

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	13	The Conflict Past	20
Astrology	14	Saints in Morocco	20
Re-Incarnation	15	Devil Dancing	21
Saints and Mediums	17	Learning from the Heathen	21
Mrs. Besant's Address	18	A Ghost	23
"The Veil Lifted"	19	Letters to the Editor	23-24

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Mr. Stead has been much interviewed in Chicago. One interview is reported by the "Religio-Philosophical Journal." The interviewer did not get much out of Mr. Stead, for it was very much as if a sixth-form boy had been asked what opinion he had formed of "binary quantities," or of Fresnel's wave-surface. Such a boy though, being clever, might hit upon something good, and so did Mr. Stead. He was asked what he thought was "the strongest and most convincing proof of the mind's survival of the body." And this is the report:—

Mr. Stead hesitated some time before giving an answer, and then said that he did not think he was competent to decide which was the strongest proof, but so far as he had gone he thought that the strongest proof in favour of human personality was supplied by the evidences that are daily multiplying of human intelligences communicating while still in the body with other persons through agencies which are independent of the body. "That is, it seems," said Mr. Stead, "that if my personality is so much greater than and more complex than the fragment of it of which alone I am conscious, and if I am able to prove the existence and functioning of my own personality independently of my conscious mind, or of the senses of the body, it seems rational to think that this mind, which operates independently of the body, will continue existing after the body has dissolved. So long as it was possible to imagine that human intelligence was simply a product of the brain which dissolved at death, the proof seemed the other way, but when you are confronted at every turn with evidence that a man's personality can function independently of his body you are no more inclined to believe that you cease to exist when your body dies than that you pass out of existence when you lay down the telephone and ring it off."

Which is certainly good—if there is so much evidence.

One of the difficulties connected with spirit return is the constant attempts made at personification. When John the Baptist or Mary of Scotland manifests, one doubts very much. But as it is still possible that either of these two might talk nonsense under provocation, though the doubt is very great, yet absolute certainty is not reached, because we none of us knew either the Baptist or the Queen. The case of Madame Blavatsky is different. We knew something about her, so that the two following accounts admit of comparison with what we do know of her. The first is from the "Harbinger of Light" for November 1st:—

A contributor, upon whose veracity and accuracy we can implicitly rely, sends us the following:—

"On Tuesday afternoon, October 10th, I was one of nine persons composing a circle which met in Collins-street for the purpose of assisting in the development of a writing medium. I was discussing the subject of re-incarnation with two ladies on the other side of the table, who are opposed to it, when a lady seated next to me, who is not a professional medium, went off all of a sudden into a condition of semi-trance, and became clairvoyant. She said: 'There is a very stout lady, with large

prominent eyes, leaning on your left shoulder. I do not like her. She uses strong language, and she smokes. Don't let her come near me.' I asked, 'Does she look like an Englishwoman or a foreigner?' 'She is foreign, I think.' I inquired, 'Is she French, Spanish, or Italian?' To each of these interrogatories a negative reply was given. 'She puts on some furs,' said the lady. 'Is she Russian?' 'Yes, yes, yes.' 'Is it Madame Blavatsky?' The reply was a still more emphatic 'Yes.' The lady then went off into a deep trance, and was taken possession of by the spirit, who brought her hand down on the table vehemently, and said: '— it, I will speak. I don't like to hear women quibbling over a subject they don't understand.' I said, 'Have you altered your opinion about the spirits who speak to us being mere shells or spooks?' 'I am here and speaking to you,' she replied, in a very positive and peremptory tone, 'and that is a sufficient answer to your question. I am very often with you.' 'Have you ever met with any Mahatmas in the spirit-world?' 'I have spoken to some great and noble spirits here,' was the evasive reply. What followed is unimportant; but it may be mentioned that the lady on coming out of trance complained of a very uncomfortable feeling, as if her frame had been suddenly expanded into one of large bulk, and she was quite unconscious of what had taken place."

The other account is in a small paper of no importance called "Occultism," published at Dorchester, Mass. The proprietor, editor, and general factotum is a certain Joseph M. Wade, who is very angry because we do not believe that he is the one true prophet. It will be seen that "Hellena" Blavatsky is different in Massachusetts from what she is in Collins-street, Melbourne. It is possible that there are several of her. To the Editor of "Occultism" "Hellena" said, among other things:—

They tell me I am again as a little child, born into spirit spheres, but with all the powers I longed to be master of in the past, and, as I never give up to defeat, you may expect to see me at some hour when you are least prepared to greet Hellena Blavatsky, and your London friend, the Editor of "LIGHT," may see or hear from me as one not dead, nor sleeping.

He shall see me floating downward
In a flame of warmth and light,
Coming to ask his doubting spirit
Why he dons the robe of night;
Why he lives in splendid mansion,
Made of wood, of glass and stone,
While the honest poor are starving,
The icy streets their only home;
Why he sneers when men of wisdom
Seek and find the rising stars,
All unknown to his proud kingdom
Close beside the prison bars;
Why he thinks himself a hero
Because his pen has won renown
In the ranks of cruel critics,
On earthly camping grounds;
Why his paper lacks true beauty,
And progressive thoughts are few,
He perchance will quickly answer,
"What in heaven is this to you?"

HELLENA BLAVATSKY.

We apologise to our Theosophic friends for publishing this "Catnach" doggerel, but it is illustrative of the curious mental state of some possible mediums. And so is instructive.

Dr. Louis Robinson, in the "North American Review," speaks of dreams in this wise:—

Speaking very generally, one may say that, during sleep, the brain does an immense amount of sorting and pigeon-holing

of impressions. It would also appear that some process, akin to stock-taking, and the rummaging of out-of-the-way corners, also goes on when the judgment and the will are taking a holiday. In considering the raw material of dreams, we must take into account a certain amount of cerebral activity during the whole period of sleep—the unbroken current of ideas that passes through the sleeping brain, and which reveals itself to the unconscious Ego only when some disturbing element intervenes. We may compare it to an invisible and silent river, flowing by without betraying its presence, save when there is a splash of a fish or a falling stone or some foaming eddy when a rock breaks the smooth surface.

And pray, what is the "brain" that does all this? and what is meant by the unbroken current of ideas which passes through the sleeping brain, that same brain being wide awake? What nonsense it all is!

ASTROLOGY.*

It is difficult for one not initiated in the art and science of Astrology to treat a book of this kind properly. At the most he can only say how it appears to himself. At once, then, it may be said, that the book appears on the whole to be fair, and that the accounts given are generally adapted to the lay reader. It is, of course, impossible to verify all the asserted facts quoted by the author, so that reference can only be made to some of them. On p. 15 the bright star seen by Tycho Brahe is mentioned, and Mr. Old says:—

It has been determined that this star appeared in Cassiopeia at the reputed time of the birth of Jesus of Bethlehem. Aries rules over Judea, and Cassiopeia with her child, Andromeda, will be found mentioned in the Apocalypse under the figure of the "woman clothed with the sun," who brought forth a man-child, which, like Andromeda, was exposed to the danger of being devoured by a hydra or sea-serpent. I think it not unlikely that the birth of Christ was predicted from the astrological indications concurrent with the appearance of this bright star.

Now, putting aside the fact of the time of Christ's birth being probably not that usually assigned to it, is it not a little stretching the argument to make the "man-child" the apocalyptic equivalent of Andromeda?

The facts which are seen in the lives of certain twins are used to expose the doctrine of planetary influence at birth. The following is an instance:—

Joseph and Samuel Clough, born at Pudsey in Yorkshire, at 8 a.m., June 28th, 1824. These twins had scarlet fever together at the age of four years; and were engaged to be married at the same time. Both the women whom they courted died at the same time, when the twins were nearly nineteen years of age. They both died within twenty-four hours of one another, and of the same complaint, consumption, and were buried in the same grave, August 2nd, 1842.—("Leeds News," August 6th, 1842.)

Now the only thing here that is remarkable, is that the two sweethearts of the two boys died at the same time. That these should both have had scarlet fever together, and both die of consumption about the same time, is what one would expect without bringing in the stars. That they should both be buried in the same grave is also not at all unusual. But how about all the twins that don't die at the same time?

Of the triangle and square, the trine and quadrature, Mr. Old says:—

In review of these divisions of the zodiacal signs it will be observed that the threefold constitutional and fourfold elemental distribution of them gives us two numbers, which are of great importance in all magical philosophy, the numbers seven and twelve, the latter being composed of 3×4 , the former consisting of $3 + 4$. These figures, represented by the triangle and the square in the world of ideas, and by the pyramid and the cube in the world of objects, have a special signification, and in all ages and countries have been held in sacred reputation as the symbols of spirit and matter, subjectively and objectively; of light and darkness, of good and evil. Hence it results that all the signs which

behold one another by a trine aspect are considered as, and may be shown to be, favourable to one another; while those related by the square aspect are evil. The reason of which is, as we learn from the teachings of Pythagoras, that the world is founded upon numbers, and that all spiritual forces, with their corresponding material forms, are bound to follow this law. So that everything which makes for harmony and union is of the nature of the divine, which is one and indivisible, is of the nature of light, is good; whereas all that makes for discord and heterogeneity is of the nature of the material, which is differentiated and full of strife, is of the nature of darkness, is evil. When, therefore, we find the triangle superposed upon the cross, we know that we are dealing with the symbol of all that is of the nature of Venus, the lightbearer, the harbinger of peace, and the spiritual nature of man; but when, as in the symbol of the planet Mars, we find the cross of matter above the reversed triangle of spirit, we have to deal with the lower material nature of man, with the source of strife and discord, and with the state of liberty in its unrestrained and selfish aspect.

This is very interesting, throwing some light, as it does, on matters which are very puzzling to the outsider. But is it right to say that the world is founded upon "numbers"? or should it be "things" of which numbers are the symbols? One gets into difficulties here, though Mr. Old may be right.

In favour of the science Sir David Brewster is referred to. But it should be noted that he lived some time ago. One remark of Sir David's is worth quoting:—

Is it not conceivable that these apparently minute luminaries whose numbers defy human calculation, may have been appointed to regulate the destinies of the numberless individuals who inhabit this earth?

This is very near, if not quite, nonsense. It is not worthy of Brewster's reputation to confound "apparent" size with "real" magnitude, and to talk about the "numberless individuals" on the earth, who are simply numberless because they have not been counted. Such argument as this would better have been withheld.

With Mr. Old's appeal to the scientific world we quite agree. After the account of some fulfilled predictions, he says:—

Such predictions and fulfilments as the above are usually referred to as "lucky hits" and "stray shots" by the opponents of astrology. I will only say this, that our critics should show that these predictions are not made according to the rules of Ptolemy, Junctinus, Manilius, Aratus, Galen, Cardan, Ramesey, and others, whose works are accessible and almost wholly reproduced in the modern literature of the votaries of this art. But having been convinced of the fact that not one in a thousand of those who try to discredit astrology can even construct a figure of the heavens for astrological purposes, I despair of ever seeing their sceptical vituperations justified by an appeal to facts. I maintain, however, that the prediction of a single event which could not ordinarily be foreseen warrants us in claiming the attention of all dispassionate lovers of truth, more especially since we do not contend for the employment of any normal faculty of the mind, such as might disqualify certain individuals for research in this department of experimental science. The ground is open to all who have fair knowledge of mathematics and astronomy, in addition to an average faculty of comparison and judgment. If astrology is to be finally discredited, there is only one way to do it—viz., by proving the principles of the science to be false by experiment. But this a method which requires more application than our opponents are willing to accord; and it is so much easier to disparage than to disprove. Hence it happens that the most serious argument that has ever been lodged against the science, when stripped of its "glittering generalities" and insidious verbiage, amounts to this: "Astrology cannot be true, because, because—well, because it is false"!

THIS WORLD.—I do not hesitate to say that the first and paramount aim of religion is not to prepare for another world, but to make the best of this world; or, more correctly stated, to make this world better, wiser, and happier. It is to be good, and do the most good we can, now and here, and to help others to be and do the same. It is to seek, with all our might, the highest welfare of the world we live in, and the realisation of its ideal greatness, and nobleness, and blessedness.—CAIRD.

*Astrology." A Series of Lectures delivered before the Mylapur Literary Society, Madras. By WALTER R. OLD, F.T.S. (Madras: Office of the "Theosophist," Adyar.)

AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW OF RE-INCARNATION.

IV.—PERSONALITY (Continued).

Man's organism is a focus in which the descending life of spiritual degree meets the ascending life in animal degree and transmutes the latter from the mode of sensation to the next higher mode, the astral. The ascending current of life continues on its ascending circuit and is carried by the fact of its conversion to its related plane—viz., the astral; where it goes to constitute the forms of the entities living in that mode or plane. In their forms it comes under the influence of descending life which has come directly from the soul plane, and is consequently thus imbued with higher spiritual qualities, or converted to a higher mode, and when thrown off as aura, is again carried to its related successive plane till it becomes life in the spirit mode or degree. This ascending life is always integrated in the forms of living entities. It cannot be said, therefore, that such ascending substantial life attains self-consciousness or self-identification. Self-consciousness is only attained when such life, after having been returned, in spirit mode, to the Universal source whence it was drawn, is nucleated in association with wisdom and love ideas, by the Elohim, as already explained. Self-identification is a later stage of unfoldment. Man stands at the negative pole of the circuit, in the centre of the chain of foci, or links, between the source of life and its return to its fountain head. As he receives ascending life from inferior modes and transmits it to superior modes, so similarly, but conversely, does he receive descending life from superior modes and transmit it to inferiors. The life which comes in the air to men, transmitted in the light and heat of the sun's rays, has in the sun been inbreathed (correspondentially) by angels and outbreathed, bearing some of their spiritual quality. From thence it descended through the intermediary ethereal planes, and through the astral, giving out and absorbing qualities in its passage through each living focus. When received by us, these qualities are reflected as thought. Thrown off by us again as aura and carrying somewhat of our quality, the life passes to animals, to plants and minerals; wherefore does the physical world represent and reflect human states, and evolve correlatively with man's evolution. Thus does life become matter, and hence it is said that matter is spirit densified; or, as science is beginning to find, living.

The ascending life distilled from food in man's organism meets the more spiritual life descending in the light and heat of the sun and inbreathed by man from the atmosphere. The fusion of this life of superior and inferior degree or mode causes combustion, and the ascending life is liberated, as flame from a fire, transmuted to a higher mode, the astral, and passes off as aura, as magnetic radiation. But all the emanations and excretions of the body are atoms of life, and carry away with them some of the quality absorbed from the organism, when descending into nature. That matter thus gains a vivifying quality is well known in connection with manures. While our spiritual state and relative unfoldment is dependent on life which descends to us from higher states, our forms are integrated from life on the ascending curve. Hence our spiritual life has to descend to us through the entities on the intermediary astral plane, and we are thus dependent on their unfoldment for our evolution. But equally are those entities dependent on us for the quality of the ascending life necessary to constitute their forms, which has been transmuted from animal life by us, and carries somewhat of the human qualities with it, when thrown off by us, in the astral mode. Thus are the two planes interdependent. The same law applies in the converse direction, as regards the inter-relation and inter-dependence of the human and the lower degrees of life. The descending life which we receive from higher states flows from us into the physical plane, and there takes form in objective representations of the qualities transmitted, under certain correspondential laws; while we are dependent again on the life reascending from that plane, for the life which goes to constitute our forms. Thus is every plane and state interdependent and inter-related with the next plane in either direction in the circuit of Being. Thus is the circuit of Being constituted of living atoms or foci, connecting the pole of pure spirit with that of matter. Thus are the planets negative to the sun, from which they receive their life. Thus, also are suns interconnected, and the whole universe linked into one living Unity, in which the progress of each unit is dependent on the state of the other links in the interconnecting chains, and in which the whole is dependent on the relative state of each of its participant units.

It is these descending and ascending currents of life, through man's organism, that are referred to in the alchemical axioms "Dissolve and coagulate," and "Fix the volatile and volatilise the fixed."*

It is suggestive in this respect to note that the astral mind principle in man is called Ruach in the Kabbala. This word is also used to connote spirit; it also signifies air. It is easy to read the occult signification, that man's mental principle or degree of spirit is carried in the air, and it is probably because of this that the astral light is also called the Universal Mind. "There is in the air," says an alchemist, "a secret fund of life, whose concealed spirit is better than the whole world. . . . The Universal spirit is a middle substance, passive, undetermined, susceptible of conversion, purifying and to be purified, itself by itself; in turn agent and patient. . . . The pure, passive expanse; the mirror of the reason of nature and medium of sublime experience of man. . . . When solved and resolved, and wisely manipulated, it becomes the stone of the wise. . . . The mysteries were ceremonies for the purification of life, of the Vital Spirit, in its proper Light. . . . Mr. Maitland, in a recent lecture, said: "Beings, like worlds, are made from light polarised, and represent an evolution from inorganic to organic, and possess thus faculties wherewith to cognise themselves and the substance of which they consist. . . ." The grade of any individual would then depend on his ability to appropriate and assimilate the substance of his Being in its purest modes; he would thus reconstitute himself and elaborate a new self, compared with that made from the coarser modes of matter and circumferential states." "Man is the laboratory of the Hermetic art; his life the process of distillation and self-knowledge the object; whereby he shall know all things."

The animal qualities inherent in the life distilled from food express their tendencies through us, usually unconsciously to the man. He is swayed by anger, passion, cruelty, selfishness, sensuality, thus emanating from animals and reacting on him, through the astral nexus, the vital web constituting his personality. But, as shown, there is also a constant influx into him of life from above, of spiritual degree, carrying spiritual thoughts and tendencies. According to the potency of this spiritual life carrying illuminating thought, inflowing into him; according to the relative source of his origin and mediate descent, and consequently of the links between him and his source of Being, will be the apparent quality of the life principle or degree, expressed in his personality, the field in which these manifold energies meet. It is the constantly varying life impulses which are brought into interaction in this focus of ascending and descending life, that cause the apparently inexplicable contradictory aspects in the same personality; as also which give rise to the appearance of conflict, as of free will.

The astral nexus of man, or astro-magnetic vortex, is generated, or polarised, at physical conception, by the mutual interaction of the masculine and feminine, or positive and negative, magnetic currents, which "induce" a vortex of astral aura. (This aura is visible to clairvoyants as luminous. Light is stated by modern physics to be atomic and polarisable.) This nexus or vital web is subsequently infilled by the spirit-Ego, the "wheel of life," which, though descending into it, is really antecedent to it; itself having been polarised from homogeneous eternal spirit on the plane of the Elohim and descended thence, through intermediary states, in elemental condition, to the astro-human vortex (below which it does not descend), and comes thus into relation with the sense-mediated plane of self-consciousness.

In that state the spirit-Ego is still related to its divine parents, the Elohim, by dual magnetic currents, which the latter propel and continue thus to act upon it; to guide and direct it through its process of unfoldment and becoming. He, the Wisdom, projects the light and life energies of illuminating thought and will. She, the Spiritual Love, propels the current that attracts, resumes, redeems, indraws. It is through these spirit-children, these units of Being, made by the Elohim (a dual masculine-feminine plural term) in their own image: "the image of God," and projected into external

* See South's "Suggestive Inquiry into Hermetic Mysteries"; Mather's "Kabbala Unveiled"; Dowd's "Temple of the Rosy Cross"; Eliphas Levi's works, "Life and its Manifestations"; Sinnett's "Human Aura"; Elixir of Life," by a Chela; Hartmann's "Paracelsus" and "Magic, Black and White"; "Clothed with the Sun," and "Perfect Way," by Kingsford and Maitland; Swedenborg's "Divine Love and Wisdom."

existence, that the Elohim: "the spirits of God," are related to external states. But these children of God are pure spirit, and do not descend below the astral mind of man, which they infill with luminous radiation, and from there build up his body, in accord with Archetypal law; which body becomes an objective representation of the life stream acting through the astral nexus, and, as will be shown later, serves as the matrix from which the permanent spiritual body is built.

The personality pertains to the circumferential astral principle, the nexus polarised at conception, and into which the life distilled from food during physical life is integrated. This nexus stands as a vital bridge between the ascending life in sensation degree, and the spirit-Ego in its soul vehicle, or focus of descending spiritual life. The radiation of the soul-focus acting on the ascending life from food transmutes this to the astral degree. The astral degree of life carries a rational mode or principle as its mode of consciousness. This is polarised into a focus by a ray from the superior soul. It is through this ray that the soul takes the spatial relations of the external world into its cognition; it is through this ray that the sense-mediated experiences of the personality are presented to and taken cognisance of by the inner soul. Spiritual thought is presented to the mind by radiation, by a vibrating luminous ray from the soul. Rational thought is presented to the spiritual consciousness from the circumferential mind by means of this soul ray, which penetrates it. Sensation is again a lower mode, taken cognisance of by the mind and presented by it to the soul. It is thus evident that the lower or more external mind cannot compass or penetrate, or gain access to, its transcendent principle, the soul, nor can it ever cognise in that transcendent mode. The mind may be guided and directed by the soul, but the personality (astral) is the effect, and cannot mould the operating cause.

While the transmuting energy emanating from the source of Being is uninterrupted and continuous, it has been shown that it does not act directly from the centre to the circumference, but mediately, by degrees of reflection. These degrees of reflection are concurrent with the discrete degrees or modes of consciousness, which, while distinguishable, are inseparable. These intermediate modes, while continuous for the Determinator, are discrete to the circumferential modes of the particularised determination on the descending curve of unfoldment; each proximate transcendent becoming obscured to its relatively inferior or circumferential mode. While the Ground-of-Being or ultimate Reality, the nuclid of eternal spirit or Universal Consciousness, is actually or immediately present in the Ego, yet it is obscured by the successive circumferential superposing of vehicles related to these modes in the intermediary planes of descent. Hence it is only mediately present, in self-reference, to the self-consciousness of the sense-related plane. While the Reality, or isness of Being, is present in experience, it is only mediately present, through intermediary links, and not immediately present, as affirmed in transcendental philosophy. The rational mind is the mode of the astral-ruach principle; the most circumferential aspect of Being. The outer cannot penetrate or subjugate the inner, but is interpenetrated by and illuminated by the radiation of its relatively central or transcendent mode. Hence, the subjective identity ever recedes behind the regarding mind. Every effort of the rational mind to cognise its proximate Universal ends negatively. Its relative transcendental must ever remain theoretic and speculative apperceptions. It can never cognise in that state or participate in that mode of Being. As those interior modes unfold, whether here or in the ascending planes, they interpenetrate their circumferential modes, and thus bring the experience of the unit into more direct, more immediate relation with the Reality of Being. The unfolding of the central principle within the Ego, its subjective-identity, entails identic-union and conscious sharing in the whole of experience, in that state.

The Ego, when differentiated, or polarised from homogeneous eternal spirit-life, by the action of the Elohim, is an ethereal nucleus of light and life, but contains inherently the Divine Archetypal Image. In the process of becoming, it descends through the planes in the Universe, its inherent modes of consciousness unfolding and relating it accordingly. In the descending, outward, centrifugal curve of manifestation, it reflects its self-determination into objectivity, or vehicles, which re-present its content. In the physical, or most external of these bodies, the centripetal or indrawing force comes into prominence and the return inwards, or reascending curve, commences. The indrawing force builds by accretion, beginning from the physical

matrix, more and more ethereal forms successively as the Ego indraws from plane to plane of substance in modes related thereto; till this becomes, as fulfilment, a divine dual-angel made in the image of God. It is these incarnations in the successive states or modes of Being, to which the Ego carries inherent relation, that are probably the true interpretation of the theory of re-incarnation.

It is taught in some schools that man's soul, or his higher triad of principles, impels a number of consecutive, impermanent personalities into external ultimatum, and gathers up into itself, as permanent element, the experiences of these personalities, which have no reality in themselves. If this higher triad be taken as equivalent to the dual-Elohim here referred to, with the spirit-life acting through them, then this interpretation differs from those schools to the extent that the children of the Elohim are real in themselves. Their personality aspect is only one in the chain of successive modes, through which the Reality within them "becomes" in the stature of the dual-Elohim, who made man in the image of God.

I have now endeavoured to show that the process of becoming proceeds in the form of a circuit, similar to that of electricity, from positive pole to negative, and thence returning to its source, with no retrogression on its path; that it is life in subconscious states, as substance, which re-incarnates by being integrated by entities into an endless series of forms, related to the respective modes, on an ascending scale, in successive modes and planes; that the self-conscious Ego does not re-incarnate in a series of human bodies, but does have successive existence in ascending modes and planes, and in forms related thereto, which it accretes from life as substance, above referred to, in the mode related to such planes; that such planes or states, while inseparable, are distinguishable and entail modes of consciousness which are discrete to the relatively inferior mode, while being cognisable to its proximate transcendent, and that each mode of consciousness carries a related mode of objectivity or nature; that personality is one of these modes of Being: the astral, which includes sensation and mind, and carries relation with the physical sense-related plane and with the astral plane; these two being continuous; the former interpenetrating the latter. I shall next deal with the soul-principle and then with the spirit-Ego itself; and endeavour to show that man's occult constitution may permit of reciprocal interchange and conscious sharing, on the part of each unit, in the experience of those by whom it is surrounded in the state of identity; consequently that it may consciously share in the whole of experience, without having had to acquire all such experience itself, by successive re-incarnations on earth.

QUESTOR VITE.

HEALING WOUNDS THROUGH MENTAL SUGGESTION.

Many of us are familiar with accounts of the wounds inflicted by African dervishes on themselves; but the statements which the narrators make, that they do not inflame, and may be quite healed in twenty-four hours, tend to discredit their truthfulness. Delbœuf's observations, made two or three years ago, make these stories more plausible. It is well established that if, in certain hypnotic subjects, a suggestion is made during hypnotic sleep, that a cautery or a blister is applied to a part of the body, it will produce, after due lapse of time, an actual reddening of the skin. The hallucinatory feeling of inflammation produces in these persons a genuine inflammation. M. Delbœuf argued from this, that the feeling of pain, however useful in other respects, must itself be an irritant, and goes on to infer that the abolition of it from an actual wound ought to accelerate its healing. On a young woman, whom he could make insensible by suggestion, he marked two corresponding spots, one on each arm, and made on each an identical burn with a hot iron, announcing to the patient, while in trance, that the one on the right should not be felt. The suggestion took effect; and the next day, when the bandages were taken off, and the left arm presented a sore with an inflammatory area three centimetres in diameter, the right arm showed only a clean scorch of the skin of the exact size of the iron, without redness or inflammation. On another subject, similar results were obtained with burns and blisters, the spots chosen being near together on the same arm or on the neck.—"Journal of Hygiene," New York.

AWFUL thought as the glory of God is, so soon as the soul is turned into the light of the Divine love, that glory is ever near at hand, and not afar off to it.

SAINTS AND MEDIUMS.

By C. A. PARRY, B.A.

VI.—ST. FRANCESCA OF ROME. (Continued.)

Francesca's outer life was about this time (1400) marked by three events, the birth of her first son and the deaths of her father and of her husband's mother. Placed by this last in sole management of a very wealthy household, she enlarged her charities, herself living in even an austerer manner than before. Her devoted care of her sister-in-law Vanozza during a serious illness is said to have been rewarded by the following miracle: Vanozza had for days been unable to take food; the very sight of it was nauseous to her, and it seemed as if she was doomed to perish of exhaustion. Francesca asked her to try and think of something she could eat, on which she named a certain fish not then in season. The servants scoured the market, but of course returned empty-handed. Francesca, almost in despair, betook herself in simple and ardent faith to prayer, kneeling at her sister's bedside. When she raised her head, the much-desired article lay before her; Vanozza was able to eat it and was soon restored. She had been about a year at the head of her father-in-law's house when Rome fell under the double scourge of famine and pestilence. The Ponziani were extremely rich; Francesca forbade her servants to send away a single poor person without relieving his wants; while she was indefatigable in visiting the hospitals and purlieus of the city and seeking out the most pitiable cases. Her father-in-law, Andreazzo, began to be alarmed at her excessive liberality, and feared it might eventuate in a famine in his own house. He prudently deprived her of the key of the granary, and then, perhaps afraid that he would be unable to resist their entreaties, he sold all the corn he possessed save what the family needed for daily use, and all his wine except one cask. Meanwhile the famine continued and heightened; the unhappy supplicants at the doors of the hospitable house of the Ponziani became still more numerous and clamorous. Francesca and Vanozza could no longer relieve them; still less could they send them away unaided. Only one resource was left: they would defy false pride and "respectability" and go and beg for the poor. Then were seen those two noble and lovely women standing at the doors of the churches, knocking at the gates of the palazzi, following the rich in the public places, pleading with tears the cause of the sufferers, gladly receiving the abundant alms sometimes bestowed, and not less gladly the sneers, repulses, and insults that often fell to their share. At last the famine reached its height. On every side, on the pavements, at the street-corners, lay starving half-clad people, haggard, wasted with fever, calling on death. The heart of our saint was well-nigh broken; the moanings of the dying, their ghastly faces, were in her ears and before her eyes day and night. One day it occurred to her to revisit the corn-loft to see if they could not find some grains of corn among the straw. By dint of some hours' patient sifting, they collected about a measure, which they were bearing away, when Lorenzo entered the granary, and behold! in place of the straw on which they had just turned their backs lay forty measures of bright, yellow corn, so shining and so full, says Francesca's earliest biographer, "that it seemed as if it had been raised in Paradise and reaped by angels"! A similar miracle took place with regard to the wine. Francesca had given away even to the last drop. When Andreazzo discovered this, he fell into a fury and poured on her the bitterest reproaches. The saint, feeling perhaps that she had again been befriended in a supernatural way, merely replied: "Do not be angry; let us go to the cellar; maybe, through God's mercy, the cask may be full by this time." They followed her; she went to the barrel and found it full of wine, which the bystanders acknowledged to be the best they had ever tasted.

If any reader professing to be a Spiritualist is inclined to sneer at these stories as mere "monkish legends," let him read the accounts of Mrs. Guppy's séances, in Miss Houghton's "Evenings at Home in Spiritual Séance," and elsewhere, and ponder especially the detailed account of the instantaneous transport of this medium from her home in Highbury to a séance-room in Lamb's Conduit-street, more than four miles distant, on the evening of June 3rd, 1871—one of the most "incredible," but also one of the best attested facts in the literature of Spiritualism.

These repeated miracles vanquished the last scruples of Francesca's relatives. The esteem with which they had always

regarded her now deepened into a religious awe and veneration, and they no longer ventured to inquire into her motives or criticise her actions. Lorenzo left her entirely free to spend her time and order her life in any way she pleased; and she took this occasion to carry out a long cherished desire, by selling all her rich dresses and personal adornments, and distributing the money among some needy families; and henceforward she herself wore no other gown than one of coarse, dark-green cloth.

Francesca had just attained the age of twenty when her second son was born. He was named Giovanni Evangelista; and the contemporary biographer of the saint says that he was endowed with wonderful gifts, and quaintly describes him as "old in sense, small in body, great in soul, resplendent in beauty, angel-like in all his ways." At the age of three, he was endowed with the gift of prophecy and the faculty of reading thoughts. Singular instances of this power are on record. He was in his mother's arms one day when two mendicant friars approached the Ponziano palace. Stretching out his little hands, Evangelista took from Francesca the alms she was wont to bestow on such visitors, and held it out to them; but at the same time, looking steadfastly at one of them, said: "Why will you put off this holy habit?—you will wear a finer one; but woe to you who forget your vow of poverty." The friar coloured and turned away. The words were prophetic; for within a short time, and after obtaining a bishopric through a simoniacal act, he died a violent death. That same year, Evangelista, being on his father's knees, who was playing with him and kissing him, suddenly turned pale, and taking up a dagger which lay on the table, placed the point of it against Lorenzo's side and said, looking up into his face with a strange, melancholy smile, "Thus they will do to you, my father." The prophecy found fulfilment about a year later.

The following few years were to be full of troubles for Francesca, spiritually and materially. "The warfare which Satan was permitted to carry on against her became more and more violent at this period. In actual outrages, in terrific visions, in mystical but real sufferings, which afflicted every sense and tortured every nerve, the animosity of the evil spirit evinced itself; and Almighty God permitted it, for she was of those chosen through much tribulation to ascend the steep path which is paved with thorns and compassed with darkness, but on which the ray of an unearthly sunshine breaks at times. She was to partake of the miraculous gifts of the saints; to win men's souls through prayer, to read the secrets of their hearts, to see angels walking by her side, to heal diseases by her touch, and hold the devils at bay when they thought to injure the bodies of others or wage war with her own spirit. But such heights of glory are not attained without proportionate suffering; the cup of which Jesus drank to the dregs in his agony she was to drink of, the baptism of horror with which he was baptised was to be hers also in a measure; and that mysterious weakness, that divine helplessness of his which allowed Satan to carry him to the pinnacle of the Temple, was shared by his servant. Strange and bewildering were the assaults she endured, but still more wonderful the defeats of the evil one. Of her triumph, as of those of her Lord, it may be said 'that when the devil left her, angels came and ministered to her.' Strange that those who believe the history of Jesus should turn incredulously away from that of his saints; for did he not expressly say that what he suffered, they should suffer; that where he had overcome, they would triumph; and that the works that he performed, aye and greater works still, they should accomplish? On one occasion, when setting out for the Basilica of Saint Peter's, Vanozza was violently precipitated downstairs by the power of the evil spirit, and fell at her sister's feet, who at that instant heard a voice whispering in her ear: 'I would kill thy sister and drive thee to despair.' Another time our saint was lifted up by her hair and suspended over a precipice; but, on calling on the name of Jesus, was put back in safety by the invisible power. Her first act on returning home was to cut off her beautiful hair and offer it as a thank-offering to him she had invoked."

THERE are few things more beautiful than the calm and resolute progress of an earnest spirit.

THE history of the reformer, whether man or woman, on any line of action is but this: when he sees it all alone he is a fanatic: when a good many see it with him he is an enthusiast; when all see it he is a hero. The gradations are as clearly marked by which he ascends from zero to hero, as the lines of latitude from the North Pole to the Equator.

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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, London, W.C. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

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MRS. BESANT'S ADDRESS ON "MAN, HIS NATURE AND HIS POWERS."

This address, admirable in itself, is rendered even more interesting through the circumstances under which it was delivered, as it was given on board the *Kaisar-i-Hind*, in the Red Sea, on October 30th, 1893, during Mrs. Besant's voyage to India. Fortunately there was on board a well-known shorthand writer, Mr. T. A. Reed, who was going out with the Opium Commission, so a verbatim report was possible.

Mrs Besant began by telling her audience that what she was about to propound to them was simply a matter of reasonable hypothesis. "All that the speaker can do, or has the right to do, is to put the truth as he sees it, leaving it to each individual to accept or to reject, the right and the duty being on each, and not on the one who speaks." With this proviso we proceed to give some account of the lecture. Mrs. Besant stated at the outset that the Eastern and Western notions of man are fundamentally different, man in the Eastern esoteric philosophy being a soul, while in the Western he is more or less a body having a mind. It is needless to say that the lecturer accepted the Eastern definition, a definition which it would be well for the West to adopt, as until it is adopted there can be little hope of spiritual regeneration.

To show how man is a soul, it was pointed out that the body is composed of innumerable minute lives, the "man" being the entity which guides, rules, hurts, or helps these lives. It would hardly seem that Mrs. Besant had seen Professor Burdon Sanderson's address to the British Association, which would have materially helped her, and perhaps have a little modified her illustrations of this part of her subject. The vitality of each one of the cells of which the body is composed, these cells being constantly thrown off, is perhaps a better way of putting the matter than to speak of the body being built up of bacteria. The argument, however, is exactly the same. The organisms which form bodily man are sent out from him poisoned or benefited, to be built up in turn into the bodies of others. Hence the importance of purity and reasonableness in physical life.

Mrs. Besant then passed on to the next stage in man, the "astral body." This she defined as the stable part of man, "which preserves the form, only slowly and gradually modified, which is more directly acted upon by the mind than the physical molecules, which affects the physical molecules in their arrangement, in that as

you alter the matrix these physical molecules must take on the form into which they run." There is a little looseness here, for there should be some distinction made between the cells and the molecules which by their separate vitalities the cells have arranged. But the word "molecule" is too often confounded with "particle," a word used in a somewhat aimless way to signify something small. What Mrs. Besant means, however, is obvious enough, and, moreover, the lecture was a popular one. And here we must use Mrs. Besant's own words. The "astral body of astral matter," she says:—

Not only envelops every physical molecule, but spreads out around the body, making a kind of atmosphere around each of us, extending some few feet away on every side, so that a clairvoyant looking at the body sees the physical body surrounded by what is called an aura—that is, a vibrating mass of delicate matter, visible to anyone who is sensitive under special conditions, but visible normally to the clairvoyant, and differing in appearance according to the state of health, physical, psychical, or mental, of the person whom it concerns. Now, that aura, or atmosphere, surrounding the body, which is in a sense an expansion of astral matter, is very closely connected especially with the mind; it is very easily affected by the mind of the person to whom it belongs, and also by the minds of others. These magnetic atmospheres that surround us (for in astral matter all magnetic forces play) bring us into contact one with the other, so that we affect each other unconsciously, as we sometimes say. Have you never felt on meeting a person for the first time an attraction or a repulsion which had nothing in it of intellectual judgment, nothing in it of previous knowledge or experience? You like a person—you cannot tell why; you dislike another—you have no reason for your dislike. Esoteric philosophy explains to you the very simple reason that causes these strange antipathies and attractions. It is that every human being has his own rate of vibration—the vibration of this astral matter, so that it is always quivering backwards and forwards. It is one of the characteristics of this ethereal matter to be thrown easily into waves; and just as light is nothing more than waves of ether set in very rapid motion by a rapidly vibrating body, which we call luminous, because of the effect it has upon the eye, so this ethereal matter, which is part of our own bodies, is thrown into waves of definite length and definite frequency; and these vibrate always in us and around us, and are part of ourselves, modified by our own characteristics. Just as striking two strings on a piano you may have either harmony or discord, according to the length of the sound waves set up by these vibrating strings, so you may have either harmony or discord between the vibrating auras of two different people; and if the vibrations fall into harmony—that is, if they bear a certain definite relation of wave length to each other—there is an attraction between the two: whereas, if they bear a different relation you get discord—that is, friction and jangle—and you are repelled, without understanding the reason.

This, obviously, is again only the popular way of putting the case. Everyone who is at all sensitive must be conscious of the existence of this aura, and the vibration theory has very strong arguments to back it, but that vibration is not necessarily a moving backwards and forwards of or in the astral matter. The vibrations of ordinary light are not simply that; there are such things as "spherical harmonies," and the vibrations of this astral matter can hardly be less simple than those of light. There is little doubt nevertheless that this vibration theory is a good one, the characteristic personal vibration starting the "super-ethereal" waves around us. But if the vibrations be there, the use of the term "magnetism" seems superfluous.

It is interesting to get at last a clear idea of mind and its connection with the soul from the theosophic standpoint, and, theosophic or not, it is perhaps not very far wrong:—

I have spoken of the soul as the man. That soul when it works through astral matter on the brain is known as mind, for the mind is the lower manifestation of the soul—it is the soul embodied and active in the body, not the soul in its own nature, not the soul in its own sphere, not the soul which uses mind as well as body as instrument, but only the soul as it is seen and manifested in the brain—intellect, reason, judgment, memory:

all those characteristics of the mind are qualities of the soul as the soul works through the brain. In its own sphere it works in matter of a much subtler kind, and there each thought is a thing. Every thought is a form; every thought has its shape in the subtler matter which is the matter of the soul-sphere. But when that shape is to make itself manifest to others who are living in the body, it must clothe itself in astral matter to begin with, and take a shape in which, in the trance or clairvoyant state, it can be seen as a form; then it may be projected further into physical manifestation.

That thoughts are "things," and more really things than those material forms we call "things," is undoubtedly true. If reasoning were worth nothing, all experience would show it. The importance of this it is not easy to over-estimate. The vibrations which produce discord may be started by an evilly disposed man, and he may do as much harm as, say, a murderer or a thief, or even more, though he may be in all apparent respects a very worthy person.

But even our careless thinking gives rise to forms; and this is a practical point of importance to us. As we think we create forms, and those forms are according to the nature of our thought, good or bad according as the thought is evil and evil-working or good and good-working. The motive which underlies the thought governs the nature of the form to which we give birth; and that form, when it passes out from us, passes into the astral world as a living thing, exists in that astral world influencing other people and forming part of the common stock of thoughts in the world.

Thus Mrs. Besant; and she is right. And again:—

I spoke of our power of physical creation: far more important is our power of moral creation; for as we give out thoughts good or evil so we affect our own and others' lives, so we build our present and our future, so we make the world of to-day and of to-morrow. What is the criminal? You and I think we can separate ourselves from the criminal, that we are so much better than he, not responsible for his acts, not responsible for his crimes. Are you so sure? A criminal is a very receptive organism—passive, negative, with all the soil made by his own past thinking, that makes him easily attract and nourish every thought which is evil and cruel. But the soil will not bear bad fruit unless evil seed falls into it. How much of that evil seed do you and I contribute? Perhaps some passing thought of anger, conquered a moment after, comes into the mind. That thought has gone out into the mental atmosphere, becoming a living thing, a force for evil. That force of anger going into the mental atmosphere of the criminal, falling into the soil prepared for it, will germinate as a seed germinates, and there it may grow, nourished by his own evil, into an anger which is murder, and is then condemned by the criminal law of man. In the juster law of the universe the generator of the angry thought shares the fault of the crime. Everyone who helps thus to pollute his brother is guilty of his brother's sin. So also with good thought. Every noble thought that we think goes out into the world as force for good, and passing into some mind, whose soil is full of all good impulses, is nourished there into heroic action, and so comes forth as noble deed. Our saints and martyrs, our heroes and our thinkers, are ours in mind as well as by virtue of our common humanity. Our best goes to their making; our noblest goes to their helping. They are ours as we have helped to form them, and every thought we think of good goes to the making of the saint.

All this may, indeed, be the teaching of the Esoteric philosophy, but it is as surely the underlying meaning of all the teaching in the world that is worth anything. It is essentially that of a pure Christianity, as well as that of a perfect Buddhism, but not often has it been so clearly set out as Mrs. Besant set it out on that day to the passengers of the *Kaisar-i-Hind* in the Red Sea.

As a countenance is made beautiful by the soul's shining through it, so the world is beautiful by the shining through it of a God.—JACOBI.

THE arguments to be derived from the light of nature in favour of the immortality of the soul amount to a strong probability; all the probability is on this side, and there is none on the other; and it ought to influence our conduct.—T. DWIGHT.

"THE VEIL LIFTED."*

This book consists of Mr. Traill Taylor's address delivered before the London and Provincial Photographic Association on March 9th, 1893,—to which ample reference was made in "LIGHT" at the time,—a collection of other papers, and extracts from several journals. There are also some reproductions of spirit-photographs taken at various times, one of a very beautiful female face which was obtained by Mr. Glendinning himself, Mr. Duguid being the medium.

It is hardly necessary to go over the old ground, as the addresses of Mr. Traill Taylor and of Mr. Glendinning have both been given in "LIGHT"; yet there are one or two things in the book, that call for more than passing notice. An extract is given from "The Practical Photographer" for April, 1893. In it we find as follows:—

We are almost surprised at Mr. Taylor's temerity in bringing forward such a subject before such an audience, when he knows full well the unreasoning prejudice with which the subject is met. Like the brothers of Dives, "they would not be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." We do not imagine that Mr. Taylor wished to convince his hearers of anything, but surely he was over-sanguine if he even expected fair investigation or criticism. Before he came forward in this matter he would have been taken as a competent investigator—in fact, the meeting in question passed a resolution to the effect that he was a "reliable person, and a gentleman well qualified to conduct such an experiment as had been described." Yet, when he states that fraud was impossible, he is at once condemned as either an incompetent or an impostor—preferably the former. A committee was appointed to investigate the matter. Will they be believed if they give a report similar to that of Mr. Taylor? Or will they only be believed if they give the report that is expected?

This describes the attitude of but too many people still. We shall be glad to know the results obtained by the committee referred to.

The book contains an account of a photograph taken without the agency of the camera:—

The experiment was made in July with a lady who is not known to Spiritualistic or Occult circles—albeit she is a good medium and clairvoyante. A dry plate from my packet of unused plates was placed in a mahogany slide. The lady then held the slide between the palms of her hands. She was under continuous and close observation in a well-lighted room, and one end of the slide was held by myself. On putting the plate in the developer, the picture of a child appeared on it. The plate was not tampered with by anyone, nor was there any opportunity given to do so, nor was it exposed to light until after it was developed and fixed.

A copy of the photograph so strangely obtained is given by Mr. Glendinning.

CONVERSAZIONE.

A Conversazione of the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held on Monday evening, January 22nd, in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, Regent-street, when Mr. F. W. H. Myers will read, and offer some remarks upon, an unpublished manuscript by Mr. W. Stainton Moses, on "The Identity of Spirit." No ticket will admit more than one person, whether member or visitor; and in the case of visitors the ticket must bear the name of the person using it, and also the name of the member by whom he is introduced.

THE annunciation of life and immortality by the Gospel, did it contain no other truth, were sufficient to cast all the discoveries of science into shade, and to reduce the highest improvements of reason to the comparative nothingness which the flight of a moment bears to eternity.—R. HALL.

DOES this soul within me, this spirit of thought, and love, and infinite desire, dissolve as well as the body? Has nature, who quenches our bodily thirst, who rests our weariness, and perpetually encourages us to endeavour onwards, prepared no food for this appetite of immortality?—LEIGH HUNT.

* "The Veil Lifted." Modern Developments of Spirit Photography. Edited by ANDREW GLENDINNING. (London: Whittaker and Co., White Hart-street, E.C. 1894.)

THE CONFLICT PAST.

Under the above heading "Light of Truth," of Cincinnati, for December 30th, 1893, contains an excellent article by Lyman C. Howe. Professor Dolbear, a well-known American, is in question. Like other scientific people, he refuses to accept at once the whole Spiritualistic hypothesis. Hence the paper, which applies much more to America than to England:—

Twenty years ago it is doubtful if Professor Dolbear could have been induced to notice the subject at all. I do not know his antecedents on this subject, but judging by the general trend of thought then and now, and classing him with the great body of recognised scientists, it is fair to presume that twenty years ago he would have thought Spiritualism beneath his notice. What he now writes on the subject is liberal, though critical, and in the nature of his mental training it could hardly be expected that he should discount his long-trusted standards to accept the, to him, incredible claims of a system predicated upon phenomena and experiences to which he has all his life been a stranger.

As President of the Society for Psychical Research he grapples with the problems that confront him in the same spirit of fearless questioning and careful sifting of theories presented by Spiritualists, that has served him so well in his eminent achievements as a physicist; and, while some of his objections are not, apparently, well taken, and some of his reasonings on psychical subjects may appear to Spiritualists superficial, if not absurd, he presents many points in a light that Spiritualists cannot afford to ignore. We need more of the scientific spirit among us, and more exact and thorough methods, as well as more care in reporting phenomena upon which the world is to judge us. A few cases of loosely reported experiments and exaggerated statements, sifted and analysed by competent critics, exposing the random and unreliable habits of our witnesses, initiate a contagious distrust of all we report, and the most pains-taking and thoroughly accurate scribes are thus discredited by common consent, because of the company they keep. If the sceptical criticisms of trained scientists should serve to check such exaggerated statements as are often found to be untrustworthy, the cause of Spiritualism will be the gainer. If all witnesses are put upon their mettle, and all inaccuracies eliminated from the testimony upon which we build the science of sciences, the objections of critics will become obsolete, and instead of a "bitter contest with the materialism of the scientists" we shall find a happy agreement and co-operation. Of course, there are pig-headed negationists who stubbornly refuse to vary their dogmatic denials, and these are often noisy denunciations of everything spiritual. But *they are not scientists*. They may have a smattering of science and in a general way be quite clever; but they are always narrow and one-sided. In splendid contrast with such mental strabismus and moral weakness stand such men as Professor Oliver Lodge, of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. In his address before the section of Mathematics and Physics at Cardiff, August, 1891, he struck the key-note of a new dispensation in science, by urging upon that body the importance of a forward movement in the direction of psychical investigations. He urges that "the doctrine of ultimate intelligibility should be pressed into other departments also," and adds, "At present we hang back from whole regions of inquiry and say they are not for us." . . . "Facts so strange that they have been called miraculous are now no longer regarded as entirely incredible." This address from such a man—delivered in such a place, to such an audience, is a significant sign of the times. It is an index of radical changes now rapidly enlisting the ablest men in the world in the study of Spiritualism; for, call it by what name they will, and handle it as gingerly as they please, talk around it, use evasive language, clothe it in antique attire, obscure it in the shadow of scientific antecedents and graveyard classics, it still remains that all studies involving the mysteries of life and the possibilities and potencies of the human mind, apart from the normal, sensuous, mechanical aspects of the body, are Spiritualism pure and simple. But we need not quarrel with them in the use of terms, nor trouble ourselves about the varying conclusions they reach. The whole drift of tendency is towards a scientific recognition of Spiritualism, by the acknowledged leaders of scientific thought, and the establishment of its central claims upon an enduring basis that will compel the respect and final acceptance of the whole civilised world.

SAINTS IN MOROCCO.

A writer in the "Christian World" thus descants upon these "saints":—

It is impossible to travel very far in Morocco without coming across "saints' tombs." The Moors do as big a trade in saints as do the Romanists. In the towns and cities these erections are separate buildings crowned with domes; in the country they are vases in shape and size, but are almost always surrounded by a grove of trees. Devotees have several methods of paying their respects to the departed "saints." Of course there are pilgrimages and prostrations and personal intercessions, but many of the natives have recourse to "rag offerings." Attached to the boughs of neighbouring trees, or tied to a window of the tomb, I saw a number of fluttering rags. These rags represent prayers, and the theory is that so long as the rag remains on tree or tomb the offerer obtains benefit from the saint. In addition to this there are "stone offerings." In the vicinity of every country shrine we find a heap of small stones; the stone being placed there by the Moor to represent his personal presence. Some of these "stone offerings" have lost their virtue by this time, I am afraid, for on several occasions necessity drove me to use them as swift and hard messengers after exceptionally obnoxious dogs. Many of these saints' tombs are imposing structures, for whatever arts the Moors have lost, they still retain the art of beautiful building. The tombs are usually whitewashed twice a year, about pilgrimage time. Often when passing them was I reminded of our Lord's striking and scathing words about 'whited sepulchres.' Beneath the apparent purity of the outside there lurks inner corruption. Striking emblem of a hypocrite!

But who are these 'saints' that they should be thus honoured? Fortunately or unfortunately, I know nothing of the dead ones, but I happened to meet some scores of living ones, and if the dead are to be judged by the living—well, let us have the Litany. To designate the creatures I met 'saints' seems the very perfection of satire. They wander along town and country scantily clad, and where sanctity overflows, they go absolutely naked. Their hair is like filthy ravelled rope, and their gaze is vacant and 'creepy.' For the most part they are insane men, and for that reason are saints. The Moorish explanation of this apparent absurdity is charmingly simple. They say that God has taken their brains to heaven; *ergo*, their bodies are *certain* to follow, and the man who is *certain* of Paradise is a saint. It is a fine piece of reasoning. That madmen are saints, was a new idea to me, and upon reflection it is surprising how many saints we have in England. We ought to think of lunatic asylums with chastened feelings after this revelation.

This sounds very well, but it is quite obvious that the writer has not understood the meaning of what he saw. These people may not be of savoury habits—there are plenty of people not claiming to be saints who leave much to be desired in that respect—but that has nothing to do with the case. And is this observer sure that the Moors said that their "brains" had been taken to heaven? May not the word have been "soul" or "spirit"? The terms are often jumbled together without distinction by certain people. The Dancing Dervishes and all such as get into hypnotic states are of interest to the student of humanity. That the observations made were not of much value seems clear from the following:—

There are many religious sects among the Moslem Moors, some of which are intensely fanatical. The cities and towns of these fanatics are entirely closed to Europeans, Christians and Jews. One or two daring men have ventured, at various times, to penetrate within the walls, but when discovered the adventurers have either had to flee for their lives or death has speedily met them. At their festivals the most horrible practices are indulged in. During my second week's stay in Tangier some thirty or more men of the *Hamacha* and *Hamduchia* sects suddenly appeared in the Soko, and to the accompaniment of most weird music they slowly advanced into the town. They yelled and made shocking grimaces. Suddenly they commenced to throw into the air axes and daggers, which fell down upon their faces and bodies, wounding them and causing the blood to flow freely. They entered the town streaming with blood, and behaving generally like demons. This exhibition was intended

to prove that, after their pilgrimage to the saint's tomb, they were proof against lethal weapons. A missionary told me that shocking as was this particular procession, it was nothing as compared with the *Assouri* (I am not sure of the spelling), whose annual performance strikes terror into Jews and Europeans.

Now, be it noted that the writer simply asserts that these fanatics wound themselves to show that they are proof against lethal weapons. They wounded themselves seriously, and yet no means seem to have been taken to discover whether the wounds healed quickly, wherein lay the whole gist of the thing. A valuable opportunity was lost, for witnesses—not missionaries—of great credibility assert that this healing does take place among certain of the Arabs.

LEARNING FROM THE HEATHEN.

The following appears in the "Religio-Philosophical Journal" for December 23rd, 1893:—

The natives of India, Japan, China, and Siam who appeared at the Parliament of Religions must have been impressed with the colossal egotism of the Occidental peoples. For centuries we have been speaking of the Asiatics as poor, benighted, ignorant idolaters, bowing down to images of wood and stone, idols that their own hands have made; we have regarded them as incapable of understanding that the works of their own hands were not veritable gods having control over human destinies and to be worshipped as arbiters of good and evil; we have thought of them as having no conception of the spiritual forces of the universe, no understanding of the relation of soul to body, mind to matter, or God to either.

Most arrogant and imbecile assumption of all, we have firmly believed that a great and good God from Whom all things proceed had selected us as the favoured recipients of His truth and His favour and had denied to the majority of mankind any knowledge of Himself. Nor was this quite all; with self-complacency so great that it is indescribable, and pride so deep that it is bottomless, we have thought that the Almighty Father of men had for their ignorance and His good pleasure doomed these Orientals to an eternal hell, and for His glory had elected us to the enjoyment of everlasting bliss.

Perhaps somewhere in history or fable there may be a story of a barbaric lord or of an imagined monster whose idea of his own importance rose higher or sank lower: many such have deemed mankind fit only to be their slaves, that the sun shone and the rain fell for their especial profit, but nowhere else have bipeds solaced themselves with the idea that the everlasting Jehovah ordained the eternal procession of the universe for their gratification, while He left the major portion of mankind to suffer indescribable woe for unending time.

Egotism is not uncommon. The poor fool who, because he had not received that recognition to which he thought himself entitled, killed the mayor of this city, was a malicious egotist; so, too, the creature who threw a bomb into the French Chamber of Deputies is an example of those who imagine their view of things to be so important that the world does them great wrong if it will not pause to listen to their declamation.

Others are so puffed up with the superiority of their opinions as to how matters should be arranged, that they hate all who do not fall in with their conclusions. Many insist that they have great talents for writing or speaking and firmly believe mankind to be exceedingly cruel in not paying them well for such work. Humility is one of the greatest of virtues. The truth is that no man's presence, work, or thought is of transcendent importance. Much was known and understood ere any of us were born, and much will remain when we are gone. The multitude whose opinions and ways we think so inferior to our own may really be in the possession of deeper truth than we ken.

The despised Hindoo has appeared in our midst as a teacher, having a comprehension of spiritual things worthy of most careful attention, offering an explanation of problems that we have been unable to solve.

Is it not well for all thinkers to ask if the theologians are the only people who have been mistaken as to the laws and conditions under which men live and as to what is best or should be or can be done in a universe of which we know so little and whose laws are beyond our control?

DEVIL DANCING.

We copy the following from the "Theosophist" for December. Its importance seems to justify its length:

While on tour in the South of India I had an opportunity of witnessing that remarkable psychological phenomenon known as *A'karshanam* or Invocation, by which a *pisacha* or demon is drawn into a body, whether that of a human being, an idol, effigy, or other lay figure. In the present case the patient was a boy of some 14 years, respectably connected, and pursuing his studies under the guardianship of an uncle, who holds a high position in his profession.

It was reported to me by a member of the T. S. that an invocation was to be performed on the morrow with a view to determine the cause of the boy's affliction. It appears that he had suddenly lost his moral balance and had several times attempted suicide while under some strange influence, his character at such times undergoing an entire reversal. Ordinarily he was a shy and quiet boy, very desirous of succeeding in his studies, and bearing himself with proper dignity while paying due respect to his elders and teachers. But when seized by this unknown influence he at once became crafty and subtle, insolent, obstinate, and capable of all kinds of mischief and even violence.

Of course I did not lose the opportunity of seeing the invocation, and accordingly I went to the house of the boy's guardian at the appointed time. Arrived there, we found the boy in conversation with his guardian, and we formed a circle in one of the rooms facing the street. I had opportunity for conversation with the boy and found him fairly intelligent. He spoke English very well indeed. I drew him out upon the subject of his "illness," which he lamented very much, as he said it hindered his studies. In answer to my question, he told me that when a seizure came upon him he first of all saw the gigantic figure of a black and hairy man, with red fiery eyes appearing from beneath a mass of matted black hair which fell over the face of the apparition; and then a giddiness would come upon him, everything would go black, and, after the last glimmer of light had gone, he would pass into an insensible state.

As we conversed I noticed that his eyes began to roll in an apprehensive manner and that he repeatedly cast a suspicious glance over his shoulder, as if fearing the approach of an enemy. After a short interval his English began to break down, his answers became more guarded, and even equivocal; he began to show signs of restlessness and frequently half rose from his seat as if desirous of leaving us.

At this point my friend asked me to show him a *Yantra* which I had prepared and brought with me. I drew it from my pocket and passed it to him, telling him not to let it be seen. The boy's eyes were riveted on the paper as it passed from hand to hand; he was absorbed in it with a hungry and anxious curiosity which expressed itself in every feature. The brows were contracted and lowered, the eyes wore a hunted look, like those of an animal at bay, the face visibly paled and the lips were drawn as if he were in pain. Suddenly he rose up, and half turning, yet keeping his eyes on the paper, he hastily made an urgent excuse and would have been gone in another moment, had I not stood up and commanded him to sit down, well knowing that his excuse was only a foil.

Just then there was a stir outside, and the boy immediately arose and went to the further side of the room, crouching rather than walking, and settled himself upon a chair, where he remained huddled in a half-recumbent position, trembling from head to foot. In another moment, the *Mántrika*, who was to conduct the ceremony of *A'karshanam*, entered the room, and without further ceremony advanced towards the boy and untied his hair, which fell to the waist in glossy black ripples. The *Mántrika* then took some white chalk and inscribed a *Yantram* on the floor in the following form:—

Six parallel lines were laid transversely upon six others. The twenty-five squares thus formed were filled with the Tamil letters arranged in the form of a Mantram. The ends of the lines projected upon the four sides of the lettered square and were barbed like tridents. Upon the four diagonal squares nearest the central one, some red *kunkuma* powder was placed, and upon the four corner squares and the central one some camphor. In front of the square was set a small brazier of burning incense, and upon either side of it the two halves of a broken cocoanut.

The *Mántrika* then seated himself upon the ground at the left hand front corner of the *Yantra*, and, taking some holy

ashes in hand, lighted the five pieces of camphor and began chanting his Mantram. I turned my attention to the boy. He sat upright now and his expression was savage and haughty, his eyes gleaming with a kind of malicious enjoyment. Suddenly, he rushed forward and threw himself upon the ground, beating out the lights with his hands; then, throwing himself into a sitting posture in the centre of the circle, he drew up his legs and spun round and round for about thirty seconds, and coming suddenly to a halt in front of the Mántrika, he gave forth a series of diabolical howls like those of an infuriated beast, and then sitting bolt upright he stared defiantly at the Mántrika and said in Tamil, "Well, what do you want with me?"

"Who are you?" said the Mántrika.

"My name is Kolli."

"Where do you come from?"

"From *S'mashána* (the burning ground)."

"What is your class?"

"I am a Tamil Kerali" (a class of elemental demons).

"Why do you come here?"

"I have been bound to possess this boy."

"Why do you come to the boy at times when you are not called?"

"Because I am commanded to do so."

"Who commanded you?"

"One Kurupati Ramaswami, a magician, sent me to the boy."

"Why?"

"To induce love."

"With whom?"

"With——"

"Have you seen me before?"

"Yes, at Maljaram."

At this point the Mántrika kindly handed over the interrogation to me, and I commenced by asking why the commands of the magician to obsess the boy were obeyed. My friend translated both question and answer for me.

The intelligence said that it was agreeable to his nature to do so, but he needed help from the magician. The following dialogue then ensued:—

"Who am I?" I asked.

"You are one like him!" (pointing to the Mántrika).

"Do you know I have come to help the boy?"

"Yes, but please do not beat me."

It must be explained that the invocation of a *pisácha* is referred to by that intelligence as "beating." At times when the Mántrika, who all the while continued his recitations in a subdued tone, threw some holy ashes on the head of the obsessed, the *pisácha* would howl as if struck with a stick.

Suddenly the boy looked up and said, "Why do they make me dance now?" I said, "Because they say you uttered falsehood last time and so made you dance again."

"Well," he said, "are they truthful people? They promised to feed me with a fowl and a sheep." By "feeding" he meant having the blood of these creatures spilt on the ground, a process sometimes used by the Mántrikas in order to give the *pisáchas* the necessary strength to respond to their calls.

I asked if such things had been promised, and on learning that it was so, I told them that the promise would have to be fulfilled if the *pisácha* was to be exorcised and expelled. It was then arranged that at 8 o'clock in the evening the "food" should be given, and I gave the intelligence notice that it would be the last meal that he would get in that place; for, at midnight, he would have to leave the boy and never return again. He said that he was bound to go at twelve, but that if he were expelled he would either kill the magician or the boy.

"You cannot kill the magician and you shall not kill the boy," I said.

"Why cannot I kill the magician?" was the reply.

"Because he is your master."

"He is not my master!"

"Why, then, do you do his bidding?"

"Because it is agreeable to my nature, and I gain power by it."

Finally, I told the intelligence that after twelve o'clock the boy would sleep, and in the morning, after his *Sandhyávandhanam* I should give him a *Yantra* which would effectually prevent him from molesting the boy any more. This was answered by one of those unearthly howls to which I think no amount of experience would entirely accustom one, and which, I fancy, owes its thrilling and horrifying nature to its demoniacal source.

Then, with an imperious snap of the fingers in the face of the Mántrika and a toss of the head, the devil resumed his

"dancing." It may be explained that this "dancing" only extends to the head and reminds one somewhat of the "whirling dervish." The subject is seated on the ground in the *padmāsana*, the arms are folded and the body bent down so that the arms rest upon the legs. At the outset the head is swung round and round, its velocity increasing until the head seems attached to the body by a piece of string rather than a set of fleshy muscles. The long black hair, whirling in the form of a comet's tail, sweeps the ground at every revolution, scattering coconuts, powder, camphor, and brazier in turn to various parts of the room, the smoke from the incense following the swish of the hair, and escaping from the little cyclone to float leisurely in the stiller atmosphere of our own circle.

The "dancing" ceases at one moment to permit of a question being put, and at another for the demon to give vent to his feelings in the manner already described. After each question the Mántrika, uttering his Mantrams the while, throws a little powder upon the head of the subject, who thereupon resumes his "dancing" and suddenly sits erect and answers the question put to him.

The séance was brought to a close in a manner I was hardly prepared for. The Mántrika changed his Mantram, and immediately the boy began to whirl round and round with his legs in the air; then, sitting erect, he raised three successive and deafening howls, sprang to his feet, and half turning as if to depart, fell at full length upon the ground, insensible. He remained so for some minutes, apparently lifeless, and then raised his head slowly while the Mántrika sprinkled some water upon him.

On the following morning the boy came to me with his guardian, who is a member of the Theosophical Society, and I attached a little silver cylinder containing a *Yantra* to his holy thread. He expressed his gratitude, with tears in his eyes, in a quiet way natural to him in his normal condition, and said that he felt as if a great weight had been lifted from his head during the night. I have since seen his guardian, and, although several months have elapsed, the boy has not had a seizure since the day that the scene I have been recording took place.

W. R. O.

TWO MAGAZINES.

The "Idler" is amusing as usual; the supernatural is not laid under contribution this month, but there is a detective story called "The Greenstone God," which is oddly enough dedicated to the glorification of Chance. Now, supposing the circumstances to have been as the writer imagines them, chance was exactly the thing which had nothing to do with them. Those who read the story will judge for themselves. The "King of Schnorrers" has reached its sixth chapter, and Dr. Joseph Parker, of the City Temple, is the "Lion in his Den," described with his wife, his study, and so forth, by Raymond Blathwayt.

The "English Illustrated Magazine" for January is a good number, though one misses the delicate engravings of an earlier period. It is with the letterpress that we are concerned, and once again we are reminded how the Unseen side of our humanity is permeating all literature, especially the literature of prose fiction. One story in this number is called "Over the Edge of the World," and tells how a strong affinity existed between a woman and a man whom she nursed through an illness; so strong that when the man was a second time so ill that he died, or apparently died, the spirit of the woman, itself just released, restored him. There is, too, in the tale a case of a telegram which was conveyed by unseen hands. But it would be unfair to tell the story, it should be read. The author is Flora Annie Steel. In the same number there is another narrative, that of a politician who dies, sees the announcement of his death placarded, converses with Palmerston, Disraeli, and others, who are wandering about this earth; and so forth. It is a case of trance, however, the spirit being for the time released. The title given to the story is "An Important Man," and it is very well done. Carmen Sylva's fairy tale, "The Witch's Castle," is delightful.

NEVER with impunity can the light of conscience be obscured, nor its scruples overbalanced.

WE wish for immortality; the thought of annihilation is horrible; even to conceive it is almost impossible; the wish is a kind of argument; it is not likely that God would have given all men such a feeling if He had not meant to gratify it.—
F. W. ROBERTSON.

A GHOST.

We take the following account from the "Sun" of January 2nd. It is asserted to be by a member of the Society for Psychological Research:—

In the year 1881 I was governess in a boarding school in a town in the North of England. The house was very full of pupils, and, to accommodate the lady principal, I agreed to sleep on the attic-storey. There were two rooms in front, the one assigned to me, and a larger one occupied by the two housemaids. At the back were also two bed rooms and a lumber-room, which do not concern my narrative. My room was comfortable and well-furnished, and for several weeks I slept the sleep of the just and hard worked teacher. Then occurred that extraordinary series of phenomena which at first filled me with terror, and then aroused the keenest curiosity.

The bed in which I slept was placed with the back against the wall opposite to the two windows, and on my right, as I lay in bed, was the wall separating my room from the one occupied by the housemaids. Between the two windows was a gas-bracket, and I was in the habit of leaving on a spark of gas all night. And now to the first of those strange occurrences which most people will refuse to believe, but which I solemnly affirm to be exactly and literally true.

I awoke one night, about the end of March, with the clang of a bell in my ear. In my first waking moment I recognised the sound as the bell of a neighbouring church, and then immediately I was conscious that the "ding-dong" was the first of the four chimes which precede the striking of the hour. I was drowsily speculating on what the hour was likely to be when, glancing towards the windows, I saw the form of a man standing between the windows and facing me. Startled and terrified, I was about to call for assistance when, to my amazement and horror, I clearly perceived the spark of gas shining behind the head of the figure. At once recognising that the appearance before me could not be a real man, my fear was intensified; for though I had always professed not to believe in ghosts, I was as much afraid of this apparition as if I had been a superstitious person. I gazed spellbound at the thing. It appeared like a young man of middle height, clad in dark clothes, with long black hair, a very pale face, a high white forehead, and eyes that looked at me with unutterable sadness. I could not then see the features very clearly, since, as I have said, the gas was behind the head, and very little light came in at the windows. But I could now describe them to the minutest detail; for, since that night, I have often looked upon that face when bright moonlight fell upon it, and, were I a skilful painter, I could put in every line and shade on it. The nose was long, but not high, and on each side of it there curled up a long thin black moustache. But those eyes! Oh, the sadness that filled them!

What I have described above I saw in a moment, before, indeed, the second chime had died away. Then the figure moved towards me, still gazing at me fixedly and sorrowfully. It reached the foot of the bed, and the lips moved as if to speak, but no sound issued from them. By this time the third chime had sounded. I could not speak or move, and yet the horror of the first shock had begun to die down. I could study the apparition more coolly, and I now perceived in the left hand what seemed an open letter, and in the right hand I saw in the dim light the glimmer of the barrel of a revolver. Again looking at the face, I caught sight of a small dark spot situated in the left temple. The chimes had now finished striking, there was a pause of two or three seconds, and the clock with a heavy boom struck one. The lower part of the apparition grew indistinct. "Boom" went the bell a second time. The whole figure had faded into a dim cloud, which entirely vanished as a third and last stroke fell.

I had seen what the world calls a ghost. What could this thing be? I had heard of hallucinations. I knew that in certain states of the brain figures will body themselves out of the invisible, and I had often explained to myself in this way many a ghost story I had read. But it was not so easy to hold to my hypothesis when the actual ghost had appeared to my bodily vision. The thing seemed too real to be the creation of my own nervous system. While I was thus speculating I fell asleep, and I did not awake until my usual time.

I did not at first tell my principal what I had seen, as I thought she would only ridicule me, and several weeks passed without any repetition of the phenomena. But one night, about

a month from the first appearance, I was again awoken by the striking of the three o'clock chimes, again the figure was seen between the windows, the movement to the bed was repeated, and the disappearance took place as before during the striking of the hour. On this occasion I felt little terror, and I was able to examine the apparition deliberately. I was deeply impressed that it wanted to communicate something to me, and I resolved, if it again appeared, to address it. About a fortnight later I had the opportunity. The chime had commenced, and as the "ghost" was approaching me I said, "Who are you? Can I do anything for you?" The lips moved, the face seemed convulsed with eager desire to express something, but there was no voice, and the figure vanished as before.

The "ghost" often repeated its visit. I became quite familiar with it, I would often address it; but I could never get a reply. I was deeply interested in my visitor, and I longed to solve the mystery of its appearance. One night I said: "Can you make yourself apparent to any of my senses besides the sense of sight?" I hardly expected a result, and it was therefore with mingled satisfaction and terror that I saw the figure come to the side of the bed and hold out its hand. I put forth my own hand and touched fearfully the white fingers that held the letter. They felt like soft cool down, not clammy or icy. At that moment the vanishing began. I resolved to try another test. At the next appearance, I said: "Can you make yourself visible to anyone else?" The chimes were about half-way through, and the figure was at the foot of my bed. It seemed to acquiesce; it moved to the wall on my right, and passed into it. The next moment I heard a scream, and the sound of voices. Then the clock struck three.

The next morning, one of the housemaids brought me my hot water. I thought she looked pale, and I asked if anything was the matter. Then she said that she had awoken just before the striking of the hour, had seen the figure, and had cried out; her companion, she added, had awoken just in time to see the spectre before it disappeared.

I saw the "ghost" more than once after this occasion, but could obtain no further phenomena of interest; and, in a few months, the school was removed to another part of the town, for what reason I could not clearly ascertain. After the removal I disclosed the affair to the principal. She seemed to make light of it; but she admitted, with some reluctance, that sometimes, as she lay awake, she had heard footsteps overhead—her room was immediately under mine—and that the sounds came just before the clock struck three.

The house in which I had these strange experiences was soon let; but it was vacant again in six months. It was again let, and again the tenant departed in a few months. Then the house was vacant for two or three years. At last it was pulled down, and two smaller houses were erected in its place.

I have made inquiries as to whether there is any tale attached to the house. All I could ascertain was that about a generation ago a young man had committed suicide in an upper bedroom, but I could glean no details of the alleged tragedy. It will probably be said that the result of my narrative is vague and unsatisfactory. It may be so, but I cannot help that. I have written not to prove a theory, but to describe facts. The "ghost" clearly was not a figment of my own brain, as it was seen by the two servants. It is this fact which gives my narrative considerable evidential value.—P. S. T.

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.]

Emmette Coleman and the Theosophical Society.

SIR,—In reply to "R.H., F.T.S.," I have nothing to add to what I have already said.

R.C., F.T.S.

Mrs. Besant's Autobiography.

SIR,—As a constant reader of "LIGHT," and admiring its usually candid and cautious tone, I am moved to say that I find some unfairness in the review of "Annie Besant" in your last issue. The concluding paragraph appears to assume that the account of her "change of front" from Atheism to Theosophy points to her having been "psychologised" by Madame Blavatsky. But what are the facts of her narrative? She is given the "Secret Doctrine" to review, and the perusal of *that work* causes the great change in her, before she sought the interview

with H. P. B., whose personal presence profoundly impressed her with a sense of genuineness and sincerity. It is the same with A. B. herself, for it appears to me that no honest nature can see or hear her without, in her own words, "knowing its own kin." I think this was the only "fascination" exercised, viz., the natural affinity of two genuine, eager souls; but that Annie Besant could have so surrendered herself to personal magnetism as to "accept authority" without the fullest exercise of her private judgment, would contradict the whole tenour of her life.

The "change of front" was perhaps more marked on the surface than in reality. She was ever eager to believe, had she earlier found a system which she could accept, and it is a fact that to some natures the teachings of Theosophy come like native food and drink, when they have long hungered and thirsted after they knew not what, till it was placed before them. Hence the rapid assimilation, and in Annie Besant's case the apparent sudden change, to which, however, her previous severe mental and moral training had gradually led her up, so that when the "psychological moment" came she had only to take the one final step from "Storm to Peace."

25, Dartmouth Park Hill, N.W. ELLEN M. HIND.
January 7th, 1894.

[We publish the above with much pleasure.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

"The Higher Ego," &c.

SIR,—Mrs. Britten in her article in "LIGHT" of the 6th inst., in which she so kindly notices my letter of the 23rd ult., mentions a list of authors, most of whose works I have read and have on my shelves, and it was the reading of these "antique writers" that led me to form the opinions expressed in the second paragraph of my former letter. Moreover, I have never said that Spiritualism was "a hopeless tangle of facts and deductions."

Before we proceed any further there are one or two points which must be made clear, and it is here that Mrs. Britten has mistaken my position. First, that certain phenomena called Spiritualistic are undoubtedly genuine, *i.e.*, they are not produced by trickery on the part of the medium or any of the witnesses, but by the agency of some force which at present we but dimly perceive. Secondly, that the Spiritualistic solution of the riddle forms but one of the many hypotheses put forward to explain the occurrence of the phenomena. This is where I challenged the accuracy of the conclusions arrived at thirty or forty years ago. To be more distinct, it is not the evidence of the phenomena that I contest, but that the phenomena are evidence of the existence of spirits and our communication with them. This also applies to the closing paragraph of Mr. W. H. Robinson's letter in the same issue.

In reference to the instance which Mrs. Britten mentions in connection with Professor Hare, valuable as it is, my dull wits are incapable of comprehending how it can be held to demonstrate that the communicating intelligence called "Little Tarley" was the spirit of the professor's son. This case presents to us the far deeper problem of memory, and passes still further afield into the little known tracts darkly hinted at in the editorial in "LIGHT" of December 2nd, and also outlined in Camille Flammarion's "Urania." The question now is, what is the nature and character of the cause of these Spiritualistic manifestations? The simple reiteration of "spirits of the departed," with increasing emphasis each time, brings us no nearer the truth. One word more. The main argument contained in the articles on the "Higher Ego" in "LIGHT" of December 9th and January 6th has the appearance of being "no case, abuse the plaintiff's attorney."

Now to turn to Mr. W. H. Robinson, who says in his letter "based upon . . . in your issue of December 9th." I have yet to learn that Mrs. Britten's recorded facts are in any way phenomenal, *i.e.*, remarkable or unusual, or that they are beyond the pale of psychology. In reference to his quotations from certain philosophers, they form, I should say, the major premiss, but the dispute is in the fitting together of the minor premiss and the necessary definitions attendant thereon.

Lastly, in regard to this discussion the only pretensions that are advanced in favour of the hypothesis of the human origin of these manifestations are:—(1) Like the Spiritualistic solution, it is an inference claimed to be based upon the nature of the facts themselves; (2) that it is quite as rational as its fellow, if not more so; (3) the delusive and contradictory character of the communications and phenomena point to it as being the theory more compatible with reason.

CHARLES STRANGE.

SOCIETY WORK.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—Sunday next, at 7, Mr. J. Veitch, an address. Thursday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Bliss; admission by ticket.—J. B., Sec.

SUNDERLAND.—"Bessie Williams" (Mrs. Russell Davies) is announced to lecture and give clairvoyance, &c., next month (February). Local correspondents wishing to make fixtures will oblige by writing direct to Mrs. Davies, Sunnyside, Ledrington-road, Upper Norwood.

311, CAMBERWELL-ROAD.—Our numerous friends will be glad to hear that the balance sheet presented at the half yearly meeting of the S.L.S.M. showed the following satisfactory figures:—Total receipts for half year, £70 10s. 6½d.; total expenditure, £46 14s. 4d.; balance in hand, £23 16s. 2½d.—C. M. PAYNE.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Owing to the severe weather we had a small attendance on Sunday to greet Mr. Leeder, but those present were well rewarded for venturing out. The first subject (given by the audience) dealt with by Mr. Leeder's control was "Intuition," which was very ably and clearly defined. The second subject was founded on the suggestion: "Some say it is not right to converse with spirits, we should let them rest, as it is right they should." This was ably and eloquently treated. We were in hope of being able to secure the services of Mr. Leeder for next Sunday, but unfortunately he is due in Halifax on that day; but we hope to have the pleasure of having him again, and trust we shall then have a much larger gathering. For next Sunday there will be several speakers.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE, W.—On Sunday evening last, the guides of Mr. J. J. Morse discoursed on "Human Duties *versus* Heavenly Joys." As no report of this able lecture could be obtained it must suffice to say that great satisfaction was expressed at the close by strangers, as well as by those who are accustomed to hear lectures from the same source. We find in Marylebone (and doubtless the same is found elsewhere) that those who have once heard any of these lectures always come again when a like opportunity is afforded. At the close of the lecture, Miss M'Creddie (from Manchester) gave clairvoyant descriptions and psychometric readings, some of which were particularly successful, one gentleman having his mother most minutely described as standing by his wife. We look forward to having Miss M'Creddie with us again soon. Miss Morse gave an effective rendering of Berthold Tours' song "The New Kingdom," adding greatly to the enjoyment of all present. Next Sunday evening, Mrs. May Mozart (from California) trance address, followed by clairvoyance at 7, punctually.—L.H.R.

MORSE'S LIBRARY.—On Friday evening, the 5th inst., at Mr. J. J. Morse's library, 26, Osnaburgh-street, Regent's Park, the members and general public assembled in large numbers to listen to the wit and wisdom of the "Strolling Player," one of the invisible friends associated with the mediumship of Mr. Morse, and also to witness the exhibition of clairvoyance and psychometry announced to be given afterwards by Miss M'Creddie, of Manchester, who has within the last few days taken up her abode in London. After some vocal music, and introductory remarks by Mr. Morse, the "Strolling Player" effected control, and for over an hour kept the audience spell-bound by a quaint series of humorous remarks and philosophical observations on things in general and Spiritualism in particular. Jest, aphorism, anecdote, epigram, followed each other in continuous stream, the "Strolling Player" appearing to be a kind of spiritual J. L. Toole or Artemus Ward, and the entertainment given by Mr. Morse maybe fairly considered unique of its kind. We are afraid, however, that our Theosophic friends would not have felt flattered by the mordant satire of the "Strolling Player" when dealing with the "spook" theory. The spirit himself exhibits a well-defined individuality that goes far to establish the plea for a reasonable and natural existence after death. Miss M'Creddie followed with clairvoyant and psychometrical delineations, which, although strikingly accurate here and there, did not exhibit the uniform level of success usually associated with that lady's powers. It was then that a fact was mentioned in explanation, which may be commended to the attention of Spiritualists anxious to become familiar with the intricacies of spirit control. By some oversight, Miss M'Creddie had been sitting in juxtaposition to Mr. Morse during the control by the "Strolling Player," and it was at once recognised that this would have the effect of largely depleting the "power" required by the clairvoyant for her part of the proceedings. Some suitable observations by Mr. Morse brought to a close one of the pleasantest evenings spent at his library since its establishment. It may be mentioned that the gathering was directly under the auspices of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, 86, High-street, Marylebone, in aid of whose funds the collection made at the close of the meeting was set apart.—D.G.

NOTHING which is real dies in God's world but to experience a better resurrection.