondered at that so much development in one evening exhausts the power, and though no actual communication has been received, the results are perfectly satisfactory to the director—and to the rest! Well, there is evidently more fun in Spiritualism than they imagined, they are anxious to go on with it, and several would very much like to bring one or two friends to the next sitting.

I have not by any means sketched a fancy picture here. It unfortunately requires but a slight acquaintance with Spiritualism to enable one to recall many such scenes to mind, and I only mention it in order that we may consider what position we are bound to take in regard to such performances. In the early days of the movement such gatherings and scenes were, of course, inevitable. Then there were but few, if any, who were thoroughly competent, as we ought to understand competence to-day, to take charge of a circle; we were working in the dark and were able to gain but little light and direction from the other side to guide us; we had to grope our way, score up our facts and experience, hoping some day to be in a better condition. Surely the results of forty-five years' experience, when they can be brought together in the comparative calm of our present position, should render such assistance as will enable us to clear away many of the obstacles, misapprehensions, and dangers which have hitherto stood in our way. I am persuaded that ninety per cent. of these difficulties are attributable to errors which are corrected in the first few sittings, and it is to this point I wish more particularly to direct your attention.

I have said that the door of the séance-room is left too much ajar. Danger comes to gratify an idle curiosity, to spend an hour in harmless amusement, or to decide a challenge given by an over zealous Spiritualist; there are but very few, comparatively, who come for the one legitimate purpose of solving the grand problem of life. When we grow wise, the latter class only will be allowed to pass over our threshold, and I may say, we are charitable only when we exclude the frivolous and the thoughtless. It is our duty to ourselves, to our fellows, and to our cause that we make it known as wide as heaven that the most serious results may ensue from a single séance, since there effects may be produced which will change the whole current of a life. Spiritualism is the most serpentine science with which it is possible for the mind to grapple, it can never be an entertainment to tickle the buffoon. We have learned that in opening up communication with the higher world we come into contact with forces and powers which are not to be played with, forces which are capable of producing results disastrous or beneficial according as they are used or abused. The man who takes up Spiritualism as an amusement commits an act of folly only equal to that of playing with bullets at a gunpowder factory.

Let me point out your first danger, and for this purpose recall to your mind the scene I sketched a moment ago. There are a dozen persons sitting; the director has been present at one séance, all the rest are novices, several profess strangers to each other, with types of mind and character wonderfully varying. From the first published for the use of the circle the director states that the first necessary is harmony, and so induce that

some musical exercise is indulged in, after the door has been carefully closed. Now what does this "harmony" mean? It means no more nor less than a blending of the influences of the persons present. In other words, every person becomes instantly united with the aura of every other person in the room. It is nothing less than an atmospheric inoculation, and when we remember that these atmospheres carry with them tinges of the moral and spiritual nature, we are at once brought face to face with the reason why the utmost care and discrimination should be exercised in selecting the company with whom we sit. I know or in other public assemblies, but the effect is not generally so marked as in the séance, since in the latter case the door is more carefully guarded so that the atmosphere may not be disturbed.

Having at length procured the necessary harmony, we introduce another factor which has to be taken into consideration. The atmospheres of the sitters have assimilated and combination has produced a spiritual condition into which spirits of a corresponding sympathy alone have power to enter. Here comes in the great spiritual law of affinity—like attracting like—and whether we care about it or not, we are brought into contact with intelligences precisely on a level with the general moral tone of the circle. Let me suppose that it is about this moment when the first young lady complains of sleepiness, and the director announces the fact that she is a trance-medium, and the attention which is at once drawn to this poor creature has the effect of making her the common centre about which the influences of the room will rotate, and the result is a half-hypnotic state; this condition makes a centre of attraction in favour of the spiritual beings who are brought there by the conditions, and they immediately avail themselves of whatever assistance is afforded them in order to gain control.

In all the stages of trance-mediumship this moment of first contact is the most vital. The influence which first took possession will strenuously endeavour to maintain it, and in such a circle the probabilities are great that the condition of the spirit is lower than that of the medium, and as an affinity must be established before any kind of work is done, and it is easier to change the state of the medium than that of the control, we may naturally expect to see most disastrous results. But we are not at the end of the mischief yet. The influence is not congenial to the medium, and the idea of yielding up her consciousness to she knows not whom, without any assurance as to her well-being, is not to be entertained for a moment, and naturally she struggles to overcome the hypnotic influences of spirits in and out of the flesh. This brings the director to his feet, and he commences to make mesmeric passes over the medium with a view of helping "the dear friends in their glorious work." Finally the lady is brought into a state of semi-stupor, from which she cannot be fully aroused even when the circle is broken up.

So far so good—that is, so far as the sitters are concerned; but how do matters stand with the medium? Is there anything more brought about than a state of physical exhaustion of hysteria, or of a mental strain which will pass away presently? These questions we are in duty bound to answer honestly, and candour demands that we admit a result which is not pleasant to contemplate. Into those by no means desirable conditions, an equally undesirable spirit has been attracted, and its attempt to control has been assisted to a certain extent by the misguided passes of the all too ignorant conductor. The effect is only a state of semi-trance from the difficulties of which neither medium nor control have power to liberate themselves, and the best endeavours of the now alarmed conductor only tend to make matters worse. When the medium is exhausted she will wake to a dazed condition, and be left to her own resources to battle with what is nothing less than an obsession. I have seen ten or twelve cases of such obsessions during the last twelve months. Not by any means have the unfortunate mediums been held by those we would call evil spirits, but spirits who have been attracted by frivolous conditions and who have answered the desire for fun by trying to control, and afterwards have found that they had been caught in a mesh from which they could not escape. It is only a few weeks since I had three such cases to deal with in one day, and there is no warning more solemn or emphatic that I would give to persons entering upon this subject than against allowing themselves to be brought into this condition. I may go a step further and say that obsession is not peculiar to trance-mediumship, although it is most pronounced in this connection; every other phase of spiritual gift is liable

to it in a greater or lesser degree. It is here at the very beginning of the inquiry where all the danger lies, and there is great risk when you attempt to launch the craft of mediumship in the absence of a tried and skilful pilot. It is from the wreckage which lies along this coast-line that our opponents build up their positions of attack; they stand upon the barren rocks of ignorance and pelt us with the *débris* of our own folly.

Perhaps, I may be allowed at this point to say one word of caution to that part of my audience which is beyond the reach of my voice to-night. What I have said, and what I shall say, will go forth, I know not whither, upon the wings of "LIGHT," and I am too well acquainted with the tactics of some persons to be ignorant of the mine of wealth I have disclosed in the statements I have made. But I have a right to demand that my words shall be neither misrepresented nor misquoted. Hence, let me say in one brief sentence that in nothing I have said has there been a single word against the use of mediumship; it is against its abuse I raise my voice. There is no blessing of God but may be converted into a curse; it is impossible to enjoy a privilege without a commensurate responsibility. We have difficulties and dangers, and so has every system, every organisation; I am only trying to do something to help their removal when I attempt to face the trouble. But these blots upon our progress are not to be credited to Spiritualism, they are simply the result of the presence of those persons who rush in where angels fear to tread. There are cases of obsession among us, yet we have not a monopoly of them by any means. Of the three cases I saw but a short time ago only one of them was due to the Spiritualistic séance; the other two cases were attributable, one to recent revival meetings and the other was that of a member of the Church of Rome; so far as I could understand neither of these latter were Spiritualists. Moreover, the frequent cases which are ascribed to religious mania are most, if not all, to be put in the same category. Therefore, I ask for justice when I make an honest admission, and expect to be treated with like candour in return.

It is far better to let this subject alone than to enter upon it without a competent guide. At the present time there are but very few of these guides available, and very many of us who could render such assistance have yet to learn that we owe a duty to Spiritualism in this respect. Before we can make that progress which we have a right to expect, responsible bodies which assume the lead must be made to understand that practical assistance is required as much as written or printed advice. When a mediumistic gift is undoubtedly discovered it is to the advantage of the whole movement that that gift should be developed under the most favourable conditions, and the medium has a right to ask for such help as may be necessary. I am convinced that much of our trouble to-day is to be traced to the fact that the development of mediums in the past has been left to incompetent persons, solely because those whose duty it was to render assistance have refused to accept the responsibility. If there is one phase of life where reciprocity ought to be observed more than another, I think it is in the study of Spiritualism, and we shall presently wake up to the fact that the great reason why we do not get all we want from the other side, is because we ourselves are doing so little to help those from whom we exact so much. My experience is not so large as that of some of you, but I have learned that it is only when I work together with my controls that satisfactory results can be obtained, and I am firmly convinced that it is our duty to provide the instruments, and then leave our friends to use them. Spiritualism without mediumship would be something like playing *Hamlet* without the Prince, and it is, therefore, most essential that all necessary attention should be given to this subject by those bodies which ought to take the responsibility.

To secure the best results in the development of persons who undoubtedly possess the power, I would advocate their withdrawal from general séances as soon as the discovery is made, and the work of development should be carefully watched and directed by not more than two persons, who are in intimate sympathy with the psychic. One of these should be a fully developed medium, whose controls have been tested and found able to judiciously direct the delicate operations, and render such assistance as may be desired both to the medium in the normal condition, and the spirits who are attempting to control. The second friend, not being mediumistic, would be available under any emergency to perform requisite services. Such an arrangement would exclude unnecessary excitement, keep the medium free from the anxious inquiries for tests, enable the

spirits who wish to direct operations to use all discretion without opposition, secure the best possible conditions, and what is of infinitely greater importance resist the advances of spirits who would bring no good.

I have several times used such phrases as "persons who undoubtedly possess the power," &c. I have done so intentionally, and here I wish to enter a solemn protest against the practice of many enthusiasts and mediums who declare all persons to be mediums who are shaken or otherwise influenced in our séances. Experience most emphatically declares that such is not the case; a man is not qualified to give judgment about electrical currents because he has dropped a penny in a slot and had a magnetic shock at a railway station; neither is a man necessarily an expert swimmer because he has fallen overboard from a river steamer. The practice of raising false hopes—from which not infrequently a great amount of inconvenience results, without any adequate advantage—is reprehensible in the extreme, and ought to be discouraged wherever it is met with.

To those who have the gift I would say a few words which may be helpful as indicating what I consider the safest path to pursue in entering upon a course of development.

First of all, when you come to the knowledge that some one or more such talents have been entrusted to your keeping, don't try to hurry, but stand still and count the cost of mediumship. Do not be misled by the idea that your future path is to be entirely one of roses, and that you have nothing more to do than receive the adulations of your friends. I tell you you will not go far in your new career before you discover a veritable "Slough of Despond"; the misdirected zeal of your friends will sometimes prove to be a snare to your feet, and you will find that claims will be made upon you from the spirit side which you had never anticipated. You will sometimes find that in leading you upward they will see differently to yourself, and you must not by any means expect to make all the demands yourself and leave your controls to make all the concessions. There is a pleasure in mediumship which is greater than I can find words to express, but side by side with this you will discover—if you use your gift in its highest sense—that there is a terrible responsibility which will overpower you at times. You will learn in a new sense that "you are not your own," but being called into such a ministry you will not always be able to speak your own thoughts, ideas, or opinions; you will be required to speak as the spirit gives you utterance, and learn to be content therewith in the full assurance that even mediums, at best, only "see through a glass darkly."

One important point you will be called upon to decide is as to the nature of your controls. In this one matter lies all the crux of your future work, and I would suggest to you the most mature deliberation over this step. All sorts and conditions of men and women are to be found on the other side as here, and the decision lies in your own hands as to what class you will identify yourself with. Like attracts like, and just in accordance with your own moral and spiritual nature will be the nature of your controls and associates. You cannot get away from the law of affinity and spiritual attraction. Reliable spirits cannot use an unreliable medium, neither can a pure control manifest himself through an impure instrument. You will presently be known and estimated among Spiritualists according to the moral and spiritual standard of the spirits to whose influences you lend yourself, and they will be known and judged by the life you are living among your fellows. Therefore, I say to you, consider this step, and having made up your mind that you will reach out after the highest spiritual ideals, which is the legitimate path of spirit communion, live up to your determination and leave the rest to the friends you attract in your noble ministry.

One more word of caution. You will find in the exercise of your gift that at times it will cause excessive exhaustion and prostration. This comes in other vocations as well as Spiritualism. At times, when I have been faint and weary almost beyond endurance, I have felt that some little stimulant would be invaluable and restore my vitality sooner than anything else I knew of, but it is with gratitude to the friends behind that I can say I have never yielded to the temptation. I tell you candidly if I had been left to myself I should have taken it, but again and again they have restrained me. Now I say to you one and all—never taste an intoxicant in the exercise of your mediumship. It is a rock upon which many a fair and promising career has gone to pieces, as much among Spiritualists as in the Church. A little rest is all that you need, and your powers will only be increased when you look solely to the other side for recuperation.

Finally. We very often hear a great deal said about life being shortened by the exercise of mediumship. Perhaps it may be. But I candidly confess I never have attached the least value to this argument, and in these times of agitation for an eight hours' day, it seems very incongruous to wish to live to a "good green old age" when you might get your work finished and arrive home in the early autumn. In the exercise of my gift of healing, I at a very modest estimate say that I have been instrumental in curing twenty cases which the medical faculty had pronounced hopeless. Suppose we take an average of five years' added duration as the result of my treatments, we have an additional hundred years in the aggregate, and even if my own life were shortened to the extent of ten years, what would that be in comparison? Someone will tell me I have a duty to my family. I know it, but I have also a duty to my fellowman and my God, and while I have talent given to me to use, it is my duty to use it to the best of my ability, leaving all other considerations to that Almighty Power who doeth all things well—this I call faith in God. If I do my duty fearlessly I have a right to expect my family to be cared for, and there I am content to leave it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

The Late Dr. F. R. Young.

SIR,—I have been expecting to see in "LIGHT" some notice of the loss which Spiritualism in its highest form has experienced through the removal to the spirit-land of the Rev. Dr. Young, just as I used to look week by week to see on which of its platforms he would be speaking. I am greatly surprised that there has not been even a word of recognition of the work which he was always ready to do for the cause, and for which he gave his time and talents without thought of remuneration. It seems strange to me that he should have passed from the ranks of Spiritualists without a single reference to his services. There are those who did not know him personally, as well as those who did know and love and reverence him, who have, like myself, looked in vain for some notice of his work, and who have been surprised at the omission. His Spiritualism was of a very high order, and might well be classed with that of the late lamented Editor of "LIGHT."

Dr. Young was a very greatly valued friend of mine, and I have had many opportunities of hearing his advocacy of Spiritualism, and have often admired his great wisdom in dealing with the subject, and his wonderful gift in putting his arguments clearly and powerfully before others. Of his character, and his talents, and his work in other directions, especially in the cause of Christ and religion, this is not the place to speak.

M. E. R.

[We did not hear of Dr. Young's departure until some time after it occurred, and then only as a mere rumour. No certain information ever reached us. And, personally, we had not the pleasure of his acquaintance. We are glad, however, to publish our correspondent's tribute to his worth.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

Mr. Stead's Address.

SIR,—If you happen to be commenting on "Julia's" theory of the "double" as given to Mr. Stead and recently reported in "LIGHT," I would refer you to a letter published in "LIGHT" on May 16th, 1891, and entitled the "Spiritual Body," in which I think "Julia's" theory is anticipated, if not put into clearer and more philosophical form.

Bandoran, Donegal.

WILLIAM SHARPE, M.D.

SIR,—I have read with profound interest in the current number of "LIGHT" an account of a meeting of the Spiritual Alliance on the 14th inst.

I was especially struck with the latter portion of the discussion, perhaps partly because it touched me nearest. Mr. Stead's suggestions have already, he says, been printed in the Christmas number of the "Review of Reviews," and are in fact the suggestions of his control, "Julia." I have not yet seen this Christmas number, but will obtain it if still to be had. It seems to me that the idea started may be the best method yet proposed, if it can but be carried out, of establishing Spiritualism as a truth. For it would go far to establish its first, but most tremendous, claim on the hearts and minds of men: i.e., its power to prove their immortality by communication with

departed spirits. And this no longer in rare, doubtful, or doubtful instances, but here, there, everywhere, always, always, always, as a matter of course, attended by a cloud of witnesses, and by any antagonism of ignorance or reluctance.

Then, indeed, man would no longer believe in a vain shadow and disquiet himself in vain; death's sting would be half broken even in the pain of separated lives, and the grave's victory be turned into defeat through certain knowledge (instead of an adequate hope or belief) of reunion with the loved and lost.

M. B.

SIR,—Apropos of Mr. Stead's most interesting account of his experiences, is it possible that some of us at any rate, like the Gadarene demoniac, may be many in one?—many personalities in one individuality, and this not from obsession from outside, but from spirits who actually form a part of ourselves? Is it possible that the Ego may be at the head, as it were, of a community, all living in and on his aura, and looking up to him for guidance and protection as a child to its parent? at the same time, occasionally so obstreperous that the Ego is often overwhelmed in his endeavours to keep them all in order. It may possibly be that while this struggle lasts the Ego is passing through the darkness of the astral world, on his way to the higher Spiritualism of the heavenly places, or New Jerusalem state, the celestial plane of Swedenborg. This ground being gained, the community and their leader become one spirit, and harmony pervades the whole being. If, as some say, we are two in one, and may, in the future, become one in two at will, why should it not be so with any number? In this case the Ego, or higher consciousness, may not know for the moment what the members of his community are about, and vice versa. It would seem as if, since the fall, all had become confusion, our characters are a mass of contradictions, and we understand our own motions as little as we do those of others.

In the case of the Gadarene demoniac the Ego had been overwhelmed, and no wonder; a legion, i.e., a thousand, is a large number to be kept in hand by one spirit. He had only strength to fling himself at the feet of the Saviour. After that the conversation was entirely between the Deliverer and the legion, to whom His presence was a hell of torment. The legion forced to evacuate their ground, the Ego became master of his body again. The words of the prophet may refer to something of this kind: "A little one shall become a thousand, and a weak one a strong nation. I the Lord will accomplish it in his time."

Y. Z.

SIR,—I was exceedingly pleased to find by his address that Mr. Stead is likely to bring to the front some of the more perplexing phenomena of Spiritualism.

Years ago, I found out the possibility of obtaining communications from the spirits of the living. I, however, only obtained such communications when my guide desired them, and he adopted the method of putting me into a semi-trance, and then called them by a magical invocation. I used then to see them appear, and I often held long conversations with them. I know this was no hallucination, as when I met the people afterwards in the flesh I found ample evidences that such communications had passed between us, though the individuals experimented upon were quite unconscious of the fact. This, however, in my case was only done as an occult lesson, and I was also taught the extreme danger of attempting such without the aforesaid magical invocation. I have been for years trying to bring this and other obscure phenomena before the notice of Spiritualists, but now that Mr. Stead and other men of note are looking into these matters, I trust that wider investigations and broader ideas will be the result.

Let me mention a few occult truths I have discovered.

Communications can not only be obtained from the spirits of the living but the latter can be influenced in various ways.

If opposition is to be expected from individuals on the material plane it is possible hours or even days before to invoke such individuals and to go through the whole thing on the astral plane, and as the result comes out there, so it will inevitably follow when the affair takes place in the material world.

I have therefore come to this conclusion, that all events of life take place, and all conflicts are fought out there first, and that what happens here is more of the nature of a reflection of the real events.

I am absolutely certain of the truth of premonitions, and the only way to remedy or ward off evils is to assail them at their source, weeks or months before they actually appear on the

material plane. This my guide has taught me, and many are the dangers which I have escaped by acting according to his advice. Herein will be found the great advantage of being under the guidance of a wise spirit. It is often too late to ward off dangers when they appear on the physical plane.

Again, it is possible to obtain a glimpse of what people are doing at a distance. Often I have found out the true nature of their attitude towards me by this method, and it has made me appear unjust as I have seemed unfriendly to them without any apparent cause.

While I know that much of our phenomena proceeds from a higher part of ourselves, yet I also know that we must have the assistance of other intelligences for certain objects. Different orders of spirits must be invoked according to the work required to be performed. Some will not assist unless a kind of compact is made with them. You must do something for them if you want their assistance. Unless this be done, only after pure aspirations, and wishing only for that which is in accord with the Divine Will, there is a terrible danger in such compacts. These few obscure phenomena, and others I may not now mention, constitute what I call Occultism, which is not Theosophy.

A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L.

Theosophy and Spiritualism.

STR.—I venture to differ from "J. J. M." I think the character of the utterances through mediums has an important bearing upon this discussion. The argument is that if we are really dealing with the spirits of the dead they ought to impart more information of an original and reliable nature than they are found to do.

The argument that Theosophy is a "re-hash of resurrected Hindu transcendentalism" would, I think, be difficult to substantiate if it were put to the test. The *Secret Doctrine*, for instance, contains original facts, philosophies, and theories, and is something more than a compilation.

So far as psychic phenomena are concerned, we have an array of facts which must be treated in the usual scientific manner, and that theory has the claim to preference as an explanation of them which best covers the ground and is the least contradictory. This requisite seems to me to be fulfilled by the Esoteric Philosophy.

H. S. GREEN.

Theosophy; Its Reasonableness or Otherwise.

STR.—The position taken up by Mr. Edge and Mr. Holt in your issue of April 1st, in so far as it is any reply to my letter of a fortnight previous, is that they accept on the authority of Buddhism, adepts, and other real or supposed illuminati, certain teachings which they cannot prove either to themselves or any one else, and this acceptance they call a provisional acceptance. Mr. Edge goes so far as to call Re-incarnation a provisional hypothesis. Now if this root-doctrine of Theosophy is merely, to all but adepts, a provisional hypothesis, and cannot be proved to others, surely this is amply sufficient to condemn the whole study as illogical, and lacking any real basis.

Mr. Holt says that Buddha teaches that "no one should believe anything till his or her reason was so convinced that it was impossible to disbelieve it." Then he goes on to say "it is but in few cases that this rule is departed from." Why should it be departed from at all? And if, as Mr. Edge says, Re-incarnation is one of these departures, surely the acceptance of other doctrines that are dependent on Re-incarnation are also departures from Buddha's rule. Without this curious idea of provisional acceptance, Theosophy could not exist, and this idea is manifestly unreasonable not only to us but to Buddha, Mr. Edge's and Mr. Holt's great teacher, as the latter conclusively shows.

So far as I know, all Spiritualists believe that man is essentially one with Deity, consequently has an innate consciousness of truth as Mr. Holt states. But surely this is another reason for trusting to one's innate consciousness and not to any extraneous provisional hypothesis.

Mr. Edge says, in illustration of his position, that "if we want to learn mathematics we accept the different rules on authority, and verify them afterwards." Now we do nothing of the kind; every proposition in Euclid is PROVEN to us before we go on to the next. The axioms of mathematics are self-evident to every reasonable mind. In mathematics absolutely nothing is accepted on authority, provisional or otherwise.

In the last sentence of Mr. Edge's letter he says, "All this provisional acceptance is very different from accepting a dogma

like that of the vicarious atonement which we are not asked to verify." Now there is no real difference in the provisional acceptance of the one and the other. Christians assert that the man who trusts to this atonement provisionally, comes to recognise its truth when he attains to greater experience and development, just as the Buddhist and Theosophist claim.

Notwithstanding the disclaimers as to the tendency of Theosophy to set up a kind of priestcraft, I, and I believe most people, will think that these letters of Mr. Edge and Mr. Holt go far to prove it. To assert that Theosophy follows Buddha's rule, to insist *always* on proof before accepting anything, and then immediately to state that Theosophy departs from this rule, seems to me to be frivolous, and does not shake in one iota the belief that Theosophy to the mass of Theosophists is dependent wholly on authority and without that authority it must necessarily cease to exist.

R. DONALDSON.

The "Onus Probandi" in the "Pre-existence" Controversy.

STR.—Mr. Harpur asks me to explain what I mean by "natural and logical presumption." In my letter in "LIGHT" of February 4th I said: "On the general question of individual psychical pre-existence, I would repeat what I said in 'LIGHT' several years ago, that the *onus probandi* for Spiritualists—for all who believe in individual immortality—is on those who assert a psychical beginning." There is a natural and logical presumption of whatever should be held to be true until the contrary is proved. Thus we say that an accused person is presumed to be innocent until proved to be guilty. The same presumption may be stated either in a positive or a negative form, e.g., as in favour of innocence or as against guilt. It is really only a statement that the burden of proof is on a particular side. So in the present controversy, it is the same thing in fact whether I say that the presumption is in favour of pre-existence, or that it is against psychical origination at physical birth. Under either form of statement what is meant is that origination at that time is the thing requiring proof. And the reason in support of this position is that such origination is the positive fact alleged, whereas "pre-existence" is simply a positive term for the *absence* of that fact. For as soon as we are agreed—this being common ground with spiritualists—that psychical individuality is essentially distinct from and independent of the physical organism, the origination of the former is not logically given with the origination of the latter, but demands independent proof. That is what I mean by the "natural and logical presumption" of pre-existence.

I explained this position at some length, and I think quite clearly, in a letter in "LIGHT" of October 4th, 1890, to which I beg to refer any of your readers who may be interested in the discussion. I found the general impression to be that the burden of proof was on the assertion of pre-existence, and it was this fallacy (as I conceive it to be) that I have tried to expose. Mr. Harpur's letter in "LIGHT" of the 1st inst., so far as it can be considered argumentative, seems to me entirely founded on a logical misunderstanding which I must trust to the foregoing explanation to remove. I do not propose to deal with his remarks in detail, because they do not appreciate the point of my immediate contention, which is not that psychical origination at birth cannot be proved, or shown to be probable, but that, on the spiritualistic hypothesis of a subject of consciousness essentially independent of the organism which relates it to a particular sphere of manifestation and experience (thus, of course, conditioning its present *content* of consciousness), such origination has got to be proved, or shown to be probable, if we are not to believe in pre-existence. As regards this "subject of consciousness," I cannot concede to Mr. Harpur the necessity of defining "the soul" more particularly, so far as the exigencies of the present argument are concerned (which is, of course, what I meant by "for the present purpose"),* because, however otherwise we might differ in defining it, we are at least agreed that it is *that*. Or if not, it only follows that "soul" is not the most unexceptionable term for that individual identity which persists through all the modes of consciousness, and is common to all the constituent principles of our essential being. I could not adopt unreservedly Mr. Harpur's definition of "the soul" as a discursive faculty ("that in man which thinks, and reasons, and prays, and worships"). It is at least disputable. The Sankhya, for instance (an individualist philosophy), holds that the true soul (Purush) never acts. Intuition is a higher

* I also used the expression "generally," which Mr. Harpur treats as opposed to "invariably." I hope it was apparent to other readers that I used it in the other sense, as opposed to "particularly."

mode of consciousness than thinking and reasoning, and the exaltation of prayer and worship is the still contemplation. I did not wish to embarrass the question at issue with any unnecessary assumptions.

C. C. M.

The Evolution of Humanity.

SIR.—Mr. Scott Elliot's account of human evolution, which you reviewed in "LIGHT" of April 1st, is, of course, based on supposed authoritative statements put forth by the Mahatmas, and he appears to have drawn his materials partly from "The Secret Doctrine" of Madame Blavatsky and partly from Mr. Sinnett's "Esoteric Buddhism." Both these works claim a Mahatmic origin, but (as most readers of Theosophic literature know) they are not in entire agreement. Indeed, on one point dealt with by Mr. Scott-Elliot they are in direct conflict; and it is to this conflict, so dangerous to a system claiming substantial infallibility, that I wish to draw attention. Speaking of planetary chains, Mr. Scott Elliot says: "It may be as well to repeat a fact which has again been verified, viz., that Mars and Mercury form part of our chain." I must confess my entire ignorance as to the means whereby this fact has been verified either "again" or at any time; but, if it has been, such verification is one more blow to Mahatmic infallibility.

This statement as to the relation of Mars and Mercury to the earth was originally put forward in "Esoteric Buddhism," as part of that revelation to the benighted Western mind of which Mr. Sinnett was the chosen instrument. But Madame Blavatsky was so impressed with the errors of that work that she wrote in "The Secret Doctrine": ". . . his better knowledge of modern astronomical speculations than of archaic doctrines led him quite naturally, and as unconsciously to himself, to commit a few mistakes of detail," among which was this very statement as to Mars and Mercury. To set the matter right, Madame Blavatsky "applied to the Teachers by letter for explanation and an authoritative version." The explanation having been received, Madame Blavatsky printed *verbatim* extracts from it in "The Secret Doctrine" (I., 165). We there read: "Again, both (Mars and Mercury) are septenary chains, as independent of the Earth's sidereal loris and superiors as you are independent of the 'principles' of Daumling (Tom Thumb)." Personally, I attach but little value to this "authoritative letter," for two reasons. In the first place, it contains a statement with reference to Laplace which could not possibly be true; and in the second place, when this was pointed out in the "Agnostic Journal," Mr. Mead at once produced a quotation from the original letter which flatly contradicted the alleged *verbatim* extract. My object, however, is to ascertain the position of Theosophists in presence of the divergent views expressed in "Esoteric Buddhism" and "The Secret Doctrine." Do they, or do they not, hold themselves at liberty to teach as true a doctrine which the High Priestess of their faith has expressly declared (on the authority of the Mahatmas) to be false?

One word on the very interesting article by Mr. Sinnett in "Black and White," also reviewed in your issue of April 1st. He there very distinctly states that the Atlanteans not only established themselves in Egypt but profoundly modified the Egyptian character. In "Esoteric Buddhism" (chap. iv.) he wrote: "It is a mistake on the part of a recent writer on Atlantis to people India and Egypt with the colonies of that continent." Can Mr. Sinnett or his supporters reconcile these statements?

F. W. READ.

If we look into our own defects, our vices and foibles, we shall be convinced that the friend we need is not he who will commend us, but he who will speak freely, and from whose suggestions and remonstrances we may derive benefit.—PLUTARCH.

THE only conclusive evidence of a man's sincerity is that he gives himself for a principle. Words, money, all things else, are comparatively easy to give away; but when a man makes a gift of his daily life and practice, it is plain that the truth, whatever it may be, has taken possession of him.—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

"THE dying melt into the great multitude of the departed as quietly as a drop of water into the ocean, and, it may be, are conscious of no unfamiliarity with their new circumstances, but immediately become aware of an insufferable strangeness in the world which they have quitted. Death has not taken them away, but brought them home."—NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

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. Intention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

MARYLEBONE, 86, HIGH-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. A. J. Sutton read an interesting paper on "Do the Dead Return?" Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion on "Spiritualism"; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Bliss.—C. H.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings each Sunday, at 7 p.m. Speaker for Sunday next, Mr. G. D. Wyndoe.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S. E.—Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., circle; at 3 p.m., lyceum; at 7 p.m., address by Mr. Long. On Wednesday, circle for inquirers, Mr. Coote. On Sunday Mr. Long read an extract from the "Two Worlds" and commented on it, and afterwards gave an able address on the Resurrection.—J. PERRY, Assistant Secretary.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Treadwell's guides delivered an excellent discourse upon the use of Spiritualism, answering several questions at the close. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., open meeting. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Mason. April 16th, Mr. Wyndoe. At 58, Tavistock-crescent, Westbourne Park, on Saturday at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S. E.—On Thursday Mr. Robson was with us. On Friday we had a social meeting when all present thoroughly enjoyed themselves. On Sunday Mr. Veitch gave an able discourse upon the rapid strides which Modern Spiritualism had made during the short time of its existence. On Sunday next the Rev. A. Smith will give an address at 7 o'clock. Thursday, at 8 o'clock, circle, Mr. W. G. Cootes, medium.—J. B., Sec.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. R. Palmer, 3101, North Broadway, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. J. Webster, 51, Peckville-street, North, Melbourne; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlosaur, 65, Königgrätzer Strasse, Berlin, S.W.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middellaaan, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, Ahmedabad, New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, B. Fortenson, Ade, Christiania; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne; or, Robert Cooper, 2, Manchester-street, Brighton.—The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park. Sunday, at 11 a.m., students' meeting. The last Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception to assist inquirers. Also on Friday, at 7.30 p.m., for Spiritualists only, the study of Spiritualism. And at 1, Winifred-road, Manor Park, Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m., meeting to assist inquirers. Also the first Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception to assist inquirers.—J. A.

SPIRITUALISM NOT A SHOW.

It is not uncommon for individuals to remark that they cannot accept Spiritualism, and then to specify certain things which are incredible to them, often referring to claims or to statements of occurrences which the more cautious and careful Spiritualists themselves reject or regard as unproven and improbable. If acceptance of Spiritualism involved the adoption of all the nonsense which is in the popular mind coupled with it, there would indeed be very few Spiritualists among rational clear-headed thinkers, but fortunately Spiritualism does not imply anything of the kind. Most of those public performances which impress the masses with the greatest effect and produce in their minds a favourable impression as to Spiritualism, are indeed the most questionable and in fact the most objectionable part of the Spiritualistic movement. Most of them are pure trickery, without any spiritual, psychical, or occult phenomena whatever, and cannot be too often repeated that Spiritualism rests upon such frail foundation.

It fortifies my soul to know
That, though I perish, Truth is so;
That howsoe'er I stray and range,
Whate'er I do, thou dost not change.
I steadier step when I recall
That, if I slip, thou dost not fall.

—A. H. CLOUGH.