

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY

"Vega's" careful letter, given in our "Correspondence" columns, presents a view which ought to be well considered, but it is a little surprising that a Spiritualist could write it. He wishes to know how our promise to twenty London preachers could be fulfilled. What was promised?—that they should be convinced that Spiritualists can be keen, honest, and competent; that the Spiritualism of to-day will be set forth as throwing light on the Spiritualism of the Bible; that Spiritualism shall be made to explain Heaven and Hell; that we will illustrate the resurrection by showing that the dead rise still—but not in the flesh; that we will give experience for hearsays, and confidence in facts for faith in words. We venture to say that every one of these promises can be fulfilled. When the twenty preachers are ready, we will at once arrange a meeting with them, and explain to them what can be done in the matter. The demand will create the supply. But one need go but a very little way in order to find sufficient to cover all we promised.

We have lately noted that America is not as much "the land of the free" as Americans would have us believe. Here is our good old friend, Dr. Peebles, in court, standing his trial for practising without a certificate. He tells us that he was indicted, without notice, by a grand jury, and arrested by the deputy-sheriff—a rather high-handed proceeding, we should say on this side; and all the more so as the worthy Doctor had been successfully practising for three years. The case, however, was decided in his favour, and Dr. Peebles has, naturally enough, put on his war-paint against the orthodox medical fraternity. It must be a sight to see him on the war-path, judging from this manifesto from his pen:—

This is the second time I've defied and beaten medical examining boards—defied and beaten the "regular" doctors—defied their class-legislation—defied their unconstitutional laws, laws enacted not for the protection of the people, but for the protection of blister-plastering, calomel-dosing, drug-poisoning doctors. How long will these bumptious "regulars" plead the baby act: "protect us—oh, legislators, protect us!" Personally, I fear neither doctors, devils, nor Pagan hells; and mark it, Americans, I will practice in any city I please and in any one of the States I please. My original Scotch temper is thoroughly up!

On this subject the aroused Doctor, in "The Progressive Thinker," says:—

How few are perfectly healthy! How few are mentally and morally well-balanced? There are quite as many sick in mind as body. And there is much in the mind-cure; much in the faith-cure; much in the deep-breathing cure; much in the prayer-cure; much in the will-power cure; and much in well-managed sanitariums where are skilfully treated both body and

mind. Sanitariums, because of the grand work they do in alleviating sickness and suffering, are becoming popular. And, by the way, I see by "The Progressive Thinker" that Dr. Randall has opened a sanitarium, to be known as the "Union Park Sanitarium of Chicago." And who is Dr. Randall? Is he mortal or spirit? Has he a diploma? Has he been before the Illinois State Board of Health, and got a certificate in Latin? Nothing of the kind. He is a spirit physician, residing in the world of spirits, and using the organism of L. Pet Anderson for treating the sick. To my certain knowledge, Dr. Randall is an exalted and skilful physician, curing many considered incurable. His diploma was granted by the gods a long time ago, and is registered in both earth and heaven. There should be more sanitariums in the country, under the supervision of medical spirits.

"Still harping on my daughter." The "Catholic Telegraph," for the nine hundredth time, brings out the bogey of Demonism as its explanation of Spiritualism. It says:—

Spiritualism is becoming a religion so that men and women, who ought to be Christians, are abandoning the teachings of Christ to accept the teachings of devils masquerading as the spirits of the dead. In Baltimore, a few nights ago, Mrs. Rachel Walcott was "ordained" pastor of the First Spiritualistic Church of Baltimore, and after being installed went into "an inspirational trance." It is pitiful to see persons so misled by the demon!

So then, because a good woman undertakes to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, and preach the Gospel, and to "speak as the spirit gives utterance," she is to be put down as demon-driven! The one fact to remember is that these people never give any reason for the "devils masquerading" theory, beyond the fact that Spiritualists think for themselves and do not agree with them.

Is Dr. Horton also among the—obscurantists? It seems so. He induced the members of his congregation, a Sunday or two ago, to get up in their places and recite that painfullest item of the Church creeds—*I believe in the resurrection of the body*. We hoped better things of Dr. Horton, and we do not envy the people of Hampstead quite as much as we did. But Dr. Horton is an exceedingly keen man: and perhaps he can believe in the resurrection of the body without believing that the body will rise again. That looks impossible, but these clever preachers say, do, and believe wonderful things; and sometimes have as many meanings for their phrases as a cat has lives.

We observe with pleasure the following paragraph:—

Cremation is becoming increasingly popular in Paris, and the crematorium erected at the cemetery of Père-Lachaise has already been found to be too small. Additions are being made, and a third furnace, a large hall, and a columbarium will soon be ready for use. The latter somewhat resembles the Campo Santo of Genoa, and will contain 10,000 receptacles for the ashes. These niches are closed with slabs of marble, on which inscriptions can be cut.

The last two or three lines are rather depressing. Why should anyone want to preserve "the ashes"? The ashes have in them nothing characteristic of the deceased. Better put them under the nearest shrub or tree. Here,

again, the mission of the true Spiritualist is to set a better example, and to in every way rise above the dismal clinging to flesh and bones and even ashes.

Many a good Spiritualist has had searchings of heart caused by the discovery that his subject somehow leads to as much breaking down as building up—sometimes more; and his adversaries are not slow to draw the inference that a Spiritism which destroys the old faith is of the evil one. A little reflection and a little courage, however, will always bring the explanation, which we find excellently stated in the "Harbinger of Light":—

It has been urged against Spiritualism that in its primary developments it fostered a habit of scepticism. This is perfectly true; and was also highly beneficial. It induced men to doubt the efficacy, and challenge the authority, of the creeds and dogmas, the ecclesiastical organisations, and idolatrous rituals which have laid their withering hand on the intellect of man, and have helped to supplant "pure religion and undefiled," by musty traditions and the grossest of superstitions. It found the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, when read in "the letter that killeth," to be full of contradictions, inconsistencies, improbabilities, and even absurdities; but, on the other hand, while discarding Bibliolatry, it was led to discover in these books, as in the sacred literatures of all nations, a wealth of spiritual truth lying underneath the surface of narratives which were mostly allegorical, or parabolic; and were no more to be regarded as historical or scientific than "Paradise Lost," or the "Pilgrim's Progress" is.

Patience and consecrated rational thought will always bring us to the Promised Land; but we must be courageous, and be willing to go out to the good land which the Master will show us.

A writer in the "St. Louis Theosophical Magazine" is trying to find out "the vital pre-requisite" of eternal life; and we are inclined to think he is succeeding. But he is not looking for any magic *elixir vite* or medical conjuring trick. He finds the secret within. The development of personality is the evolution of soul or spirit. He who ceases to be a drifted atom or a driven beast ceases or is ceasing to be transient. The power to hold one's own, to master environment, to make all things one's servants, working together for good, that is the power to live on, to persist as a thinking, moral personality when the flesh is done with. To secure this end the body must be well understood and rightly used. It is the avenue to the inner temple of the spirit and to self-possession. It must cease to be dominant; it must be taught not to crave; it must be cured of its animal crudities and foulness; it must itself become spiritual and a swift-answering servant of the spirit. Immortality is only another name for the victory of mind; but mind has been developed through the body. The time is coming when the dualism will be a matter of common experience, when body and spirit will be aware of one another, when the spirit will be master of the house and know it.

A writer in an American journal tells the following story. The writer's name is given, and the story is told as a serious fact:—

One day I was standing by the window, looking out into the street and talking to a lady friend who was sitting in the room, when our attention was directed to a funeral procession at that moment passing by. It came from the country about two miles distant from the city of Owatonna, where I then lived. As the hearse came directly opposite the door a strange feeling came over me, that I cannot describe, and my friend said: "What is the matter? You are as white as a sheet." I told her the man whose body was being carried to the cemetery stood before me and in frightened, pleading accents said: "Don't let them bury me—O, don't let them bury me up in the ground!" My friend said: "Talk to him; say something and say it quick." So I said: "Is this you talking to me, or is that you in the coffin out yonder?" A new idea seemed to dawn in his mind,

for he had been one of those that had thought of life only in connection with physical things. Somehow he seemed bound to the body and had to follow it. But my friend said: "This man will come to you again, for more instruction, more light."

Sure enough, the third day after the funeral I was alone, when this same man stood before me. How he came I did not see, but he was there, and said: "I stood by the grave and saw them lower my body into the ground. It was I, and yet not I. I went home with my family, but when I spoke to them they gave no heed; when I sat down by any of them or put my hand on their head, they gave a little shudder and shrank away from my touch, for they thought, as I had thought, that by burying my body they had buried me. I feel lonely, unhappy, and do not know what to do nor where to go; so have come to you, for by the materiality of your spirituality (the very words he used) I first comprehended that life was not of the body, but of the spirit. What can I do, and where shall I go? for I am utterly alone."

I asked him if he had friends who had gone on before him into the spirit life. "Many," he replied.

"Then earnestly desire that some kind friend may approach you, and open the way before you, and help you to break the magnetic cord that still holds you to earth conditions; for, to be born of the spirit one must be severed from the body wholly."

I felt that he was being led away, and never saw or heard anything more of him.

THE DECLINE OF PHYSICAL MEDIUMSHIP.

In a recent discourse Mr. J. J. Morse alluded to "the dearth of mediumship," particularly in London. "Mediumship," he says, "has dwindled to almost invisible proportions." As there is a reason for all things, there is a reason for this spiritual dearth, and it is surely time to set about discovering the cause. Now this cause is so apparent that it seems to me that no subtle analysis is required to explain how the dearth has come to exist. It is idle to deny that such a condition of things does exist, especially in London, but I doubt if many have stopped to consider how it has come about that in an immense centre like London, where there are thousands of Spiritualists, and tens of thousands of seekers—in a city which may be said to have all the English-speaking races at its back—mediumship should be actually dwindling down to invisible proportions.

As I have travelled a great deal, and studied mediumship and Spiritualism in almost every civilised country under the sun, I think I can give a pretty accurate diagnosis of the cause of the present weak state of Spiritualistic phenomena. The cause is twofold: first, an overdose of physical mediumship, with its deadly train of earth-bound spirits, its materialistic influences, and its vulgar origin; secondly, modern Theosophy, with its fair promises, its metaphysical conceits, and its gilded claims. The first gave people a surfeit of grossly materialistic phenomena; the second is filling their minds and imagination with the pleasures of "initiation" and the allurements of adeptship. Mediumship, in the strict sense of the term, has become so common that it has ceased to be sought for in a great central civilisation like London, while Theosophy made itself manifest by pretences of spiritual culture which its founder and her followers have failed to substantiate. Now, while physical mediumship, in cities like London, was passing out of fashion, so to speak, Theosophy was slowly recruiting its ranks from the Spiritualists who had become impatient of mere phenomena; and although all impatient Spiritualists did not join the Theosophical ranks, they refused to longer support materialistic manifestations. But just at the time that physical mediumship began to lose its hold on intelligent minds, Madame Blavatsky stepped in and turned the current in her direction. It was a sharp stroke of psychical diplomaey. She succeeded in creating an intense interest in the higher phases of occultism, but as her claims to superior power were found to possess no found-

tion in fact, she, in her turn, left a void just as physical mediumship has done.

But there is a third cause for the present spiritual dearth, the most important of all. It will be asked by many how it is that other forms of mediumship do not take the place of the physical. Simply because all really psychical, intellectual development is difficult, rare, and hard to arrive at. Interest ceases in phenomenal Spiritualism just in proportion as it multiplies itself. No one thinks of getting out of bed to see the sun rise, nor of leaving the dinner table to see it set, but if the sun rose but once a year the world would celebrate the event by a universal festival. The same rule holds good in everything. If there were a thousand singers like Madame Patti, the singing of that celebrated vocalist would not appear phenomenal nor even remarkable. But Nature is inflexible as well as inexorable in her wondrous laws. The rare and the beautiful never cease to interest, nor did Nature intend that the rarest and most beautiful phenomena should ever become common. Now the highest psychical manifestations can only be obtained through human organisms fitted by Nature for that purpose, and to expect such manifestations to proceed from organisms like those of our physical mediums is like trying to extract blood from turnips. The fact is, our material is not made of the proper stuff. We have lacked, and do still lack, the material from which to extract the highest order of inspiration and psychic force, and, strange as it may appear, when such rare phenomena have flitted across the Spiritualistic horizon only a few were prepared to appreciate the manifestation.

A very curious thing may be noticed in connection with this interesting subject: the rare organisms possessing the most original gifts (like those of Mr. Maitland), are beginning to drop the word "mediumship" for the terms *illumination*, *inspiration*, *mysticism*, &c. And in reality there is a vast distinction between simple mediumship and real psychical power. An uncultured medium resembles a machine which is put in motion by steam; the vital force is the steam or spirit power and the medium is a virtual nonentity. With the true psychic or mystic the case is reversed and the illumination proceeds from within. A mystic can possess the same powers as a medium, but in addition he possesses gifts far greater than those belonging to mediumship. Mr. Stead has been able to recognise this fact, for he places inspiration and kindred phenomena above everything else. Mr. Stainton Moses also appreciated the fact. The thing is so simple that not to understand it is a sign of unpardonable ignorance. How are we to expect superior intellectual manifestations from men and women without inherent culture? Many Spiritualists, like Theosophists, expect something to proceed out of nothing. They have been sadly disappointed in the past, and the future will not deal more mercifully with them. They must learn that true inspiration cannot come where there is no condition fitted to receive it.

There will be a dearth of phenomenal Spiritualism of a high order in London and elsewhere until conditions arise to make room for such manifestations. Meanwhile the modern Theosophist is abroad in the land, leaving no stone unturned to make fresh recruits; while the *fin de siècle* scientist on the one hand and the indifferent Spiritualist on the other dissipate harmony and arrest progress. But prepare for one thing: if Spiritualism does not soon appear in a new dress it will be too late, and then this is what will happen: the really gifted ones will themselves don a new dress, move out of its ranks, and leave the worn-out garments for the Spiritualists.

Lauritz Waldemar Tonner.

If any man is able to convince me that I do not think or act right, I will gladly change; for I seek the truth, by which no man was ever injured. But he is injured who abides in his error and ignorance.—THE EMPEROR MARCUS AURELIUS.

AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW OF RE-INCARNATION.

V.—APPEARANCE AND REALITY.

(Continued from p. 160.)

The only key which offers any satisfactory solution as to the special source of our own particular life, in its relation to the whole, is, I think, to be found in the consideration of the Archetypal law, which has its application in all planes; in correlated modes; taken in conjunction with Swedenborg's "Grand Man" of our solar system, and of the similar Kabbalistic conception of Adam Kadmon or Macroprosopus: the Greater Countenance. Taken in this light, it may be that we emanate from respective Hierarchies of life, which represent severally different functions or organs in the Grand Solar Man, or the God of this system in whom these find their unification and identity. Our position here may be related to the function which our special life stream represents in its relation to others, and the only criterion by which we may estimate this is to be found in the Archetypal image as shown in the human organism, with its respective organs; in which, while each differs from the others, yet all are equally necessary and interdependent. It is evident that the utility of the contributive function of the respective organs of the body is not to be estimated by the attractiveness of their appearance, or by the amount of external recognition accorded to them.

As entities descend from certain organs, or functions, in the Corporate Solar Deity and represent that function in the human corporate social body, so also may it be possible that the orbit and function of every atom of life that descends or ascends into our organism may be so related and similarly regulated. The Archetypal image must necessarily be present in each entity, as a focus into which the life atoms take lodgment in building up our organism. But the law under which each respective atom of life takes lodgment in the several organs of our bodies is probably inherent in the atoms themselves, and regulated by and in accordance with their respective sources, as above suggested.

It will thus be seen that while each entity emanates as an atom from a special hierarchy of life, representing a special organ or function in the corporate solar angelic society, or the Great Archetype of this solar system, yet, by the fact of being projected into the material plane, he synthesises into his organism life atoms which have emanated from the hierarchies representing all the organs or functions in that solar system, and therefore becomes in himself a minor representation of that solar system. From a unit he becomes an inclusive representation of the whole system. The spiritual atoms of life from the Elohim, emanating from the soul plane, return ultimately to the sun, in the form of minor representations of itself. Is this the "image of God" in which man was made by the Elohim?

This gathering of life by the Ego, from all the hierarchies of the solar system, into its own form, in itself necessitates a sharing in the whole of experience, when the content of all those life atoms comes to be read by the soul of the Ego, whose radiation permeates and interpenetrates them. And it will be seen that re-incarnation would entail the annihilation of the results thus achieved, as it would necessitate the throwing off of all the life accreted by the Ego, in order that the latter might again commence its descent into matter as a unit and again begin *de novo* its integration of life. But the life integrated by the Ego is transmuted and carried forward by it from plane to plane as shown. Only the remains are shed and left behind, such as the physical body, &c. So that this annihilation of the results achieved by Ego, in accreting life in its orbit of becoming, is impossible. Then the re-incarnation on the earth of an Ego, become into the stature of a minor image of the sun, is also impossible. Then re-incarnation is impossible.

As the soular life ray from the sun acts upon its identic principle in man, so has it been taught in occult schools that the rays reflected from the hierarchies of life on the planets act similarly on their equivalent degrees of life present in man (accreted by him here, as shown). As the Hierarchy of soul-life or the soul plane is associated with the sun, so has it been taught that other degrees of life are associated with the planets, and different systems give different attributions, associating certain colours, *i.e.*, vibrations or forces, with each. Planets being circumferential to the sun or soul plane, must belong, like the earth, to the astro-physical plane, and planetary influences

pertain, therefore, to the astral principle and induce activity in that life degree, related to themselves, present in man. These influences have been classified in astro-logos, or astrology. Messages have been transmitted through the air, between ocean liners, by induction. The human being with the descending and ascending currents of electro-vitality passing through him, may be compared to an induction coil, with a multiplex microphone attached, in the shape of the brain and other nerve ganglia. If the planets be considered as batteries radiating light-force, it is evident that the respective receptors in man that respond to their particular vibrations, will vibrate responsively, producing moods and emotions in him. It is now recognised by science that magnetic effects are transmitted to the earth from the sun. Warnings to miners, based upon observations of these solar vibrations, are now sent out from Greenwich. If magnetic effects are transmitted from the sun it follows that the planets also must cause effects, though such effects are not yet recognised by science. The sunlight reflected from the planets must be qualified by the inherent life degree of the planets. We recognise that light has vitalising effects. Siemens and others are now experimenting with differently coloured light, and recording the varied effects on plant life. It is well known that there are stars of various colours. We are, therefore, not far from discovering that the light from the planets and stars carries various inherent effects on earth life. The planets attributed to the several emanations of life (Sephiroth) are given in the "Kabbala Unveiled." Their stimulative effects on men's emotions have also been classified in astrology. The energies and moods thus induced in man are also symbolised in alchemy as metals, where the transmuting of these metals, or degrees of life, into the pure gold and silver of soul and spirit, is dealt with. The transmutation of the life within man, from the astral to the soul mode, renders it no longer subject to planetary influences, as it then transcends the astral, planetary plane, and attains equilibrium. In a recent work on Astrology, Mr. W. Old says: "It was never taught that man was altogether under planetary influence, but only so much of man as is by nature beneath the stars, *i.e.*, beneath the forces which control and move them. The mind of man is controlled by planetary influence, in just such a degree as his sense of happiness is dependent on the conditions of his physical existence; or in other words, as far as he is subject to his lower nature."

It will be seen that these systems taken collectively represent man as a minor solar system in himself. The spirit-Ego within his soul relates him with the Universal spirit and reflects its presence to his system, may be symbolised as his moon. His soul, as radiator of life-light to his body, is related to the sun, or plane of soular life. The ever-varying energies and emotions of his personality, caused by the continuous flux of descending and ascending life, passing through the astral degree or aspect of man, is symbolised in the continuously changing aspects of the planets. Mr. Maitland resumes this somewhat differently as follows:—"Man is a Kosmos, consisting of seven concentric spheres, or orbits, of which the innermost is the central and radiant point, the sun of his system. The seven spheres of his system must further be conceived of as having each their own tincture, or quality, according to their relation to the centre, and as corresponding to the rays of the prism; from the red to the violet, and to the planets, from the sun to Saturn, the latter as circumferential being outermost."

But if man's Ego, from an atom of life-light, becomes as fulfilment "made in the image of God," *i.e.*, a minor representation of the solar system, then it follows that the solar system must itself be a transcendent Ego, or God, whose evolution as a Unity implies and entails the evolution of its constituent atoms or units; whose organism is probably represented by the planets, and whose life is ever evolving into entities "made in his own image." In this conception we would have the solution of the problem of individual becoming, which in itself is probably an illustration of the mode of evolution of the Unity. We would have an answer both as to the "why" and as to the "how" of individual existence. We would have an explanation of "that power in us, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness," as the evolution of the solar Ego would in itself entail the evolution of every inherent atom of life; and conversely, the evolution and becoming "in the image of God" of the aggregate constituent atoms would entail a gradual growth in the relative potency of the soul principle of the solar Ego, as compared with

its physical aspect. The whole process of becoming of the solar Ego, and of its inherent life atoms or Egos would be the resultant of the inflowing power, implicit in its spirit-life stream, relating it with its own antecedent source or prius; even as is the case with ourselves.

The pretensions of some schools when viewed in this light, that their adept teachers control and direct the forces which govern this earth and its evolution, suggests a comparison with archetypal law, as illustrated in the working of the human organism. What would result if certain atoms of our body, ignoring the guiding spirit of the Ego, were to assume to themselves the pretension to reform and remodel the organism in which they formed integral units? The effect would be inflammation and disease, ending probably in the insurgent atoms being expelled and sloughed off from that system.

The interpretation here set forth has been filled in on a Kabbalistic skeleton; yet it is not Kabbalistic in itself. Few people are sufficiently intuitive, or independent enough, to trust to their own judgment, and prefer to rest on authority, though the "voice that speaks within" is the ultimate Reality and court of appeal to each of us. The more mysterious the authority the more implicit, often, is the belief. Authorities have therefore been quoted in order to show that the interpretation advanced rests on a sound or a recognised basis.

But the leading argument running through these articles has been, that spiritual unfoldment, or the "gifts of the spirit," occurs from within and is not obtainable from without. Study in the various schools of occultism is useful, as all knowledge is valuable. But "the Kingdom of God is not to be taken by force"; "things pertaining to the gods are moved by the gods themselves." Study in secret schools presents the danger of tending to foster self-conceit. Behold we know, but we may not give knowledge to the unfit is the attitude engendered, though not intentionally so; and this is the very opposite of true spirituality, which is better illustrated in the humility and simplicity of the Christ, than in the arrogance of the Scribe. The reverential worship of the Spirit of God which illuminates us all may better tend to spiritual unfoldment than all occultism; but that attitude is itself an effect and not developed by the personality.

The sun worship and the Osiris of the ancients may apparently have carried an implication which we can now only grasp intuitively. The same truths will be found to exist behind all the technical terms or various modes of presentation, in the religions and myths, whether of the so-called Pagans or Christians. And, indeed, if all men are God-manifesting in progressive stages, it must necessarily be so. The voice that speaks through us all is one and the same, though shining through us more or less obscurely or clearly, according to the evolutionary conditions or transparency of the vehicle. All truth comes from within. No Bibles have been written by men, and yet all have been communicated from inner states through men. All are the voice of God speaking to man in terms related to his temporary states. The Vedas, the Mahabarata, the Iliad, the Æneid, the Norse Sagas, the Niebelungen Lieder, the romances of the Holy Grail, all tell the same truths in different modes, related to the period and the peoples to whom they were addressed. But the voice of God did not only speak to man in the past; it ever speaks to him, and ever will do so. The time will come when man will recognise that "all things are God, though all things are not in the condition of God" (Maitland), but evolve slowly towards that condition; when we will recognise that all men are brothers emanating from the same source, and that the progress of the one is conditioned by the progress of the whole; when men will tear down the shams and empty forms of sacerdotalism and seek for, and reverentially worship, the Spirit of love and truth as it manifests through themselves, through the whole race; through the whole of Nature; through the whole Universe.

QUESTOR VILA.

(Conclusion.)

OF Brotherhood there are two kinds, the false, when a man chooses who shall be his brothers and whom he will treat as such, when he claims his own class as brothers, also when he claims men of his own opinions as brothers and not men who differ from him; and true brotherhood in which a man believes that all are his brothers, and not of the flesh, or of man, but of God whose children they all are alike, when he feels it absurd and impossible and a practical denial of the very name of brotherhood to fraternise with one class and not with his enemies, as absurd as it would be in him if from private prejudice he called only one of his mother's sons brother and denied his eternal and God-given relation with all the rest.—CHARLES KINGSLEY.

THE SEER OF DORLISHEIM.

Several Continental Spiritualistic publications have been commenting on an article which appeared in the columns of the "Journal des Debats" of March 8th last. It appears that in the town of Dorlisheim, in Alsace, there is a seer named Jost, who is considered by the peasants as a benefactor, and by the medical faculty of Strasburg as a rival—who is, curiously enough, at once despicable and dangerous. People go to this medium from all parts of Europe, and even from America, for the purpose of deriving benefit from his magnetic passes and visions, while there are several members of the upper circles of Strasburg who can prove the efficacy of his powers. He has been visited by officers of the garrison and by the Governor himself, Lieut. Gen. Bergmann, who, however, says that he merely went from a feeling of curiosity. The fight between the medical faculty of Strasburg and this medium has lasted for ten years. They had him condemned for illegal medical practice, and his reputation of course increased, while recently he was prosecuted for swindling before the tribunal of Saverne. In 1867 he was a tailor's apprentice in Paris, where he began to take an interest in magnetism. Dr. Desjardins found in him a medium almost expressly made for his experiments and employed him down to the war of 1870. At Dorlisheim he rapidly became famous as a curative medium and was able to build himself a little house, and gained by his kindness the goodwill of the people of Dorlisheim and Molsheim. Experts were called on both sides, and where the prosecution brought fifty witnesses to prove that they had not been cured, the defence brought a hundred to testify that they had. After the defence had concluded it is said that the doctors brought a charge of immorality against the medium and the decision has been postponed until this charge is disposed of. An interesting fact came out during the trial, in the evidence of Major von Clastervald. This gentleman, calling one day on a friend, a Professor at Zittau in Saxony, found with him a young country girl, who assisted him in his hypnotic experiments. The Professor requested the witness to put a question to the subject, and it struck the Major to ask her about one of his friends, a Colonel in Magdeburg, whose name and address he gave to the medium. The young woman, who did not even know Magdeburg, immediately gave a minute account of the Colonel's apartment down to the smallest details of its arrangement and furnishing. Passing afterwards to the inhabitants, she described—also without error—every member of the Colonel's family. He himself was unwell, and the subject diagnosed him, pointing out symptoms which had not been observed until then. These symptoms were accurately described, as the witness learnt three days after his return to Magdeburg.

INTERESTING EXPERIMENTS.

The following somewhat novel experiments have been made by Mons. Horace Pelletier, and communicated to "Le Messager," of Liège. He placed in the middle of his table a candle-end, about an inch and a quarter high, and seated around the table three of his mediums. The doors were carefully closed, and the "sensitives" strictly enjoined neither to blow nor cough—scarcely even to breathe—although it was observed that the slight movement caused in the atmosphere by the seating of the mediums did not disturb the steadiness of the flame. In about forty seconds it began to flicker, and then, as if a wind had suddenly penetrated the apartment, it inclined until it became horizontal. Resuming for a moment the vertical direction it again slightly inclined, and then once more became horizontal, while at the same time it appeared to lose a little power. That, however, was only a brief lapse, as the flame expanded and rose again until a fresh discharge of psychic fluid forced it once again almost horizontal. These are the different phases through which the candle flame passed before going out for good, which it did in about two and a-half minutes by the experimenter's watch. With two "sensitives" only it takes four minutes. It occasionally happened that the flame not only expanded, but the candle itself ran along the table, or jumped to the floor. Readers who are acquainted with the experiments of Mr. Crookes, F.R.S., will probably remember his description of the current of cold air which he sometimes experienced, blowing strongly in the room during his experiments with Mr. D. D. Home, a phenomenon with which most Spiritualists are also familiar when sitting *en seance*. Mons. Pelletier has for some time been experimenting on his own account, and his success has been remarkable.

DR. CHARLES RICHEL ON OCCULT SCIENCE.

On the first Friday in March last Lady Caithness invited a number of her friends and acquaintances to her sumptuous establishment in the Avenue Wagram, Paris, in order to hear the well-known Dr. Charles Richet deliver an address on "Occult Science"—for that seems to have been the foundation of his remarks, although the title of his address actually was "The Future of Science." This distinguished Professor of Physiology at the Medical School approached the main portion of his subject quite frankly, it is reported, drawing a parallel between the present condition of medicine and that of occult science. During the last twenty-five years, he said, everything in medicine has been revolutionised by the illustrious savant who is a glory to France—M. Pasteur. The discovery of microbes has destroyed the ancient theories and promoted the triumph of modern medicine, and yet for more than sixty years the most esteemed scientists of Europe denied the existence of microbes, and refused to direct their studies towards these unknown creatures which were pointed out to them. To-day the light has come and doubt has disappeared. It will be the same with occult science in the near future. At present it has more sceptics than believers, but the time will come when this science, more mysterious than the others, will have its definitions and its formulæ. M. Richet further declared that scientists are bound to tell the truth to those who listen to them, and that they have no right to dissimulate or travesty their opinions. Like the soldier on the battlefield, like the nun among the plague-smitten, they ought to have their professional courage and march straight to the goal, disdaining mere scoffers who are not of their opinion. They require the zeal of the apostle along with that of the scientist.—The greatest interest was manifested by those present in Professor Richet's discourse, which included premonition, clairvoyance, and several other branches of the subject.

A CURIOUS APPARITION.

Dr. Gaston De Messemey sends the following contribution to the pages of "La Revue Spirite":—M. S., aged seventeen, a creole of Guadaloup, who is at present studying at Montpellier, came, on my invitation, to spend a portion of his holidays with my family. During one of the long winter evenings the conversation turned on the subject of strange spiritualistic phenomena. He then told me the following circumstance. A Mons. Lacascade possesses at Guadaloup a fine estate, of which the principal mansion is reputed to be haunted by one of its ancient masters, a very cruel man, who occasionally visits it at the hour of noon. M. Lacascade laughed at the notion, and treated the story with ridicule. He had seen nothing and he believed nothing. Sometimes, however, during the night he heard sounds of munching, imitating very accurately the noise made by a negro chewing sugar-cane. Mons. Lacascade at first attributed all this to pleasantry on the part of some joker. One day, however, towards noon, while he was taking his siesta in a hammock, he saw approaching him the figure of a man clad in white, and whose feet, not resting on the ground, appeared to be supported on a vaporous cloud. The man, or rather the phantom, for it was one, stopped before M. Lacascade and looked at him, saying, "These are my names," . . . and having given them, he said: "Get masses said for me—prayers, if you please." He then went away, leaving M. Lacascade considerably astonished. The two doors of the chamber in which the hammock was slung were open, and as soon as the apparition crossed the threshold of one of them it evaporated in the air like smoke, and M. Lacascade could distinguish nothing more. The gentleman got the masses said as requested, and since then nothing more has been heard. Some months later, however, M. Lacascade was in a field where they were cutting cane, when suddenly an animal rose as from the ground, and passed gently before him, bearing a piece of gold in its mouth. The negroes said the animal was the guardian of concealed treasure, and was revealing it to M. Lacascade. The latter gentleman had the place dug up, and discovered a jar full of gold, and a little box containing a watch, as well as papers on which were seen the names given by the apparition.—Dr. De Messemey's young friend, M. S., who stayed in the house, and is his informant, states that the apparition was seen during the months of February or March—as nearly as he can remember—of the year 1885. Dr. De Messemey, who is also a native of the Antilles, states that among the natives there is a general belief in various spiritualistic manifestations.

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Light:

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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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MR. VOYSEY AWAKE.

When we wrote our leader, entitled "Wanted," we little thought that a luminous commentary upon it would be so soon vouchsafed to us; but it has arrived.

The Rev. Charles Voysey is a truthseeker of a rather rigid type, with a conservative bias and a radical militant mind, in relation to Religion. He has never been friendly to Spiritualism; and we believe he has some pet notion about hypnotism being at the bottom of it all. Everybody is deluded into fancying that "things occur." And yet, somehow, Mr. Voysey has always seemed to be a bit haunted; he does not seem to be able to properly lay his ghost. In the midst of his attempt to rap our knuckles we can always see the tremors of his own; and now we have him with his eyes wide open, in a corner.

It is true he is only engaged in his favourite occupation of baiting the Christians and convicting them of gross inconsistency, but he evidently feels the gravity of the dilemma he so cogently puts forth.

It all came out in a sermon on the Resurrection, in which, by the way, like a sensible man, he entirely took our view that the record of the resurrection of the *body* of Jesus tells against rather than for our persistence into a future life. He does not give our reason, but he shares our conclusion; and then he hits the conventional Christian hard. First of all, however, he has his usual fling against us. "I am persuaded," says he, "we have had no voice from the tomb, no resurrection, no angels or spirits to tell us a single word as to the state of the departed." At one fell swoop he knocks out two-thirds of the Old Testament and one-third of the New, and all the testimony of the ages concerning spirit-communication. A very courageous man, and a strong, is Mr. Voysey. But he immediately picks up all the bits, and, in the very next sentence, placidly says: "But I admit frankly that it is possible that, in the advance of science, the future life may yet be demonstrated." How very good of him! And then, he again immediately adds: "All I now say is that, in my opinion (and I may be wrong) the instances of alleged communication with the spirits of the dead have not been satisfactorily proved." It is something to know that he may be wrong: it would be even more to the point if he would tell us how he got his "opinion," and how much he has really done in the way of trying to find out whether such communications have been proved. We are rather inclined to think that Mr. Voysey—to put it plainly—knows next to nothing about it—at first hand.

But there are other signs that Mr. Voysey's eyes are opening. He not only admits the possibility that we may be right after all, and that he may be wrong; but he admits the good-faith and the good-sense of his Spiritualist friends, and expressly says: "The contempt which is too often exhibited towards those who believe in Spiritualism I entirely forswear." He even thinks it is "deplorable" that men of science do not gravely look into the matter. So far good. Now for his story.

A medium, in a London drawing-room, "presented," says Mr. Voysey, as the spirit of a deceased person, one Florence Maple, who stepped out from some cabinet, shook hands with persons there, conversed with them, and abundantly manifested her personality before disappearing. Is it not wonderful, asks Mr. Voysey, that this could happen in this very city, and no particular notice be taken of it? Then occur these noticeable words:—

Now, we cannot use half-terms in speaking of this alleged fact. If it really occurred, if a person who was once dead has been seen alive and in costume, moreover, of manufactured material, and handled, and heard to speak by a roomful of ladies and gentlemen, and then as suddenly disappeared, then it is unpardonable to show apathy upon a subject of such supreme importance to mankind. But if it did not really occur, it must have been a monstrous and wicked fraud, practised by, or upon, the parties who said they witnessed it. Such a fraud is a scandal to our country and to the enlightened age in which we live. It deserves our deepest execration. Yet no one at the time seemed to care to settle so momentous a question, or even to clear the character of their neighbours by any attempt at investigation.

This is a trifle incoherent, but Mr. Voysey's meaning is perfectly plain; and, in the main, we agree with him; though, as regards the last sentence, we would suggest that perhaps "no one" attempted "to clear the character of their neighbours (even the grammar halts!) by any attempt at investigation," because no one had any reason to doubt either the medium, the host, or the test.

We entirely agree with what seems to be in Mr. Voysey's mind—that it is absurd for people who believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus to remain unconcerned in relation to Spiritualism. What they only believe, we know; and we are half disposed to think that their unconcern indicates a less deep fountain of faith than they suspect.

We do not care to follow Mr. Voysey in his criticism of "Spirit Teachings" by "M.A. (Oxon.)." He seems to imagine that we believe all we are told by the unseen people, and he makes much of the contradictory messages that are given. Does he imagine we are such geese as not to know all these things, or that we have not made up our account with them? Mr. Voysey is a keen man, but he has much to learn about the people of whom he says:—

Spiritualists appeal to a vast portion of mankind who prefer seeing to believing, who are ever hankering after signs and wonders, and whose materialistic notions of God and soul and heaven compel them to seek satisfaction in visible proofs. We come into the field against unbelief in immortality with very different weapons: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal." And if we cannot hold our ground with these, we refuse to adopt an inferior mode of warfare, or pander to what seems to us a morbid craving for hidden mysteries.

But, for all that, Mr. Voysey is very much concerned about this uncanny thing. Will he respond to our challenge, and join our band of clerical inquirers?

LOVE AND LIFE.

THE night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

—BOURDILLON.

ADDRESS BY MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN.

A meeting in celebration of the forty-sixth anniversary of Modern Spiritualism was held in St. Andrew's Hall, Newman-street, London, on Sunday last, when an address entitled, "What new thing has Spiritualism taught? What good things has it done?" was delivered by MRS. E. HARDINGE BRITTEN. There was a large attendance, the occasion having brought together a number of friends from all parts of the Metropolis and its environs, and some even from a considerable distance.

After the opening hymn, "Welcome, Angels," MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS (President of the London Spiritualist Alliance), who occupied the chair, made some introductory remarks, in the course of which he said that for the benefit of those who were strangers to the subject, he would give a brief definition of the term Spiritualism. He defined it as the belief in the possibility of persons still in the flesh holding conscious communion with those who had passed beyond the veil. That was a comprehensive statement of the Spiritualistic creed, and the possibility of intercourse with those who had departed from this world was a demonstrated and demonstrable fact. It was only of late years that the subject had been investigated by scientific men, who had acknowledged that the phenomena did occur. They had now some of the most distinguished scientific men on their side, and it only remained for them to convert a body of men who it might be supposed should stand in no need of conversion, namely, the clergy. They, of all men, ought to have been the first to believe in the truth of Spiritualism; but, in many instances, they had been its bitterest opponents. They had said that even if it were true, it came from the devil. That statement seemed to imply a suspicious intimacy which enabled them to say definitely what the devil would do under certain given circumstances. Spiritualism, however, had made progress even in the Church—that was to say, the Church of England. Many of the clergy had given their adherence to Spiritualism, but for the most part they had not yet had the courage to have their names made public in connection with the subject. He asked the respectful attention of the audience to Mrs. Britten, who had spent many years in investigating the subject in this and other lands, and who was an authority on all that appertained to it.

After a solo entitled "Cloister Voices," pleasingly rendered by MISS ALICE EVERITT, the address of the evening was delivered by

MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN, who, after an impressive invocation, said that those who knew that the spirit still lives and loves and can make its thoughts known to earth, would not marvel when they were told that it was at the request, and by the aid and influence, of some of the pioneers of the movement who had passed beyond the veil, but who still worked in the upbuilding of the Church of Divine Humanity, that the anniversary address was delivered that evening. This great work of opening the gates and displaying to mortals the realities of the life beyond, had, even like the teachings of the great and good Nazarene, had its John the Baptists—voices crying in the wilderness of a perverted and dark theology. Two hundred years ago one of those educated in the theology of his time—Emanuel Swedenborg—as he sat him down to take counsel for his future discourses on theology, was suddenly awakened from dreams of immortality to the higher and grander realities of the life beyond by the voice of an angel, and under the guidance of guardian spirits traversed the spheres of the life hereafter, realising some of the tremendous delusions in which the world had been trained. It was true that the followers of Swedenborg had narrowed his beautiful and elevating doctrines to a sect, and, imbued with a spirit of conservatism, had determined that the revelation of which he had been the subject was for Swedenborg alone. Spiritualists knew that what was possible for Swedenborg was possible for every other man; nay, the voice of Swedenborg, sounding through two hundred years, called upon them to choose the revelations of God rather than the traditions of men.

Another John the Baptist was Anton Mesmer, who from boyhood seemed to be inspired with the determination to discover the soul of things. The discoveries and researches of this inspired one at last culminated in the recognition that there was a soul of things; that the force that moved the planets and guided the vast constellations was the same force that beat against the shores of oceans, the same force that propelled the course of streams, the same force that lingered in

the rock in the shape of the loadstone, that palpitated in the plant in the form of growth and life, that looked into the face of humanity through the wistful eyes of the living creatures whom men controlled, and at last beat upon the shores of life in the heart of humanity itself. But the time had not yet come when the true Messiah of light on the conditions of immortality could be received, and so Mesmer, like an ancient Frankenstein, stood before the mighty revelation he had made, and feared it, not daring to advance. But others followed in his steps, unlocking the marvels of the magnetic sleep, until the "flying souls" went forth and discovered the fair white cities of the immortal life, and brought the tidings that there was no death.

Yet another John the Baptist began life as a poor cobbler's boy traversing the wild Catskill mountains in loneliness, poverty, and ignorance, peddling wares for the sake of the few pence he could procure for the hungry ones at home. This boy heard a voice—a voice not of earth—calling his name, a voice that guided him to a group of lads like himself from whom the great magnetiser Livingstone selected him, and for four years the boy, during his earthly sleep, ascended in spirit to the higher world, and brought back tidings of the dead; penetrated into the mysteries of the human anatomy and prescribed for the sick, and at last blossomed into the noble seer, the spiritually instructed man, Andrew Jackson Davis. He was one of the chosen by the heavenly counsels, of the higher world to reveal the mysteries of God's providence, to discern how the world of spirit in the life beyond moved forward little by little, with the earthly world, how the seen and the unseen advanced up the steps of progress. He saw how the great movement of Spiritualism was initiated in the spirit world by Franklin and Mesmer and other great souls, who had resolved themselves into a mighty council in response to the appeals of multitudes of spirits who besought them to build a bridge on which they could cross to the earthly side of life—to construct a telegraph whereby they could assure those they left behind of their continued existence.

That spiritual telegraph first worked successfully through the instrumentality of two little Canadian children who with their father and mother had settled in the humblest fashion in the village of Hydesville. What was the result of this modern revelation from the unseen to those to whom it was first made? They were persecuted, maligned, driven from their humble home, compelled to take refuge in the city of Rochester, still pursuing the wonderful experiments which had been presented to them. There, once more, were they reviled and oppressed, suffering loss of friends and loss of means, but ever receiving from the spirit circle consolation and guidance. Nevertheless, their troubles thickened. Their windows broken, their children hooted in the streets, the parents, knowing not which way to turn, prayed that this terrible trial should be removed from them—that the strange visitation from the other world should cease. Their prayer was answered. A great silence fell upon the house, and they knew that the power had disappeared—the haunting was over. But the silence was unendurable. The fear that the wise counsellors and helpers had fled preyed upon the hearts of the little household, and then it was that Isaac Post, a good Quaker who had sympathised with them in their troubles, came to them. They told him that the spirits had gone. "Perhaps," said Isaac, "they will rap for me," and once again, with hearts overflowing with joy, they heard the signals of the spirit visitants.

The speaker then related, with thrilling effect, the story of the appearance of the children in the great Corinthian Hall of Rochester, where they were, by the direction of their invisible monitors, placed on a platform in order that the phenomena with which they were associated might be publicly displayed. The tumultuous character of the gathering on this occasion, the threats to lynch all concerned, and the heroism of Isaac Post and a few sturdy friends who—closing round the children and the committee of gentlemen who had reported on the genuineness of the manifestation—protected them from the insane fury of the mob, were vividly portrayed.

Dealing with the question, "What new thing has Spiritualism taught?" the lecturer ably summed up the significance of the various phases of supernormal manifestations. There was a noble science called acoustics—the science of sound. Spiritualists, however, knew that in the presence of mediums sounds are heard which do not comply with any of the known conditions of acoustics. Not only were sounds produced that were inexplicable on ordinary grounds, but those sounds were frequently found to be possessed, in some mysterious way, of a

knowledge of spelling and the gift of conveying intelligible communications. That was one new thing—it was something even if it stood alone. There was another science, a still pro-founder one—motor power. The world had been searching for motor powers ever since the days of schoolmen began—it had used the motor power of animals, it had employed the elements, harnessing fire, water, and air to its machines, and it had tried in every conceivable way to produce a new motor power. Many people mocked at the “dancing table.” But it might be asked: “What made the table dance?” Spiritualism had given the world a new motor power, with which only Spiritualists were acquainted. There was yet another science called optics. For the faculty of vision certain pre-requisites were required. It was required that the eye should be in a proper condition, that there should be a certain point in space in which the object to be observed should be placed, and it was required that this object should not be gaseous, but fluid or solid matter. But the faculty of clairvoyance set all these requisites at naught. Finally, there was the science of physiology. We took an atom, and, examining it by the aid of a powerful glass, found that the tiny speck was a cell with a nucleated point. Further examination showed that this cell under certain conditions expanded, giving birth to other cells like itself; and that little nucleated point might be traced through various organic developments until we arrived at man. The savants said it was merely a question of chemistry! Many times had the speaker, in company with friends, sat in a darkened room, and, after a little waiting, perceived a light flocculent mass which, slowly developing in density, took the shape of a human hand, warm and living. Sometimes the nebulous mass took the form of a human being, who, instinct with life and intelligence, conversed with those present, perchance being the father, mother, or the dear friend of one of them. That, too, was simply “a question of chemistry!”

The lecturer then narrated an instance of an ex-soldier at Columbus, Ohio, who, under spirit control, has drawn portraits of the deceased friends of hundreds of people whom he has never met and of whom he knows nothing. A poor woman in Boston, being called upon one day by the speaker, displayed a large, rough, but fair character-drawing of two little boys. “I am a widow,” she said, “and my little ones were my only incentive to live. Both were taken from me by death, and lately laid in their graves. Here are their portraits, drawn by one a thousand miles away, one whose name I have never before heard. Will you, madam, write to him for me, and say there is one happy heart in Boston to-night?” Here was one out of countless good things which Spiritualism had done.

In an impassioned peroration the speaker referred to the manifestations of the unseen world from the earliest ages, and the influence for good in their modern presentment—Spiritualism—as witnessed by her in her travels amongst the miners of the Far West, in whom the knowledge of a future existence frequently wrought an impulse for better things and a complete change of life. “You will ask, Why is not the whole world convinced by the miracles of Spiritualism? Patience! God has made the fairest things out of the wild deserts of thousands of years ago; from the decaying forest, and the granite rock, have come the rose and the lily, and all the glorious blossoms that make the world so beautiful to-day. Be patient and do your part in building up the fabric of a pure life. Trial and toil may be yours, but the workers win, if not to-day, to-morrow. Be faithful in your generation, and patiently abide the time when every soul shall have assurance of the truth. The movement has gone far enough. It has compassed the round world; its work is almost incredible. All that remains is for each to do his part. The possibilities of growth accompany you at every step, and you can all do something to help forward the good cause. You can bear your testimony; you can give the word of sympathy and consolation to those who mourn for the dead as without hope, the dead restored to you as ministering spirits. Wait patiently God’s own good time; see that you yourselves are faithful unto death, and thus you will be preparing for that glorious life of the hereafter, when you yourself, returning as a ministering angel, may say, ‘I am he that was dead, and behold I am alive for ever.’”

D.G.

LET our daily inspiration flow in magnetic currents through the dirt under our feet, and then great hopes will go tiding through our daily toil.—J. LLOYD JONES.

MRS. BESANT AND INDIAN CIVILISATION.

That great good has resulted to India through the contact and partial affiliation with the civilisation of England is beyond question. The salvation of the Orient from semi-barbarism and superstition is dependent upon its acceptance and assimilation of the learning, civilisation, and science of the Occident; and any thing that tends to retard this assimilation is a menace to the progress of the East. In view of this truth the recent course of Mrs. Annie Besant in India is no trifling matter; it has its serious side as well as its grotesque. It is probable that the people in England do not realise the possible great harm that may be the outcome of Mrs. Besant’s intemperate zeal in behalf of barbarism, idolatry, and nescience. A summary of the situation may not, then, be amiss.

Mrs. Besant has been lecturing in a number of the larger cities and towns of India, in all parts of the Empire,—in just those places where European civilisation is closest in contact with the native population. From first to last she has denounced and belittled Western civilisation, science, and learning, to the glorification of those of India. The Hindus are said to be particularly susceptible to flattery, and Mrs. Besant has fed them everywhere therewith, *ad nauseam*. This, conjoined with her eloquence and power, has captivated the natives all over the Empire; and herein lies the danger of her work in that country. She is hailed, in all parts of the land, as “the goddess of Ind”; as an incarnation of Saraswati, the goddess of learning and eloquence; and as an incarnation of various other goddesses. “The orthodox Hindus adore her,” says a native writer. Hundreds of people who do not know one word of English come to her meetings, pressing and crushing one another, to see her and hear her pronounce the sacred words “Sri Krishna” and “Arjuna.” Honours are given to her, by the Brahmans, such as are “only given to gods and persons of high spiritual renown.”

Mrs. Besant has publicly embraced the Hindu religion as a whole, and requested that she be called by her new Hindu name of Anna or Ani Bai, instead of her European one. She tells the people that she was and is a Hindu,—that in her prior incarnation she was an Indian pandit, and she is now “visiting her own land after a sojourn in the West, where she was re-incarnated to know the nature of the materialistic civilisation of those regions.” She has “appealed to her countrymen and countrywomen (the Hindus), nay, to the world at large, to adopt the Hindu method for the regeneration of the race.” Is not treason to the Government contained in this sentence?—“She said that if the youths of India would act up to the traditions of the past, instead of fawning on a foreign Power, they would not long remain under a foreign yoke.” She declares in her addresses that the Hindu philosophy and religion are the best in the world, the Hindus the wisest of all nations; Western civilisation, with all its science, is nothing compared with Hindu civilisation, and all that is best in the West was borrowed from India. She asserts that she is anxious to see the ancient Hindu civilisation restored, “being the oldest, truest, and best in the world.” To the boys and youths in the colleges she inveighs against modern civilisation, and urges them to renounce the falsities of European learning and science, and cling fast to the native science and learning. “She was glad to know that many youths were turning back to the ancient sacred literature and philosophy of their country, and were learning that a diamond of great price was superior to a bit of glass cut in the European fashion.”

The curse of India is the atrocious caste system—one branch of the most abject spiritual despotism the world has known. Yet “Ani Bai” extols this odious institution as a noble and beneficent one, “intended for the very noble purpose of spiritual advancement.” The castes, she says, “have given stability to Indian life; they have preserved her civilisation.” She upholds the caste system “as a necessary part of the law of Karma, those in the lowest caste being there as the result of their former works”; and she looks upon Hindu caste as “a most wise, practical, and enduring system upon which every society should be founded.” In addition to the caste regulations, the daily life of the Hindus is hedged about with an intricate and burdensome system of ritual, formulated by the Brahmans to preserve their spiritual supremacy over the masses. Mrs. Besant has most urgently emphasised the necessity that no change be made in “the customs of the people, acting on the advice of foreigners, particular stress being laid on the religious cere-

April 14, 1894.]

man had to go through in life." She has exhorted the Hindus to instruct their children anent these customs to prevent their being thrown overboard on account of the children becoming ashamed of them as "superstitious and barbarous." She spoke like a goddess," says a native paper, "jealous of her institutions and customs which are in danger of being cast aside by the Anglicised Hindus." She is instrumental in forming "Aryan Leagues" to defend native religion and customs. "Ani Bai" regrets that the laws of Manu are not carried out strictly. These laws embody the horrible caste system, the absolute supremacy of the Brahmans as infallible gods, and the complete slavery of woman. Probably in no social system the world has ever seen is woman under more abject subjection to man than in Manu's code. In it a wife must worship her husband as a god, though he be devoid of every virtue, and every woman must be in subjection to some male relative from birth to death. In the "Theosophist," for February, 1894, p. 294, it is admitted that Mrs. Besant's denunciation of adult-marriage in the West was an endorsement of the child-marriage system of the Hindus, and one of the most pernicious institutions now in vogue in India. Both polytheism and idolatry are eulogised by Mrs. Besant. "She has great faith in the Hindu gods and goddesses." In a speech at Madras she alluded to India murmuring a prayer to the gods, "and as that prayer comes up to the great gods, shall they not hear it?" As Dr. John Murdoch says ("India Past and Present," p. 35): "If Mrs. Besant truly believes in the 'great gods,' she must become an object of contempt to intelligent Indians who are monotheists. If she regards them as fictions, she is entering on a course of deception like that of her *guru*" (Madame Blavatsky). "Preserve your idols," "Keep your idols," proclaims she to the people. Not only does she accept the philosophic creed of the Upanishads, but the popular religion as well, with its many superstitions and puerilities.

Intelligent, progressive Hindus are disgusted with her course. S. Sathianadhan, M.A., LL.B. (Cantab.), in an Appeal to his Countrymen on Theosophy, states that her popularity as a lecturer in India "does not depend so much on her eloquence or her learning as on the trick of enlisting the sympathies of the audience by posing as a martyr, and on the outrageous flattery in which she indulges." This flattery, he says, is being resented by the more thoughtful of his countrymen. "Nothing," continues he, "has been a cause of such incalculable harm to the cause of progress and truth in this country as the flattering the vanity of the Indians, by referring, in season and out of season, to the greatness of their ancestors and their civilisation. Such talk only helps to keep them in a fool's paradise." Although in dense ignorance of the religion and philosophy of the Hindus, except a slight smattering derived from popular literature, "Ani Bai" hesitates not to instruct (?) the natives relative to their religion. As Mr. Sathianadhan remarks: "Mrs. Besant's acquaintance with the ancient literature of the East in the original is even less" than that of Madame Blavatsky, "but her presumption in expounding Vedic philosophy is even more astounding." Another Hindu scholar thus speaks of her assumptions: "She is extraordinary in being able to build up the most daring conclusions on the flimsiest basis of facts, with the aid of the crudest hypotheses and the most far-fetched analogies. She can talk glibly of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas, the Linga Sariras, the Akasa, and all the endless terminology of Hindu philosophy and religion as if she were a profound scholar of these subjects. But beneath all this show of knowledge one can detect that it is from a cursory perusal of translations and magazine articles that the little modicum of information she possesses has been gathered. It is, therefore, extraordinary to find that on this slender substratum of information she can pose as a leader of Hindu thought, and pretend to have crossed the ocean to instruct the Hindus and revive their ancient greatness." As Mr. Sathianadhan says—in Mrs. Besant's lectures "we have a number of high sounding Sanskrit words pronounced most inaccurately, but woven cleverly and eloquently into clauses and sentences; but the audience, beyond being tickled by flattery, returns no wiser than it did before hearing her." An Indian scholar, in a recent number of the Calcutta "Statesman," warns the "sober reading public, and even the undisciplined student" to "hesitate before accepting the hysterical utterances of a woman not known as an Oriental authority, against the plain teachings of written history, archæology, and ethnology." Even some of the Calcutta Theosophists have repudiated "Ani Bai" as a lecturer on Theosophy since she

proclaimed herself a Hindu. Scant reference has she made at any time to Theosophy since she arrived in India. For the most part she has confined herself to Hinduism, and we learn from the February "Theosophist" (p. 332), that Mrs. Besant's work in India will direct the Theosophic movement into "the channel of Hinduism pure and simple."

Shortly after the death of Madame Blavatsky, Mrs. Besant asserted, as proof of the genuineness of the Mahatma letters, that she had herself, since the death of Madame Blavatsky, received letters from the adepts. In that she was, doubtless, honestly deceived; there is now a shrewd suspicion who was the writer of the bogus Mahatma letters which she and others have received since the death of H. P. B. And is she not equally mistaken in thinking that she saw a Mahatma before she went to India, and that she knows she was a Hindu pandit in a former life? That is the question? It is also significant that while in England, and upon her journey to India, Mrs. Besant did not proclaim herself a Hindu, in nationality or religion; yet as soon as she arrived in India she began her extravagant laudation of everything Indian, and denunciation of Western civilisation, and announced her adhesion to Hinduism.

One English weekly has expressed the hope that Mrs. Besant will not come home by way of Turkey, lest she should turn a Mohammedan, and adds: "It is a matter of chance whether she will find herself next in a convent or a harem." Another English weekly remarks thus: "Before Mrs. Besant leaves India she will have time to add Mohammedanism to her already accepted religions; and as she is so soon to pay a visit to Australia she may be expected to pick up there some other and more barbaric creeds. Then she ought to travel in Africa in order to absorb the cult of Obiism and all the phases of fetish worship."

The truth or falsity of Theosophy *per se* is of minor importance compared with Mrs. Besant's efforts to firmly establish modern Hinduism and to prevent all further reform, social and religious, in India. For it is not the ancient Vedic religion which is sought to be restored in India, but the continuance of the modern corruptions, due to admixture of the Aryans with the barbarous indigenes. Re-incarnation, idolatry, child-marriage, caste, and other present-day abominations in India formed no part of the primitive Vedic religion; but all these Mrs. Besant labours to render permanent. This is a matter which affects the whole civilised world—one in which every philanthropist should be interested, apart from all mere disputed points *in re* Theosophy proper. The Theosophists of Europe and America should themselves disavow the unwise and disastrous action of their leader, "Ani Bai." Who can tell to what extent this action of hers may retard the progress of civilisation and social improvement in India?

San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A. WM. EMMETTE COLEMAN.

RECEIVED.

- "The Arena" for April. (Boston, Mass. 50 cents.)
- "Psychical Review." Organ of the American Psychical Society.
- "Coming Day," for April. (London: Williams and Norgate. 3d.)
- "Astrologer's Magazine," for April. (London: Foulsham and Co., Pilgrim-street. 4d.)
- "The Humanitarian," for April. (London: Swann Sonnenschein and Co. 6d.)
- "The Cosmopolitan" for April. (London: International News Co., Chancery-lane. 15 cents.)
- "The Islamic World." No 11. (Liverpool: The Crescent Printing Co., Elizabeth-street. 6d.)
- "Lay Religion." By RICHARD HARTE. (London: E. W. Allen, 4, Ave Maria-lane. 2s. 6d.)
- "The Urn." A monthly journal devoted to the interests of Cremation. (New York: Louis Lange, 57, Willett-street. 10 cents.)
- "Psychological Phenomena: Are they Worthy of Scientific Enquiry?" Written and published by A. CROSS, 99, Middle-street, Portland, Me., U.S.A. (5 cents.)

It is not growing like a tree
 In bulk doth make man better be;
 Or standing long, an odd three hundred year,
 To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere.
 A lily of a day,
 Is fairer far in May,
 Although it fall and die that night,
 It was the plant and flower of light.
 In small proportions we just beauties see;
 And in short measures life may perfect be.

—BEN JONSON.

MR. JESSE F. SHEPARD IN HOLLAND.

It is with a deep feeling of gratitude to Mr. Jesse Francis Shepard that I give the readers of "LIGHT" a short account of his extraordinary work and success in Holland. There has been nothing to equal it in the history of Spiritualism in our country, and it should be borne in mind that we have had visits from such powerful mediums as Mr. Home, Mr. Slade, and Mr. Eglinton, not to mention many others, so we cannot be accused of ignorance or inexperience in these matters.

Mr. Shepard received pressing invitations to visit Holland ten years ago, but at that time he did not feel disposed to leave his work in Paris. This time we were more fortunate. Mr. Shepard being again in Paris I opened correspondence with him, and through the kindly aid of our mutual friend, Prince Wiszniewski, I succeeded in inducing him to come here as my guest, which he did on the 20th of January last.

Mr. Shepard went from here to Arnhem, where he was the guest of the Marquis and Marquise Ciccolini. From there he went to Utrecht, where he was the guest of Mr. J. S. Göbel. As a matter of course, the greatest work and interest were centred at the Hague, which is known as one of the most critical and fastidious capitals on the Continent in everything pertaining to art, music, and general culture. Mr. Shepard's music created a profound impression wherever he went, but at the Hague his listeners seemed never to have enough. To describe the effect his singing and playing produce is quite beyond my ability; hundreds have attempted and failed. I must confine myself to the general impression produced on intelligent hearers and to his marvellous psychical influence on society. As I said before, there has been nothing experienced in this country in any way resembling this psychical influence. All agree that the quality of this music, both vocal and instrumental, is the most mysterious, the most unearthly, the most thrilling and indefinable ever heard or felt. People not only enjoy it through the sense of hearing, but it seems to seize one as by a personal psychical power, penetrating to every nerve and fibre of the body, and laying hold of the soul itself. The vital force of this music can no more be described or analysed than the execution itself. No one knows precisely how it is done; no one can tell whether at certain times one voice is singing or two, or whether more than two hands are occupied on the piano. But no matter; what chiefly interests me and my friends is the result obtained by Mr. Shepard's unparalleled powers. What we have to deal with is not the psychical force, not the mere manifestation, but the effect, the profound emotion, the intensity, the spiritual influence felt by all persons who hear it in a harmonious spirit.

For the first time in Holland the strongholds of the aristocratic and the conservative have given way before a manifestation of psychical power. Mr. Shepard's work in the Hague, during the last weeks of his stay there, was done almost exclusively among this class, a class which in Holland has always ignored everything connected with the public movement of occultism in any form. What this victory is can only be fully appreciated by people who live here, who have realised the difficulty of the work to be accomplished. One of the most important results obtained by Mr. Shepard's visit is the fact that the "Dagblad," the leading orthodox and aristocratic newspaper of the Hague, has, for the first time, opened its columns to eulogistic articles on the gifts of a person connected with mysticism and Spiritualism. In the "Dagblad" of March 11th Mr. J. M. Keen says, among other things:—

Not alone the mystical, but the highly artistic character of this music distinguishes it from all other. Its overwhelming mightiness must make an ineffaceable impression on every feeling human being who is capable of appreciating music in its noblest form. But also in other respects is Mr. Shepard a most remarkable man. His worth as a thinker and writer is proved by the publication of his French work, "Pensées et Essais," and his English "Essays and Pen-Pictures." There is not a paragraph in both these works that is not doubly worth the pains of re-reading and re-enjoying. Here profound, but never obscure, there witty, but never vulgar, Mr. Shepard's two books contain many original and just criticisms on artists and litterateurs of the past as well as of the present day. The impression produced in France (where Mr. Shepard published both his works) is best shown by looking over Mr. Shepard's album of letters and photographs sent him by eminent persons and which are of priceless value to the owner. In turning over the leaves of this album we find letters of enthusiastic admiration for Mr. Shepard's literary and musical gifts from the Duc d'Aumale, Jules Simon, Jules Claretie, Sully Prudhomme, the Duc de

Brogie, Henri de Bornier (all members of the French Academy), the King of Belgium, Paul Bourget, the Rev. Père Hyacinthe, the Comtes Antoine and Hubert de La Roche-foucauld, the Dowager Duchesse and the Duc de La Roche-foucauld de la Roche-Guyon, Christine Nilsson, the Princess Mathilde, the Duchess of Cumberland, and many more equally distinguished.

In the "Dagblad," of March 14th, the editor himself, who is an open enemy of Spiritualism, after having heard Mr. Shepard's music, says:—

All of a sudden, in a moment of ecstasy the bass voice turned into a soprano—not one of the false notes one sometimes hears in theatres, but full, large, and of an extraordinary volume, from the lowest to the highest register. It was as if the room had suddenly been filled from all sides with splendid and ringing tones, melting together in a mighty harmony. It surpassed the piano music in power, although the tones of the piano became more and more fortissimo, and seemed like waves of tone swelling up from the instrument. It was as if one heard the word "Excelsior!" and, although we do not believe in the supernatural, the soul was taken hold of and carried to higher spheres. The inspiration, which is awakened through Mr. Shepard's power is already quite wonderful enough. Why try to find an explanation in the supernatural?

Our well-known writer, Madame Elise van Calcar, editor of the Spiritualistic review "Op de Grenzen van Twee Werelden," devotes the principal part of the April number of her Review to Mr. Shepard's gifts and his work in Holland, from which I attract a few of the most salient points:—

Of late years, the word "mystic" has been so much abused and profaned that I hesitate to use it in its former elevated sense, which spoke to us of religious mysteries, and the spiritual elements of our life; but I find no other word when I wish to write of an inspired artiste, who truly represents the mystic side of man and of art at the same time, and who expresses it to us in an original manner. Mr. Shepard is at home in every sphere of inspiration, metaphysician, poet, musician and singer. . . . His temperament is absolutely artistic, especially musical and poetic. He understands perfectly well that modern society cannot be improved by a revival of magic and chiromancy. Such has been tried in vain by so-called occultists. He does not argue about the old idea of inspiration, but gives us the reality: art, music, poetry, combined with religious sentiment. Schiller was right when he said that those who look for truth within the limits of the visible shall not find it. The vigour and clearness of Mr. Shepard's judgment strike us forcibly in his "Pensées et Essais," while his poetry is verbal music. . . . His music is not intended to amuse the masses or to beguile the leisure hours of the superficial. His vocation is to show us what music is in its noblest and purest form. His gifts were intended for serious and cultured minds, and for this reason he never appears in public. . . . He is never obtrusive, but lives entirely for his mystic art, which is a vital proclamation of the existence of inspiration in our days; so he stands alone, independent of schools and dogmas. His visit to our country will remain ineffaceable. We hope that the great interest which was shown in him in so many places, but especially at the Hague, will encourage him to renew his visit here, and rejoice his many friends again. He has achieved a grand work which will live in many hearts. His appearance amongst us has created a deeper interest in the purest form of mysticism than that of any other worker in our ranks who has visited these shores. The physical phenomena of those who came to Holland before Mr. Shepard did more to amuse the senses than to really edify or to elevate the soul; the sacred fire was lacking. . . . The many forms of mediumship originally possessed by this highly-gifted person were all suppressed so as to concentrate the power in one great gift, just as a gardener plucks out many buds to produce one fruit of superior size and excellence. . . . Mr. Shepard gives and reveals to us what he in turn has received, and we accept this gift with thankfulness, and with reverence to the giver.

After spending six weeks in the Hague Mr. Shepard was obliged to cease work and take a well-earned rest. He has just spent ten days at my house; but even here he has not been idle. I have now heard this wonderful inspirational music on a dozen different occasions, and the more we hear of it the more mighty and mystical does the effect become. Last evening he took his seat at the piano in the presence of all the members of my family, Mr. L. W. Tonner, and Mr. J. M. Keen, who had arrived the same day from the Hague. None of us had expected Mr. Shepard to sing or play. After a solemn, half-religious composition for the piano, we heard what seemed to be a low sound, as if it were part of the piano music itself, and yet it gave us the impression of a voice trying to overcome, and rise above, the notes of the instrument. Little by little this strange sound developed, becoming distinct and personal, not following

the accompaniment, but taking an independent part in it, gradually rising higher and higher, seemingly moving to the right and then to the left, above us and about us, until the whole atmosphere was filled with an indescribable vital element of mysterious harmony and melody. Then the strange, mystical soprano was followed by an equally mystical bass of the deepest, most sonorous quality, which sang not to the piano music, but with it, as of a thing apart, while the tones of the instrument seemed to sing like low voices at certain moments, so that we could only seize and appreciate the effect as a whole. The character of the music last evening was ancient or Oriental, and the impression it left on the mind was that of some marvellous, mystical ceremony, taking place in some Eastern temple in the presence of a mighty host being initiated into some sacred mystery.

Mr. Shepard's visit to my house has made me think of the Bible text in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

Mr. Shepard leaves Holland in a few days for London, on a visit to his parents; but we all live in the hope of seeing him again in our country, where he has left a host of friends. His visit has certainly marked an epoch in the history of spiritual progress in the Netherlands.

F. W. H. VAN STRAATEN,

Editor of the "Spiritualistische Weekblad."

Apeldoorn, April 2nd, 1894.

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.]

Wanted.

SIR,—The potency of promise held out by you to twenty preachers in London who will combine to look into Spiritualism savours rather of romance, methinks, than reality; and, with all the value I attach to our glorious cause in appropriate surroundings, your promise seems to me to belong to that region which was discussed recently at a meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance as to whether Spiritualism does not often claim more than belongs to it.

As we shall probably be having similar claims, or even more exaggerated ones, I ask with all earnestness that you would point out how twenty earnest persons can be satisfied after the manner laid down by you in the following words:—

Do they need convincing that Spiritualists can be as keen, as honest, and as competent as men of their own order? They shall be convinced. Do they want such light thrown upon the Bible as shall bring all its records of spirit phenomena within the sphere and compass of natural law? They shall have it. Do they want to know what heaven and hell really are? They shall be told by those who have tried the great experiment. Do they want evidence that there are resurrections every day in London? They shall be put in the way of getting it. In a word; if they want to change hearsays for experience, and faith in words for confidence in facts, they have only got to come and ask the way. We make no apology for Spiritualism: we challenge Christendom to consider this claim—that Spiritualism holds the key to the beliefs and hopes of the world.

There is so much truth embodied in the above, and it portrays a consummation so devoutly to be wished for, that, as an old Spiritualist, I would welcome its solution.

Under happy circumstances, such as are to be found only in family circles, could such confident assurances be realised.

I am frequently appealed to, and by ministers of religion among others, as to how they can see for themselves, and be convinced of the truths of Spiritual phenomena; for they require, and you seem to admit, that these must be seen, and not merely the records of them, in order to satisfy your postulates. Rather do I, as an old Spiritualist, persuade all such inquirers first to read the records of Spirit phenomena—and to take in "LIGHT"—study the literature we already have, when if these truths will assimilate with the reader's habit of thought, good: if not, "neither would he be persuaded though one rose from the dead!"

One word more. Is it wise for us, as Spiritualists, to be constantly minimising the value of Christian faith—a much nobler quality of life than that obtained through spiritualistic knowledge? Where such faith is impossible, or Agnosticism is

dominant, by all means let Spiritualism come in where it can, and prove the hereafter, and introduce such of its philosophy as reason can accept. We must even then admit as to Spiritualism and faith that

Each supplies defect in each,

and that neither is complete without the other.

We do Spiritualism harm when we claim for its teachings an authority on equality with those of the Great Master and His disciples, for it is perfectly obvious they do not possess these. It would be wise at present for Spiritualists to lay stress more upon facts: but into this discussion I do not propose to enter; it has been admirably done elsewhere by advanced Spiritualists.

The object of my letter is to ask how your promise to twenty preachers can be assuredly fulfilled. VEGA.

"Father Clarke in a New Light."

SIR,—Will you permit me to say a few words in reference to Mr. Lillie's interesting notice, in your issue of March 24th, of my pamphlet, "A Convert through Spiritualism," and its preface by Father Clarke?

I agree with Mr. Lillie that it would not be fair to say that Father Clarke has changed his mind. He has all along enunciated principles which he would regard as unchangeable. But, it may be, that facts which have come to his knowledge since his articles in the "Month," on Spiritualism, were written, have suggested to his mind a certain amount of hesitation as to the justice of labelling all spiritualistic phenomena "diabolic" without exception.

Magical and necromantic practices and processes are undoubtedly condemned by the Church, and many Catholics, both clerical and lay, have hastily assumed, without knowledge or inquiry, that all Spiritualists whatsoever, practised forbidden arts of invocation, to which evil spirits only could respond.

It seems to me, and to many other Catholics, greatly to be desired that priests should take the trouble to investigate the psychical questions agitating so many minds at the present moment, and greatly also to be lamented that they have so little leisure for, and apparently so little attraction towards, the study of mystical theology.

That the Church forbids all communication between the living and the dead, Father Clarke certainly does not mean to imply. The "Litany of the Saints," quoted by Mr. Lillie, and the lives of nearly all these holy persons, all along the ages, would make it impossible for any Catholic to hold such an opinion, or to suggest that all spirits communicating with earth are demons. Father Clarke can only intend to impress upon his readers the absolute necessity of immense caution, which has always been insisted upon by all spiritual writers, outside the Catholic Church as well as within it.

Mr. Lillie says that the Roman Catholic Church "is simply an apparatus of magic." If by this, he means to signify that it is essentially mystical, and full of marvellous symbolism, and of the highest Spiritualism, I, and all Catholics who have dived beneath the merest surface, nay more, I would say, all, who are properly instructed in their faith, are at one with him. Priests are unquestionably (as Mr. Lillie says), "Mystes," the ministrants of the Divine Mysteries. I cannot help a feeling of surprise at Mr. Lillie's statement that he has been told by Catholics that his classification (which he says is taken from a novel by Cherbuliez), of humanity on earth into three groups: (1) Sinners; (2) the Just; (3) the Saints (*monks and nuns*), is accurate, according to the teaching of the Church. I think he would be assured by a theologian, that although in the Church Militant there may be, broadly speaking, three classes: (1) Indifferent persons, making no effort to keep the Commandments; (2) those endeavouring to keep them; (3) those aspiring to the Counsels of Perfection, yet, that these last are not necessarily monks and nuns, neither are monks and nuns necessarily saints. The religious state is higher than the secular condition, but the individual religious is not, consequently, higher than a secular person.

The category of Canonised Saints contains the names of "all sorts and conditions of men" and women, from kings and queens, and those of the intermediate classes, down to peasants and beggars,—some, married, some, single; some, widows and widowers; some Popes, Bishops, Priests; and some, in secular life, but all of proved and well-attested "heroic virtue," which,—and not the attributes of the mystical or the contemplative life,—is the technical definition of sanctity sufficient to receive the crown of canonisation.

A. E. W.

Alternative View of Re-Incarnation.

SIR,—In "LIGHT" for March 31st "Quæstor Vitæ," in his "Alternative View of Re-incarnation," No. V., gives a general description of what he believes to be the Theosophical position with regard to the question of Re-incarnation and Illusion. In discussing the first, "Quæstor Vitæ" wishes us to believe that the argument for periodic alternation is based on induction from particulars to Universals. I beg to traverse this statement. It is based on the consideration of Universals which gives us Equilibrium, its subsequent destruction and consequent innate tendency to readjust its broken balance (by oscillation) as the underlying cause and nature of Motion in the Universe. The particulars which, according to him, construct this argument are merely illustrations adduced in support of the main contention, and his attempt to reduce Re-incarnation, as we understand it, to a Solar Myth is, I think, more ingenious than accurate. Then, again, the whole question of Illusion has reference to the Perception of the Ego as the way in which it explains to itself its relation to its surroundings rather than to the fact of its existence either in Devachan or on Earth. In the former, Illusion consists simply in this: that the Ego is still under the impression that it is limited and distinct from other Egos by its own interior individuality; whereas, perfect freedom from this illusion consists in a consciousness of Absolute Unity or Oneness with the Whole on the Spiritual Plane. This the Ego possesses when it has learnt to harmonise it with the maintenance of the Separateness distinctive of phenomenal manifestation. It then realises its Perfect fulness as a First Cause, or, in Pythagorean language, has become the higher Tetractis. Our Theosophical teaching on the subject of Maya is well described by "Quæstor Vitæ" when he says "that we only cognise the quality and not the thing; . . . that the Reality will vary in appearance to us according to the plane on which our perception functions . . . while its relation to the perceiver may vary according to the mode of perception in action"; all of which is most admirably put but is, for some inexplicable reason, supposed by the author to be in antagonism to the conception of Illusion held by Theosophists.

THOMAS WILLIAMS, F.T.S.

A FAMILY SEANCE.

A Mons. G. G. Loubris has forwarded from Boston to the pages of "La Revue Spirite" an important communication in which he affirms that he has identified spirits of his own family who materialised during some séances which were held with a medium whom he calls Mme. Blise. His son, his mother, his sister, his father, and a lady who was a friend of his son, all showed themselves just as they looked when alive. The son was clothed in blue canvas, such as he wore at his work in the rolling mills on the day when his father found him there dead, having been killed through an accident. The mother looked as her son knew her on the last occasion he saw her alive on earth. She embraced him exactly as she used to, by placing her two hands on his shoulders. Her face was wrinkled in the same manner, and had the same complexion. "I asked her if she had seen my sister, and she replied—in true Belgian *patois*, the language of my birthplace—that she would bring her, and immediately she presented her to us, holding her by the hand as she came out by the curtain which closed the cabinet. It was really my sister, and my wife and all of us were greatly moved. It was a veritable family re-union and full of happiness. My wife was seated, and my sister knelt beside her and took her hands and those of all of us, speaking for a long time with my father and with us all, and that in the Belgian dialect which no one here knows."

ARTIST AND MOTHER.

OFt in the after days, when thou and I
Have fallen from the scope of human view,
When, both together, under the sweet sky
We sleep beneath the daisies and the dew,
Men will recall thy gracious presence bland,
Conning the pictured sweetness of thy face;
Will pore o'er paintings by thy plastic hand,
And vaunt thy skill, and tell thy deeds of grace.
Oh, may they then, who crown thee with true bays,
Saying, "What love unto her son she bore!"
Make this addition to thy perfect praise,
"Nor ever yet was mother worshipped more!"
So shall I live with thee, and thy near fame
Shall link my love unto thine honoured name.

JULIAN FANE.

SOCIETY WORK.

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

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE, W.—Sunday next, Miss Rowan Vincent. First of a series on "Spiritualism, Past and Present."—H. R.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—Sunday, next, Mrs. Bliss, on "The Spiritual Anniversary." Thursday, Soirée, at 8.15. Sunday 15th, Mr. Bradley, 7 p.m. sharp.

BRIGHTON.—Mrs. Ashton Bingham, 1, Alexandra-terrace, Portlade-by-Sea, near Brighton, would be glad to hear from Spiritualists or Investigators, with the view of establishing a South Coast Society in Brighton or within its precincts.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—An "In Memoriam" floral service will be held on Sunday next at 6.30 p.m. at the above hall, to commemorate the birth in the spirit of Mrs. Edwards, the beloved wife of Mr. W. H. Edwards, who passed to the higher life on Saturday, April 7th. Friends are requested to bring or send flowers to the hall (white if possible) by 6 p.m. on that date.—C. U. Payne, Hon. Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—We had a full meeting on Sunday last when Mrs. Mason's controls addressed us upon "Spiritual Gifts," urging upon parents the importance of developing their children for the great work which is before them in the near future. Mrs. Mason followed with descriptions of spirit friends present, nearly all being recognised. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Humphries; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., Séance, Mrs. Mason; April 22nd, Mr. H. Darby. Inquirers welcomed at 9, Haydn Park-road, Uxbridge-road, on Thursday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Mason.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY.—The proposed meeting for the re-organisation of the London Occult Society has been definitely fixed for Sunday evening, May 5th. The place of meeting, which will be held in a central hall, will be announced next week. We hope to see a large gathering of all interested in occult research. I shall then deliver a lecture, entitled "Twenty Years' Study of Occultism," and several prominent speakers will address the meeting. All wishing for tickets, or to join the society, should apply, by letter, to the Secretary, F. W. Read, 15, Lanark Villas, Maida Vale.—A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L., President.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Service each Sunday at 7 p.m. On Sunday last Mr. J. Veitch spoke on some points in Spiritualism, his address being warmly appreciated by the audience. Next Sunday, April 15th, we shall commemorate the 46th anniversary of Modern Spiritualism, and several speakers, including Mr. A. Glendinning, will give some of their experiences. A musical programme is arranged, and we hope that all friends will help us to make this service a grand success, as we intend to devote the collection to founding our building fund. Cards and collecting books will shortly be ready.—J. RAINBOW.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—Africa, Mr. B. Stead, care of Hazell, Ballan & Co., Kimberley; America, Mrs. M. R. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Argentine Republic, Sr Don A. Ugarte, President "Fraterninad" Society, Buenos Ayres; Australia, Mr. H. Junor Browne, "The Grand Hotel," Melbourne; Belgium, Mons. F. Paulsen, Spiritualistic Federation of Liège, Angleur-Liège; Brazil, Sr. Don A. C. Munhoz, Director de "A Luz," Curitiba; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlochauer, 1, Monbijou-place, Berlin, N.; Holland, Den Herr Van Straaten, te Apeldoorn, Middellaan, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; Italy, Signor M. Falcomer, President "Armonia Spiritista," Termano; Mexico, Dr. L. E. Calleja, Director de "Lux ex Tenebris," Puerto de Vera Cruz; New Zealand, Mr. J. H. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Norway, Herr Torestenson, "Advocate," Christiania; Russia, M. Etienne Geispitz, Grande Belozerski, No. 7, Lod. 6, St. Petersburg; Spain, Sr. Don E. E. Garcia, Hita, 6, Bajo izqda, Madrid; Sweden, Herr M. Fidler, Gothenburg; Switzerland, M. L. Gardy, Geneva; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 13, Berkeley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

X.—Shall appear in our next issue.

J. W.—Received and shall have attention.