

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.

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The instalment of the Records of the Séances at which Mr. Stainton Moses was the medium, in to-day's issue of "LIGHT," is of considerable interest. The *apport* of stones, either of the same nature as, or of a similar nature to those generally called precious, is remarkable from whatever point of view it is regarded. If the stones were previously in existence and were brought by the unseen agencies, we have a clear case of what is called the passage of matter through matter; if the stones were in some way produced on the spot we get a case of some kind of transcendental chemistry which is of an importance not to be overrated. Granted that the carriage of one material substance through another is an established fact, we may endeavour to explain the matter in one of two ways: either by a mechanical and general, but uniform, displacement of the molecules of the thing carried, whereby those molecules are passed between the molecules of the thing passed through; or by a chemical process where the compounds forming the thing carried are resolved into their elements, and so passed through, perhaps, more easily—afterwards being brought together again in the séance-room in their original proportions and orderly arrangements. In both these cases, however, there is the supposition of a pre-arrangement, consequent on the ordinary forces of nature, the thing having so been built up. But if the stones were produced there and then in the room, we must further admit that the Intelligences had the power of taking the elements from somewhere, and themselves doing what the slower process of nature would take long to accomplish. All these surmises are, however, founded on the hypothesis that matter and spirit are discrete,—if they are not so, but only different presentations of the same thing, the difficulties do not vanish, but become less. In connection with the subject there comes in the whole question of the use of precious stones, and the properties they are believed to possess.

It is difficult now to keep pace with the literature of the Unseen—that is, the literature which does not issue from the Spiritualistic or Theosophic Press: "Do the Dead Return?" has been followed by "I Awoke." (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co.) We shall probably have occasion to refer to this book in a later issue. At present we are only occupied with a certain remark made by one of the morning papers, the "Daily Chronicle." After stating the assertion of the writers of the book—for there were more than one—that its contents were received from "those who once dwelt here, but have now passed over into the Unseen," the "Daily Chronicle" says, "It may be so; we cannot tell one way or the other." Surely there could be no more convincing evidence of the altered state of public

opinion than that a newspaper like the "Daily Chronicle" should admit the possibility of such an alternative.

With these altered conditions it behoves us to be exceedingly careful in all that we say or write, and in no case more so than when dealing with that modern science whose developments are bringing the boundaries of the physical and the spiritual worlds closer at every step onwards. It is, therefore, with great reluctance that we feel compelled to remark on a paper in "The Coming Day," called "Where is the Unseen?" by W.A. Cram. The writer says:—

Over and about this globe is the vast atmospheric sea of matter, too fine to be seen, but just as much real matter and a part of our world as the granite boulders or the ocean.

Quite true; but, unfortunately, this paragraph is followed by

Over and about this great atmospheric sea, the vast ethereal realm (of, no doubt, many degrees of higher and finer matter), is flowing about our little invisible globe. . . . We live nearly at the bottom of these great atmospheric and ethereal seas that overflow us.

This is an entirely wrong conception of the supposititious ether of space. We are simply *in* it, and it fills up the intervals between the molecules of the air, just as much as it does the intervals between the molecules of the "granite boulders." All the phenomena of electricity appear to occur in that ether, and the so-called electric current passes by means of a telegraph wire either *in* or *above* the earth.

There is, too, this erroneous sentence:—

We pick up a piece of iron or stone and it appears very solid and real to our senses; the chemist takes it and dissolves it into its constituent gases.

No chemist that is living, or has lived, has ever dissolved a piece of iron into its constituent gases, for the simple reason that there is no gas of any kind in its composition. Stones, being usually compounds, may be resolved into metals and gases, but some of them, such as the diamond, can only be transformed into another non-volatile substance—namely, carbon. And it is a pity that this erroneous assertion should be made, because the intention is good, namely, to show that change—such change as death implies—is only a transformation. It must be remembered that we have to do now with twenty-odd years of the School Board epoch, and such mistakes as these must not be made if we are to produce the impression we wish to produce on the generation that is.

We hope shortly to produce a succinct account of the experiments carried out at Milan, the medium being Eusapia Paladino. M. Aksakof, who was present, has kindly offered to correct the proofs, so that we may have a faithful account of the phenomena which have so profoundly affected the scientific circles of the Continent.

We call attention to the first of a series of articles called "Death a Delusion," by the Rev. John Page Hopps. Mr. Hopps's well-known outspokenness and independence of thought should ensure a well weighed consideration of all that he says or writes.

"SEVEN" AND "THREE."

This is the title of a curious paper in the current number of the "National Review." The author speaks of these two as Mystic Numbers, "though," he says, "the mystery which they involve will not always yield readily to inspection." It certainly will not, nor does Mr. Gaye, who writes the article, attempt to solve the problem. As a collection of items connected with the numbers "seven" and "three," the paper is very instructive. As regards the Biblical use of the numbers—

It cannot be disputed that the first total of which we read in Holy Writ is Seven. A little farther on in Genesis seven-fold vengeance is denounced on the slayer of Cain, if such a one should be found. Pharaoh's dream of the kine and the ears of corn is familiar to the least Biblical of readers. Balaam, again, demands seven altars, and, for victims, seven bullocks and seven rams. . . . Nebuchadnezzar's furnace was heated "one seven times more than it was wont to be heated" for the faithful three. Seven priests and seven trumpets marched round the walls of Jericho. Seven times did Elijah's servant look, at his master's bidding, seaward.

As to the Book of Revelation:—

The very first chapter introduces us to the Seven Churches of Asia, the seven golden candlesticks, and the seven stars.

Mythology and fabulous history also furnish examples of this strange taste for the number "seven," such as the expedition of Polynices and his six companions against Thebes, and the tradition of the seven Kings of Rome. In Egypt there was the seven-days' *fete* in honour of Apis.

Coming to later times we get, among chapbooks, "The Seven Wise Masters of Rome," and "The Seven Champions of Christendom"; and the seven ages of man "appear to us a perfectly natural division of human life."

There is not much sentiment, as a general rule, to be extracted from a legal document, and mysticism is the very thing which it seeks, though not always with success, to exclude. How is it then that leases are so often drawn for seven, fourteen, and twenty-one years? . . . An equivalent coincidence, if it be nothing more, we may distinctly trace in most of the old indentures by which apprentices were bound. A servitude of seven years was the rule, almost without exception, and it obtains to this day. Even arithmetic itself is not without symptoms of the influence exercised by the weird number. In logarithmic tables the results are commonly worked out to seven places of decimals. The die of the Roman gambler, like that of his British representative, was so marked that the sum of the dots on any two opposite faces was always seven. The musical scale is another case in point. It is to the combinations of a simple series of seven notes that we primarily owe the masterpieces of Mozart and Beethoven.

As to the number "three," Mr. Gaye points out that no number is so generally associated with the various religious systems of the world. But beyond that, as is well shown, this number constantly crops up in all directions:—

In those epidemics of genius which, from time to time, have illumined a specially favoured age or people, this peculiarity has always been very strongly marked. Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were all born within a period—brief for the exhibition of such a galaxy of dramatic talent—of five-and-forty years, and Greece gave us no other tragic poet of any note.

So we have Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle as a triad of Greek philosophers, and "Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio, the three main sources of the beautiful, the true, and the great in Italian literature." And from the *Divina Commedia* to the *Decameron* there were barely fifty years. Of the world's great epic poets we have three again—Homer, Virgil, and Milton. Of the world's great religions we have Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, "practised by more than nine-tenths of the world's population."

Mythology is a museum of trios. What consternation would ensue were it suddenly brought to light that, after all, there was a fourth Grace! An addition to, or subtraction from, the number of the Furies we might possibly endure; but it would seem

little short of sacrilege to tamper with the roll-call of the Fates. The Sirens, the Harpies, the Gorgons, again, all attest the favour with which the mysterious Three was regarded long before history and chronology came into being. The judgment of Paris turns on precisely the same point, and the judgment of Paris must now be something like 3,000 years old.

And so we get in later times the legend of the Three Kings of Cologne: offerings of "gold, frankincense and myrrh," and "faith, hope, and charity." But to follow Mr. Gaye through all the bye-paths in which he finds the mystic Three would exceed the limits of a "LIGHT" article; suffice it is to enumerate a few. In public-house signs we get such things as the "Three Angels," the "Three Devils," the "Three Admirals," and the "Three Washerwomen." There are the three Lombardian balls, the cognisance of the pawnbroker; the three divisions of the Order of the Bath, the three readings of a Parliamentary Bill, the triple announcement of the banns of marriage, and the "tag, rag, and bobtail" of a London crowd.

And the author concludes with another Biblical reference, the story of Job. Job had three friends, and after his new happiness "his flocks and herds were exactly doubled. The number of his family, however, and the proportion of males and females, remained exactly the same, as if incapable of improvement. And He had also Seven sons and Three daughters."

THE REV. M. J. SAVAGE ON PSYCHICS.

Mr. Savage has published a book entitled "Psychics: Facts and Theories." From his preface the following weighty words are quoted in the "Arena" for April:—

People often ask why, if there is anything in these so-called manifestations, they have waited all these ages and have not appeared before. There are stories of similar happenings as marking every age of history; but as reported, they have been only occasional, and they have not attracted any serious study. Let us note the stages of evolution as having a possible bearing on this point. First, muscle ruled the world. Then came cunning, the lower form of brain power. Next, the intellect became recognised as king. After that, the moral ideal showed itself mightier than muscle or brain. To-day it is the strongest force on earth. No king dares go to war without claiming, at least, that his cause is a righteous one. Now it is not meant that either of these has ruled the world alone, for they have overlapped each other, as have the advancing forms of life. And as heralding the advent of each new stage of progress, there have been tentative and sporadic manifestations of the next higher, while still the lower was dominant. Is it not then in line with all that has gone before, that the next step should be a larger and higher manifestation of the spiritual? And in this case, are not the tentative and sporadic manifestations reported from the past just what might have been expected? "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."

This is very striking, and we commend it to the careful consideration of our readers.

THE ZOUAVE JACOB.—According to "La France," of February 2nd, quoted in "La Revue Spirite," the Zouave Jacob is still living. It will be remembered that his fame as a healing medium was very great about 1866, and for some time afterwards. He was prosecuted for illegally practising medicine. He was condemned, but still continued his beneficent work. It appears that Jacob has recently been again prosecuted for the same offence, but in view of the disputed legality of hypnotism in France he got off with a fine of fifteen francs.

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.

THE SHEEP AS AN ORACLE.

The "Literary Digest" gives the following summary of a paper by Dr. B. Langkanel in "Die Natur-Halle":—

In P. v. Melingo's book, "Modern Greece" (*Griechenland in unseren Tagen*), there is a description on page 176 of the celebration of the Easter holidays, concerning which he writes: "According to ancient custom, the master of the house divides the roasted lamb, and gives to each one his portion, reserving for himself the right shoulder. The repast finished, he proceeds to read the future from the shoulder-blades, precisely as was the custom of the ancients, of the Byzantines after them, and of every man during the War of Liberation, to which Greece owes its present status."

What the author here describes as a custom of Ancient and Modern Greece, prevails from China, through the northern half of Asia, and, with only slight modifications, through Europe to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. The following are a few instances, beginning with Eastern Asia:—

William Woodville Rockhill, in his "The Land of the Lamas," gives a description of "Divination by Shoulder-Blades," with two illustrations, which corresponds closely with the accounts given by Radloff in his "*Aus West Sibirien*" (I., 475), where he says: "If a Kirghiz would know which way a missing horse has gone, or seek directions for following a thief, or inquire whether absent relatives are well or sick, and for many other problems, the shoulder-blade of a sheep is turned to for reliable guidance."

Similar evidences are available showing the universal diffusion of the custom over all Northern Asia. The Huns, too, are said to have attached great importance to this method of divination, and Jornande gives an account of Attila's consulting his oracle before his battles.

The custom of consulting the shoulder-blades prevails also in Arabia. Jacob Grimm unearthed a manuscript in the Vienna Court Library, concerning the data by which the oracles were guided a thousand years ago: "When the shoulder-blade is thin and clean on both sides it betokens life; but if the lines are confused, death is foretold. If at the outbreak of war there is a small red cloud on the right shoulder-blade, or if on both sides the lines are long and dark, the war will cover a long period, but if both sides are quite white, peace will soon be restored. In all pending matters, on which the shoulder-blades are consulted, confused or reddish or dark lines are unfavourable omens, clear white surfaces favourable."

Gregorius found divination by shoulder-blades resorted to in Corsica, and Geraldus, in his *Cambrian Itinerary* (1585), notices that the Flemish settlers resorted to divination by means of the shoulder-blade of a ram, sodden but not roasted.

How the Greeks resorted to it during their War of Independence, and how, relying on its favorable predictions, they faced unnumbered odds, and yet trembled like children while the oracle was being deciphered, is graphically depicted by Melingo. How, now, shall we explain this widespread application of the sheep's scapula among so many diverse people? How can we separate Europe from Asia in the face of the many resemblances in ancient customs and superstitions? In the third volume of the "*Zeitschrift für Ethnographie*" (p. 102) there is an exhaustive treatment of the striking resemblances in customs, arts, and food substances introduced by the Moors into Spain, A.D. 700 to 1490, and by the Tartars and Mongols into Russia from 1223 to 1481. Nomadic people in steppes or mountain-lands, where the vegetation is scant, can easily domesticate the sheep, while the ox is found unsuited. This one fact necessarily exercises an enormous influence on food and habits, which is likely to persist even under changed conditions. Hence it is that, to this day, Spain and the Balkans are essentially sheep countries. The ancient Egyptians set small store on sheep; cotton, flax, or hemp took the place of wool in their fabrics. No woollen material could be introduced into the temple or the grave, nor might mutton be eaten by either king or priests. According to Dümishen, the sheep is not represented on the chapel walls of the pyramids of Gizeh and Sakarah of the fortieth-fiftieth century, but appears first among the memorials of the New Kingdom. But in Eurasia the sheep was everywhere sought after, and every part turned to account. We find the astragalus (ankle bone) used as a plaything from Italy to the far East, from Persia to Hungary, and learn that it was familiar to the ancient Scythians. According to Herodotus

the end most desired by the ancient Massagetæ was to be cut up with mutton and eaten by their own people.

Is this, we wonder, to be taken as an explanation? If so, it is of the lamest. The "divination" is taken for granted. To talk of the prevalence of the sheep as exercising an enormous influence on "food and habits" is to assert a truism, but "why" those habits?

VISIONS.

We have given in previous issues of "LIGHT" some of Miss A.'s remarkable experiences in crystal-gazing as recorded in the "Proceedings" of the Society for Psychical Research. But Miss A.'s extraordinary faculties are not confined to crystal-seeing. The visions described below are quite independent of that. Both stories have reference to Salisbury Cathedral. The first occurred in August, 1889:—

The first time Miss A. went to the Cathedral she noticed standing in the door of the chapel opposite the "Cage" (or Hungerford Chapel) a monk, dressed in dull sort of muddy brown with a knotted cord round his waist, a sort of tippet and hood, and something white, either cloth or flesh (?), where the hood or tippet was not drawn close. He carried in his hands a brown rosary and silver (?) cross hanging to it.

Subsequently she saw a good many of them apparently filing out of the door of the chapel, and back again, holding books and rosaries. The cross of the rosary was rather a peculiar shape.

She has seen these monks nearly every time she has been to the Cathedral, and one gave his name one day by raps, but owing to the fact that the Bishop and the head verger both said that no Order of monks had ever been connected with the Cathedral, we thought that perhaps it was an hallucination. Yesterday, however, February 23rd, 1890, Miss A. again saw the monks, and asked what Order they belonged to; the answers were by raps.

Q.: What Order do you belong to? A.: St. Francis d'Assisi. Q.: Do you mean Franciscans? A.: Yes. Q.: Did you live here? A.: No. Q.: Where then? A.: Palace.

Having obtained this clue, on my return home I looked in Britton's "History of Wiltshire," and found on an uncut page that there had been a Monastery of Greyfriars (Franciscans) at the S.E. corner of the Cathedral (where the Palace and grounds now are), and that Bishop Poore gave them the land.

The present Bishop has just unearthed from the cellars of the Palace a beautiful vaulted crypt room, which was supposed to exist in or previous to the time of Bishop Poore. This is a curious coincidence, and may have been where the Greyfriars lived. Sir Richard Colt Hoare mentions that there existed an Order of Friars taking their name from St. Francis d'Assisi, who were settled at Salisbury.

Lady Radnor adds:—

In Steven's "Continuation of Dugdale's Monasticon" there is a plate of a Franciscan which exactly corresponds with what Miss A. saw. We only found this afterwards.

The second case is as follows: it occurred in February, 1890.

On February 23rd, Miss A. and I were in the "Cage" and she told me she saw a grand ceremonial taking place. There appeared to be a tall chair which obstructed the view down the choir, and gradually the place appeared filled with clericals and others dressed in their best attire. Then she saw a tall big man slowly walking up, dressed in red with white and lace over it, something that hung round his neck and down to his feet of broad gold embroidery, and a broad sort of mitre (but not peaked) more like a biretta, of beautiful embroidery.

Then there were three or four dressed very much like him, gorgeously dressed, and lots of little boys about in red and white and lace—holding candles, books, &c. The whole place was very full of people, and it was evidently a great occasion. After the principal figure had knelt in front of the chair—looking to the west for some little time—he stood up and ten little boys lifted up the chair, and carried it higher up and placed it in front of the altar, still facing west. Then the principal figure walked up two steps and faced the east. (The whole of the arrangements of the altar, &c., as Miss A. saw them, are quite different from what they are now.) [It is here meant that Miss A.'s description was correct for that past date; as Lord Radnor explicitly told

me was the case.] He had nothing on his head now. He knelt some little time, and then the most gorgeously dressed of the other figures placed something like a mitre on his head and retired, and the principal figure walked up to the chair, and sat down on it facing the congregation. Miss A. said she saw him later dead in a coffin, with the Winchester Cross over him. She says he was tall, big, clean-shaven, a little curling hair, and blue-grey eyes.

Miss A. asked what she was seeing, and the answer came by raps.

A. The induction of Briant Uppa.

Then Miss A. said: There can't be such a name; it must be wrong.

She tried again, and got—

A. You are wrong. It is Duppa, not Uppa. Brian Duppa.

Q. Who was Brian Duppa? A. Chister. Q. What was he? A. Bishop here. Q. When? or what was his date?

A. 44-16. His researches would help you. Manuscripts should lay at Winchester.

On returning home, we were talking after tea, and I casually took up Britton's "History of Wiltshire," and said to Miss A. laughing: "Now I will look for your Bishop." . . . The pages where the Bishops' names were were uncut, sides and top. I cut them, and to our delight we found on p. 149:—

"Brian Duppa or de Uphaug, D.D. . . . tutor to Prince Charles . . . translated to the See of Chichester (Chister) . . . Bishop of, 1641 . . . (deposed soon after by Parliament) . . . preferred soon after the Restoration to the See of Winchester." He was at Carisbrooke with Charles I., and is supposed to have assisted him in the writing of the "Eikon Basilike," which book Miss A. had been looking at in my boudoir a few days previously, but which contains no mention of him nor his name.

"FIN-DE-SIÈCLE."

The following pessimistic article is culled from the "Literary Digest." It was translated and condensed for that journal from the "Vom Fels zum Meer," of Stuttgart, for February. Are the author's views correct, or does he mistake "new birth" for "senility?" They are, perhaps, after all, not so far apart:—

The French are the inventors of the phrase "Fin-de-Siècle," a term admirably expressive of the senility of the present generation. "The Spirit of the Times," says Nordau, "is singularly perplexed, a mixture of feverish restlessness and an abandoned gallows humour. The predominant sentiment indicates approaching wreck, dissolution." Fin-de-Siècle is the pessimism of the age, a special characteristic form of it. The books which pourtray it do not content themselves with depicting the common sensualism of naturalism. Sensualism becomes suited to the salons only "when it becomes unnatural and degenerate." The æsthetic needs of elegant society yearn for new nerve excitations such as healthy natures do not comprehend, or at least do not crave for. In this Fin-de-Siècle sentiment, in the tendency of current art and literature, in the personality of the authors of mystical, symbolical, and decadent works, in the attitudes of their admirers, and in the tastes and tendencies of the fashionable public, the nerve physician or psychiatrist recognises, at first glance, the symptoms of two distinct diseases—degeneration and hysteria. These two conditions of the organism are distinct, but have many characteristics in common, and are frequently co-existent.

The degeneration is a diseased aberration of an original type indicated by special characteristics (stigmata), physical and mental. Into the physical characteristics—facial asymmetry, &c.—I forbear to enter; suffice it to say that they are always detectable in the earnest leaders of mystic movements, and those urged by a semi-insane, irresistible impulse to write for publication. The predominant mental stigmata are: intense self-seeking, an utter incapacity to resist the translation of any sudden impulse into action, a loss of spiritual strength and courage, an undefined fear of man and nature, or a feeling of inward contradiction. To the mental stigmata of degeneracy pertain also loss of will-power, and indulgence in idle dreams, incapable of realisation. The degenerate is oppressed by doubts and harassed by problems beyond our solution, but above all—he is a mystic. "Of all the symptoms of incipient insanity," says Colin, "we believe there is none more reliable than

mystical delirium, or, if it has not yet developed into delirium, continuous absorption in mystic and religious problems, &c."

It must not be supposed that Nordau is alone in his conclusions as to the diseased nature of the type he is discussing. His views find expression in all the current Parisian literature of medical science, and have the support of such names as Colin, Legrain, Morel, Lombroso, Magnan, Charcot, Krafft-Ebing, and numerous others. Legrain, speaking of the "genial degenerate," tells us that the "higher degenerate" are sometimes highly gifted—one common character unites them: vacillation of purpose, and unsymmetrical development of their mental powers. Their conceptions are never of a high order. They are incapable of entertaining great thoughts or fruitful ideas. This fact frequently results in an excessive development of the imaginative faculty. Lombroso says of them: If they are painters their leading characteristic is colouration, they must be decorative; if they are poets, they exhibit brilliant style, rich setting, but no thoughts; frequently they are "Decadents."

If these characteristics of mental degeneracy are applicable to the modern school of literature, and of this we think there can be no doubt, the question naturally arises: How is it they have so many admirers and imitators? Here we have to do with the second form of disease above referred to—hysteria. Hysterical people, of whom there are as many men as women, are in the highest degree sensitive to suggestion, and this sensitiveness will account for imitation. "Another phenomenon," says Max Nordau, "is in the highest degree characteristic of the degeneration of the one and the hysteria of the others, and that is the formation of the isolated, close schools or groups now so observable in art and literature. Healthy writers or artists, with properly balanced minds, would never think of banding themselves into a clique, inventing a catechism of æsthetic dogmas, and asserting them with all the fanatical impatience of the Spanish Inquisition. If there is one human faculty stamped by individuality, it is the artistic. The healthy artist is ever a distinct personality, and any fanatical enthusiasm for a literary dogma is ample evidence of degenerative disease." These remarks are especially applicable to the modern literary condition of France. "A degenerate," says Nordau, "under the influence of an imperious impulse, asserts some æsthetic dogma; it may be realism or pornography, or mysticism, or symbolism, or diabolism. He enforces it energetically, enthusiastically, persuasively, recklessly. Other degenerate hysterics flock to him, receive the new dogma from his mouth, and thenceforth live only for its extension."

As to the causes of this wide spread of hysteria, it must suffice here to ascribe it in general terms to the restless endeavour of the past fifty years; the race has striven so earnestly, achieved so much, and under such intense excitement that it is weary, and, having leisure, would fain cultivate its imagination. But as Nordau remarks: "Books and works of art exercise an immense power of suggestion under such conditions. In them the age fashions its ideals of conduct and beauty. If, then, these works are senseless and hostile to social order, their influence tends to confuse and distort the views of the whole generation."

Is this not the cry of the Materialist who fails to grasp the Spiritual? Else how can we explain the amazing jumble of hysteria and degeneracy with mysticism? There is a note of fear which the writer does not quite realise.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Under this heading, at the request of several subscribers, we give from time to time such questions as may reach us—provided we deem them of a profitable character—with a view to their being answered, not necessarily by the Editor, but preferably by our readers. Both questions and answers should be stated clearly and succinctly, and in the replies the questions should be indicated by the number.

QUESTION.

10.—Apart from its ancient origin, what has Astrology to recommend itself to our credence? Is the book, "The Influence of the Stars," by Rosa Baughan, considered a good one for a beginner to read?—B.

THE spirit world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere; and everywhere
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapours dense
A vital breath of more ethereal air.—LONGFELLOW.

RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES

FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.

No. XLIII.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

January 8th, 1875.—This afternoon Dr. and Mrs. S. and Mr. S. M. sat at Hudson's for spirit photographs. The experiment was tried under test conditions. Dr. S. and Mr. S. M. watched it throughout, never losing sight of the plate. A draped figure appeared on two of the plates, the same figure in different positions. In one of the photos the spirit held a scroll. And on one was a star, the symbol of a spirit we had long known at our seances as the Prophet.

In the evening of the same day we, who had visited the photographer, sat for information. Very soon we saw a cordon of light round us, and much delicious scent was brought. Franklin controlled and gave us information concerning the gems that had been brought to the circle. One, representing a sapphire, with the help of many spirits, he was bringing for the medium to-night; this stone was very precious, and there was no other like it in the world; they had thrown around it influences that would in many ways help the medium both spiritually and physically. King Solomon was a wise man, he believed in the virtue of amulets, and there was truth in this belief. Franklin said he was present with us at Hudson's, and, "if the photographer has done his work well, you will find on the plates the figure of the Prophet, and on one will appear his symbol, a star." The Prophet then flashed his light as an evidence of his presence. At the conclusion of the seance we found much dry musk, and the beautiful gem that had been promised Mr. S. M. It was clear, and of a deep blue colour, transparent and sparkling. He was told to treasure it with great care, and to keep it always about him. We noticed when he was not in good health the stone often became dull and changed in colour.

January 9th.—We met this evening as usual, and had much spirit-light and scent in the rooms and musical manifestations, as previously described. Mr. S. M. said that he saw a spirit-hand over Dr. S., and we then heard something hard drop on the table near him. Light was rapped for and we found a pale green transparent stone in the place where we had heard it drop, and where Mr. S. M. had seen the hand, just in front of Dr. S. B. Franklin controlled, and said that the gem had been brought for Dr. S., and signified truth; it was his spirit-stone; his spirit-name was Truth. He was to wear it, as they had surrounded it with good influences. We asked what stone our son's would be? Benjamin Franklin said it would be well for the boy to have a stone, and it would be like his father's, and he would go and see if one could be procured. Apparently he left, and all seemed quiet. In a few minutes he controlled, saying: "We have got a stone, but cannot bring it into the room; join hands." We did so, and instantly a stone fell upon the table: it appeared to fall from the ceiling of the room. It was a lovely bright green stone, brighter than the one they had brought for Dr. S. We noticed that a bright cordon of light was always round the circle when these spirit stones or gems were brought.

January 12th.—This evening Mr. Perceval sat with the circle. The scent was not as pleasant as usual. Imperator controlled, speaking through the medium and saying: "It is difficult for us to speak to-night, but there are one or two things we wish to say to you. Since we were last with you our friends have brought to you some memorials of their power, and the medium has received communications respecting them. We now state explicitly that the aura and influences of those evidences of spirit-power have not been exaggerated. When men grow wiser, and become less material, they will know that amongst the chief material benefits that spirits bring to them are those evidences of their power, which have been lately brought to you. We would also speak of the image of our friend the Prophet, which we have secured for you. It is a successful and good representation, and we were pleased to be able to produce it for you. I myself was not engaged in the production. You must remember that those of us who operate on the plane of spirit rather than of matter do so on your earth under conditions that are very delicate and precarious. Matter has faded from our gaze, and when we return to the material plane we see nothing of it; all that we see is the spirit. We could not present ourselves for a photograph but we might commission other spirits to present an image of us."

In reference to the return of spirit-friends Imperator said that those who have passed away from earth very often cannot return, and when they are able to do so they find it difficult to give clear communications. The over anxiety of the spirits themselves and of their friends on earth produces a kind of repulsion and destroys the rapport. "We have sought to direct your attention to divine truth, and to the fact of the intercommunion between spirit and matter, rather than to questions of merely personal interest; not that we would undervalue the strong conviction that is often produced by the return of friends, but we would have you remember that the anxiety on both sides produces conditions by which deceptive and erroneous results might probably follow. Thus there are grave reasons for using the greatest caution under these circumstances. The mental bias of friends gives colour to communications, and they become (if we may use the expression) affectionate rather than precise, effusive rather than true. If you wished to obtain information on any point you would go to those who could judge calmly and without bias; thus we have endeavoured to put evidence before you which rests on catholic rather than on personal grounds. Evidence which under good conditions would be most potent for conviction becomes most dangerous under the opposite conditions of failure. When results can be obtained with precision they are most valuable, but it is rash to seek for them, save under conditions which absolutely ensure success. The small grasp that each individual can take of this subject is but one thread in the woof that is being woven around you, and if we may carry your thoughts back for a while to the time, now a year ago, and ask you to look at what has been done in that period, you will find that some light is thrown upon what we have just said. Who shall fix the extent to which influences have been brought to bear on the human race during the past year? The experiences of the individual may seem slight and unimportant, but the progress of divine truth has been great during that period. When my Great Master lived on the earth, there were many, it was said, who had not bowed the knee to the material gods around them, and so it is now: there are many who have come out of the material Church and have become recipients of spiritual knowledge. These have found a newer and a truer Church, which receives inspiration from the Supreme, and is brooded over by the Divine Spirit. From these, and such as these, shall be built up hereafter the true Church which shall receive the ministry of angels and a divine revelation. It is little congenial to us to dwell upon that which is vague, and we will not speak further on this subject, but we wish to tell you that we are able to look hopefully, both on the time past and to the future. True it is that the great minds of the present generation have not been touched, but it is better that they should gain spiritual knowledge in another sphere of existence, and not have the beliefs of a lifetime suddenly overthrown. The rising generation is being acted upon in a way of which you know but little—there the powers of good are prevailing—nor can you estimate the extent to which centres of spiritual influence are being formed on your earth. On the other hand the destitution of the human spirit, and the powers of the adversaries, are sources of constant trouble to us, for though they have now been repulsed, they may soon rise again, as they are not beaten, but only driven back. They are spirits who have withdrawn themselves from control and have developed an antagonism to the progress of all that is good amongst men. Although we may not prophesy, and our mouth is sealed as to the future, yet we may say that the days are coming when there shall be such an outpouring of the Divine Spirit as shall reach to the uttermost corners of the earth, driving the adversaries into open revolt, and bringing home to receptive souls the message of truth for which they are longing. It is to the brighter side that we would have you look, and to those great truths which in the time to come shall bear fruit for the regeneration of humanity and the glory of the Supreme. There is hope, blessed hope, for the future, and the prayer which earnest souls should raise should be for the abundant outpourings of the Divine Spirit, and for the gathering together of faithful souls united in the cause of truth. Keep your eyes fixed on the future, and do not despair. Be strong and of good courage, for in the words of your own inspired writer, 'Greater is He that is with you than all that are against you.' Farewell."

ASTROLOGY.—A correspondent would like to know who is the astrologer referred to by Mr. Edgar Lee in the "Arena" for January, as the "Seer of the Charing Cross Road."

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

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Light :

EDITED BY "M.A." LOND."

SATURDAY, APRIL 15th, 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.

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

PROGRESS OR OTHERWISE.

The phenomena that we get repeat themselves. Rarely is there anything new. Mr. Stead's experiences may prove to be something a little different from what we have had before, but that is not much. We have demonstrated, as we hold, satisfactorily, the existence of a consciousness which is not the consciousness of ordinary life as we think we know it, but is something transcendental and different, whatever we may call it, but we have not got very much, if anything at all, beyond that. That we have got thus far is, of course, a tremendous getting, a getting which should be, and will be, epoch-making, for it is nothing less than the demonstration of another life, which life is a continuance of this. Moreover, it has produced a common starting point for Spiritualists, Theosophists, and Psychical Researchers. How each may regard both base and superstructure is another matter, but there they are. That the world's religions have not known it or have ignored it is their loss and their fault. We are nevertheless not satisfied, and why should we be? How or why it is, we do not know, but the movement which is at the base of all life is part of ourselves, and quietude cannot be our portion. We must have more: we must know more: we must go on. That intelligence exists outside the body, as we call the presentation of the spirit which we know by that name, we believe: but what is that intelligence, and what are the conditions of its being? The repetitions of séances, the reiterations of platitudes purporting to come even from the most exalted spirits, telepathy, crystal-vision, all are the outcome of the same thing, and we cannot and must not be satisfied. How, then, is this going on to be done?

In any branch of physical science, and also in that science which is the science of all sciences, mathematics, there comes a time, and that pretty early, when all expression, that is, all expression necessary for advance, is made in terms of the particular science.

In dynamics, the terminology of dynamics must be used as knowledge proceeds; and what progress could be made in chemistry if the "thought" used in the endeavour to get that progress was not "thought," if we may use the expression, on the chemical plane? The systems of ideas which the advanced organic chemist uses are as far away from the original small investigation of the properties of oxygen and hydrogen as are the systems of ideas in which the quaternion investigator works, from the addition

sum of the small first-form boy. The progressed thought is in both cases utterly beyond and outside the commencing neophyte.

Do we, however, follow this course in the investigation of Spiritualism? Do we work on the spiritual plane where alone advance can be made? Or are we still fascinated by the elementary blue fire, trying our experiments with spiritualistic oxygen, and getting pretty results for the benefit of the multitude? "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe."

Some there are who are not babes. But how many are there who not only require to be taught what are the first principles of the oracles of God, but indeed like the teaching? This should not be, and in some directions it is clear that change has begun. Many letters in our own journal, the serious discussions at the meetings of the Alliance, and the research of many into the more recondite paths of Spiritualism, show that this is so. Yet there remain outside a vast number who seem utterly incapable of assimilating anything but milk, and milk largely diluted with water, itself not too clean.

BERLIN "SPHINX" ALLIANCE.

The first report of this association comes from its offices, 2241, Schwedterstrasse, Berlin, N. It deals with the newspaper view of an interesting case of so-called "possession" which occurred in the village of Hartzweiler. The newspaper writer admits that the majority of the people in the district believe, not only in the supernormal character of the affliction, but also in a similar source of cure, while he mercifully suggests that if the subject—a girl of eleven—had been treated to a wholesome discipline with live coals, when her "possession" was first observed, the comedy would never have continued. The quantity to be used is not given, and it is probably for that reason the report refrains from disputing the accuracy of the statement. The report also quotes an interesting account of a séance given in the Wintergartens by Miss Kenedy and Mr. Lorenz, the talented American practitioners of thought-transference. There is also a minute description of the singular appearance of a lighted lantern with a hand holding it, which was seen by a great many people in Thuringia, between Sommerda and Weisensee. A large landowner there, who was noted for his preference of the tavern to the church, once drank so deeply that on his way home he sank down on the highway and fell asleep. He was never afterwards seen or heard of, but, from the time of his disappearance, a lighted lantern with a hand over it was frequently seen on the road, and particularly at one place where, it is supposed, the besotted man fell. The inhabitants of the district became familiar with it, and one courageous woman, it is related, addressed the vision, saying, "God pardon thee, for the sake of thy light," whereupon an answer came. "I have waited now a long time for that." Whether the lantern answered or not is perhaps not so well established as the fact that it has really been seen by a great many quite trustworthy people, and although it is twenty years since it was last visible, there are many old folk still alive in Sommerda who vividly remember it.

STILL ANOTHER MAGAZINE.—The first number of the "Pall Mall Magazine," conducted by Lord Frederic Hamilton and Sir Douglas Straight, will appear early in May. It is to be published by Messrs. Routledge & Sons, Limited, in London, Manchester, and New York, and the price will be one shilling. It is intended that the illustrations shall be one of its principal features. Mr. T. Dove Keighley is the Art Editor.

SYMBOLICAL PICTURES.—Through the kindness of a member there are on exhibition at the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, three remarkable pictures produced about twenty-five years ago, through the mediumship of Mr. Gilbert. From their essentially symbolical character and elaborately detailed execution space will not permit an adequate description; but Mr. Godfrey will gladly show them with the written description of their signification to any friend who may wish to inspect them.

DEATH A DELUSION;

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

ON THE

BORDERLAND BETWEEN SENSE AND SOUL.

BY JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

I.

For twenty years and more, I have been asked to write my experiences in relation to Spirit-Communion. Instead of complying, I chose rather to bear, in other and varying ways, my testimony to the truth that is at the heart of it: and now I comply because the hour has manifestly come.

"The hour has manifestly come"; but, even now, the great majority will not understand: and many who understand will not be prepared; and there will be dangers. On the other hand, the subject is so vividly "in the air," and the need for evidence or testimony is so great, that it would almost be a crime to keep back even the feeblest ray of light. At the same time, I think that they who embark on this undertaking, in the hope of at once convincing the world, will suffer disappointment. The world is more encased in animalism than most of us seem to imagine.

By "animalism," however, I do not mean sensuality or brutality: I only mean the being absorbed in external things; and many who seem to be and really are, in a way, refined, are so absorbed. These will be, not so much unbelieving as unresponsive: and they will be careless, or worried, or vexed, or satirical, or scornful, according to temperament or circumstances.

II.

But the barrier to belief will not only be what I have called "animalism." A serious difficulty will be found in the very general absence of any real apprehension of what immortality means. The grotesque belief in the resurrection of the body, the conventional shrinking from a spirit as a mere spectre, the vague and sentimental talk about Heaven, the habitual and utter exclusion of "the departed" from all earthly affairs, the association of everything deplorable and dreadful with death, all indicate what is the actual state of the average conventional mind in regard to this subject. Multitudes of devout Christian people, who imagine they believe in a life beyond the grave, have yet to realise it; and they will never have realised it until they can bear to be told, for instance, that a so-called "dead" man may go and look at his tombstone, and laugh or be vexed at the nonsense written there.

Those last words indicate, with intentional bluntness, what I mean by "Death a Delusion." I entirely agree with William Howitt who, on being asked, "How can the dead return?" replied, "You have first to prove that they have gone away." By that he, of course, did not mean that the so-called dead are bound to this earth. He only meant to strongly protest against the arbitrary assumption that death necessarily means disappearance: and, as I say, I entirely agree with him. Think of a future life, as I will, I cannot get away from the conclusion that it is either a delusion or such a reality as entitles us to say, "There is no death." A future life means persistence of life; and persistence of life means that the spirit-self remains, as a conscious living self, when it sheds the "muddy vesture of decay." The emancipated spirit-self sees, hears, remembers, desires, loves, reflects, rejoices, sorrow, just as it did, only with quickened because emancipated powers; and it knows that death is a delusion. It may linger here, or soon pass on to the inner spheres; but, in any case, it lives and is nearer the subtle vital forces which we with difficulty reach and control.

Such a being, acting from the unseen upon the sphere of what is, to us, the seen, might, under certain conditions,

be able to work what we should call *miracles*. Easily commanding, at first hand, so to speak, the electrical and kindred forces, it might be able to so act upon what we call matter, and so operate upon the mind, through suggestion and by means of the imagination, as to demonstrate its presence. And this is precisely what millions say is done.

III.

It may here be as well to explicitly set forth what are the phenomena or evidences that are relied upon by those who believe in spirit-communion: and, in doing so, I quote words of my own, published many years ago:—

Upon what, then, do these Spiritualists depend for their belief? or, rather, what do they say they know? They tell us it is a fact within their frequent experience that men, women, and children, when out of the flesh, retain all the characteristics of personality, and that under certain conditions they can so control material substances and persons as to make their presence known. This they accomplish in various ways.

They move ponderous bodies, often with the greatest possible ease, and in the light. These bodies they cause to produce what may be called intelligent movements, by which answers to questions are given, or information imparted, sometimes of a remarkable nature. In many cases the information thus given is "news" to all present, and is afterwards found to be correct: in other cases the information is found to be untrue.

They produce sounds upon material substances, and in this way reply to questions or impart information. These sounds, hundreds of thousands of persons tell us, are of daily occurrence, and are enjoyed by home circles in every rank of life. Those who are accustomed to them do not think them "low" or "undignified," but regard them in the light of a useful and convenient telegraph.

They entrance certain persons, and use them, when unconscious, to write, paint, or speak, sometimes in a manner altogether impossible to the medium in the waking state. In the trance, foreign languages are sometimes spoken or written, not a word of which is known by the medium. They control the arm and hand of others in their normal state, through whom messages are written, often containing matters of fact utterly unknown to the persons used, or even opposed to their opinion. They make themselves visible to seers, so that they can be accurately described to friends. They can also produce pictures or scenes in order to make their identification more certain. They make themselves visible to all in the circle, and in many ways prove that they are real beings, though the material forms they create at such times only last for a limited period. They convey material substances from place to place, often before the eyes of onlookers, or under conditions that make deception impossible. In these and various other ways they are said to make their presence known to their friends and to strangers, and that without the intervention of "experts" from without; so that many thousands of families quietly live in the enjoyment of spirit-communion as one of the certain facts of their daily life.

IV.

I know perfectly well that all this will be, by many, regarded as grossly unspiritual or as grossly absurd; and that, curiously enough, the evidence itself will be a stumbling-block. The average mind or imagination, although its apprehension of immortality is so hazy, has associated with the unseen everything that is stupendous, awful, or glorious; and it receives a painful shock when the evidence comes in the guise of a moving table, or a telegraphic rap, or a scrawl on a slate, or the scribbles of "passive writing," or the chatter of a "trance-medium." "Surely," it is said, "the saints in heaven have something better to do than this!" Ah me! we talk of "saints" when we ought to talk of "mother," "father," "husband," "wife" and "child"; and we think of "heaven" as too far away. As for these despised movements and sounds and scrawls and messages, would it not be as well to consider what other avenues are open to the unseen beings, if they are here, and whether it is not our grossness and not their frivolity which is responsible for

these poor modes! Nay, would it not also be well for us to consider whether, after all, the vulgarity and poverty may not be in us! To great souls, nothing is really small,—the click of the telegraphic needle, the vapour of a test-tube, the flying of a kite, the behaviour of tiny electric sparks, the movements of an earth-worm; for, by these little humble doors, before which the great observers have to become as little children, we enter the scientific kingdom of heaven: and surely, if we can look with respect and even awe upon a Huxley bending with eager anxiety over specks of jelly, to find in them, at the physical end, the life-stuff, the protoplasm, from which all forms of life have come, we may watch without ridicule the signs of intelligence and meaning in the signals that come from that other end whither the higher forms of life seem to go. Huxley's solemn dabbling with his jelly-specks leads, they say, all the way from the mollusk to the man. What if the scrawls in the Transactions of the Psychical Research Society and the "solemn fooling" of the séance-room legitimately lead all the way from a living angel to a dying child!

V.

At this point, it may be as well to say that, on the whole, I prefer not to be called a "Spiritualist," partly because I avoid all labels, whenever it is at all possible, partly because this label, at present, is rather limiting, and partly because, as a matter of fact, I have for a very long time ceased to experiment. At the same time, I think we are immensely indebted to Spiritualists. In season and out of season, under the fire of ridicule and before the icy wind of neglect, they have done a great work and have set a fine example of courage, patience and pure love of truth. It will always be delightful to me to remember that in their ranks I have, for many years, found some of the very brightest, wisest, purest, and happiest people I have ever known.

It seems to me, however, that the field is being enlarged, or that many new roads are leading to the promised land. A variety of influences from many sources have made the age receptive to new and deeper thoughts. Science itself has led us into some marvellously subtle regions, so that not a few wonderfully suggestive bases of belief in the unseen have been laid for us by thinkers who never intended to help on faith in spirit-life. The experiments of hypnotism, thought-transference, and the patient but somewhat tedious and even perverse investigations of the Psychical Research Societies, have helped to accustom multitudes of people to the fact that the sphere of human activity and influence is not bounded by the body. When I asked so cautious and profound a man as Professor Balfour Stewart what, in his opinion, had been really proved, and received for answer that thought-transference, without sound and sight and contact, was a fact, I said:—*This is the beginning of the end. After that, all is comparatively easy.*

VI.

First of all, it is necessary to get some sort of scientific foothold, inasmuch as it is fact we are wanting, not romance or dream. And, as I cannot improve upon what I said some few years ago, in my little book on "The Future Life," I will quote a few paragraphs from it:—

In our study of the unseen universe from the standpoint of science, and in appealing to science for evidence, it must ever be borne in mind that the difference between matter and spirit, whatever that difference may be, is not the difference between the known and the unknown, the conceivable and the inconceivable. To the unscientific mind, indeed, the difference between matter and spirit is that, but the really scientific mind knows perfectly well that it is absolutely ignorant as to the real nature and basis of matter. The science of the present day has abundantly demonstrated its own ignorance, and confessed it, as to what even an atom really is. Besides, even in relation to the world of sense, it is confessedly true that the ideal world, or

world of consciousness, is immeasurably more vital than what is usually called the world of matter.

At this very moment, it is the mind that controls the body, the gross is even now moved by the ethereal. Apart from this mysterious unit of vital power and volition, the whole body is a mere mass of inert matter. Spirit, or whatever we call this "unit of vital power and volition," vivifies and employs it. And, even when certain schools of science refuse to employ the spirit among admissible realities, they have to admit that they confront absolutely insoluble problems in the phenomena of life, consciousness, and thought: they also admit that life, and consciousness, and thought, are more demonstrable than the existence of matter itself.

We are, then, at all events, as sure of the inner world of mind as we are of the outer world of matter: and both are inexplicable. We do not, however, in ordinary life, doubt the reality of matter because we have not the slightest idea of what the central, essential basis of an atom really is: neither should we doubt the reality of mind or spirit because we should not conceive of a substance unlike that which we are familiar with as matter. Thought may be, and probably is, accompanied by some corresponding change or movement in the substance of the brain, but it does not follow that thought is produced or secreted by that change or movement, any more than that musical ideas are produced by the fingering of the keys of an organ, though musical sounds may be. Changes and movements in the substance of the brain may be necessary for the manifestation of thought in a certain way, but it by no means follows that the thinker is necessarily dependent on such material conditions.

So obvious is this that even so cool a thinker, and so poor a "believer" as John Stuart Mill, saw and fully admitted it, and even went beyond it, in his "Essays," in which he very forcibly said that "the relation of thought to a material brain is no metaphysical necessity, but simply a constant co-existence within the limits of observation:" and, he added, "the uniform co-existence of one fact with another does not make the one fact a part of the other, or the same with it." "Experience," he says, "furnishes us with no example of any series of states of consciousness" without "a material brain," "but it is as easy to imagine such a series of states without, as with, this accompaniment, and we know of no reason in the nature of things against the possibility of its being thus disjoined." He even says, "We may suppose that the same thoughts, emotions, volitions, and even sensations which we have here, may persist or recommence somewhere else under other conditions." This is all we ask, and this is perfectly scientific. Sensation, thought, and consciousness, are all in ourselves, and are absolutely unlike matter in all their peculiarities. In our present physical condition, sensation, thought, and consciousness, are excited by certain conditions or states of matter: but it is perfectly intelligible that we might exist under totally different conditions, and, by having a body adapted to altogether different surroundings, have precisely the sensations and thoughts we have now,—or even in an intenser form.

It thus appears that in relation to a world of thought and consciousness we have got hold of three solid facts:—that this world of thought and consciousness is at least as real to us as the world of matter; that it is in every way, in all its phenomena and results, utterly unlike the world of matter; and that its existence amid other conditions of exciting causes is perfectly reasonable and scientific. This is something gained,—almost enough to bring us within reach of that unseen universe which is the world of thought and consciousness.

Matter affects us, then; waves impinge on the senses, thought under physical limitations is accompanied by physical phenomena; that is all we can say. For the rest, it looks as though the great realities, and the master of the fleshly house, were behind the veil; it looks as though an emancipation and not a destruction might come with the separation of our mental powers from fleshly control.

One of the greatest services rendered by modern science is its singularly vivid presentation of the fact that all our senses are extremely limited in their range,—a fact which is all important in our inquiry into the possibility of an unseen universe. It is a common and very natural mistake, that we see all there is to see, and hear all there is to hear. We have all our lives been accustomed to the five tiny windows through which all sensations come, and we inevitably fancy that they are adequate: but a very decided effort ought to be made to overcome the delusion,—very natural, I repeat, but very misleading.

that we now see and hear and touch all that there is to be seen, heard, and touched. Our five senses are all we have, and they measure only our poor range: they do not measure the boundless reaches of being, far, far beyond our ken. We can easily imagine that our senses might have been four instead of five—that the sense of smell, for instance, might have had no existence. In that case, we should have had no conception of odour; and, though the subtle causes all existed around us as now, we should for ever have been oblivious of them. Why may it not be that the lack of some sixth sense is hiding from us some still more subtle reality? From everything that grows there are physical emanations, and, as our sense of smell is acute or dull, we perceive these as odours. Why may there not be from everything that thinks and lives mental and moral emanations? and why might there not be a sense that would detect and distinguish these? Nay, may not the rudiments of that sense be actually active in our unaccountable feelings and instincts of attraction and aversion? and why may we not conclude that it is this very sense which has made some sensitives "thought-readers" and "seers"? Here, again, we are on the very threshold of spirit-life; and the great suggestion is forced upon us, that when we get beyond the hidings of the body we shall develop mental, moral, and spiritual senses that will enable us to see and know one another in our inmost selves, and as we really are: and all that new and heightened life would be perfectly natural and not supernatural at all, however supersensuous it might be.

In that great epoch-making scientific work, "The Correlation of Physical Forces," Grove says, "Myriads of organised beings may exist, imperceptible to our vision, even if we were among them: and we might be equally imperceptible to them!"

All the senses lead up to the Unseen. There is, for instance, a great deal that is very suggestive about the sense of touch, which is the indicator of our relations to external things; and a very poor and misleading indicator it is. We are absolutely certain that there are forms of matter which are to us quite invisible and intangible, and that these substances can pass through others that appear to us to be absolutely impenetrable. The gases, for instance, are as truly matter as the solid metals, and hydrogen is as much a substance as iron: and yet the one is solid to our touch, and the other is as nothing to that sense: and the gas can readily pass through the metal. It is only habit, and the limitation of our sense of touch, that lead us to think of matter in a certain subtle condition as less real than the denser substances: and, as the life-principle is itself something intensely subtle, it is quite conceivable that it might be united to matter in such a subtle condition that we, with our present gross sense of touch, would be utterly unable to come into contact with it; nay, it is even scientifically conceivable that this exquisite living substance might be the organised body of a conscious living being, and yet that, while it might itself be able to readily pass through the densest substances, it should be absolutely beyond apprehension by any of the dull crude senses at present at our command. Every object is to the hand what the hand is to it. A hand more sensitive would realise things in quite a different way. A hand is scientifically conceivable that should be subtle enough to pass through granite, and exquisite enough to feel the difference between oxygen and ozone.

It is here that the sublime laws of evolution, continuity of being, and the conservation of force, come in with their wonderful suggestions as to the persistence of life beyond the bounds and barriers of the Seen: so much so that it is almost forced upon us to infer the continuity of thought as well as of matter. It seems utterly unnatural to suppose that the lower should persist, and the higher fail and perish; that matter should be able to ebb into the Unseen and flow again into the Seen, and mind alone rise and fall on one solitary shore—begin and end on this tiny spot of earth. The inference, the longer we ponder it, becomes the more inevitable, that life and thought, no less than matter, though they may know vast changes and pass into higher or more subtle forms of being, are destined to find their home in the vast Unseen.

Thus we may reasonably conclude that the ultimate production of conscious spirit-personality is only the highest stage, on this plane of being, of the well-known process of evolution; and it is perfectly in accordance with that process, and with the great law underlying it, to trace that spirit-personality into a higher and more appropriate sphere of existence, and to find in the unseen universe both its first cause and its final home.

Assuredly we have here all the conditions of a state of being inconceivably superior to any known to us here. Imagine the life principle united to a spiritual body as subtle and exquisite as itself, and having its sphere of activity in a world perfectly adapted to its own sensitive, ethereal form of existence; surely we should there have everything that could give the most thrilling realisation of life, with all its possibilities of progress and delight. Here, "in the body pent," we know everything only through the dusky veil of the flesh, and that hides a thousand times more than it reveals; but what will it be to pass behind the veil with our growth of spirit personality; to know everything immediately; to hear, to see, to touch, at first hand, and without the veil between; to have the spirit self to one's self, without the earthly tabernacle to imprison it?

Shakespeare finely makes Lorenzo say of the harmony even now "in immortal souls," that we cannot hear it because "this muddy vesture of decay doth grossly close it in"; and, time out of mind, the finest, rarest, noblest men and women have thus discoursed of the inner self.

I feel that such thoughts as these prepare us for the evidence which leads to the conclusion that, in the unseen, there are conscious and very active beings who, under certain conditions, can and do act in and upon the sphere of the seen. Who are they? We can never be sure; but we are entitled to inferences: and if the signals received persistently indicate intelligence, and if the statements made name the operators, with confirmatory tests, we may at least be civil enough to give these operators the benefit of the doubt, and to assume that they are the persons they represent themselves to be.

(To be continued.)

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.]

Mr. Stead's Address.

SIR,—I think all the old though absent members of the "London Spiritualist Alliance" will have been interested in the account given in your issue of March 25th of the curious phenomena recorded by Mr. Stead and the discussion resulting therefrom.

First, I think that Mr. Stead deserves praise *not* because of his so-called courage of opinion, but because he disclaimed the need of any. For the life of me I could never see the necessity of praising anyone for the "courage of opinion." It is inevitable that whenever anyone, no matter who he may be, or in what circumstances, FULLY believes a thing, he must hold to it. If of reticent nature he will not hurry to declare it at once, but for all that, under favourable circumstances, he never can deny it. Mr. Stead, being of a sanguine and demonstrative nature, obeys that nature, and rushes. He deserves no praise, for he cannot help himself; but he does deserve praise for truthfulness and upright appreciation of the circumstances in deliberately refusing it.

If there should result therefrom "a boom in Spiritualism," in course of time Mr. Stead will see the importance that many writers, both of old and of to-day, attach to these things as being of vital interest; also that nothing is new, that all that is known now has been known ages ago, and that too much caution cannot be exercised in the matter of "spirit intercourse."

With all this I do not, however, propose to meddle. Time will show, and facts will speak for themselves. But I should like to say something as to the theories enunciated during the discussion, a discussion which was exceedingly interesting, and tended to show that the "automatic telepathy" practised by Mr. Stead produced other features than those remarked in automatic writing generally, in that it emanated not from "a spirit *out of*," but from one *in*, the body."

This discussion did not condemn the possibility of the thing, but the difficulty in conceiving of the matter lay in the idea as to how a person in the flesh could be perfectly ignorant that he was communicating with another person in the flesh, as in the case of the friend in financial trouble. Mr. Stead was unconscious of the information and so was the friend. It was made known to them through the automatic writing, and found to be substantially correct.

Now, all this seems of profound difficulty on ordinary grounds, but I do not think that it is impossible to understand it, if we

take advantage of the fuller knowledge of psychic matters that one can gather from studying the writings of the masters. I do not here mean only those who are called, and doubtless are, "Mahatmas or Great Souls," but those masters of "occult" thought and practice who have in past times had the courage of their opinions and have given freely of their learning, though, according to the reticence of true wisdom, in such a way that no injury should be done in merely gratifying the idle curiosity of the dabbler. From these writings I venture to say that an intellectual solution of the difficulty of the *interconnected consciousnesses* may be gathered. I say an intellectual solution. An experimental one, as I shall show, is quite another matter. Theosophy as shown by Madame Blavatsky, and Theosophy as shown by "writers ages before her" (for it is no reproach not to be new—truth is eternally old), teach that man is "made up" of several "bodies." One must use the word "body" for lack of a better. Each "body" has its own plane of consciousness, and self-consciousness is not really the function only of the body. On the contrary the body impedes the more expanded or truer self-consciousness; but here I am straying into metaphysics, and many of your readers object to what they think is a labyrinth having no issue.

Now, the masters of old knew this, and they taught it by the great doctrine of Regeneration, which is neither more nor less than true alchemy or the "chemical" re-adjustment of man as a physical being. They knew that, as man is, the higher or inner planes of consciousness could not be reached if the outer man were alone recognised as man. They knew that man was the microcosm, that in him were other sensoriums, with faculties akin to the bodily ones, only practically without their limitations. To achieve the great work of evolving these inner sensoriums, like a flower from the seed, so as to act freely through the physical man was the *experimental* work of the adept. This is vastly different from intellectual inference and surmise—there is just as much difference as between a person only saying geometry is true and his being a practical geometrician.

Necessarily a man who has achieved this great work is in possession of faculties that place him in a very different position from other people—and so much so, that the temptation to *real sin* in consequence of the enormous power and knowledge, is tremendous. Therefore, the Path, as it has always been called, has been wisely hedged in with innumerable difficulties and hindrances, so that when a neophyte becomes an adept he is too truly purged of all mistaken ideas (I prefer to use the word "mistaken" to "sinful") that he is in no danger of "making mistakes" on the earthly plane and *real sin* on the spiritual plane. Now, one inner sensorium is stronger in some people than in others, and, without going into the question of Karma and Reincarnation as causes, there are persons who are born endowed with certain physico-spiritual properties and, as I venture to think, "the writing" (p. 143) very truly replied, that some persons have their souls "very loosely connected" with their bodies. The astral or soul body is absolutely physically easily able to emerge. This inner sensorium then works on its own account as a consciousness disconnected with the physical consciousness. It has in consequence lost connection with the higher self-consciousness (*Manas* and *Buddhi*, Reason, intellectual and divine), but it is able to gather information, not to reason on it. Roughly speaking, we may say there are three sensoriums—the physical, the astral, and the celestial—each functioning perfectly on its own plane of consciousness, each one being the real to itself; but as the lower one cannot embrace either of the higher ones, and as the highest can embrace all three, we know that the *real* reality is the highest and most expanded. The knowledge on the astral plane is only just beyond the physical capacities and consciousness, and some people naturally from birth or through study have so far expanded their consciousness that they have attained to some practical acquaintance with their astral bodies. In Mr. Stead's account there were these two astral bodies in communication with each other, but *they* were masters of the situation. Mr. Stead is, I venture to say, mistaken if he is sure he is "boss" of his own hand. His astral body was the control, but as it was acting on its own account, and Mr. Stead was unable to connect the two consciousnesses, he would be quite unaware of the fact, and could not be sure as to what might be the result.

This seems, perhaps, puzzling and confused, but if so it is my fault, and not that of the theory—that man is a trinity and has the three consciousnesses in him, more or less latent, and that the *sense consciousness* of which we think so much is the least important of all. It is generally imagined that because a thing

is conceived of metaphysically it is *in reality* but a figure of speech. This is a grave error. Reality exists in every plane. It is a fact to the physical consciousness that chairs and tables exist. It is no use saying they are illusions. They are *real* to the plane on which they manifest. Carry this argument on to higher planes, and we find the true doctrine that the idea is the reality that is, the idea of a thing is the cause of its ultimate manifestation. The ultimate manifestation is true on its plane, but, so to speak, mainly the result, not the source, it is final and transitory, and in this sense is illusion. So the higher faculties of man, perceiving the source of things, say with truth and understanding, because they have the power of comparison, that earthly things are illusion. The man with the physical faculties only cannot compare, and he denies the possibility of there being any real self-consciousness except through his body. Hence, the far-reaching idea that spiritual consciousness means something *too gaseous* to be of interest or use to any one in the body. The general knowledge evinced by Mr. Stead, and also by his friend, of mundane matters, hints that astral knowledge is not necessarily "spiritual," as it is generally understood.

Liverpool.

ISABEL DE STEIGER, F.T.S.

P.S. I should not like it to be inferred that because I say the inner sensoriums or inner faculties of mankind are latent or dormant they are so completely, save in neophytes or adepts. The fact is, that everyone has all these faculties in more or less degree in active force. Hence all genius and mind in man, and hence his consciousness of right and wrong. Happily, very few men are only governed by their physical senses.

These higher faculties scintillating, as it were, through the material brain are what guard and illuminate it; but all this is different from the high range of power and knowledge which man can assume through the conscious co-ordination of the higher faculties, with the inner sensoriums—no longer dormant, but waking and active—in perfect balance and order. When one imaginatively conceives such an expanded consciousness, *realising* on each plane, one can see that infinite perfection of character must be achieved by that master who can use his gifts, the result of his labour, his hardly earned heritage, as they ought to be. This, moreover, can be but surmise on our part. I have only ventured to touch upon the astral or soul or double consciousnesses described by Mr. Stead. The account of "Julia" is most interesting, but I dare not venture on the debateable ground of such spirit control, for on that plane it appears to me phenomena are multiform, and would require an adept to explain truly. The chapter in the "Perfect Way" "On the Discerning of Spirits" appears to me still to contain the most valuable and direct information touching these phenomena. The statement of Mr. Edward Maitland, regarding the knowledge put forth in this and other works of the authors as being gained by restored memory, means that the inner sensorium in their case being able to communicate with the outer brain in a *same* and *orderly* manner through its power, physical memory became not a thing of the one life or the one person, but of many lives, many persons, and many things.

The "infinite vision" of the Eastern sage also means that the eye of the inner sensorium sees in vibrative sympathy with the physical brain, so the vision is recorded in his waking consciousness. Of course there is also the possibility that the soul or astral body can leave the physical body when it is loosely connected, and another one can enter unsuited to the body, one that cannot ever co-ordinate with the spirit, and whose ingress is so distinctly unlawful that it is out of order—such a one may have much knowledge which may dazzle the physical brain; but this is a state of things which the masters of occult knowledge earnestly beseech their students to guard against, and hence lie, in my humble opinion, the dangers of spirit intercourse. People whose bodies are concrete and *tightly* put together—the non-mediumistic ones, the non-lunar people—may experiment with comparative security. Not so the lunar and mediumistic ones.

STR.—Respecting Mr. Stead's writing experiences, which are very interesting, I should like to inquire if Mr. Stead is conscious of the answer, as a "whole" or "word by word," before it is written.

If Mr. Stead is conscious of the answer before it is materialised in writing, I can scarcely see the necessity for the writing at all. Why not make it a merely mental or psychical process? For years I have doubted the fact of purely automatic writing, while readily admitting the impulse to receive and transmit mental impressions.

AN OLD INQUIRER.

The Evolution of Humanity.

SIR,—According to your review of his pamphlet, Mr. Scott-Elliott seems to have accepted Theosophical teaching with a blind faith analogous to that of an old-fashioned Christian who took the orthodox Scriptures in their plain, literal, and grammatical sense. This is what all our teachers expressly warn us against, and Mr. Elliott is hardly likely to have forgotten their caution.

But Oriental writings are notoriously figurative, and each symbol has so many meanings that it is by no means easy to get at its ultimate signification, and still more difficult is it to express occult ideas in language that the uninitiated can understand. Besides the literal sense may be perfectly true as used, but if the writer is treating of a spiritual aspect and you apply his words literally to a physical aspect much confusion must necessarily arise.

Take, for instance, what is said about Mars. The statement in the quotation is that "Mars was the last planet occupied by Man." I understand by what follows that, since Man left the Mars world, it has ceased to be a sphere of active life, and has gone into Devachan, or rest. The sun of spiritual vitality no longer shines upon it; consequently it is in spiritual obscurity, no matter how much physical light it may receive from our physical sun, or how much it may reflect upon Man's present abode. Your correspondent seems to understand it quite differently. Who is right?

Then as regards gravitation. This force Theosophy identifies with attraction, and the existence of "attraction" necessitates the existence of its opposite, "repulsion." Now repulsion needs a location as well as attraction. Is it not, then, possible that this location is what is termed the four invisible globes and that there force acts from centre to surface so as to balance, in cosmic economy, the attraction from surface to centre which we call gravitation?

Of course, I offer these suggestions simply as my own guesses at the truth. It must never be forgotten that the most advanced English Theosophists are mere students. None of us pretend to be Masters in occultism. At best we are only pupil-teachers who can quote the "words of the wise" and give crude interpretations of their "dark sayings." We know enough to feel sure that we are on the right track and we are diligently pursuing it; but just as you would not ask anyone to solve an abstruse mathematical problem when he had only mastered simple arithmetic, so must you not require us to expound ultimate truths when, as yet, we can only deal with elementary ones.

The Hindu Chronology and unverifiable history have, of course, to be received with due caution. They may be, as asserted, true statements from personal knowledge, or they may be only philosophical deductions in the form of poetical narrative. Subba Row has clearly shown that the Māhabhārata war primarily refers, not to a contest between actual potentates, but to the fierce struggle in the mind of a Chelā when he determines to master his carnal desires and to devote himself to Raja Yoga. At the same time it is quite possible that there was a war between the Suryavansas and the Indovansas about B.C. 5,000, and that incidents in that war have been utilised by the philosophical poet in his great epic.

As for a mixed race, like our own, being a Re-incarnation of the old Romans, Mr. Elliott may have definite and satisfactory evidence which warrants his making this assertion, but I must frankly admit that I have never been fortunate enough to meet with it, so a verdict of "not proven" is all I can record on this issue.

Of course it would be exceedingly interesting to have accurate information on these matters; still, after all, they are but of secondary importance. The great aim of Theosophy is to deify Man—that is, so to enlarge and purify his consciousness that he will forget personal desires and be only for the good of humanity. All its teaching is in furtherance of this end, and it seeks to develop intuition as the best means of bringing us into direct communion with the truest and wisest of our race.

Theosophy knows no personal, that is, limited God, but postulates a divine Be-ness, an Ante-All, as the Causeless Cause of universal consciousness. In this consciousness divine Ideas are intuited. These Ideas and their countless differentiations are evolved by divine Thought, and are manifested in suitable forms on various planes of Being, the physical ranking as the lowest and the last.

To account for Evolution, we are told, "The Unconscious evolved the universe only in the hope of attaining clear self-

consciousness, that is, of becoming man" (S.D., 1-106), and then step by step, a cosmic theory is constructed.

Of course, within the scope of a letter it is impossible to give more than the barest sketch of the teaching, but, possibly enough has been said to prove that, at any rate, we have a rational working hypothesis. If that should induce any to study the facts and arguments by which this hypothesis is sustained, I do not think they will accuse me of having caused them to waste their time.

R. B. HOLT, F.T.S.

Mr. Tindall.

SIR,—I trust you will allow me a few words of explanation with regard to your criticisms on my letter in your last issue.

In "LIGHT," of July 19th, 1890, in a pamphlet entitled "Seventeen Years' Experience," in the "Agnostic Journal," and also in numerous lectures, I have detailed much of the phenomena I have obtained and their proofs.

In the February issue of "Astarte" you will find records of my séances for the last eighteen months. These are taken from the books of the London Spiritualist Federation, which can be inspected by any earnest inquirer.

Now, I maintain that when I have given so many proofs of my mediumship, and these are put in juxtaposition with my long labours in the Cause, labours (non-professional) without any fee or reward, even if I were not to give those further evidences which you require some weight ought to be attached to my statements and some value given to my advice. Nor should the result of these long investigations be said to be worse than useless or actively pernicious.

It must be remembered that to give full accounts of these matters would be to unveil the most private affairs of my life for public scrutiny. Many of the phenomena I speak of happened years ago, and were given me at that period to aid in my own development. It was also before the times of rigid analysis came into vogue. However, as I am so distinctly challenged, I will endeavour as soon as I have leisure to prepare a statement, and, if possible, to find sufficient facts without trenching too much on private matters.

But it is, unfortunately, the phenomena in connection with those events which people cannot expect anyone to make public which form the strongest evidences of spiritual power, and also of both the dangers and comforts of Occultism. Every student must find these things out for himself, and if he loves truth and perseveres he will, undoubtedly, be taught as I have been.

I hope the statements in my former letter may not be so pernicious as is supposed, and while I will endeavour to furnish "LIGHT" with the proofs required, yet I do believe that this publishing broadcast to the "unprepared" everything we know is one of the many dangers which are looming ahead. The ignorant, who have scoffed for so long, will begin to believe, get frightened and call, as usual, for Governmental interference, and then the witchcraft persecutions in a new form will begin again. I hope in a few weeks to send you what you require.

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

[There is no desire to publish "broadcast" to the unprepared all that "we" know. But why announce the results at all if there is this fear? The most elementary acquaintance with secret knowledge should have taught our correspondent the absurdity of doing so. We do not think Mr. Tindall need fear even proximate martyrdom.—ED. "LIGHT."]

Theosophy: Its Reasonableness or Otherwise.

SIR,—Mr. R. Donaldson is either so obtuse or such an adept at perversion that it is rather difficult to deal with him seriously.

We were discussing the unfounded charge of credulity which he had brought against leading Theosophists. I instanced Buddha's precept, and said that but in few instances this rule is departed from, certainly not in those he mentioned. My meaning, of course, was that Theosophy does not sanction any Theosophist accepting any statement on the authority of any one, but that a few students might violate this rule. Your correspondent twists my words into an admission that Theosophists play fast and loose with moral principles. This is as unwarranted as it is uncourteous and untrue.

Then he complains that we do not dogmatise about Re-incarnation. The facts are, those who believe they know, do speak positively; those who do not know accept their statements *cum grano salis*. Surely this is the wisest course and is quite consistent with Buddha's rule. This rule, by-the-way, has no

SOCIETY WORK.

with any man beyond his own consciousness of its deness.

a person of Mr. Donaldson's very limited knowledge to that he can determine what are our root-doctrines is creditable to his assurance than to his sagacity.

in, when each Theosophist knows no God but the Deity him, and himself is the priest who sacrifices his own nature to his own spiritual being, it requires a very imagination to discover the possibility of a priesthood in common acceptance of the term; with Mr. Donaldson's al burlesque of it we have nothing whatever to do.

R. B. HOLT, F.T.S.

The Double.

SIR,—In reply to "Verax" I can only say that the fact I mentioned at the last meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, of the appearance of the double of a living person and holding a long conversation with the friend so visited, I had at first hand from the person in question almost immediately after its occurrence, and that I regard my informant as perfectly reliable; but as the persons concerned are still living and the subject of their talk was of a purely personal and private character, I do not at present feel at liberty to make any further statement on the matter.

T. SHORTER.

"A Word of Warning."

SIR,—I have read with much emotion Mrs. Britten's article headed "Margaret Fox Kane." I hope you will find a corner for a word of warning. It seems to me that stimulants and sedatives are weapons used with deft assiduity by "the Adversaries," always actively against us, and now more than ever on the alert; because high influences have chosen these last days of this century for an outpouring into the souls of men such as has rarely happened.

I have within my small experience known several cases where sensitives, naturally gentle, docile, good, have succumbed just as the two younger Fox girls were overcome. It often happens that the best natures are most liable to the abuse of drugs. And the demons inseparable from alcohol use it as a skilful fencer thrusts his rapier at the heart.

I am not writing as an advocate of what is called "total abstinence." For most of us temperance is much better than vulgar, violent resistance; but it is plain that fragile, highly-wrought vessels can only be filled with aroma of the gods when their fulness renders adulteration impossible.

General Drayson's excellent article on "Breathing" in this month's "Nineteenth Century" permits me to offer his advice to persons who, by reason of high-strung nervousness, require bracing. Let them go into the best air they can get, and inspire it deeply into the lungs, and then exhale forcibly through the mouth, closing it immediately afterwards. Ten minutes of this potent exercise, done when there is a craving for a stimulant, will do permanently what champagne does temporarily, with freedom from the bad after effects which are ruinous. Eastern ascetics know how important is right custody of the breath.

And now I want to add a word on another subject. Spiritualists are quite right to get together. Lord Bacon wrote: "Certain it is, and it is one of the greatest of Nature's 'secrets,' that the minds of men are more open to impression and affections when many are gathered together than when they are alone." Now, especially, to aid the outpouring of spirits, there should be frequent gatherings together with music and incense. The reading of a set paper, no doubt, has its uses. But the assemblage of souls seeking for the same thing is of immense importance; and handshaking and genial conversation, absolutely free from the superintendence of Mrs. Grundy, will work charms much more potent for good than the dull stand-offishness and solemn silence of sham respectability.

GILBERT ELLIOTT.

The Soul's Survival.

SIR,—If it be a fact that nothing survives the body in, or with, or by, or from, which it originated, "C.C.M.'s" argument is a valid one; if not a fact, it is not worth the paper it is written on. In my last letter I mentioned certain garden bulbs as showing that it is not a fact, giving one example out of scores that might have been named. Now can "C.C.M." on the other hand point to one single thing in the natural world, the nature of which is not to survive the body from which it originated? If he can I indulge the hope that he will. And until he has done so my conclusion must be exactly the opposite of his. Reasoning from the analogy of what we observe taking place all around us, I do not see how to avoid the conclusion that if the soul originates in, or from, the body it not only can survive it, but that it is the very law of its origin to do so.

GEORGE HARPER.

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

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings each Sunday at 7 p.m. On Sunday next several speakers will address the meeting.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S. E.—Sunday at 11.30, circle; at 3 p.m., lyceum; at 7 p.m. an address. Wednesday, circle at 8.30 p.m., for inquirers. Mr. Long will be in Brighton during May, and local Spiritualists requiring his services should write at once, as his time will be very much engaged.—J. PERRY.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday last, Mrs. Bliss, the well-known clairvoyant, spoke to a very full meeting, and much interest was shown in the description of spirit friends known to some present. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. A. J. Sutton; 7 p.m., Mr. O. Pitcher. On the 23rd, Mr. W. G. Long, on "Death and the Resurrection."—C.I.H.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Thursday Mrs. Bliss gave clairvoyant descriptions to a large circle of friends. On Sunday the Rev. A. Smith gave an address showing that in all things we should be loyal to the Spirit of Christ; followed by a reading from the "Christian World" showing how every action of our daily life is impressed upon our Spiritual being, distorting or beautifying our spirit as the case may be. On Sunday Mr. F. Vaughan will give an address at 7 o'clock. Thursday at 8—Clairvoyance.—J. B. Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—In the absence of any appointed speaker, Mr. Mason gave an address on Sunday upon the "Doctrines of the Popular Faith Contrasted with the Teachings of Modern Spiritualism." Mr. Norton and Mrs. Mason's guides followed with inspirational discourses and good clairvoyance. Sunday at 7 p.m., Mr. G. D. Wyndoe. Tuesday at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason. At 58, Tavistock-crescent, Westbourne Park, on Saturday at 8 p.m., Mrs. Mason, inquirers welcome.—J. H. B., Hon. Secretary.

SPIRITUAL MISSION ROOM, 19, SUNDERLAND-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday an harmonious meeting was opened with singing and invocation, after which a short inspirational address was given, followed by clairvoyant descriptions and psychometry. Questions were answered to the perfect satisfaction of those present. One gentleman, a stranger, was treated for a disease of long standing. One outcome of our meetings, so recently started, is the request for a room to be opened for a week-night séance in the W. or W.C. district. Any reader of this who is willing to let a room for this purpose will kindly communicate.—DEBORAH.

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 Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. J. Webster, 5, 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, Middellaan, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; 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 Coover, 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.

"THE HIGHER ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM."—It has been believed that this work was out of print, but a few copies have just been found. They may be had for 2s. 9d. each, post-free, on application to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi.

APOLOGY TO MESSRS. GLENDINNING AND DUGUID.—We take the following from "The Amateur Photographer," of April 7th, 1893.—"Our readers will remember our article on Psychic Photography, written after hearing Mr. Traill Taylor's paper read at the London and Provincial Photographic Association; in this we stated that the darkening of the room did not satisfy us, and was a weak point at which trickery and chicanery might be introduced if anyone were so disposed. Messrs. Glendinning and Duguid, however, have assumed that we have imputed to them a want of good faith. This was not our intention, and we have to express our regret should anyone have read us in this way and to withdraw the same."