

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Our correspondent, Mr. Gilbert Elliot, sends us a letter in which he suggests combination—in other words, that all who believe in the Unseen should sink minor differences and join hands in the great conflict against Materialism. We fear such a union is impossible; it could only come about when there was such a consensus of opinion as to facts and the meaning of facts as we are not likely to arrive at for some time to come. It was the earnest wish of Stainton Moses to bring about a federation among Spiritualists and Spiritists themselves, but we know how it failed. He succeeded in founding the London Spiritualist Alliance, and even that is not supported as it might be. On Thursday, June 1st, at St. James's Hall there was a goodly company, as indeed there always is at the Conversations of the Alliance, but at the fortnightly meetings at Duke-street, although visitors are welcomed, few avail themselves of the opportunity, except on such special occasions as that on which Mr. Stead attended; so that there is but little encouragement to hope for federation or combination with others outside their own ranks. It is, perhaps, well that each body of thinkers should work on its own lines for the present. There must come a time when the roads will meet, as material science has already begun to meet the results of Spiritualistic and occult investigation; till then it is to be feared we must wait.

We desire to call attention to the very remarkable story called "An Enigma" which appeared in the May number of "Good Words," and from which certain extracts appear in the current number of "LIGHT." The phenomenon therein described may possibly not be so uncommon as is supposed. Some years ago the present writer was told by a young girl, then about eighteen, that when she was quite little she had had for a long time an imaginary playfellow who was quite a real personage to her. It would be interesting to know of any other such experiences.

In last week's "LIGHT" there were given some extracts from Lord Ronald Gower's "Joan of Arc." These extracts were from the interrogatories which took place during her trial at Rouen. It has been the custom to treat this young girl as an enthusiastic visionary, but we have in that evidence a description, exact in almost all its details, of the modern "medium." There were the voices and the lights. But one important fact stands out in connection with the life of this girl, and that is her perfect purity. That so great a genius as Voltaire should have sullied the pages of French literature by his disgusting attack on the Maid of Orleans is a shame for all time, for the evidence shows how little right he had to make his vile insinuations. No

such results could have been obtained as were obtained by Joan, unless her life had been pure and holy. And how little we have appreciated this wonderful, inspired girl. It was by no spell that she saved Orleans; she was only eighteen—a peasant girl—when she was burnt, and yet said Alençon, the great French captain, "Everybody was amazed to see that in all that appertained to warfare she acted with as much knowledge and capacity as if she had been twenty or thirty years trained in the art of war." And said Thibault d'Armagnac at the celebrated trial for the rehabilitation of the Maid, "In the manner of the conduct and ordering of troops, in that of placing them in battle array, and of animating the men, Joan of Arc had as much capacity for these things as the most accomplished captain in the art of war." Then, whence came this wondrous ability?

This story of Joan of Arc leads one to think once again with some irritation of the phrase "Modern Spiritualism." That the Fox sisters should have been the humble means of reviving an old belief in no sense makes that old belief a modern thing. It is not a question of forty years, or four hundred years, but of all time, this question of communication with the Unseen. Modern Spiritualism does not exist; modern developments of it there are, modern ways of investigating it there may be, and there are modern interpretations of its phenomena, but the phenomena and the practice have existed through all the ages, as this story of Joan of Arc shows clearly. That the thing existed at Philippi Mr. Edward White knows full well, else we should not have been treated to that wonderful lecture on the soothsaying slave-girl.

Mr. White, by-the-way, has given his last lecture on Spiritualism. Speaking of its latter-day developments, he said, according to the "Christian World":—

It first manifested itself in the uplifting of tables; then the tables not only rose, but remained in the air. After the tappings were heard, letters of the alphabet were touched by a pointer, and the names and messages of the dead were in that way spelt out. So the wonders went on until visible forms appeared in the rooms of scientific men, who sat with doors closed fast against all visitors, and communications were written by hands which had no knowledge of what was coming. Men were borne out of one window into another; photographs were fetched fifty miles from locked drawers, to the horror and alarm of witnesses known to him personally; and photographs were taken of spirits that showed that stark indecency was added to practical atheism.

This hardly seems the true case as to the sequences, but be that as it may the next assertion will cause some amusement in Buckingham-street:—

These things were now accepted as facts by such a hard-headed society as that of Psychical Research, which found it impossible to doubt their reality.

That the "spook" is a poor hand at imitating the divine writers" is possibly true, and we have no doubt that "the last page Mr. White would ever think of resorting to for light in time of darkness would be that written by a Spiritual author," but when Mr. White asserts

that there is no "thrilling hope in any of their writings," we differ from him entirely. That reams of twaddle are poured out in trance addresses goes without saying, just as cartloads of stuff are published every year by the publishers of religious books; but if the Spiritualist has a certainty where Mr. White has only a conjecture, or as he calls it, a belief, the "thrilling hope" is rather with the Spiritualist than with the Religionist.

As to the miracles of the Bible as compared with those of Spiritualism, Mr. White is once more not quite correct:—

The Bible contained throughout a record of miracles about which the most wonderful fact was that not one of them had descended to the level of Indian jugglery or the most respectable example of modern Spiritualistic marvels. There was no record of nosegays dropped through the ceiling, no example of inspired verse so poor that even friendship was ashamed, no post-office trick of communication by aerial telegraph.

One would like to know what is meant by the level of Indian jugglery. There are certainly no records of nosegays dropped through the ceiling, yet the following quotation from Judges vi. 36-40, is instructive:—

And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand as thou hast said,

Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said.

And it was so; for he rose early on the morrow, and thrust his fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl of water.

And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once; let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.

And God did so that night; for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

This is hardly up to the level of some Indian jugglery, and certainly not equal to the nosegay coming through the ceiling. And who was that God with whom Gideon was so familiar?

THERE IS NO DEATH.

There is no death. The stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore;
And bright in heaven's jewelled crown
They shine for evermore.

There is no death. The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer's showers
To golden grain or mellow fruit,
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

The granite rocks disorganise
To feed the hungry moss they bear,
The forest leaves drink daily life
From out the viewless air.

There is no death. The heavens may fall,
The flowers may fade and pass away;
They only wait through wintry hours
The coming of the May.

And ever near us, though unseen,
The dear immortal spirits tread;
For all the boundless universe
Is life—there is no dead.

—LORD LYTON.

WHEN one comes to think of it, it is just as strange that a ghost should disappear, as that it should appear. How is it managed? Out of three ghosts which I have viewed, none disappeared, all went past, or round the corner, and I did not know they were ghosts till later circumstances made that theory highly probable, if not precisely capable of exact demonstration. One of them certainly was not anybody, could not have been, but was in a dress different from the dress actually worn at the moment by the living person of whom it was the phantom. If we may sleep suddenly for a minute, we may dream in that minute; but how is one to know one was asleep? Some cases of contradictory evidence may have arisen from these queer psychological conditions. A seer may be in for perjury with the best desire to tell the truth.—ANDREW LANG, in "Longman's Magazine."

"DEATH."

The following extracts are from a lecture on "Death," delivered by "Sapere Aude," F.T.S., at the Adelphi Lodge on February 6th, 1893:—

Almost universal in the ancient world was the doctrine of successive lives, of a series of earthly experiences. Reincarnation was the most general of all *post mortem* ideas, it was reserved for the religion which sprang up on the ruins of Roman civilisation to popularise the dogma of a single life for each individual. It is very important to bear constantly in mind the fact that the present views regarding *post mortem* states, and of an eternity of weal or woe, an alternative of never-ending reward or punishment, without further experience, are derived from the extensive spread of nominal Christianity, a doctrine which has reached its present development by a series of changes at first by the acceptance of dogmas at the hands of dominant teachers who evolved them from their own sense of what was fitting, and later by successive concessions to public opinion and scientific investigation. Apart from parable and allegory, one cannot find in the words of Jesus any assertion of eternal burning, or of everlasting white-robed choral service. The red-hot hell of the most orthodox European Christian, like the tablet and horned Satan, was evolved from the morbid fancies of Egypt and priest in the dark ages of Europe. Eternity is truly said to be inconceivable, and as this is true, so is it true that no such period without change can exist. Longer than a life, longer than the life of a nation, longer than the life-history of a planetary world perhaps—but any stage of any existence, to be endless is a contradiction in terms, it indeed cannot be conceived, nor can it exist.

Death introduces a new order of things, new associations, new developments, but neither of these, nor any further change will be infinite, so long as time exists or so far as time is conceivable—the human mind may indeed conceive of a spiritual plane, of spiritual persons beyond time and out of place—but in time—the idea of "changelessness" is an empty folly.

If I were asked, why Christianity has at once spread so widely, and at the same time why the civilisation of Christian nations is so honeycombed with vice and hypocrisy, I should attribute as the reason, its dogma of a single life alone, to each individual. Even to-day, after eighteen hundred years of Christian domination in Europe, it must be confessed that in Christian England, the purest country of the world, the ratio of criminals to population is higher than in countries where the older great religions bear sway, and especially higher than in Buddhist and Brahmin lands, and higher than among either Hebrews or Mohammedans. Ancient Hebrews knew nought of immortality in joy, or in punishment, Rabbinic Judaism taught the doctrine of successive lives—so did the Mysteries of Ancient Egypt, so did the Greek aporrheta, and Roman cultus, and so did and do the great Indian religions; and I believe the ideal of subsequent lives on earth—each tinged by the conduct of the previous life, and each either hastening on or delaying a long and blissful reunion with the divine—tends more to a life of morality, purity, and benevolence than the ideal of an almost inconceivable eternal heaven, or the notion of a hell of eternal torment—inconsistent with the ideal of a benevolent Supreme Being.

Yes, but why should these renewed lives be on this earth only? Continuous existence both before and after this earth life seems to be a necessity, but is the existence of the individual equally a necessity?

It matters but little whether disease or accident has brought a man down to the valley of the shadow of death, at whose entrance we are now to meet him, and to trace his fate; whether he be in the home surrounded by friends or alone upon a desert, he must submit to the inevitable. If the death be sudden, the early stages are rapidly run through; and if the end be lingering the events of dissolution are all dwelt upon, and more fully realised.

How does the lecturer know this? Is sudden death then a desirable thing? It is open to grave doubt whether the "early stages" are "rapidly run through." May not the sudden disruption itself be an evil?

As to the Kama-rupa, the animated though mindless shell of the dead man, the lecturer speaks in this way:—

The Kama-rupa of the perfect man would receive no contribution from the high Manas; it would be a brute, a shell,

senseless phantom, soon fading out, an elementary without evil influence. But the Kama-rupas of the wicked, and of suicides, although invisible to us men, are terrible realities, and sources of many dangers; they are the deluding spooks of the seance room, the dwellers on the threshold, to whom, especially, the unwary and untrained experimenter in magic, exposes himself, hence the risk of fooling with the occult arts.

Whether this be the right interpretation or not, that the "dweller on the threshold" is not a figment of the imagination some know only too well.

The moral teachings of the lecturer can be applied to themselves by all:—

Let us work while it is yet day, let us cultivate length of days to obtain measure of progress—let us develop while we have the opportunity. But we are under Karmic law which decides for us how long this present opportunity must last, within certain limits; we cannot anticipate the decision. We should work without personal ambition, as those who are ambitious; we should struggle upward, as those who fight for self, but we should fight for all; respect life as those do who desire life for its own sake: do these things and you will be as happy as those who live for happiness.

How excellent a thing it must be to spend a long life well, and to attain at last to death as the end of a long and arduous journey, to fall asleep in peace as from fatigue. For the aged, the final scene is often brief and the phenomena of dying are imperceptible. At such a time the vivid recollections of a long life spent in benevolent self-sacrifice, in zealous endeavour to do the right, must constitute that *ethanasia* so much to be desired by all. Let us endeavour then so to live as to have no fear of death: holding such doctrines as I have described, to confess to a fear of death is to confess to an ill-spent life.

"IDOL WORSHIP."

The following extract from an account of certain New Guinea customs is taken from the "Theosophist" for May. It throws a curious side-light on the meaning of idolatry:—

It is the custom of the Motumotu people, a powerful tribe in the Papuan Gulf, to make representations in wood of the renowned departed men of their tribe. These images are treated as counterparts or spirits of the dead men the figures are supposed to represent; hence, when they consult their images, which is invariably done on all topics concerning the tribe, they imagine them to talk, and themselves to receive wise counsel from the figure as they did when the man was alive, and they mostly act upon the advice so imparted to them. The Kadisu (spirit), sometimes named after the individual the image represents, is located in a special compartment in the extreme end of the Elamo, a dark and musty place indeed. The Elamo is a house up to a hundred feet long with a width of about twenty-five feet, a sort of club-house where the men sleep apart from the women. The privileged man or sorcerer who can converse with the idols enters into the dark and supposed sacred chamber where they are kept, secure from the gaze of ordinary mortals, and so consults them upon the subject the people are desirous to be enlightened on—such as war, family quarrels, or trading expeditions, or any other important undertaking the tribe may be intending to embark on. Kadisu can produce illness, death, health, and most that is evil. He is the cause of wreckage of canoes, if offended with some of the members aboard; and should anything happen to a trading expedition undertaken by the people without first seeking advice from Kadisu, then woe to the man or men, who urged on the journey; he or they stand in imminent danger of being killed by those immediately concerned in the calamity; in fact, Kadisu is the solace of all their troubles.

The sorcerers often obtain their revelations in dreams, which they cannot account for in any other way except as coming from Kadisu, and whatever their impressions may be, when purported to come from him, through direct consultation or dreams, they are always carried out to the very letter. No woman is permitted to set eyes on the idols for fear of provoking their wrath; to let such "*inferior beings*" as women look upon them would mean destruction to the people. It is only old men, or professional sorcerers, who are the favoured mediums. The professional class are always paid, and, if their predictions do not turn out favourable, they always create loop-holes, in case of accidents; yet the spirits are implicitly believed in. At the

same time, there are instances where these conjurers have to pay the penalty of death for unfavourable predictions, while the spirits or idols remain uninjured.

RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES.

FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.

No. XLVIII.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

May 23rd, 1875.—During dinner time black and white pearls were placed on the table near my daughter. We met as usual in the evening. Raps commenced before the lights were extinguished. Much exquisite violet scent was blown over the circle, and the room appeared full of masses of floating light. Odorafa manifested, making a long musical wail in the air; the sound was very sweet and by it he answered questions. Mr. S. M. saw a hand hovering over the table dropping something. Just as he spoke a large pearl bead fell near us, apparently from a great height. We counted about twenty which had fallen on the table; two or three fell into our hands. G. and the Welsh Harper then manifested and many other sounds were heard on the table and about the room, including the "fairy bells." Sparks of light were seen darting round the medium. He described a tall, commanding looking figure standing near me, and then said: "It is Dr. Dee." While he was speaking a crash came close to my hand on to the table like a thunder bolt. We were all greatly startled. Mr. S. M. told him he must go away unless he could manifest more gently; he then answered our questions by rapping quietly. Sade controlled Mr. S. M. for the first time. He spoke in a low peculiar voice, quite unlike the medium's, saying: "Sade is speaking to you." He then said that it was he who had played the organ the other night, and he hoped to do it again. He influenced the medium to get up and blow the organ, while he made it sound, although the instrument was closed. Mr. S. M. returned to his seat, but appeared excited, saying he saw Sade sitting on the music stool. He made a dart at him, going through him, pushing him against the wall of the room, or through it, as he remarked, "He is gone, now he is coming back." Mr. S. M. continued standing by the organ, still closed, while Sade made several loud notes apparently using the medium's breath, as I heard him gasping repeatedly. I then asked Sade to come and sound notes on a small harmonium while I blew the instrument. He did so, and said another evening he would play on the large one if I would blow for him. A great quantity of scent was thrown over the circle and Mr. S. M. described the room as being filled with spirits. Catharine came and rapped very briskly, telling us through the alphabet to "cease."

May 27th.—After the usual physical manifestations Emperor controlled for a short time and said, "The gems that have been brought to you at different times were charged with a certain magnetic power which unites us to you. You must not keep them in juxtaposition. They are sacred deposits, and must be kept for the use for which they were intended. Each has its own peculiar property, and loses much by association with others. We can crystallise from the atmosphere objects which in your world would have been formed by natural processes. The hour is at hand when the world of spirit will have far more power over your sphere than at any time of which you are conscious. Much doubt and difficulty will arise from this. Everything on your earth is now in a disturbed condition, the external evidence of the internal forces of which we are to you the exponents. Unfortunately the lower powers can counterfeit almost everything that we can produce." Emperor said he hoped to leave us a sign of his presence, and at the conclusion of the seance we found a piece of paper with Emperor's signature.

July 23rd.—We met as usual. After the control was established Emperor said: "We have somewhat to say to you and may have no other opportunity for some time to come. Since we last spoke to you many things have occurred which are of great significance. The action of the adversaries, fraud and deception and general antagonism, are at work. The French photographer's iniquity has been so flagrant as to cause many to go back, but out of evil comes good, for when the evil is made manifest the good appears more clearly. Hence you will learn to put into practice the Apostolic injunction to 'try the spirits' and cease

to consider a disembodied spirit something desirable whether it be of God or His enemies. Strange, to us most strange, that men should not see the proofs we bring of our mission. To the vast majority our words would seem as idle tales. This is a lesson taught by past experience, hence we have withdrawn ourselves of late, but be not disheartened, for it is well that the smooth waters should be troubled sometimes. Divine truth is not choked, even though men do not receive it. Your age has lost the essence of the Divine. In all ages, of which we know anything, men have worshipped God. The human race is morally, mentally, and physically diseased, and requires for these diseases long treatment."

After this last séance we left London for Shanklin. We sat several times, but I find I took no record of the séances; to fill up the gap I have copied extracts from Dr. S.'s diary.

August 25th.—At this séance coral and scent were brought. Mentor and Pauline manifested. John Dee gave a most violent blow.

August 26th.—Pearls and coral brought. Much scent.

August 27th.—A cameo carved out of a shell, in our presence, and brought by the spirits. Emperor spoke. Much coral again brought, and an emerald was brought in the light after dinner.

August 31st.—Séance good. Kabbila's lights, also Mentor's. Very good scent. Cameo made by Magus.

September 2nd.—A little bell repeatedly and even violently rung close to me. Kabbila's light visible.

September 6th.—Séance good, pearls found under the table. Ruby, sapphire, and emerald brought. Abraham Florentine came with almost uncontrollable power.

September 7th.—Two cameos cut out of a shell during dinner. ["These shells Mr. S. M. had picked up in the morning while walking out with us; he was evidently spiritually directed to them, as he suddenly darted forward and picked them up. He took them home, and placed them on the mantelpiece in our dining-room. While we were dining we heard sundry raps, and a chipping sound going on. Through raps on the dining-room table we were told to look under Mr. S. M.'s chair, and on the mantelpiece. Under the chair, which had a loose cover over it reaching to the ground, we found one cameo, and on the mantelpiece the other, and as far as I can remember broken fragments of the shell."—Note by Mrs. S.]

September 7th, evening.—Good séance. Dee, Abraham Florentine, and Magus manifested; bell rang.

September 9th.—Ivory cross brought for Rosie.

September 10th.—Beads; lights nearly all the time.

September 12th.—A pearl seen falling at dinner-time by Mr. S. M. and Mrs. S. At the séance, pearls, coral, emerald. New musical sound. Emperor.

September 15th.—Wooden cross thrown down between self and back of chair by Magus; also a cameo.

["After the séance was over, and the room lighted, an intaglio fell from a great height, apparently running down the window curtain; seen by Mr. S. M. and Mrs. S. No one was in the neighbourhood of the window when it fell."—Note by Mrs. S.]

October 3rd, London.—Mr. Percival joined the circle this evening. After the usual manifestations of raps, scent, and the ringing of a little bell, Emperor controlled, and after offering up a solemn prayer, said: "We have preferred speaking to you ourselves to-night, on the nature of the spirit-world, spirit, and its ultimate destiny. In doing so, we would first put before you what wise men of other ages have known and gathered up of past revelations. Their knowledge would not be intelligible without previous knowledge, as they are written by initiates couched in language which you could not understand. The information we have to give lies at the root of all spirit-teaching. Spirit is in itself eternal. We will speak of it first before it reaches your earth. It had a prior existence in the spheres which underlie, surround, and control your world. Matter is but the shell which encloses the energising and animating spirit beneath it. One of the properties of matter is its inertia; it can do nothing. It is governed and animated by spirit beneath it, which spirit is individualised when incarnated. The divine breath, as the ancients phrased it, dwells within the spiritual body. All spirit finds its home in space, until it takes upon it a body of flesh, and at the same time a soul is breathed into it, and it then becomes immortal. Before spirit is incarnated it is without free will and moral consciousness, without a soul, or immortality. An incarnated spirit becomes accountable for its actions, and becomes immortal. It becomes a microcosm, a representative of

that Divinity of which it enshrines a spark, and thus it becomes powerful over matter.

"Elementary spirits are, as you may say, outlines of the perfect human being without bodies or souls. They have intelligence, like clever dogs, and are concerned principally in the production of physical manifestations. They have no moral consciousness, and will play any part to amuse those with whom they are brought in contact; hence comes the foolish message. They are of all shades and grades, and are produced according to laws we will not now explain. Laws are the effects, spirit the cause. The elementary spirits have their own world, and their aim and object (like yours) is to progress. They can originate nothing, but can read your thoughts, and can act any part that is likely to please you. Hence the question arises, How do you know that you are not conversing with elementary spirits in a circle? They have no power of originating anything. If the minds of the medium and circle are blank, then no elementary spirit can communicate with you. In mixed circles you have no guarantee that any immortal spirit will communicate. Usually the physical manifestations are entirely produced by elementary spirits.

"Round your world there is a spiritual sphere, from which all spirit comes, and to which it returns. There are also the spheres of work, of which we have spoken to you and the spheres of contemplation. They are states, not places. The seven spheres of work are round your earth, and through them each incarnated spirit passes. The atmosphere of spirit that surrounds your earth is the spiritual world. To dwell in it although you know it not; it is similar to your world, only more beautiful and sublimated. Spirit, in order to manifest, must be substantial and have a form, though spiritual. In the spirit-world there are the same gradations of substances that you have, such as vegetable, mineral, and animal. Thus the change from your world to ours is only a change of condition. A man born blind cannot understand what light is, and can only believe in it on the evidence of many persons, or of one on whom he can rely. Yet if he gains sight he has only changed his state, not his place. So when you have thrown off your material body, you will not have changed your place, only your state.

"Did you ever think that none of your fellow creatures have ever seen you? They have seen your body, but not yourself: they only see the veil of matter, not the spirit that underlies it; but when your eyes are purged you will see the spirit, and know that spirit animates all: builds up the animal body, informs and controls it, and will remain when all that you now think so solid has vanished into space. As one of your teachers has said: 'The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are unseen are eternal.' The old sage spoke of the universe being surrounded by 'Astral light' from which spirit came to earth, and to which it returned. They were versed in spiritual lore, and subdued the elementary spirits, and made them their servants and ministers, but they knew but little of the destiny of spirit—Farewell."

[NOTE BY MRS. S.]

In answer to T. W.'s remark in "LIGHT" May 27th, I think he has misunderstood the following sentence of Emperor's: "A spirit leaving its body was no new occurrence, as it dated back from the incarnation of souls into our world." I have always understood this to mean that from the first incarnation on this planet the incarnated spirit had power at times to leave its earthly envelope, and that this power belonged to those highly organised beings we call mediums. With regard to Re-incarnation, Emperor always said it was not true as generally held. It occurred sometimes, when an exalted spirit wished to return to benefit mankind, and it also happened when a spirit was so desperately wicked that it sank to the lowest spheres, and became merged in the ocean of spirit, to be at some future time re-incarnated, though, perhaps, not in the world, as a school that had failed once was not likely to be tried again. Almost the last time I conversed with Emperor only a few months before Mr. S. M. left the world, he told me that that medium was a very old spirit but that this was his first incarnation on our planet. This would account for his having no remembrance of a previous existence here, though he always said he felt he was a very old spirit; and truly he was a very advanced one. Of all the spirits that manifested to us in circles—some dating two or three thousand years back—not one ever mentioned having been incarnated on our earth a second time.

THE WORKS AND PHILOSOPHY OF CHRIST.

The following article from the "Religio-Philosophical Journal" on certain views of Mr. Hudson, as expressed in his book on "The Law of Psychic Phenomena," will be read with interest. We purpose to refer to the book itself later on, but such a book cannot be handled lightly :—

Mr. Hudson in his work "The Law of Psychic Phenomena," which has been previously noticed in these columns, devotes considerable space to the physical manifestations and to the philosophy of Christ. He claims that the discoveries of modern science confirm the story of the cures performed by Jesus and demonstrate the truth of the central ideas taught by Him concerning man's immortality, proving that He was, in fact, a real saviour of the souls of men. It is not claimed that He taught anything new in morals, all precepts uttered by Him having formed a part of the codes of ethics which preceded Him. He was a saviour in the sense that he promulgated ideas essential to man's salvation. He did not formulate the scientific principles underlying His doctrines, for the world was not ready to receive nor was it capable of appreciating them. He stated the facts. Had He formulated the scientific principles which pertain to His doctrines and His works He would not have been understood. He gave the Apostles information enough to enable them to continue his work, stating the conditions of success and promising that whosoever complied with these conditions should be able even to exceed the works that He had done. He taught His chosen ones the true method of healing and he left the power to heal as a heritage to all who should come after Him possessing the requisite faith. He was the first who correctly formulated the exact conditions indispensable to the exercise of the power to heal the sick by psychic methods. The conditions which He declared to be necessary to enable Him to exercise that power, namely, faith, are the same which are indispensable to-day.

The case of Jairus' daughter furnishes to Mr. Hudson an illustration of Jesus' comprehension of the mental conditions necessary to cure the sick and possibly raise the dead even. He inspired the father with faith because He was in telepathic rapport with the daughter. He kept the multitude of unbelievers away from the house, knowing the diseased influence of an atmosphere of incredulity, and surrounded His patient with an atmosphere of faith and courage by taking with Him three of His most powerful Apostles, Peter, James, and John. He excluded the weeping friends and relatives from the sick room for the same reason that He prevented the multitude from following Him. He declared that the damsel was not dead, to inspire them with faith and hope in her recovery and to convey to the subjective mind of the patient the most powerful suggestion possible. Then He took the damsel by the hand and by an energetic command, restored her to life. If it be objected that the girl was not dead, the reply is that the evidential value of the case is just as great, supposing it to be a case of suspended animation. Jesus could not have taken the course which He did had He not been in full possession of the law of mental therapeutics, the law of telepathy, the law of suggestion, &c. He enjoined secrecy when He performed cures, because persons suddenly healed by mental processes should not talk on the subject in public or to persons who are sceptical, who are apt to dispute the facts or to ridicule the idea of such processes, these constituting suggestions liable to act unfavourably upon the patient.

An example of Jesus' ability to heal by what is known at this day as "absent treatment" is furnished by the case of the nobleman's son at Capernaum. The nobleman, it will be remembered, met Jesus at Cana and besought him to heal his son, who was at the point of death. Without going near the patient, Jesus said, "Go thy way, thy son liveth." At that hour the fever left the young man and he recovered.

Jesus insisted upon faith. By faith He meant the assent of the soul or subjective mind to the truth of what He declared to be true. Faith is that emotion of the soul which consists in the unhesitating acceptance and belief in the absolute verity of a suggestion. The verity of a suggestion made to the subjective mind is the essential and never-failing law of its being. This, which science now teaches, Jesus perfectly understood. Jesus said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Jesus had the power to perceive to an exceptional degree the operations of the spiritual world.

Reference is made to Zerah Colburn, who, before his scientific education was sufficient to understand the power of

the nine digits, was enabled instantly to state the cube root of any number that was given him. This is a power which transcends reason and is independent of induction. It was this subjective power which enabled Christ to define the whole law of mental therapeutics, as it has been discovered nineteen hundred years later by scientific investigation. His accurate scientific knowledge of spiritual law could not have been obtained in his day by the ordinary processes of objective education. For the conclusions arrived at by the inductive processes of modern science are identical with the doctrines which He proclaimed.

Jesus laid down the principle of belief as necessary to the attainment of immortal life. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." He did not teach that belief had any atoning power for sin. Men may have any amount of faith and yet be immoral. As Mr. Hudson says: "In every Christian society there are all too many devout believers who live in constant violation of every law, human and divine. It is an insult to the intelligence of Christ and humanity to hold the monstrous doctrine that the belief of these men can shield them from the punishment due to infamy or that they can be adequately punished, 'according to their deeds' by annihilation." What Jesus meant was that in the absence of belief in immortality, the soul cannot have a conscious existence. This, Mr. Hudson says, is in accordance with the fundamental law of its being, the law of suggestion. In cataleptic trance the suggestion to the subjective mind that the subject is dead renders that mind unconscious of its own mental operations. A suggestion to a deeply hypnotised subject that he is dead will produce symptoms of profound lethargy or catalepsy, which resembles death, and if the impression were not removed it would doubtless end in death. So, settled belief that the death of the body is the end of life constitutes a suggestion that must operate to deprive the soul of conscious existence. Therefore, Jesus proclaimed the law that belief was a condition precedent to immortal life, and therein He announced a truth which was then new to the world, but the proof could be understood only in the full light of the scientific knowledge of to-day. In formulating the doctrine of faith, as the essential condition pre-requisite to successful healing, He uttered a scientific truth which it has taken nineteen hundred years for the world to appreciate. In formulating the proposition that belief is the essential pre-requisite to the attainment of immortality, he announced another scientific principle of vastly greater importance than the other.

The application here made of the law of suggestion to the doctrine of immortality is so far as we know original with Mr. Hudson. That Jesus had any such meaning as is ascribed to Him when He declared belief a condition of salvation, is open to doubt. In fact, there is no evidence of it whatever. Mr. Hudson has evidently read into the teachings of Jesus the results of his own reflections, and we must say that it does not seem reasonable that a human soul can be preserved or extinguished for ever, so far as conscious life is concerned, by a mere belief, by confidence or lack of confidence in any person or any theory. Consciousness seems to be an essential attribute of the soul, and to suppose that it can be destroyed by conceptions which are formed is not in accordance with sound mental philosophy and is contrary to the teachings of common-sense. While, therefore, we have been interested in Mr. Hudson's work, which is replete with thought, much of it of a very valuable character, and have endeavoured to present the author's views quite fully, because of their novelty, we by no means concur either in the view that man has a soul separate and distinct from his conscious life or that his future, his immortality, or annihilation depends upon the ideas he accepts and under which he lives during his short sojourn on this planet.

THE kingdom of God is a society of the best men, working for the best ends, according to the best methods. The membership is a multitude which no man can number; its methods are as various as human nature; its field is the world. . . . It has no minutes, for history keeps them; no members' roll, for no one could make it. Its entry money is nothing; its subscription, all you have. The society never meets, and it never adjourns. Its law is one word—loyalty; its gospel, one message—love. . . . For this world, for these faculties, for this one short life, I know nothing that is offered to man to compare with membership in the kingdom of God. . . . If you know anything better, live for it; if not, in the name of God and of humanity, carry out Christ's plan. — PROFESSOR DRUMMOND.

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

Light:

EDITED BY "M. A., LOND."

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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.

A STATE OF THE SOUL.

Archdeacon Farrar has a reputation. When he preaches the churches are crowded, and so it is well sometimes to notice what is said by such a man. The reputation of the Archdeacon is not perhaps so much on account of the solidity of what he says, but because rather of the way he says it. Nevertheless, there should be some substratum of reality in what so prominent a preacher says, and a sermon reported in the "Christian World" for June 1st gives us something of a chance. The Archdeacon took three texts, with the first of which we alone have to do here: "And when they saw him they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts." (Matt. viii. 34.) This text, with the two others, Dr. Farrar made use of to illustrate three different states of the soul. Of the state of the soul represented in this verse from St. Matthew's Gospel he said:—

The first state of the soul which I would set before you is the utterly profane and godless state—the state of the soul which deliberately chooses the world rather than heaven, the temporal rather than the eternal, the present rather than the future.

This is in curious contrast with Dr. Dale's utterances referred to lately in "LIGHT," for this Canon of Westminster contrasts heaven with the world, whereas Dr. Dale seemed rather to wish to let heaven take its chance. The point, though, is, what did the preacher mean by the "soul" which is in such an utterly profane and godless state?—and this point seems indeed to be a very important one, for the "soul" seems generally to be a vague name for a vague and almost impossible entity. A clear definition might sometimes help preachers like Dr. Farrar to make their meaning clearer than it is, or more often keep them from talking about it at all. In pulpit theology there is nothing more feeble than the way the "soul" is talked about. A profane and godless man we can understand, but unless we have something more intelligible in the way of statement, a profane and godless soul is meaningless—it sounds well, however. But this sermon, of course, had to do with the demoniac of Gadara, and the swine that ran down into the lake, and the argument is that these profane and godless souls wished Jesus to depart out of their coasts because they were afraid of his holiness. They had lost their swine, and so the "gluttony of every low-bred Gentile, the greed of every apostate Jew in that half-heathen district, took alarm. With disgraceful urgency, with shocking unanimity, they implored Jesus to leave their coast." But let us see what had happened. Christ had shown his power over evil spirits, and the man was cured,

As usual the deliverance from his Satanic illusion was accompanied by wild convulsions, and, in some scene which we find it difficult to understand, a vast herd of swine had been driven over a neighbouring precipice and had perished in the waters of the lake.

But this "scene" contains the gist of the whole story. The devils entered into the swine, according to the narrative,

and Dr. Farrar talks about a vast herd of them being driven over a precipice just as the devils had left the maniac. May we not give these poor half-heathen the benefit of a doubt, and believe that they were seriously frightened by such a power, and that they were no more necessarily godless and profane than Dr. Farrar would be if he saw a similar occurrence to-day, and showed some signs of trepidation. It is useless to gloss over the account and talk about a scene difficult to understand. Either the story is true or it is false—that is, from Dr. Farrar's standpoint. We say nothing about an esoteric meaning—which is more probable than anything else—but from the orthodox standpoint either the devils were not cast out and, therefore, did not go into the swine, and the whole is a fiction, or it is literally true.

And how delicately the Archdeacon treads over the somewhat dangerous crust of the facts as they stand. "The Satanic illusion"—a Satanic illusion could hardly trouble the swine, but then they were hurried down the precipice "in some scene difficult to understand," so that the Satanic illusion had nothing to do with them. How utterly feeble it all is! Surely if so distinguished a pulpit orator as the Archdeacon of Westminster wanted a peg on which to hang a description of a profane and godless soul, he could have done better than use a passage which refers to a story which he himself deprives of every vestige of meaning. As the story stands, we have the obsessing spirits driven out of the man by the mighty power of Christ, and in their violence harrying the swine, themselves not so pure as the beasts they at once destroyed. And, moreover, the Archdeacon is disloyal to the great Master of Christianity. He wielded his power against the spirits of the power of the air, against the spiritual wickedness that abounded then as it does now. It was no Satanic illusion with which he fought, but a real battle with the evil ones, even though the story of the Gadarene swine is not to be taken literally, as it is taken, though glossed out of all meaning, by Dr. Farrar.

SPECIAL PROVIDENCE.

The advocates of the theory of a special providence base their doctrine upon the theory or hypothesis that God has created the material universe and has endowed the same with certain powers to be exercised in accordance with fixed laws therein established; and that he has withdrawn his immediate supervision therefrom, and thus they attempt to distinguish between the laws of nature and the laws of God. Then, in theory, they introduce the operations of what they denominate a special providence, supplementing the laws of nature, called the laws of God.

But such advocates err greatly in their supposition that the natural or spiritual, separated from the Divine or Inmost Presence of the universe, could have any power with which to make or execute any law. To suppose that there can be any life not of the Divine Life, or any power not of the Divine Power, becomes the source of endless errors. All such minds have a very imperfect idea of the fact that "in God we live, and move, and have our being." To the spiritually anointed eye everything is aflame with the Divine Presence, and every tree, and shrub, and bush becomes a "burning bush" in which the Divine Presence can be seen and the Divine voice can be heard proclaiming all to be "Holy ground."

This doctrine of a special providence belongs to Paganism. All such teachers, though varying the form, retain the spirit of Paganism. The Pagan multiplies the number and variety of his gods to suit circumstances; because he does not perceive how one God could attend to so many and such a variety of things at one and the same time, or can manifest such a diversity of character as the Pagan sees in the diverse operations taking place about him.

The advocates of this doctrine of a special providence seek to unify the being of God by mysteriously increasing his personality. Thus they mistake a trinity of operations for a trinity of persons—and thus by their theology, called philosophy, the infinite, the eternal, and absolute presence becomes divested of every perfect attribute by which the omniscient, the omnipotent and omnipresent Father can become revealed as an actuality to his children.—JUDGE JOEL TIFFANY, in the "Religious Philosophical Journal."

CONVERSAZIONE OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A Conversazione of members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance was held in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, on the evening of the 1st inst. There was a large attendance, the company including:—

<p>The President (Mr. E. Dawson Rogers). Mr. T. A. Amos. Miss E. J. Amos. Miss W. E. Amos. Mr. John Anderson (Edinburgh). Mrs. Anderson. Judge Anderson. Dr. G. André. Miss Aldridge. Mr. J. T. Audy. Mrs. Andrews. Mrs. Brinkley. Miss Brinkley. Mrs. Bradley. Mrs. Bell. Mrs. H. E. Bell. Miss Ethel Bell. Mr. Thos. Blyton. Miss Blyton. Mrs. L. G. Bunister. Mr. H. J. Bowen. Mrs. Bowen. Mr. E. J. A. Balls. Mrs. Bliss. Mrs. Barker. Mrs. Billings (New Zealand). Mrs. Breasley. Mrs. Butterfield. Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Collingwood. Miss A. M. Collingwood. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Carter. Mr. and Mrs. Horace Carter. Mr. F. Clarke. Mr. and Mrs. L. Callard. Miss Cartisser. Mrs. Damer Cape. Mr. N. Cautley. Mr. J. B. Cox. Mr. Herbert Chapman (South America). Mr. J. Chesworth. Dr. Ellen Collyer. Miss Charlton. Miss Cruickshanks. Mr. and Mrs. Cole. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Cole. Miss B. Cole. Miss J. Cole. The Misses Dixon. Mr. and Mrs. J. Drummond. Miss Drummond. Mrs. Davidson. Mrs. Darling. Mrs. Darling. Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Davis. Miss Davis. Miss Drake. Mr. and Mrs. T. Everitt. Miss Everitt. Miss Edridge. Mr. F. Freeman. Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Flint. Mr. A. Glendinning. The Misses Glendinning. Miss M. W. Glanville. Dr. J. Gale. Mrs. S. Gunn. Mr. and Mrs. B. D. Godfrey. Miss Edith H. Godfrey. Mrs. Green (Heywood). Madame Greck. Miss Griffiths. Mr. and Mrs. J. Henderson. Mr. and Mrs. T. Heywood. Mr. Chandos Leigh Hunt. Mr. Geo. Hayward. Mr. B. Holmes. Miss May Holmes. Miss E. M. Holden. Mrs. Hoone. Miss Blanche D. Jerome. Mrs. Jackson (Manchester). Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Judd. Mr. Geo. W. Jones. Mr. and Mrs. G. Kreuger. Mr. W. Keiller.</p>	<p>Mr. E. J. Keiller. Mrs. Fancou King. Miss Kattreine. Miss Kostka. Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lucking. Mr. B. J. Lilly. Mrs. Livett. Mr. H. J. Levett. Mrs. Lysons. Mr. John Lamont (Liverpool). Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Lees. Mr. E. H. Lees. Mr. L. H. Lees. Mrs. Lovell. The Misses Lloyd. Mr. J. J. Morse. Miss Morse. Dr. T. C. Marsh. Mrs. L. Milne. Miss McKibbin. Mr. Ernest C. Meads. Mr. F. D. Mordle (Nottingham). Mr. A. Montgomery. Mrs. Essington Nelson. Mr. Paul Preyss. Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Parker. Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle Petersilea. Mrs. Morgan Payler. Miss Morgan Payler. Miss F. Porter. Mr. W. Paice, M.A. Miss Dawson Rogers. Miss Alice Dawson Rogers. Mrs. M. Rogers. Dr. and Mrs. W. T. Reynolds. Mr. R. W. Reynolds. Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Rushton. Mrs. Robinson. Mr. H. Ridgway. Mr. H. Rumford. Mrs. Ravenhill. Lady Coomara Swamy. Miss Spencer. Mr. L. Stamm. Mrs. Stamm. Mr. Thos. Shorter. Miss Shorter. Mr. A. J. Sutton. Miss Wallace Smith. Mr. P. G. Sarpy. Mrs. Parker Stanley. Mr. Percy Smyth. Mrs. Shurmer Sibthorp. Mr. Shurmer Sibthorp. Mr. Boswell Stone. Hon. Mrs. Sheffield. Mr. J. Smith. Mr. F. South. Mr. and Mrs. R. Palmer Thomas. Miss F. J. Theobald. Mr. J. Traill Taylor. Miss Taylor. Mr. H. Thacker. Mrs. H. Tetley. Mrs. Palmer Tebb. Mr. H. Tidbury. Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Tindall. Miss A. Vincent. Mrs. Jno. Venables (Walsall). Miss A. Rowan Vincent. Mrs. Vaughan. Mr. H. Withall. The Misses Withall. Mrs. Basil Woodd. Mr. Basil Woodd. Mr. E. A. Woodd. Madame Willis. Mr. E. Westlake. Mr. W. H. Willats. Miss Willats. Miss Ward. Mrs. Whitehead. Miss Wells. Mrs. Whamond. Mr. and Mrs. Young, &c., &c.</p>
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In the course of the evening Mr. J. J. Morse having been briefly introduced by the President, delivered the following trance address:—

THE PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPIRITUALISTS.

Spiritualism has passed beyond the age when apologies were necessary. The body of evidence upon which it rests its claims, and demonstrates communication between the living and the so-called "dead," is to-day of such huge proportions and of such unassailable character, that Spiritualists can well pause in their efforts to scatter their knowledge abroad outside their own ranks and ask themselves what privileges this movement has conferred upon them and what responsibilities are entailed upon them in relation thereto? To-night, then, we speak to you as Spiritualists; we speak to you as having satisfied yourselves of the great realities of communion within the two states of being. We have no interest at the present time to apologise for the shortcomings—if shortcomings there be—in this same modern Spiritualism, nor have we any desire to over-persuade any doubting Thomas to join the ranks of the faithful few to-night. Indeed, we should prefer to let everyone

be persuaded according to his own mind and judgment, always bearing in mind that the wise man has an attentive ear and silent tongue, when listening to those things narrated by others which are not within the ken of his own experience. Spiritualism has been to millions of the people of the world literally as a shining light in the darkness. When all around was steeped in gloom, and the night seemed beyond all possibility of dawn, and the cry of sorrow and the tear of agony arose from the breast and streamed down the cheeks of those who mourned the loss of their beloved, this light came, feebly flickering at first, but presently shining with a holy radiance, which gradually illumined that darkness, dispersed that gloom, and ushered in the day of peace, wherein knowledge took the place of doubt, and certainty dispelled fear for evermore. If Spiritualism has done this for one soul it will have had some purpose in the world; it will have done some good for mankind. But souls that it has thus blessed can be numbered to-day by their millions; the hearts that have thus believed, the lives that have been thus illumined, are found wheresoever civilised man plants his foot to-day. But the question we must consider to-night must needs be looked for within this movement itself; and what does this movement do? Besides answering the old-time question, "If a man die shall he live again, bringing comfort to the mourner and knowledge to the doubter, what else does it do?"

There is a delusion in the popular mind that this same Spiritualism is confined altogether to holding agreeable conversations with vagrant ghosts that flit hither and thither from the shadow-land into this realm of mortal life and, as some people say, are temporarily galvanised into life, and dance at the whim of some poor wretch of a medium just for an hour and then vanish as curiously as they come; while some others say that Spiritualists are so immersed in this commerce with the spiritual world as to forget the requirements of their daily life, and must needs apply to tables and other things to gain some authoritative expression of opinion from their beloved spirit friend as to whether they should buy a new ribbon for their bonnet or exchange one kind of dog for another. All these things have been said over and over again; but the Spiritualist knows that while there may be those incapable of making a wise use of Spiritualism, as there are others who are incapable of making wise uses of every holy and good thing in the world, the entire truth, the whole scope of the subject, must not be narrowed down to these petty issues that do not belong to it in reality. It does more than this, friends, it does more than bring the two worlds into harmony; it does more than restore the dead to the living; it does more than merely demonstrate the belief of the ages in the immortality of the soul; it brings man face to face with the problems of his own existence here in this world. And one of the privileges we should consider in this connection—it should be esteemed the highest—is the insight, the philosophic insight, it enables you to obtain into those problems of consciousness and personal experience belonging to you here in this world; for unless the secret of man's spiritual being can be unravelled in its first founding here in this life, and so legitimately led up as a logical sequence into some other state of being, only half the battle of this Spiritualism has been fought and won. Spiritualism helps to make the other half of the conquest. It is to the careful thinker and the close reasoner an inestimable privilege to be possessed of a guiding hand, some light shining in the perplexities of his problem—some hand that shall point his way out of the tangled maze wherein mankind hath wandered for so many generations. But more than that—for the bulk of human creatures are not philosophers—far from it; the cold temperament, the intellectual calm that philosophic thought requires is a rare jewel, even in these times. Somehow, human hearts stir quicker when human affections appeal to them, and in the wide sea of human feeling who knows what depths are sounded when something stirs the deep waters of the soul? Death stalks abroad, a pale terror or nameless horror just as you may look at it—touching the fair flowers, the trees of life; plucking often seemingly the fairest and the best, and leaving hearts to grieve, crushed, bruised, and broken. "Where is my darling gone?" rolls out in tremulous, breathing prayer upon the midnight air. No answer; no answer; no echo from the echoless land! No? we have a deeper faith in God than that—a deeper trust in His beneficence—and feel sure, even apart from the known evidences of these spiritual questions, that there should be in the very constitution of the Universe some means or method whereby the soul shall find its lost one, even if it hath passed through the gate of death.

But this Spiritualism proves, proves the faith that man has had in his ability and possibility to hold communion with the spheres beyond; proves it to be true; and the father and mother, the husband and wife, the sister, the brother, the lover, who have passed through the sombre gate, come back—less the garments of the flesh—but vested in the radiance of an immortal day, purified by the change, uplifted and exalted in bliss, throbbing with that eager love that binds kindred souls together, and, in their mighty incursion, like resistless hosts sweep away the grim terrors that appal the mind and bring the demonstration of immortality home to the intelligence and sympathies of human nature.

Put it to yourselves. Grey-haired mothers, by whose side you have sat and whose smile you have rejoiced in for many and many a year, whose counsel has been a tower of strength to you in your youth and early manhood, and whose loving breast was still the refuge to you in your maturer years, pass from you, and are gone away far from human ken. If that be all then, this death has indeed been a calamity for you, for the truest friend you ever had—and truer than true mother man can scarcely hope to find—the truest friend you ever had has been taken from you. There comes this tapping, tapping, tapping; these strange movements of the furniture, these wondrous lights that flit in the air, aye even these whispering voices that come between the thin veil and you; and gradually the mother that you loved and trusted comes back to your heart, takes her old place in your life, exercises that old time sweetest influence upon your thought and action, and, death being vanquished for you, the inestimable privilege of once again in spirit and in truth clasping that departed mother's hand is yours. Who shall say this is not a benefit? Who shall say that those who have this privilege, or who believe they have, are not blessed either in their knowledge or belief? Even if it is a delusion what a most pleasant delusion it must be! But if it be knowledge, what wondrous power to revolutionise the thought of the age is here indicated; privilege beyond all question, not only for the son who has lost his mother, but for the wife who loses husband, for the parent who loses child, for the friend who loses friend, and for the hearts bound by those silken cords of human love that have the finer thread of the spirit running through them, souls that have been touched by that mighty magic that prevents all change from the object of affection. What a mighty privilege they have, to find that death—even grim monster though it may have seemed—hath no power to separate twin souls and that the beloved gone before can still be and is in spiritual and sweet union with our daily life, purifying and ennobling every sentiment and keeping the wandering feet perchance that might have gone astray upon the straight track and the right path of life. Privilege! Only those whose hearts have well nigh rent in twain, only those who have bowed under the crushing load of grief, only those who have sighed and sighed for some answer to the question at their heart, only those who have been tried in the fires of pain can tell the inestimable privilege of this union with the angels of the higher world. "He jests at scars who never felt a wound," your greatest poet has said, and those whose hearts have not suffered, whose souls have not felt the pain, may cynically say: "Your spirits are queer folk, they tell us little that is useful, they are not scientists or philosophers, and to be obliged to hold fellowship with such creatures would indeed be a degradation of our life." Let the cold steel pierce through the breast, let them but feel the ground slipping from under their feet, let the universe seem unstable and even broken, let them in their frantic efforts clutch hold of something that assures them of the reality of life and death, and their cynicism vanishes and, Nicodemus-like, they creep to the porch of the despised temple and humbly say, "Good sir, can you give me no word that shall end my sadness and give me proof that death is not the end of life?" They are ready enough for the privileges when the trial compels them to ask. One work of Spiritualism is so to educate the general conscience that the love of truth and the necessity of its possession will finally compel all men to seek this knowledge, and that the lash of pain and sorrow will not be necessary to force them along the road.

But there is another privilege. It has been said that man is naturally a religious animal, that the veneration sentiment—the worshipping instinct shall we call it?—is possessed in a greater or less degree by all and that those who have been fortunate enough to be brought up under what are considered to be good auspices—where

devotion, reverence, spiritual-mindedness, and morality have formed leading elements in their education—have naturally a tendency towards the spiritual and to the religious—to the spiritual perhaps would be the better term. But think of the things that are sometimes said in the name of the God of Love; think of the things that are sometimes said in the name of the Man of Peace; think of the things that are sometimes said of the destiny and disposition of departed men; think also how the great uprising of nineteenth century intellectual life has changed the aspect of all these things to the intelligent portions of the community: and you will at once realize the almost irreconcilable difference between the intelligence of to-day and the doctrines of the past; how the old husks fail to sustain the living souls of to-day, and how few and far between are those capable of feeding even in part the hunger of soul and heart from which so many suffer. Where shall we erect our altar? Whom shall we have for priest? Where shall we look for that living spirit which will enkindle the words of life into glowing truths and make them become divine realities? To whom can you turn for knowledge of the life beyond, better than to those who live that life? To whom can you better turn for help, in dealing with the vexing problems of sin and evil and their consequences in and upon yourself, than to those who have passed to experiences of immortality, and are able from their loftier estate to see not only further, but even deeper into these very problems? To whom can you better go to learn whether that fearful libel upon the love of God which culture and intelligence have left behind for good, that story of a realm of everlasting pain and sorrow—to whom can you go better for knowledge as to whether such exists or not, than to those who tread the shores of the silent land, and who for generations, aye, even for ages, have made these circumstances and conditions their especial study? To whom can you go to learn what are the dead like in their land of light, save and only to those who live in that land? And as the existence of the human soul and its possible immortality and its circumstances in that immortal life are the prime essentials of religious preaching, teaching, doctrine—the demonstration of these points and the analysis and disclosure of their exact component elements make up the basic truth on which religions must in future rest. There is no church wide enough for these to-day. The preacher's heart may be in the right, his mind may be willing to answer to the vibrations of the thoughts of the great beyond, but the iron band of conventionalism confines them; and, worst of all, the dread that he overshoots the heads of those to whom he preaches holds the willing mind in chains. The Spiritualist has a privilege here well worth trying. He needs no church with piercing spire rising through the blue, with painted window shutting God's sunshine from the worshippers, but in the sacred precincts of my own home, around the family altar, at my table with my own beloved wife of my heart, and the children of my affection, with friends who meet in company, here shall be my altar, here shall be my church, and hence shall rise the pure aspirations of our hearts. The Vestal of to-day is found in many a family, the Pythoness is duplicated in the homes of multitudes. The Holy Ghost, the Divine Spirit, the loving Presence of those brooding hosts of angels but await the invitation, and out of the rich stores of their love, out of the depths of their wisdom, through the willing lips and responding brain of these "mediums," so called, the family church receives its ministers, finds its knowledge, obtains its guidance and that understanding of the life beyond, and of its circumstances, which cannot be found elsewhere to-day. Is this no privilege? To have a church within your own home, a ministry within your own circle, a light burning before you day and night. The whole soul is bathed in the glory; the mind is tintured, softened by the glow; the whole being is bettered and uplifted; and the gracious consciousness that the eyes of the angel world not only see the act, but also the thought that prompts, is as a constant warning and admonition towards righteousness and goodness every day of the week. In this respect Spiritualism might be described as a seven-day religion, lasting all the month and not concluding when the year was done, beginning again when the new year comes and running daily with you all your life on earth.

But one other privilege and we must pass on to the most serious side of the subject. In sickness and in danger how valuable is the friend who eases your pain or saves you from calamity. How often you, out of human love and sympathy, render these services to each other yourselves, helping and aiding, guiding and defending, as loyal hearts ever should when

need calls for such service. But when there are those who can guide you, who see beyond the limits that human sight and judgment impose; when there are those who can guide you with stronger hands than the strongest that men possess; when side by side with you they can be silent witnesses and guardians and guides; here, then, is a privilege that should not be slighted nor lightly viewed. When the fires of fever burn within the body or racking pains make life almost intolerable, and the unseen help breathes loving blessings, quenches the fierceness of the fire, whispers words of sweetness, and stills the raging pain, there is a privilege that puts to blush the whole College of Surgeons and the whole range of the Pharmacopœias. No drug, pill, or potion hath in it half the magic that this power of the Spirit has upon the sufferings of human nature, and many are the Spiritualists who can tell you by experience how, in days of sickness, they have received the greatest help from those whom the world sees not at all, and in calamity how often the guiding hand hath been stretched forth to save, aye, even upon the very brink of the precipice—warnings, monitions, suggestions; and how often, too, have lives been saved from wreck, wreck too horrible to contemplate or even to put into words! When evil has assailed the life of maidenhood and under specious guise endeavoured to play the serpent, thinkest thou the mother of the child if she could protect it at all, if she be at all conscious of the danger, thinkest thou she would not make some effort to save the sorrow and the shame? Thinkest thou that God would say to that mother, "That thing thou shalt not do?" Help, guidance, protection are among the privileges that Spiritualists enjoy as a consequence of their communion with the world of the spirit people.

Privileges imply responsibilities. He who expects to have all the goods of life and render nothing in return to his fellows is selfish in heart and purpose, and in the course of time will inevitably meet chastisement. Let the world discover you to be wholly selfish in your desires and in your actions, and the world will very soon play a protectively selfish part upon its own side, leaving you discreetly to enjoy existence out in the cold. Spiritualists, however, have had not only their emotions, not only their spiritual sentiments, but their intelligences as well, appealed to and awakened and exalted by these spiritual ministers, and they have learned that if they have privileges they have responsibilities also. What are they? When you are in courts of justice you are requested to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—which of course you always do; but Spiritualists have realised that in relation to the questions in which they are specially interested, the whole truth is an absolute necessity; they realise their responsibility to their cause in this—that whatsoever is of doubtful origin or value must be laid aside for further inquiry or investigation, and that only those things which are beyond cavil, for which a man would lay down his life, shall go before the world as representing facts and truths in connection with their cause. One of the most absurd delusions that the outside world entertains of this same Spiritualism is that Spiritualists are incapable of accurate observation, that they are enthusiasts, hasty in their judgments and convinced because they want to be convinced. Why if you were to take a hundred Spiritualists and shake them up together and pick one out at random he would tell you without hesitation: "I became a Spiritualist because I could not help it. I doubted, ridiculed, denied; the evidence became too much for me, and, like an honest man, I had to give in." That is the way that Spiritualists are made. It is not, "I believe, because somebody else said so." The responsibility which the Spiritualist recognises is that the ground on which he stands, the ground on which he bases every assertion, must be firm and true and square and beyond all possibility of being overturned. His foundation being thus he asks also: "What is my responsibility?"

This movement is a teaching movement, not a drawing-room entertainment, not something for an idle hour. "But cannot we take it up as we do a fashionable craze?" Yes, you can, of course, palter with the truth, trifle with Heaven's greatest marvel; you can make God's revelations in the universe the subject of an idle hour's jest. But then, what advantage will it be to you? None; and we warn you fairly that if you take up this question seriously it will lay such firm hold upon you that you will not have the slightest inclination to make it a frivolous amusement or a passing pleasure. A responsibility of the Spiritualist, then, has regard to the question: What do the dead teach when they come back? They teach the necessity of righteous living in this life if you desire a happy continuing

in the world beyond—a simple statement but sufficient in itself to embrace all the thoughts, desires, and deeds of human life. And living, as we stated once before, in the very presence of these unsoon monitors, who have taught you that you are responsible to yourselves for your own life and not for any one other's life, the grave responsibility of fulfilling the noblest and purest duties of humanity is imperatively laid upon every Spiritualist in the world.

There is another responsibility. Shall we carry this light to all? Shall we become apostles? Shall we preach another crusade, finding some modern Peter the Hermit to go with us and rouse the multitude to enthusiasm? You will have your labour for your pains in such cases in the main. Emotionalism and fanaticism run dangerously close together. It is not everyone that is prepared to receive a truth so strange as this modern Spiritualism; and to pitchfork people promiscuously into the very arcana of these wondrous forces and marvellous phenomena, without rudder, chart, or guide to enable them to make their way safely, would be a grave injustice. The Spiritualist holds his responsibility to his own domestic church, that the altar shall not be profaned by those who are unfit; that the priests shall not be contaminated by those who would degrade, and if those outside wish to acquire this Spiritualism let them pursue the same painstaking method that every Spiritualist has had to adopt. There is an old saying about casting—well, your imagination can supply the saying: we have nothing to throw away to-night. Another responsibility, then, we say is this, that in the promulgation of the facts, philosophy, and teaching of Spiritualism, due care and circumspection should always be observed. A precious truth may be good for all mankind when all mankind are capable of appreciating it; but until all mankind are capable of appreciating it only those who can appreciate it, who desire and are ready to become willing students, should be permitted to pass the threshold.

Spiritualists also realise their responsibilities to the spiritual world towards which they are going. "Ah, yes"—it is sometimes said—"it makes them other-world-like, draws them away from the practical concerns of daily life, makes them uncanny, often queer kind of folk. If they have to keep one eye on the other life and only one eye on this life how can they properly fulfil their duty in this world?" By simply remembering that all actions have an eternal relationship; that there is really no more break between the night of death and the day of immortality than there is between the night of sleep and the rising of to-morrow's sun; and that as to-morrow will carry you on, with the sequence of to-day unbroken, so that life will carry you forward with the main sequences of this life unbroken also; and as whatsoever seed is sown to-day that does not mature to-day may be trusted to mature to-morrow or on some other to-morrow—as many have found to their pain—so, whatsoever seed does not mature in this life will mature in the life beyond. Hence the responsibility that the Spiritualist realises towards the spiritual world is not that responsibility which implies abstraction of thought from all the concerns of mortal life, but the concentration of thought upon all the duties of to-day, so that the to-morrow, whether of this world or of the world of the spirit, shall be happy and unmarred by any sin or evil of to-day.

Then—and this finally—there is another responsibility towards the community around. That you possess a truth is not in itself any reason—to use a colloquialism—for putting on airs about it. There are some people who, when they know just a little more than their neighbours, have a whole laundry of starchiness developed at once. They hold up their heads and walk along with a sort of grand air as though wisdom would die with them. Some there are, unfortunately, who, when they possess a little advantage in this way, adopt an air of aggressiveness towards their less favoured friends, by ruthlessly assailing their opinions right and left, utterly regardless of the sacredness of human conviction; for every man's conviction, honestly entertained, should be a sanctuary for his soul which no other man should rashly invade. Your responsibility to any truth is that you shall so live that truth, that it suffers nothing as a consequence of your life; and the responsibility of the Spiritualist is this, to treat all men as brethren, no matter how they vary in opinion. Remember that all roads lead to truth. Each man picks his road—let us wish him God-speed! In the age to come we shall all meet at the common centre and then smile to think how we quarrelled about the different roads that we had severally taken.

The responsibilities and privileges of Spiritualism, then, are great. Spiritualists are blest; the sun of their truth shines

upon their faces, its warmth fills their souls with a new life. They have broken with the old and the crude in opinions, creed, and doctrine; they have entered into the larger faith, they have grown to the greater love; they come into sweeter fellowship with Almighty Providence, and guarded and blessed and guided by the angels, the friends and brothers, the kith and kindred who once were flesh with the mortals here on earth, they have indeed a glory in their hearts and homes precious beyond all words to describe.

Good friends, Spiritualists and non-Spiritualists, all we ask of you is to live the life of which the spirit world has spoken to the Spiritualist these forty-five years past, and whatever your creed may be, whatsoever road you may take, will matter little in the end; for he is the friend of man and co-worker with God who labours for the emancipation of the souls of men from ignorance, superstition, and darkness, that they may stand free, erect, and upright, perfect men and women in the liberty of truth that saves the world. (Applause.)

After a few words by the President, a vote of thanks was accorded to "Tien," the Intelligence by whom Mr. Morse had been controlled in the delivery of the address; and the remainder of the evening was devoted to music and social intercourse. Mr. Carlyle Petersilea delighted the audience with his pianoforte playing. His rendering of one of Chopin's charming Nocturnes, and of a graceful transcription of the song, "The Brook," was especially appreciated. The musical programme also comprised songs from Miss Everitt, who sang with much taste and feeling; from Mr. Tidbury, a young tenor, whose sweet and sympathetic voice we hope to have the pleasure of hearing again; and from Mrs. Hamilton Tetley who, accompanied on the concertina by her sister, Miss Clementine Ward, gave Gounod's "Méditation" and Cowen's "Tears" with expression and power. Miss Clementine Ward also played concertina solos in her usual pleasing style. The grand piano used on the occasion was kindly lent by Messrs. Brinsmead.

"AN ENIGMA."

A curious paper with this title appears in "Good Words" for May, from the pen of Mr. William Canton. It consists of a series of extracts from letters which he received a year or two ago, and as "no one is now left to be affected by the publication of them," Mr. Canton has published them. And very interesting they are. The writer of the letters was twice married, and just before the death of his first wife their only child died at the age of six weeks. A girl was born of the second marriage, and it is this child who is the *motif* of the extracts. Surely, in no quainter language was the development of a baby-girl ever described. The interest for the readers of "LIGHT," however, is in the last few extracts, and these are given here:—

"By-the-way, she has got a new plaything. I do not know what suggested the idea: I don't think it came from any of us. Lately she has taken to nursing an invisible 'iccle gaal' (little girl) whom she wheels about in her toy perambulator, puts carefully to bed, and generally makes much of. This is—'Yourn iccle baby, pappas, old man' if you please. When I sit down, this accession to the family is manifest to her on my right knee; and she sits on my left and calls it a 'nice lovely iccle thing.' When she goes to bed she takes Struwwelpeter, Sambo (a sweet being in black india-rubber), and, of all people, Mrs. Grundy; and when she has been tucked in she makes place for 'yourn iccle baby,' which, of course, I have to give her with due care. It is very odd to see her put her hands together for it, palms upward, and to hear her assurance, 'I not let her fall, pappas.'"

"I told you about her invisible playmate. Both N. [his wife] and I have been wondering whether the child is only what is called making-believe, or whether she really sees anything. I suppose you have read Galton's account of the power of visualising, as he calls it—that is, of actually seeing outside of one the appearance of things that exist only in imagination. He says somewhere that this faculty is very strongly developed in

some young children, who are beset for years with the of distinguishing between the objective and the subjective. It is hard to say how one should act in a case of this kind. To encourage her in this amusement might lead to some mental condition; to try to suppress it might be injurious, for this appears to be a natural faculty, not a habit. Let nature have her own way?"

"If I rest my foot on my right knee to unlace my boot, she pulls my foot away—'Pappas, you put yourn foot on yourn baby.' She won't sit on my right knee at all until I have tended to transfer the playmate to the other."

"This girl is going to be a novelist. We have got a friend the great Mrs. Harris. She has invented Mrs. Briss. N. knows who Mrs. Briss is. Sometimes she seems to mean herself; at other times it is clearly an interesting and interesting third person."

"The poor wee ape is ill. The doctor doesn't seem to understand what is the matter with her. We must wait a day or two for some development."

"How these ten days and nights have dragged past! I not ask me about her. I cannot write. I cannot think."

"My poor darling is dead! I hardly know whether I am myself alive. Half of my individuality has left me. I do not know myself."

"Can you believe this? I cannot; and yet I saw it. A little while before she died I heard her speaking in an almost inaudible whisper. I knelt down and leaned over her. She looked curiously at me and said faintly: 'Pappas, I not let her fall.' 'Who, dearie?' 'Yourn iccle baby. I gotten her here.' She moved her wasted little hand as if to lift a fold of the bed-clothes. I raised them gently for her, and she looked like her old self. How can I tell the rest?"

"Close beside her lay that other little one, with its worn face and its poor arms crossed in that old-womanish fashion in front of her. Its large, suffering eyes looked for a moment into mine, and then my head seemed filled with mist and my ears buzzed."

"I saw that. It was not hallucination. It was there."

"Just think what it means, if that actually happened. Think what must have been going on in the past, and I never knew. I remember, now, she never called it 'mamma's baby'; it was always 'yourn.' Think of the future, now that they are both what? Gone?"

"If it really happened! I saw it. I am sane, strong in sound health. I saw it—saw it—do you understand? And yet how incredible it is!"

Some months passed before I heard again from my friend. In his subsequent letters, which grew rarer and briefer as time went on, he never again referred to his loss or to the incident which he had described. His silence was singular, for he was naturally very communicative. But what most surprised me was the absolute change of character that seemed to have been brought about in an instant—literally in the twinkling of an eye. One glimpse of the Unseen (as he called it), and the embittered recollections of bereavement, the resentment, the distrust, the spirit of revolt, were all swept into oblivion. Even the new bereavement had no sting. There was no anguish of loss; there were no words of desolation. The man simply stood at gaze, stunned with amazement.

MRS. ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.—"I am asked to express or explain my present views of human life, as compared with those I held at the time 'The Gates Ajar' was written," says Mrs. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps in "The North American Review." The book was written twenty-five years ago. As most of our readers know, it is an imaginary picture of heaven and the occupations of its inhabitants—occupations brought into joyous play all the noblest faculties of mind and heart. The author now says: "'The Gates Ajar' is not yet, and I pray heaven it never may be, a work forsworn." She does not lay so much stress now on Bible revelation, having come to believe that it was not one of the primary objects of the Bible to gratify curiosity in this direction; but she is convinced, from the very tragedies and apparent failures of human life, that God is good, and as He is good, "mystery and misery and waste and sin shall find their justification in the happiness and the holiness of the celestial economy which death reveals."—"Christian World."

"THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND."*

This little volume by James Robertson seems to be a useful, concise, and very fair history of what has been done in connection with Spiritualism in England during the last forty years. Such a succinct account should be very valuable. A short *résumé* of the connection with the Unseen that existed in the case of certain notable people during the world's earlier history is not the least important part of the book; from this *résumé* we take the following sensible remarks as to the Protestant Reformation:—

The Protestant Reformation did good work in dissipating the power of Rome, and though Luther said and did much for freedom of thought, undoubtedly as a rule reformers rejected in principle and in practice the idea of religious freedom. Liberty of conscience was a sentiment spoken of, but the story of the martyrdom of Servetus gives the lie to this. Liberty was only given to think on the lines of the new school. Calvin throws a dark shadow on his own and subsequent times. The Romish Church had affirmed that within its pale the same inspiration which produced the gospels and epistles still continued, while the new school repudiated this in its entirety, and assumed that all inspiration and all spiritual gifts similar to those of Jesus's time had ceased and were withheld by God.

If we accept the truth that Nature's laws are unchangeable, and that the wonders of Christ's time took place under spiritual laws, then there could be no reason for saying that they had ceased. The spiritual gifts of the apostolic age were not isolated phenomena, showing themselves for one century only. St. Augustine, who was copied closely by Luther and Calvin, who lived 395 A.D., gives minute details of miracles worked in his day. The reformers threw away too much; they sought to separate the wheat from the chaff, but they retained too much of the latter and lost much of the former. Their rejection of the continuation of spiritual gifts was a fatal error, and yet Luther himself, as can be seen from his "Table Talk," had a personal belief in angels watching and protecting him. Because he accused the Catholics of manufacturing sham miracles he was afraid to claim to have the power of working true ones, in case they might retort. His experiences and confessions in "Table Talk" reveal that he had much in the way of spiritual manifestations. As Robert Dale Owen says in treating of this subject: "This reaction from the abuse of spiritual gifts in the Catholic Church has all along been a killing frost, destroying every beautiful flower of Paradise."

Will anyone say that the Catholic Church is decaying and, that the Protestant Church is gaining ground? The facts are all the other way. Luther had too much communion with the devil. According to his own account "The devil supped with him, slept with him, watched with him, spoke to him in all his calamities and misfortunes." This so-called devil, whoever he might have been, evidently intensified his will and strengthened him in his reformatory work. "As a man thinketh so is he."

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.]

Inspiration.

SIR,—Just a line saying that I never supposed for a moment that you doubted the truth of my statement, but I think your remarks in the note alluded to cast discredit—unintentionally—on the belief in inspiration through our spirit friends, whether good or evil; and an inquirer—for whom my communication was intended—would probably say, "this evidence is of no value: even the Editor disbelieves it."

It is a matter of no consequence whatever that people should look upon me as an inspirational medium; nothing was further from my thoughts than the wish to put that forward; but in speaking of this phase of mediumship, the most prevalent of all to my thinking, I could not well speak of any other person's experience; and I still think that coming from a man who knew next to nothing about Spiritism, and who had never written anything beyond an ordinary letter of business,

the production of that essay in the manner described was as strong a proof of spirit-control as could be afforded, short of personal experience, which does not come to all; and as the knowledge of this truth—if it be true—will benefit humanity, then, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." You touch the key note when you say that this "raises the whole question of genius," and I prefer the teaching of the Apostle James to that of Mr. Myers on this subject.

T. L. HENLY.

Astrology.

SIR,—In "LIGHT," p. 242, "Libra" asks "Who will apologise on behalf of Astrology?" Astrology being a *true* science, no apology on its behalf is needed, but I, one of its students, am a fallible, mortal man, and as such am fated to blunder more or less; were I *perfect*, I could make perfect predictions but not being so, my predictions often fail. I am to blame, not astrology.

As for Zadkiel's and my own predictions differing, what of that? Opinions always differ. Witness the medical or any other profession.

If any of your readers wish to see *where* the great difficulty lies, I would refer them to the forthcoming (July) number of the "Astrologer's Magazine," to which I have sent an article on the point raised by "Libra."

RAPHAEL.

SIR,—I would point out to your correspondent "Libra" that, before he attempts to condemn Astrology, it would be advisable to carefully study the subject for a somewhat more lengthy period than one month, and not to depend on the conclusions of others; also to distribute his favours to more than one branch of the subject.

Further, "Libra" assumes that the present rules we have are perfect. They are, however, far from it, and they are only just being divested of the vagueness and indefiniteness which have hitherto surrounded them; and yet in the face of the fact of their unreliable nature there are now some self-constituted authorities trying to render them still more so by theorising and shrouding them in a veil of Theosophic nonsense.

Without being enthusiastic I may say that I have come across one or two rather remarkable cases, and at the same time many that cannot be accounted for by the present known rules; and as to finding a "true history of our lives written in the stars at the moment of birth" I have never come across one single case to support that statement.

What is needed in astrological research is a society sufficiently broad in its views to work on entirely original and scientific lines, that is, to sweep away the old rules and aphorisms and collect as many Nativities as possible of persons with known and definite characteristics, and on these found fundamental rules suitable for the age we live in, and so, provided that there is sufficient evidence, build up the "hoary science" till it is no longer classed amongst the ancient superstitions. Thus, by presenting an array of facts, we might draw the attention of men better suited for research by their knowledge of science and its analytical methods, than a few amateurs who by their position are only able to devote two or three hours a week to the subject.

CHARLES STRANGE.

13 or 11?

SIR,—There is an old superstition that if the number at a feast be found to be 13, one of the company will die before the year is out, or at least have some ill-luck; hence 13 is *said* to be an unlucky number. This superstition (and a senseless superstition it is) is founded on the fact that there were 13 persons present at the Last Supper when Judas betrayed his Master; and this is the only foundation for it! Just as well may it be said that 13 is a most lucky number because there were 13 at the Last Supper, and Peter was one of them, and was promoted to be the Prince of Apostles and the first of the mightiest line of Sovereign Pontiffs the world has ever seen! The real unlucky number has thus escaped notice, and that number is 11, whose place 13 has taken without the least show of reason. For when Judas went out and betrayed his Master, *then* was it that the number 11 showed its evil significance as the number of apostacy, of treachery, and defection. Not only so, but taken of itself it is an imperfect number, falling short of the sacred and solar number 12, and exceeding the perfect number 10, the sum of all numbers. I have carefully kept note myself of friends who have moved to residences numbered 11, and in no one case has

* "The Rise and Progress of Modern Spiritualism." By JAMES ROBERTSON. (Manchester: "The Two Worlds" Publishing Company, Limited.)

she move been lucky; and what is more remarkable, *deficiency*, or apostasy, seemed to run in the majority of instances. In one case a clerical friend pitched on a house No. 11. I said to him (he being perfectly satisfied with his Church at the time), "You will leave your Church before six months are out or something of that kind." I had not the least reason for expecting anything of the kind, but strange to say he took up some book in defence of "Irvingite" principles and four months after (or five) he seceded. In another case a friend lost a large sum in a bank failure, and another lost a friend of many years, I might say of the greater part of his life. In both of these last cases a supper or dinner of 11 persons had preceded, at which we were both present. On the other hand I have supped often in company of 13 and I never met any instance of ill luck during the year that followed, and I have known exceptionally good fortune to attend some persons who had moved into houses so numbered. The author of "The Perfect Way" believes that the evil significance of the number 13 is now reversed, *if it ever had any*, and I do not believe it had. It is the number of woman, and of the moon, and in that way may have with some reason been thought a *little less* lucky than 12, the solar number—but unlucky in itself 13 never was. I. O.

"A Plea for Association."

SIR,—“It is because the real self, while blinded by any body, has lost touch with other selves, that death has been a gulf instead of a gateway between embodied and disembodied souls.” This utterance of Mrs. Besant is plain speaking, for most of us more valuable than volumes of occult lore. Get rid of selfishness, and help one another, has been a teaching of the Sages, the why and wherefore of which here below need no words; and Mrs. Besant's further explanation is conclusive for those who have even a little of the aptitude which her laborious self-sacrifice is steadily developing into a knowledge of truth got by goodness.

She says that "Nirmanakayas," perfected men, have out of pity for mankind, casting aside their physical bodies, but retaining their other lower principles, remained in the earth sphere to help the evolution of mankind, and, I daresay, she will admit that some of these have from time to time been in the world in the flesh—as Jesus the Christ was, and as Gautama the recluse of Sakya was, and as others have been, and perhaps now are doing their best to make us good.

If that be so, and towards that end, Sir, I have to say that it might be better if Spiritualists and students of Theosophy, and if it be possible the Great British Christian, too, would so far tone down their differences as to come together and shake hands preliminarily towards a union that would begin by strengthening us all materially so that we might, in the important concomitant of ways and means, strike out on lines calculated to improve us spiritually. We are all of us. Spiritualists, Theosophists, Gilbert Elliotists, students—we want to find out what is right and to help one another to do it. What can be a shorter cut towards this end than the sort of approach which might be begun by consultation between the Spiritualistic Alliance, and, say, Mrs. Besant's Lodge? Surely it is possible to take steps in this direction free of the stumbling which might happen if one side, or both sides, were to talk about certitudes. In reality, ought any of us to be cocksure about anything? Certainly, if that attitude be preserved there is no chance of anything better than tattle. I confess that I am not ready to formulate a scheme or even a sketch of how ends could be made to meet. And it's just as well that I am not. Who am I to put myself forward with anything but a suggestion? This much only I will say, that I feel I have stood alone in the world too long; that I desire to associate myself with others who inquire, as Spiritualists and students of Theosophy inquire; that I firmly believe in what Lord Bacon said, that it is certain, and one of the greatest of the secrets of Nature, that the minds of men are more open to impressions and affections when many are gathered together than when they are alone; and rejecting, as I do, anything in the way of clericalism and ecclesiasticism, I still crave for the sort of association which this crude attempt suggests.

Highfield, Mottingham, Kent. GILBERT ELLIOT, F.T.S.

ACCORDING to the sincerity of our desire that our friends may be true, and our companions wise—and in proportion to the earnestness and discretion with which we choose both, will be the general chances of our happiness and usefulness.—RUSKIN.

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible, and by appending their signatures to their communications. 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.]

CARDIFF CHILDREN'S PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM, Queen-street Hall.—The following subjects were discussed in the groups at the meeting on Sunday: "Excelsior," "Spirit Visitation," "Prayer," "Keep to the Right," &c., &c.—E.I.C., Sec.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings each Sunday, at 7 p.m. On Sunday next, Mr. J. Burns will give a memorial address on the passing over of a member of the society.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—On Sunday last Mr. W. Wallace's guides gave us an instructive address upon the Bible from a spirit's point of view, and also answered numerous questions at the close. Mr. Drake also conducted the proceedings. On Sunday next at 7 p.m. Mr. C. White; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., seance, Mrs. Mason.—J.H.B., Hon. Sec.

311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday evening we had a good time; many spoke as the word was given them. Mr. Long's control gave us a short but able address. We had also the pleasure of having a short address from Mr. Butcher's control. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., circle; at 3 p.m., lyceum; at 7 p.m., circle. Wednesday, at 8.30 p.m., circle for inquiries.—J. PERRY, Assistant Sec.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—"Spiritualism, the Union of Faith and Fact," was the subject on which the controls of Mr. J. J. Morse eloquently discoursed to a crowded audience on Sunday evening last, Mr. T. Everitt in the chair. The lecture was a combination of clear reasoning, sound and powerful argument, and pure and refined sentiment, with brief touches of wit and humour. A beautiful solo was given by Miss Morse. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., meeting; at 7 p.m. Mr. W. G. Coote on "The Science of Psychometry," concluding with experiments. On the 18th, Mr. Carlyle Petersilea, "Mary Ann Carew, Wife, Mother, Spirit, Angel." On the 25th, Miss Rowan Vincent, on "What must I do to be saved?"—C. I. HUNT.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Sunday last the guides of Mrs. Bliss conducted a floral service to the memory of Mrs. Sarah Harn, who lately passed to the higher life. They spoke of death as being the new birth, and gave to the relatives and friends of our departed sister much spiritual food for reflection. Mrs. Bliss spoke a few words normally, explaining how she first became a Spiritualist, through the passing away of her own dear child, whom she had seen many times in the spirit. We (the members) sincerely thank Mrs. Bliss for the manner in which the service (which was well attended) was conducted throughout, and also the friends who so kindly contributed towards the floral decorations. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Dale's Thursday, at 8 p.m., clairvoyance.—J.B., Sec.

PECKHAM RYE.—On Sunday last Mr. R. J. Lees by special request took as the subject of his discourse "Paul's Antagonism to the Teachings of Jesus." In treating it he pointed out the great difference between the "universal" spirit shown throughout the whole of Christ's life, for in this the best exponent of his teaching was to be found, and the narrow doctrine of election laid down by Paul throughout his apostolic career; and he contended that a great deal of the sectarian spirit had arisen through the Pauline doctrines having covered over the simple Gospel of Jesus with theological intricacies. Mr. Lees touched upon the question of free will, which he considered was limited in the individual, with a power to be a force for good or for evil, but eventually circumstances would so work that every one would forsake the evil and cling to the good.—J.C.

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 Chabanaïs, Paris; Germany, E. Schlochau, 1, Monbijou-place, Berlin, N.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middelland, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, R. Fortenson, Ade, Christiania; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14 Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or, W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings: at 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park:—The last Sunday in each month at 7 p.m. Reception for inquirers. Also each Friday, at 8 p.m. prompt, for Spiritualists only, the study of Spiritualism. And at 1, Winifred-road, Manor Park, the first Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J. A.