

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 717.—VOL. XIV.

[Registered as]

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1894.

[a Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Charles Dawbarn, writing in "The Light of Truth," puts forth a curious and rather gruesome theory concerning spiritual intercourse. He suggests that we may be doing harm to some spirits by it. He lays it down as a law of life that we must progress by entering upon new paths, interests, and conditions; and that, therefore, harm may be done by "babying" a beloved child too long. Certainly it is so on earth; and Mr. Dawbarn thinks it must be so if the child is on the other side. He says bluntly:—

We know that a foolish mother can "baby" her child in earth life until she spoils his independent manhood. And the spirit can be injured in exactly the same way. In this case the mother has "babied" the spirit of her son till he is quite content to remain in the earth sphere. He cares nothing for the universe of knowledge and experience everywhere around him out of which it is his duty and privilege to evolve a higher manhood. Like the barnacle he has become "attached" and that is the end of his ambition. The son is a spirit sluggard; the mother physically exhausted. And that is the result of what we call "motherly affection" unduly prolonged. I know that has a very harsh sound, but spirit development demands an intellectual freedom, and a blending of those with like tastes and ambitions that compel release from every mortal tie.

He tells of a resolute mother who, after a time, thought she saw the peril, and who "positively refused to continue to 'baby' her spirit son;" and adds:—

The spirit of her dear father, who had been entirely shut out by the constant presence of the son, now tells her that the son will presently be impelled to a self-effort that will for a time take him entirely away from her sphere. Thus both will be blessed by separation.

As he says, that has "a harsh sound," but our duty is clear—to look patiently and thoughtfully along every avenue which seems to lead to "the Unseen."

Dr. Holbrook's "Journal of Hygiene" contains some valuable thoughts on will-power as a curative force. We are persuaded that in days to come so-called "miracles" will be wrought by it. The writer of the article relates an interesting case, received at first-hand from the principal agent concerned in it, a father who apparently saved his child's life by inducing or commanding her to draw upon her will-power, helped by deep breathing:—

He had lost all his children except one; naturally he was solicitous for her health, but in spite of care and prevention she was taken down with diphtheria. Under the care of her physician she grew worse and was at death's door. A council of doctors was called and they pronounced her case hopeless. Indeed, she was then sinking into that comatose state which precedes death. When the doctors announced this to the father he wrung his hands in agony and left the room to get a moment to himself to consider what to do. Though not a praying man, he involuntarily began to pray for guidance.

Strange to say, some unknown influence came over him to which he yielded. Almost unconsciously he went back to the bedside of his child, pushed the doctors and nurses to one side, took his daughter's hands one in each of his and called out to her with energy: "Lizzie, don't die; use your will, breathe, don't die; use your will, breathe deeply, use your will with all your might." Those around him thought him mad, but did not interfere. In a few moments Lizzie opened her eyes and he again said to her: "Use your will, breathe deeply." "Yes, papa," she answered feebly, and she did, and slowly she returned to life to bless her father who had called her back to love and bless him.

"The Present Truth" is agitated—almost too agitated to be coherent. It says:—

The growth of Spiritualism, a term which may be taken to include all the family of correlated cults, is a fact which every Christian believer must reckon with. It is thus stated in a Spiritualist paper:—

It is idle to deny that at the present moment, just at the close of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, there is a wave of Spiritualism over-spreading all lands of the known world, and increasing daily in intensity.

The whole subject of man's nature is involved in the claims of Spiritualism, and it behoves every Christian to study his Bible for himself if he would not be deceived by "signs and wonders; inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

We do not quite understand. If the growth of Spiritualism is such "a fact," and if "the whole subject of man's nature is involved" in its claims, why assume that Spiritualism's "signs and wonders" deceive? If the readers of "The Present Truth" will take its editor's advice and study their Bibles, they will find plenty of Spiritualism in them.

We often say that Spiritualists should be consistent in their lives, and we cannot say that too often; but they should be consistent also in relation to death. If our beautiful faith is true; if our delightful hope is well-founded; why should we follow the fashions of the unbelieving or dimly-believing world?

We were glad to see the following in one of our American papers:—

PASSED TO SPIRIT-LIFE.

Mrs. Mary Carter, an old pioneer of San Bernardino, Cal., and a Spiritualist of many years' standing, passed to the higher life from her home in this city, on July 19th last, and on the following Sunday (July 22nd) her mortal form was laid away under the auspices of the Pioneer Society of San Bernardino, of which she was a highly esteemed member. She had planned her funeral, and as nearly as possible her wishes were carried out to the letter. The form was robed in white, with the national colours conspicuously displayed; and the casket in which it reposed was covered with rich, white brocaded velvet; while the relatives, left behind, by special request of the deceased, wore no weeds of mourning. Cheerful Spiritualistic songs, intermixed with patriotic ones, were sung; and the whole unique service was a fine object-lesson to the large congregation who had assembled to pay their last respects, teaching that death should not be considered a gloomy thing; and showing forth, also, the intense love of the deceased for her adopted country.

CONVERSAZIONE OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

A Conversazione of members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance was held in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, on the evening of September 27th, when Mr. W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Experimental Physics and Dean of the Faculty in the Royal College of Science for Ireland, delivered an address on "Science and Spiritualism." There was a large attendance, the company including:—

MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, President.

Mr. T. A. Amos	Miss D. Frisbee	Mr. A. Perrott
Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Amos	Miss Kate Frisbee	Mrs. Plant
Miss Amos	Mr. Fordred	Mrs. Pym
Dr. Park Allen	Miss Fordred	Mr. Dawson Rogers, Jun.
Mr. F. Temple Allen	Mrs. Foster	Miss Dawson Rogers
Mr. J. T. Andy	Mrs. G. Ferguson	Miss A. Dawson Rogers
Mr. T. H. Angerer	Miss Foxcroft	Mr. & Mrs. C. H. Rushton
Mr. J. Anderson	Mr. A. Glendinning	Dr. and Mrs. Reynolds
Mrs. Alexander	Miss Glendinning	Miss Frances Reynolds
Miss Anston	Miss Nellie Glendinning	Mrs. Murray Rolland
Mr. Aubrey Acton	Miss Ethel Glendinning	Mr. W. Stewart-Ross
Prof. Barrett, F.R.S.E.	Dr. J. Gale	Mrs. M. Rogers
Mr. & Mrs. W. P. Browne	Mrs. Glanville	Mr. A. Rita
Mrs. McBryde Brown	Miss May W. Glanville	The Misses Ridley
Mrs. Banister	Mrs. Russell Gurney	Miss Retzbach
Mrs. Brinkley	Mr. & Mrs. B. D. Godfrey	Miss Rendall
Miss Brinkley	Mr. B. Godfrey	Miss Spencer
Miss Edith Brinkley	Miss E. Godfrey	Mrs. Swanson
Mrs. Bell	Madame Grock	Mr. J. Howard Spalding
Mrs. H. E. Bell	Miss Gallogley	Mr. H. Arthur Smith
Miss Bell	Mr. and Mrs. Grant	Mr. A. J. Sutton
Mrs. E. Bell	Mr. J. A. H. Gray	Mr. Thos. Shorter
Mrs. Butler	Mrs. Gray	Miss Shorter
Mr. Butler	Miss Gates	Mr. S. C. Scott
Dr. A. G. and Mrs. Beall	Miss Cecilia Gates	Mrs. S. C. Scott
Mr. Thos. Blyton	Mrs. Gambrell	Miss Scott
Miss Blyton	Miss Edith Gambrell	Mr. Sydney C. Scott
Miss Evelyn Blyton	Miss Lillian Gambrell	Mr. Arthur Stannard
Dr. Milne Bramwell	Mrs. J. Glen	Mrs. Arthur Stannard
Mr. and Mrs. Butcher	Miss Glen	("John Strange Winter")
Miss Nellie Butcher	Mrs. Gunn	Mr. F. W. South
Mr. and Mrs. Beck	Mr. W. Gow	Mr. & Mrs. A. C. Sprange
Mr. and Mrs. E. Booth	Major Hopkins	Mrs. Syngue
Miss E. K. Bates	Mr. R. Harte	Mrs. Parker Stanley
Mrs. Brensley	Miss Harte	Mr. J. W. Straghan
Mr. A. M. Bose	Mr. Hichens	Miss Shenhessy
Miss Bailey	Mrs. Hankin	Miss Scoone
Mr. T. W. Boulding	Miss Hughes	Mr. J. J. Smith
Mr. J. Braund	Miss E. M. Holden	Mrs. Stoney
Miss Baker	Mr. A. H. Hoffer	Mr. J. Sunderland
Mr. T. Brooks	Mr. Herbert Holmes	Mr. & Mrs. M. Theobald
Dr. Ellen Collyer	Mr. Leigh Hunt	Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Theobald
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Carter	Mrs. H. Handley	Miss Amy Theobald
Mr. A. Carter	Mrs. Heathcote	Miss Minnie Theobald
Mr. and Mrs. A. Cole	Miss M. Hordern	Mr. E. G. Theobald, B.A.
Miss Isabel Cole	Miss Harwood	Miss F. J. Theobald
Miss Bessie Cole	Miss Blanche D. Jerome	Colonel J. Le M. Taylor
Mr. and Mrs. F. Clarke	Mr. G. W. Jones	Mr. Wm. Tebb
Dr. Clarke	Mr. F. R. Johns	Mrs. R. P. Tebb
Miss A. M. Collingwood	Mr. W. Keiller	Mr. R. Palmer Thomas
Miss Julia Collingwood	Mrs. Keary	Mr. and Mrs. L. Times
Mr. and Mrs. Cole	Mr. F. W. Levander	Mr. and Mrs. Titford
Mrs. Damer-Cape	Miss E. Levander	Mr. Traill Taylor
Mr. W. H. Coffin	Mr. and Mrs. C. Lacey	Miss Taylor
Miss Nina Corner	Mr. & Mrs. W. J. Lucking	Mr. E. A. Treeton
Mr. B. G. Crews	Mrs. Lambley	Miss Trigger
Miss C. J. Case	Miss Lambley	Miss Rowan Vincent
Miss Cartisser	Mr. W. E. Long	Madame Voyer
Mrs. Leuty Collins	Mr. L. Loewenthal	Mrs. Viveash
Mr. and Mrs. Corp	Mrs. Lane	Mr. Hy. Withall
Mrs. A. Cooper	Mr. C. C. Massey	Miss Withall
Mr. and Mrs. Davis	Mr. E. Maitland	Miss H. Withall
Mr. Davis	Mr. and Mrs. Milne	Mr. A. A. Wells
Miss E. Dixon	Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Morse	Mr. H. Wright
Miss Jessie Dixon	Captain Melhado	Miss Wright
Mr. G. Dyne	Dr. and Mrs. W. Marsh	Miss C. Wright
Miss Dyne	Dr. T. C. Marsh	Miss Mack Wall
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Davies	Mr. Ernest Meads	Mr. and Mrs. E. Westlake
Mrs. and Miss Donkin	Miss Maunders	Miss Wingfield
Mr. & Mrs. E. Dottridge	Miss Minchen	Mr. M. Wingfield
Mr. and Mrs. Duggan	Mr. C. K. Menon	Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Ward
Mr. J. M. Dale	Mrs. F. McEride	Miss Clementina Ward
Mr. J. Dobson	Miss McKellan	Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Waite
Mrs. Dennis	Mrs. Murly	Mrs. A. A. Wedgwood
Miss Drake	Miss Mack	Mr. and Mrs. E. White
Miss Davy	Mrs. Nelting	Mr. and Mrs. A. Webster
Mr. Gilbert Elliot	Mr. W. H. Parker	Mr. J. Wristbridge
Mr. and Mrs. T. Everitt	Miss Parker	Mr. J. Waddington
Miss Everitt	Miss S. Parker	Mr. H. Willsher
Mr. W. H. Edwards	Miss Philippis	Mr. W. West
Miss Mabel Edwards	Miss Ross Poppmacher	Miss Wanless
Miss Lillian Edwards	Mr. W. Baist Picken	Mrs. Whittaker
Miss G. E. Eales	Miss Pocter	The Hon. Alex. Yorke
Miss Evison	Miss Frances Pelly	Dr. W. Yates
The Honble. Mrs. Forbes	Mr. H. B. Ponder	Mr. Young
Mr. St. George Lane Fox	Mr. C. Perrott	&c., &c.

SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

PROFESSOR BARRETT, having been briefly introduced by the President, delivered a very able and eloquent address, which was listened to with rapt attention and elicited frequent bursts of applause. The following skeleton outline of his remarks will convey a very inadequate conception of the Professor's lucid and exhaustive treatment of his subject, but it is the only report which we can give at present. We hope, however, to have the pleasure very

shortly of presenting our readers with the address *extenso* :—

Professor Barrett made a very happy beginning, enlisting the sympathy of his audience at once, by showing that to a very large extent he stood on the same platform as themselves. I am here this evening, he said, though not a member of your association, in response to the earnest appeal of my friend, Mr. Dawson Rogers, who has so long and so courageously kept burning that portion of the manifold Torch of Truth which you, as a body, meet together to cherish. You have thus contributed your share to that growing circle of light which is slowly pushing back the darkness that encompasses us, and have taken care that the prevailing fashion of the day, which happens to prefer light of another colour, has not blown out, or otherwise extinguished (as it has tried its best to do), the light which you have so wisely and jealously guarded. Those whom he had the pleasure of addressing affirmed the truth of Spiritualism, having either had in their own experience indubitable evidence of the existence of phenomena entirely new to the science of to-day—phenomena which received their important solution upon the hypothesis of a spiritual world and of intelligent beings therein, able through certain channels at times to communicate with us—or they had satisfied themselves on this point by careful study of the abundant evidence that existed. Neither the blazing light of public opinion, nor the exact and rigorous methods of modern scientific research, had destroyed their belief, which was avowed by some of the acutest intellects of the day. Surely it was a supreme problem for science to solve, if she could, whether life as we know it could exist without protoplasm; and although the province of religion was the region of faith, yet surely as a handmaid to faith the evidence afforded by Spiritualism ought to be welcomed by religion also. Yet these two authorities, science and religion, blocked the way. Science denied the possibility of mind without a material brain, or of any knowledge being gained except through the recognised channels of sensation; while, on the other hand, our religious teachers stoutly opposed this, asserting that a spiritual world does exist and that the inspired writings contain a system of knowledge supersensuously given to man. Of course, both views could not be true and yet both were urged in antagonism to Spiritualism. But the effect of this opposition had not been an unmixed evil. If science had at first attempted to include psychical phenomena in its survey, the work of science to-day would have been less complete, whereas what science had now established and held to be eternally true was that the Universe is a cosmos and not a chaos, that amidst all the mutability of visible things there is no capriciousness or disorder. It was no doubt true that the great body of Spiritualists, numbering some millions of people, were held together by a common faith, and had had evidence which to them had been sufficient, but their method could not, in many cases, with strict accuracy be called scientific; and it should be recognised that their faith was foolishness unless the facts upon which it was based could be incontestably established in the dry and clear light of science. True, belief was not a voluntary act, but an involuntary state of the mind, arising from the evidence to which we had given our attention. We could, of course, refuse to listen to the evidence, but, having listened to it, belief or disbelief followed, whether we wished it or not, according as our judgment considered the evidence conclusive or otherwise. Professor Barrett then proceeded to relate some of the evidence which had come under his own observation, remarking that the impressive fact in the phenomena was the intelligence behind them, and the evidence of an unseen individuality as distinct as our own. Neither hallucination, imposture, mal-observation, mis-description, nor any other known cause could account for them, and the simplest explanation was the spirit-hypothesis. Similar phenomena had been recently witnessed and attested by some of the most eminent English and Continental observers, and for a report of the Commission of Inquiry on the phenomena attending Eusapia Palladino, he referred his hearers to "LIGHT" for April and May of last year, remarking that "LIGHT" was a journal which was a standing memorial of hard work and honesty of purpose, and deserved a very wide circulation from the freshness and variety of its contents. Why then had all this weight of past and present testimony not made more impression on the educated world as a whole? It was, no doubt, mainly because the dominant school of scientific thought was essentially, if not grossly, materialistic. The abundant

testimony which existed on behalf of the operation of unseen intelligences was put aside in this century as rubbish because, science having done so much for human thought and life, public opinion naturally inclined to the view held by the present school of scientific thought, which denied the possibility of any life without chemical matter. Of course there was a perfectly legitimate position taken up by many scientific men, and which was justified by the caution that characterised all sound advance in knowledge. It was, that the antecedent improbability of these phenomena was so great, and involved ideas so unrelated to our existing scientific knowledge, that before they could accept them they must have not only evidence, but overwhelming evidence, on their behalf. This was common-sense, and obviously necessary, but it was precisely the business of science to seek out such evidence, and it was only because the trained scientific investigator had until recently turned his back on these phenomena that others had had to try and do the neglected work of science in this very difficult region of inquiry, and, having done it to the best of their ability, were kicked and pelted by the educational world, and told to get out of the way and be ashamed of themselves. And yet, after all, now that it was scientific heresy to disbelieve in an imperceptible, imponderable, infinitely rare, and yet infinitely elastic, luminiferous interstellar and inter-atomic ether, an all-surrounding material medium of an entirely different order of matter from anything known to our senses, with properties far transcending those possessed by earthly or chemical matter, and yet the very existence of which is only known inferentially, and not directly, was it so very incredible a thing to suppose that in this ether, or in some, perhaps, finer form of matter, life had originated, and the law of evolution, the Divine law of progress, had been at work, it might be for æons prior to the formation of the habitable earth? The finer and more plastic matter, one could imagine, would yield more promptly, and respond more easily, to the inscrutable power that lay behind phenomena. There was nothing extravagant, nothing opposed to our scientific knowledge but quite in harmony with it, to entertain the belief in an unseen world in which myriads of living creatures existed, some with faculties like our own, and others with faculties beneath or transcending our own. Nor was it unlikely that the evolutionary development of such a world had run in parallel lines to our own. The rivalry of life, instinct, intellect, conscience, will, right and wrong, are as probable there as here. And in course of time, consciousness of our human existence may have come to our unseen neighbours, and some means of mental and even material communication with us have been found. For his own part he had long entertained the opinion that the bulk, if not the whole, of the psychical manifestations witnessed in a Spiritualistic séance—he did not refer to the higher phases—were the product of human-like, but not really human intelligences, which aggregated round the medium, as a rule drawn from that particular plane of mental and moral development in the unseen which corresponded to the mental and moral plane of the medium. As to psychical inquiries, there were many, who were not prophets, who urged that the dangers, especially of Spiritualism, more than counterbalanced any use which such inquiries might serve. He did not deny that there were some risks, but they had been grossly exaggerated, and those who knew least of the whole subject were those who magnified the dangers most. One danger there was as regards Spiritualists—that of their coming to the conclusion that the phenomena taught the necessary and inherent immortality of the soul. It was true that they showed us that life could exist in the unseen, and that those we had known on earth were still living and conscious; but a life after death did not necessarily imply immortality—an error into which Spiritualists fell in common with the rest of Christendom. Of course every Spiritualist knew the mischief of promiscuous sittings with ignorant people. On the other hand, so far as the medium was concerned, more injury was likely to be caused to his sensitive organisation by a single ferocious sceptic than by tens of thousands of simple-minded and kind-hearted Spiritualists. Some people objected that a medium should be necessary in these Spiritualistic manifestations, and asked why they could not test the truth in their own home circle. Well, the objectors could try, and, like many others, might be successful in sittings with their family alone, but it was desirable to be well-advised, and preserve a level head in so doing. But, however obtained, Spiritualistic effects always did appear to be inseparably connected with some special living organisation which we call mediumistic. Looked at from a

purely scientific standpoint there was nothing remarkable in this. Certain persons—happily, not all of us—were subject to abnormal states of body and mind, and the alienist or pathologist did not refuse to investigate insanity or epilepsy because restricted to a limited number of human beings. Furthermore, physical science afforded abundant analogies of the necessity for a medium or intermediary between the unseen and the seen. It was, doubtless, a peculiar psychical state that conferred mediumistic power, but we knew so little of its nature that we often ruined our experiments and lost our results by our ignorance. It would be well in the immediate future to collect all the available information and make a careful experimental study of the particular psychical state both of the medium, and the sitters who attended a successful séance. We were, doubtless, on the eve of a great change in public opinion with regard to the whole class of phenomena in which we were interested. The Society for Psychical Research had largely contributed towards this better state of things, due in no small measure to the wise counsels of Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick and the zealous and brilliant work of Mr. F. W. H. Myers; at the same time we must not forget the brave pioneers who so conscientiously and laboriously led the way—Elliotson, Esdaile, Gregory, Dale Owen, W. Howitt, Edmund Gurney, and, not least, Stainton Moses, with many others besides, of our still incarnate friends, A. R. Wallace, W. Crookes, and C. C. Massey. But some would ask, When all is said and done, and the facts we are slowly accumulating are generally recognised and credited, what will be the gain? Clearly, some of the popular assaults on the Christian religion based on its incredibility would be deprived of most of their force. Faith would no longer be staggered by trying to conceive of life in the unseen. Death would no longer be felt to have so icy a grip over even Christian hearts. The miracles of the Old and New Testament would no longer seem to be the superstitious relics of a barbarous age. The "prayer of faith" would no longer find an adequate explanation in the subjective response it evoked, nor the "Word of the Lord" in mere human aspiration. But even to those who prefer to regard these phenomena from a purely scientific aspect there would be great gain, in the solution afforded to many perplexing problems, the opening up of new regions of fruitful experimental inquiry, and the impulse given to a truer psychology and a healthier philosophy. Nay, more than this, the result would tend to bring before our minds the transcendent unity of Nature, the solidarity of the Race, and the immanence of the Unseen.

At the close of Professor Barrett's address a few remarks were offered by the President, and a cordial vote of thanks to the lecturer was passed by acclamation. The remainder of the evening was devoted to music and social intercourse, the musical arrangements being under the direction of Mr. J. C. Ward, ably assisted by Miss Emily Foxcroft, Miss Minnie Theobald, and Miss Clementine Ward, who provided a varied programme, which was much enjoyed by an appreciative audience. The grand piano used on the occasion was kindly lent by Messrs. Brinsmead.

COUNT TOLSTOY ON COMPULSORY VACCINATION.

Mr. William Tebb, having sent to Count Tolstoy the copy of a communication from Adin Ballou, one of the early pioneers of Spiritualism, on the true sources of happiness, has received the following reply:—

Dear Sir,—I am very thankful to you for Mr. Ballou's letter to your wife on "True Happiness." I did not know of it before, and have found great interest and profit in reading it. The works of A. Ballou, his "Commentary on the New Testament," as well as his "Treatise on Socialism," are known to me, and I have copies of them. I greatly sympathise with your work against compulsory vaccination, as I do with every struggle for liberty in any sphere of life whatever. The obligation of parents to let their children be subjected to operations deemed necessary by doctors seems to me as great an outrage as the obligation of parents to subject their children to school teaching imposed upon them by the Government, which in its tendency may be opposed to their views. I wish you success in your work, and should be happy if I could have the opportunity of helping you in it.—Yours truly, LEO TOLSTOY.

ONE sure way of peacemaking is to let the fire of contention alone. Neither fan it nor stir it, nor add fuel to it, but let it go out of itself.

THE MESSAGE OF SPIRITUALISM.

ADDRESS BY MRS. BRITTEN.

The Marylebone Spiritualists' Association had long desired a more commodious and accessible meeting-place than that which it has till lately occupied. There were many difficulties in the way of attaining this object, but these have now vanished before the persistent and zealous endeavours of the little band of workers who constitute the Executive of the society, and on Sunday evening last the usual weekly service was held in the new quarters of the society—the Cavendish Rooms. As a meeting-place the Cavendish Rooms are in every way adapted to the needs of the Association, and they may be even said to be consecrated to their present use by the fact that they were the scene of Spiritualistic assemblies many years ago, and have never altogether lost their traditional connection with the cause. Apart from more isolated gatherings the Metropolitan Spiritual Lyceum held its sessions there during 1883-4.

To do honour to the present occasion, Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten was announced to deliver an address entitled, "The Message of Spiritualism to the World," and long before the time fixed for the commencement of the proceedings, the hall was thronged with an audience which, after filling all the available space inside, overflowed into the lobby.

MR. T. EVERITT (the President of the Association) occupied the chair, and in the course of his introductory remarks said that it was unnecessary to introduce the speaker to the Spiritualists present, since she was so well known as a writer and lecturer. In his opinion the great question of the age was, Does man survive after the change which is known as death? Spiritualism and Spiritualists answered this question emphatically in the affirmative, and furthermore asserted that under given conditions the spirit could return and make itself known to those still in the body.

A solo by Miss Everitt followed; after which

Mrs. HARDINGE BRITTEN delivered the address of the evening. Referring to the title of the discourse, "The Message of Modern Spiritualism to the World," the speaker said that after forty-six years, during which the great inaugural outpouring had captured the minds of millions in every country of the world, it might seem that to give any further message would be but to repeat an old and worn story; but in every great movement, especially in every great change of public opinion, there were eras and special times and events which marked the passage of the mighty changes that were going forward, even unconsciously, to those who were directly concerned, and therefore it might be well that night—in the commencement of a new era, in the hour when the good and true and those who had been blest by that knowledge would fain find a fresh opportunity of giving it to the world—it might be that they did well to dedicate that meeting-place by re-numbering their jewels and re-treading the foot-prints they had made, not on the "sands of time," but on those of eternity.

The speaker then dealt with the antiquity of the evidence of spirit return, remarking that with the exception of the peoples of India and Egypt, who studied, mastered, and practised occult art, every nation had claimed that the beings which visited the earth were not human, not even superhuman, but were angels and ministers of God. This was exemplified more particularly in the Jewish Scriptures known as the "Bible," where it is claimed that the mysterious visitants who came to mortals were messengers direct from the Deity Himself. Such claims did not exist in the modern movement. On the contrary, all those who had studied it, even superficially, all who had entered into its ranks, or been favoured by its visitations, knew that from the very first opening of the gates until the present time the powers that manifested themselves in all cases claimed to be the spirits of those who once lived upon the earth, and that claim they justified by a series of test facts unparalleled in the history of humanity. The Spiritualistic movement came not from priests nor reformers; it was not the thought of any special teacher, nor the work of any great psychologist, albeit there were those who might be called the John the Baptists of the new dispensation—Swedenborg, Anton Mesmer, and the Poughkeepsie seer (Andrew Jackson Davis). The attitude of the world as regarded its dead was largely one of anxious doubt and uncertainty; but just when it was growing most hopeless, behold these departed ones came back. Making no choice of prophets or priests, they returned to proclaim that they still

lived, and took captive everyone they found suitable to become an instrument to work that great spiritual telegraph which was another fact in the history of the movement.

The first great question of the age was religion. Spiritualism came with the highest and most wonderful claim for its facts, and in their fundamental points Spiritualism and religion were alike. Spiritualism taught and also proved the existence of God the Spirit. It demonstrated that there was no power inferentially it proved immortality. Spiritualism gave humanity the means of preparation for the life beyond. Religion consisted in a knowledge of God, the proofs of a life hereafter, and the proper comprehension of the relation of this life to the next, and all these requisites were fulfilled by Spiritualism. The great triumphs of science and art which had virtually remodelled the condition of the earth from the time when it was a primeval waste of swamps, deserts, and tangled forests, and man first appeared on its surface, all these were due to the powers of humanity as spiritual beings. That these spiritual powers of deathless was a mighty discovery—a discovery that led to a deeper and clearer realisation of the truth that God Himself was a spirit. It was true that the Creator could never be comprehended—the atom could never comprehend the totality—the finite could never master the infinite; but nevertheless they knew God now as the Architect of the Universe, the great Engineer who drove the ships of fire through the heavens, who inspired thought and animated matter, who guided, and raised up His children through necessity, to higher conditions of existence. Spiritualism had enabled man to recognise God as his Father, giving a new meaning to the idea, for man had now discovered that he was a spirit even as his Creator. It had abolished all the wild and terrible fantasies of theology, and had imparted higher and truer conceptions of existence.

Regarded in another aspect, Spiritualism was seen to be a great science—the science of sciences. The first awakening in this direction, the voice that cried in the wilderness, was mesmerism. The researches of Anton Mesmer resulted in the discovery of new powers in man—the power of healing, the nature of the life principle, and the possibility of transferring it from one organism to another. Another discovery was that while every living creature was vitalised by this life principle, it was distributed in different ways and conditions in different organisms, rendering some susceptible to its reception and others susceptible to its withdrawal—operator and subject—and showing that there is a vast realm yet to be studied. It opened the spiritual eyes, and enabled the spirit within man to quit its mortal tenement and traverse space, and finally enabled the clairvoyant to pass beyond the will of the mesmeric operator, and scan the home of departed humanity beyond the veil.

Much scornful allusion had been made to the rapping of spirits and the dancing of tables. People had said that it was highly undignified—it was scandalous—to claim that spirits who had ascended from the conditions of life on earth should return to rap on floors and make tables dance. One might retort that it was equally undignified for Kings, Kaisers, and Princes to send messages to each other by the aid of a little copper and zinc and a few wires. It was not a question of dignity, but a question of a new science. There was, for example, acoustics, the science of sound. When a rap occurred without the usual physical conditions being fulfilled, and when that rap testified intelligence, and gave proofs of identity, it might certainly be claimed that a new science of acoustics had been discovered. Again, by the aid of the dancing table the mother had found her child, the husband his wife, the mourner had recovered all his lost ones. But still there was the question, What made the table dance? Science had long been looking for new motor powers; but still the table danced. It might, therefore, be claimed that a new motor power had been discovered. The dancing table, however, instead of being something degrading, was, in effect, a telegraph between this world and the next. There was a beautiful science called optics, the science of sight. A number of conditions were required for the exercise of the faculty of vision. Yet there was an optical faculty constantly being exercised amongst Spiritualists which defied all the conditions usually accepted as pre-requisites. Some explanation of the phenomenon of clairvoyance was demanded from the scientist. Again, to take a fact in physiology. By a wonderful process a nucleated cell, placed under given conditions, developed into a living being and became in process of time a man in all the pride of strength and activity. Wonderful as the process was, yet, the lecturer maintained,

it was virtually duplicated in the case of materialisation, when from a tiny germinal point was built up a full-grown human organism, manifesting the power of the spirit chemist. Here was another phase of science. They tell you, continued the lecturer, that in a period of some seven years every atom of your bodies is changed. What has become of those atoms? The spirit scientists claimed that these imponderable atoms passing from the body were held in solution in the atmosphere, and the spirit chemist (by passing electrical sparks through these atoms, just as the electrician will produce water from the air, or crystallise water into a gem) was enabled to gather up these atoms, and, on physiological principles, reproduce a living form.

The lecture, which was throughout fervid, vigorous, and animated, closed with an earnest appeal for better social conditions, and a more equitable distribution of the necessaries of existence, which was quite in accord with the tone of the reformatory thought now prevalent. A complimentary allusion by the chairman to the undiminished energy and earnestness of the lecturer, after so many years of arduous work, brought the proceedings to a close.

A SPIRIT'S PRESCRIPTION.

BY EDINA.

Mention has frequently been made by me in these columns of my daughter's control, or spirit-guide, who designates himself to us as "Professor Sandringham," but which name we know is a mere *nom de plume*. As I have formerly explained, this personage has for the past four years exercised a most watchful supervision over our family and affairs, and we owe much to his wise counsel and sage advice in times of trouble or difficulty such as occur in all large families. His medical skill has often been brought into requisition on behalf of many members of the household; and occasionally one or two outside friends who believe in the occult have had the benefit of his advice in chronic and lingering ailments, always, I am glad to say, with beneficial results. On one or two occasions when he desired to treat diseases in an exhaustive fashion, instead of writing down automatic messages by the hand of our daughter in the note-book specially kept for them, he has asked us to bring a trance medium to the house, when he has more than once descanted at considerable length on the disease of the patient, and the curative methods to be adopted. He did so, so recently as the beginning of July last, when we were favoured with a very learned and effectual discourse on the cause and cure of a most painful disease existing on the hand and arm of a friend of ours who had solicited the intervention of this beneficent control. On several occasions he has written us that he would have had much pleasure in writing out a prescription for the patient, but that he believed no earthly chemist would make up the medicine unless he knew the doctor who had prescribed it; and he had, therefore, to content himself with using herbs and patent medicines which can usually be bought without a written prescription. So stood matters between us and the control until the evening of Monday, September 17th. During the day our family medium had been complaining of severe gastric disturbance, but nothing very serious was the matter with her. The spirit-guide, however, had not been unobservant of her condition, for about nine p.m. she was controlled to write, and a letter, covering four pages of note paper, addressed to myself, and headed "Mr.—— Dear Sir," was written in the peculiar sprawling and somewhat illegible hand always affected by the Professor; and of which we have hundreds of pages in our note-book. This letter informed me that the control had been watching the medium's condition, and gave me minute directions as to what she was to eat, drink, and avoid in future. Accompanying this letter there was at the same sitting, written by this control, and in similar handwriting to the letter, a prescription bearing his initials "P. S." This prescription contained details of two draughts to be made up for my daughter; one to be taken before meals, and the other as a tonic to be taken thrice daily. There were three separate drugs in each of the draughts, and two of these were utterly unknown to me; so much so, that apart from the delicacy of going to a druggist who would probably ask the name of the doctor (which of course I could not give), I was a little doubtful if the drugs there specified really existed in the Pharmacopœia. We were then living in the country, and on my

visit to town next morning, I recollected that I knew the name of a druggist in the extreme west of the city, who had some knowledge of occult phenomena, so took the prescription with me to see if he could get it made up, or at least advise me regarding its contents. Before doing so, however, I accidentally met a medical student of my acquaintance, to whom I read the prescription, stating that it had emanated from "a friend of mine who had some medical skill, but was now retired." On looking over it he said it was "all right" and any druggist would make it up. Emboldened by this assurance I accordingly presented it at the large drug shop which I usually patronise, and had the satisfaction of taking home the two bottles of medicine with me to the patient the same afternoon. No questions were asked and no information was volunteered by me as to the author of the prescription.

In the interests of spiritual truth, and with the view of demonstrating how real a thing is our connection with the unseen, I have deemed it desirable to forward you a full account of this episode as it humbly seems to me to show beyond question or cavil (1) that there is here clear evidence of the existence and beneficent action of a spiritual agent in complete rapport with this sphere. (2) It serves to show the beneficent results flowing from spirit-communion, and (3) it is a sufficient answer to the sceptic's query, *Cui bono?* "What good is to be got by the study of psychology?" I hardly think, on the face of this bit of real evidence, doubters of the type of Madame de Steiger will have much to say about the "cosmic ether" producing a prescription, the contents of which were, to a large extent, unknown to me, and were absolute "Greek" to the medium, who has not the most elementary knowledge of medicine, far less of its combinations. In short, the production of this prescription is, to my mind, a bit of real evidence of spirit identity and control, worth a thousand of the theories of telepathy, thought-transference, unconscious cerebration, or the like propounded by scientists or psychical researchers; who, like the late Sir David Brewster, say, in effect, "Spirit is the last thing I will give in to." What we want in this age of religious unrest, shifting belief, and honest doubt is *facts*—something tangible to rest upon; and, in my humble judgment, the production of this prescription and its conversion into two bottles of medicine got in the ordinary course of business across a druggist's counter, is a strong adminicle in the chain of evidence slowly accumulating on behalf of the truth of Spiritualism.

I have further to state that the prescription was written in English instead of Latin (which is usually employed in composing prescriptions), and I forward it to the editor of this paper with instructions to allow it to be seen by any person desiring to read it. The result of its action on the patient has been most satisfactory, my daughter being now quite better in health. That is, however, not the question. It is its production, in the manner and under the circumstances before detailed, which appears to me to be unique, or at least an unusual event in the chronicles of psychic phenomena.

THE MOST SCIENTIFIC HYPOTHESIS.—For myself, I have never been able to see why any one hypothesis should be less scientific than another, except so far as one explains the whole of the facts and the other explains only a part of them. It was this alone that rendered the theory of gravitation more scientific than that of cycles and epicycles, the undulatory theory of light more scientific than the emission theory, and the theory of Darwin more scientific than that of Lamarck. It is often said that we must exhaust known causes before we call in unknown causes to explain phenomena. This may be admitted, but I cannot see how it applies to the present question. The "second" or "sub-conscious self," with its wide stores of knowledge, how gained no one knows, its distinct character, its low morality, its constant lies, is as purely a theoretical cause as is the spirit of a deceased person or any other spirit. It can in no sense be termed "a known cause." To call this hypothesis "scientific" and that of spirit agency "unscientific" is to beg the question at issue. That theory is most scientific which best explains the whole series of phenomena: and I therefore claim that the spirit-hypothesis is the most scientific, since even those who oppose it most strenuously often admit that it does explain all the facts, which cannot be said of any other hypothesis.—DR. ALFRED R. WALLACE.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT," 2, DUKE STREET, ADELPHI,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6th, 1894.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS,
Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

Light.

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.
PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—"Light" may be had free by post on the following terms: Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance.

ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.—Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 5s. Column, 22 2s. Page, 44. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed "..... & Co."

"Light" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria Lane, London, and all Booksellers.

THE TESTIMONY TO SPIRITUAL RELIGION.

One most consoling sign of the times is that the advocates of every Faith and every Church now take refuge in the religion of the spirit, from the hard, narrow, or merely glittering characteristics of ecclesiastical Christianity. Trinitarian and Unitarian, Calvinist and Swedenborgian, Protestant and Catholic, vie with one another in attempting to show that Christianity is a religion of love; and that true Religion is what Leigh Hunt called it—the religion of the heart. In this every Spiritualist should rejoice, for one of the brightest uses of Spiritualism will, in time, be the aid and comfort it will give to this very thing which, as the Religion of Humanity, will gradually absorb or extrude all the survivals of the Religion of exclusiveness, creedism, and fear.

A charming instance of the eagerness of the best men to put out of sight what we have called the hard, narrow, or merely glittering characteristics of ecclesiastical Christianity, is given us by Father Bernard Vaughan, who, in an address to a vast assembly in St. James's Hall, discussed "the potent factor in social evolution,"—the true life and motive force of Christianity and the Church. This "potent factor," this "one thing needful," is—"the heart," or, in plainer English, *Love*. That, and that alone, if we are to accept Father Vaughan as an exponent of the wishes of the modern Church of Rome, is the only thing worth talking about as at once the inspiration of the Church and the hope of the world.

This remarkable address has been printed and published under the good Father's direction; and it will abundantly pay us to go with him for awhile.

He takes note of the rather sobering or even saddening fact, that we are living "in a strangely turbulent age"; "time-worn barriers, which once divided the nations into different sections and classes, are being swept away by strong forces of industrial workers, organised and marshalled for purposes of aggression, no less than of self-defence." "We find the power-holding classes relinquishing their strongholds and receding, partly in consequence of the spirit of humanitarianism abroad, still more, perhaps, because they are helpless to defend themselves before the ever-advancing tide of the incoming people."

We could not expect a good Catholic to altogether rejoice in this (the Popes seem always to mourn over it); and Father Vaughan talks of it regretfully; and yet, further on, he supplies all the needed consolation, and indeed finds the whole secret of these astounding and upsetting changes. He says: "Paradoxical as my contention may at first appear, I maintain that all these seemingly conflicting passions are but the heart's love in disguise." We rejoice that a Roman Catholic teacher has found it out.

It ought to be a common-place with every Spiritualist. The instructed Spiritualist ought to know that all these disturbing social changes are as truly spiritual, and are as truly decreed, as anything that ever happened in the history of the world and men. Of all people, Spiritualists ought to be the cheeriest, the hopefullest, the most assured. These breakings down of caste and upsettings of monopoly, these sweepings away of class-rule and pourings in of the masses to take possession of Parliament, these uprisings against Labour's tyrants and grinding conditions of toil, are all, to the Spiritualist's eyes, the uprising of man into higher regions, and towards better and happier conditions. They are the "growing pains" of the masses, now being "led by the spirit" into the promised land. As Father Vaughan shows us—Hope, fear, sadness, hatred, jealousy, despair, and even self-slaughter (as, for instance, in a ruinous strike), may all be manifestations of "the heart's love in disguise."

We must admit, to use Father Vaughan's daring figure, that mankind has gone, and often goes to day, into strangely evil courses, even in its pursuit of justice, led on by love, and has "sent the drainage of the sewer into the fountain." The remedy is to make God the centre of attraction, to heal the heart, that health may be restored to the whole social organism. Father Vaughan, of course, leads us on by this route to the Church. ("All roads lead to Rome"!) Christianity, he says, was a purifying torrent:—

From her bosom there sprang forth the Christian family, with its love of home and its traditions of chivalry; there sprang forth the Christian convent and abbey, with their religious vows and love of God's poor; there sprang forth Christian guilds and confraternities for the protection of arts and crafts; there sprang forth Christian hospitals and asylums for the shelter of the sick and the maimed; there sprang forth Christian Universities and schools for the education of the feudal lord and the serf; there sprang forth the Christian nation, with its motto, "Pro Deo, Rege, et Patria"; and there sprang forth the Christian world, with its proclamation of the Universal Brotherhood of Man. Yes, the heart, no less than the face of Europe, was completely changed. Furnished with a new religious language, with a new type of worship, with new ideals in art, with new fields of literature, with new canons of taste, with new sanctions upon domestic, social, and national intercourse, Europe became, like the King's daughter, all glorious within.

We would like to accept the charming picture as true. True partly it is; but there never was a time when "the Christian world" preached or practised "the Brotherhood of Man," when "the heart, no less than the face, of Europe was completely changed," when "Europe became, like the King's daughter, all glorious within." That is only rhetoric. In spite of Christianity and the Church, Europe went stumbling on, fighting, murdering, revelling, grinding the poor; and the Church ran riot in evil-minded persecution of thousands whose only offence was that they desired to think out religion for themselves and to worship God in their own way. No, Father Vaughan! Your Church did much for learning, for charity, for education, in a way, for the poor as against the rich, for the miserable people as against their vicious rulers; but it could be vicious too, and tyrannical, and selfish. The real truth is that the main thing is, not organised religion and Church, at all, but man himself and his motives. As John Ruskin says, in his blunt way, "A knave's religion is the rottenest thing about him." So with a Church and the men who run it and rule it.

And so we are brought round again to the Spiritualist's vital teaching, that the main thing is the inner spirit-self. A Church, like a ghost, can bring us "airs from heaven or blasts from hell," as Hamlet has it. A Pope could be a healing angel or a poisonous demon; and Popes have been both. We admit all that Father Vaughan says about the gracious contribution of the Roman Catholic Church to the

world's health; but that Church went too far in trying to make the world pay back all it ever gave. It sought to fasten itself upon the world as a veritable "old man of the sea" upon the back of our secular "Sindbad." Father Vaughan himself lets this fact peep out on page 16. He says:—

The Cathedral is the city. The first object you catch sight of as you approach is the spire tapering into the sky, or the huge towers holding possession of the centre of the landscape—majestically beautiful—imposing by mere size amidst the large forms of nature herself. As you go nearer, the vastness of the building impresses you more and more. The puny dwelling-places of the citizens creep at its feet.

That is just it; but it is just what we do not want—the puny dwelling-places of the citizens creeping at the feet of the church. The time has come to end that.

We will say nothing about Father Vaughan's onslaught upon Protestantism, except that it is not a perfect exhibition of his own doctrine of the reign of love: we prefer to express our agreement with his picture of some of the ills of modern Society and his remedy—but his remedy as spirit and not as letter. Vain is it to call Christ "Lord" and to make much of that: vain is it to build cathedrals and erect lovely altars and lofty spires: vain is it to clothe priests in glorious attire and to deck "God's house" with the offerings of Art; vain is it to fill the place with incense, mingling with heavenly waves of sound from organ-pipes and choir; ay, vain is it to win the adoring regard of men for a Church thus armoured and adorned. The devotee may cross himself in the morning and cut a throat in the afternoon, and feel no incongruity. No, what we want is a right spirit, Church or no Church; and, to help us in that, a humble meeting of Spiritualists under a railway arch or in a back parlour may be as effective as the grandest cathedral—perhaps more so, for the last thing that Spiritualists would ever long for is that citizens should be made to creep at anybody's feet.

"THE WORLD AS GOOD AS NEW."

Countess Wachtmeister has been interviewed by a "Tribune" reporter at Chicago, where she has been lecturing on Theosophy. Her wonderful stories about Madame Blavatsky are not entirely new, though they certainly seemed to gain fresh confirmation at the Countess's hands. What most interests us is her forecast, or, rather, the forecast of the adepts, concerning the future development of the human race. She says:—

The adepts have shown us that this world belongs to a chain of seven globes. We are now on the fourth globe—the most material one. We are also in the fifth race of the fourth globe, and as members of the fifth race we have the five senses. We are now gradually approaching the condition of the sixth, which is to have a sixth sense. That race will be born here in America, where the people of all the world have been brought together for that purpose. The sixth sense that this race will have will be what we now know as intuition. Some of us now experience a slight forerunner of this sixth sense in the flashes of things that come to us of a sudden. We know certain things intuitively at times and we are as positive of them as we are of the things that we see, hear, taste, touch, or smell. When we have advanced to the seventh race, we shall have a seventh sense, but I do not pretend to know what it will be. I have been told by the adepts that it is impossible for us to know what it will be until we have fully entered upon the sixth race and acquired the sixth sense.

This may be only an acute guess, or flight of pure imagination, but there is, probably, solid truth in it. But who can decide when doctors differ? A very high authority in forecasts has informed the world that it will come to an end in (we think it is) 1896—that, in fact, a huge collision will turn the old planet into gas again; and here is an adept telling us that the globe is as good as new, and that its best wine is to come. We vote for the adept.

THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

BY OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.

MRS. RUSSELL-DAVIES.

(Continued from page 464.)

"Well," pursued Mrs. Davies, "to tell you about Dewdrop before I forget what I was going to say. She has written a letter in Sioux, which I am going to publish in my new book, and then people who know the language (I suppose there are very few) can see and decide for themselves. Furthermore, it has been arranged for Dewdrop to speak into a phonograph, and then those who understand her tongue will have an excellent test of her good faith and identity."

"You have another leading control, I think, of whom I have heard mention?"

"Oh, you mean Ned. Ned is a character, I can assure you, ready and rough, but a perfect treasure. He is our man-of-all-work; whenever anything wants doing in the house he controls me and does the job in a thoroughly workmanlike manner. Mends locks, replaces broken panes of glass, plumbs—when the frost got into our cistern he put it right in no time. Ned is a splendid fellow; I don't know what we should do without him. Do you know why we are here in these rooms over a shop? No, of course not. Well, I will tell you. We took a new house at Wandsworth, and then it struck us to ask Ned about the drains. 'Oh,' he said, 'they are very bad.' 'Well, what is to be done?' 'Look under the kitchen and you will see. Not only are your drains bad, but they are just the same next door.' So Mr. Davies went down to see the agent about it. The agent protested that the drains were all that was perfect, but as we insisted he consented to an examination being made. Then a difficulty arose through there being no plans. Ned set to work and drew a set of plans through me. It all turned out just as Ned said; his plans were correct, and the drains were in a frightful state. Orders were given to have them put right. Just at the last moment, when we were bound to leave our house, and the work was supposed to be completed, Ned told us that nothing had been done, and that we were being humbugged. Down went Mr. Davies again. The agent declared that everything had been put right; but on being pushed in a corner he at last reluctantly admitted that the work had not been touched. That is why you find us in these temporary quarters, waiting until our new house is fit to live in. What do you think of that?"

"I think Ned is a gem of the first water. Every household should possess one."

"Ah, there is only one Ned; and if he does sometimes use rough expressions, it is usually under provocation, and he more than atones for small offences of that sort. Mrs. Besant would call Ned a spook or an astral or an elemental, or something of that sort. Could anything be more absurd? If she had a week of my experience she would give up such ridiculous ideas once and for all. The most conclusive evidence is given almost daily of the reality of spirit communication and of spirit identity. Here is one case. Margaret Fox is dead. On the very day that she died in the United States she came and wrote, 'Dear Florence Marryat, I made a sad mess of my life, and now I have passed out of it I will do my best to make amends.' Was not that so, Flo?"

"Exactly as you tell it," corroborated Miss Marryat. "We ascertained afterwards the time of Margaret Fox's death, and found that, allowing for difference of time, the message reached us just five hours after she had passed away."

"Was Margaret Fox a spook?" demanded my hostess with indignation. "When I hear Mrs. Besant talking as if she knew all about it, though she is as ignorant of the subject as a child, I get in a rage. Cases like this I have

told you of are quite numerous. There came to me the other day, for instance, a lady who concealed her name, and had a gentleman with her to protect her. As often happens, the lady who came for a sitting got nothing and he got all. 'There is a spirit here,' I said, 'who gives her name as Margaret, says she is your wife, died in Vienna, and left a little boy five years old called Frederic.' 'Tell me about her hand,' he said. 'She is a very tall woman,' I answered, 'and she has the smallest hand I ever felt in my life.' 'That satisfies me,' was his reply. Was it a spook or astral that gave me that message, and her hand to feel? They came again, and then the lady got something. I turned to her and said, 'Your husband is here. He is Captain So-and-So, he died such and such a year, of paralysis of the throat, at the age of forty-seven; his greatest regret was that there were no children.' She acknowledged every word to be correct. The same lady came again last Saturday with her sisters, and let me read you, from this letter I have just received, what she says of one of them: 'I have to convey to you my sister's deepest thanks for what you have done for her. She is a confirmed believer in consequence, and is convinced that nothing but the absolute spirit of — could have given her the facts.' This lady, at least, had no thought of spooks. Then, again, was it from the astral that I was able to tell the relatives of that unfortunate girl, whose disappearance in Scotland was a sensation in the papers a few days ago, that she was dead, and that her body would be found at the spot where, when search was made, they did find it?"

"You seem to have a good many visitors, Mrs. Davies?"

"Not a day passes but I see several, mostly perfect strangers, and letters come in shoals from every part. You should see some of them, full of the most fulsome and nauseous flattery, the idea of the writers being to get on my weak side and extract something for nothing. I am foolish enough to allow them usually to do it. One hears a good deal of nonsense about fees, and I have been well abused for my practice of accepting payment. I take a guinea, and often have received twenty-five without asking. Well, believe me when I tell you that, for every person I take a guinea from, I see a dozen free. Yet people have gone away and, I am told, complained of my avariciousness. Think. The best part of almost every day of my life is occupied with this work. Apart from giving hours to interviewers and sittings, I answer any number of letters. To-day, for instance, there came seven by one post and eleven by another, all requiring a reply. I begin to write at seven o'clock in the morning in bed, and keep at it till ten. I consider I am entitled to take a fee for all this work and all the exhaustion and strain it entails. I must either take a fee or give it up. Do you not agree with me?"

"The question is one that each medium must settle for himself in the light of his own circumstances. It is not a matter on which I should care to express an opinion, especially as I am going to play deadhead myself shortly by asking you for a sitting."

"You are privileged, and shall have it with pleasure. Whilst on the subject, I may tell you as of interest that I have been offered £500 to go and live in a person's house, and £1,000 if I would go over to Africa. A short time ago some company promoters, hard-headed men of business, brought me a map of the gold locality, and Dewdrop marked out for them spots where gold would be found. A company was formed solely on the strength of my information, and it is working at this moment."

"You, or your controls, then, have no scruples about supplying information of this sort?"

"None whatever; why should we have? Surely it is better to get information this way than to waste much money and expend much energy in reaching the same point by the ordinary road. I know what you are going to say, that it is only a step from this sort of thing to prophesying

the name of the winner of a horse-race, to assisting betters and gamblers. Well, I don't do that, and I need hardly say, I don't approve of it. There was a time when, under protest, I helped in some Stock Exchange operations; but I didn't like it, and I don't do anything of the kind now."

"Talking about offers," went on Mrs. Davies, laughing, "do you know I got one once from Madame Blavatsky? It was eighteen or nineteen years ago. She wrote to me from Cairo, 'I have heard of your wonderful powers. What will you take to come out?' I replied that no inducement would take me out. She wrote a second time, and I did not answer. Years went by, the Himalayan Mahatmas were discovered, and Theosophy had been launched on its course. She wrote me again from London. Of course I would have nothing to do with her. No, I'll tell you what it is. Theosophy is simply a form of aesthetics. Its professors can assume a garb, look soulful, and high-falute. Here am I a medium, and a Spiritualist, but a Theosophist never; I absolutely declare that every communication that is genuine comes from a spirit that was once an inhabitant of a human body, that walked and talked in this life, and can, if need be, prove his identity. Anything beyond that is pure imagination. After all my years of experience, I believe in spirits—and will have nothing else."

(To be continued.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Psychic Photography.

SIR,—As my name has been somewhat freely used in connection with this subject without my authorisation, perhaps you will allow me to state that I am not a Spiritualist, and never was one; that I have never even seen a copy of the book called "The Veil Lifted"; that I am not interested in so-called psychic photography, the few examples that have been shown to me not being supported by a tittle of evidence that could be laid before a jury.

I fail to see what business it is of the author of "The Veil Lifted" whether my house is open or shut, as I distinctly refuse to allow any copies to be made by any person of any picture in my possession. Out of courtesy and friendship to my old and valued friend, Madame de Steiger, I consented, at such time as might be convenient to myself, to take my picture to London to be seen by you, or anyone else interested in the matter; but if this consent is to be made a ground of personal annoyance to me or to Madame de Steiger, I shall withdraw that consent.

15, Royal Circus, Edinburgh. J. W. BRODIE-INNES.

Astral Emanations.

SIR,—The letter of "Practical Spiritualist" affords a good example of the danger of practising Spiritualism without acquiring a knowledge of Occultism, whereby to "discern the spirits," their real nature and character. Imagining the entities in question to be "poor spirits, whose souls are darkened," but who are capable of rising to a higher life, he fosters and encourages them, and mistakes their apparent amelioration under such treatment for real improvement; while all the time they are not souls at all, but magnetic reflects, emanating either from himself or from others, or else consisting of the *débris*, in course of disintegration, of souls passed on; in either of which cases he does but cherish them at the cost of his own vitality, without doing them any real good. For being, like the image seen in a mirror, impersonal, they are not individuals and have no positive existence, and though capable of influencing sensitives they have no force.

The instance to which I referred was one of a series of experiences which was permitted me expressly in order to form the subject of the complete and elaborate exposition concerning the various orders of spirits by which it was followed, which exposition is given in "The Perfect Way," Lecture III., Part II. being devoted chiefly to the astrals. Any repetition of the experience was forbidden, the practice of Spiritualism for mere experience sake being detrimental to spirituality. Some of the most distressing *post mortem* results which have

come under my notice have been due to the encouragement of experiences of an order which ought to be sternly repressed. It is possible for a person to become infested by the reflects of the astral to such an extent that he cannot shake them off after death, but remains, as it were, in their net until set free by a purgatorial process more or less prolonged and arduous. Nevertheless, being neutral only and not positive, they are not evil in themselves. Nothing that I am saying applies to that true and legitimate Spiritualism which is represented by the expression, "Communion of Souls."

EDWARD MAITLAND.

Mrs. Russell-Davies and Re-incarnation.

SIR,—In your impression of September 22nd, Mrs. Russell-Davies gives what, to me, is such a puzzling account of herself that I venture to solicit an explanation.

She describes a vision of a Greek temple, in which, she says, "I saw myself at the foot of the steps, walk up between the pillars, and disappear. In part, through it, I have become a re-incarnationist"; and then, with characteristic feminine readiness to jump to conclusions, she adds: "This, and other things, have thoroughly convinced me of the fact of re-incarnation."

I do not, of course, know what these "other things" may have been; but if they are of apiece with this thing, they are not of much value as evidence. The fact she depicts ought to have convinced her that re-incarnation in her case was an impossibility and a delusion. If she saw herself moving about objectively as a separate and distinct individuality in some spiritual region, the obvious inference is, that the spirit thus discerned could not have been the same being who was then and there in the flesh, and conscious of the external existence of the phenomenon which she beheld. It is self-evident that a spirit so occupied as an isolated personality could not be re-incarnated in the seeress who was engaged in watching the performance, unless, like the Irishman's bird, she "was in two places at once."

The story puts me in mind of the showman who exhibited two skulls of Oliver Cromwell—one when he was a boy, and the other when he became a man.

It appears to me that any argument or circumstance—for proof there is none—however absurd it may be, is good enough to be used by its advocates to support the doctrine of re-incarnation.

If the lady should condescend "to explain" that what she saw was not really her own individual spirit, but a phantasmagoric likeness, then the vision may be an illusion, or, more probably, an intimation, or a revelation, of what in future may be her occupation in the world to come and the regions of the blessed.

NEWTON CROSLAND.

The Isolation of the Mystic.

SIR,—I desire to thank "C. C. M." for his helpful reply to my letter. Much of it was the very reading I required. Difficulties, however, have not entirely disappeared for me. The previous question was whether the self was not annihilated rather than realised, when viewed in abstraction from the object, and the answer was that such abstraction was the condition of a higher possibility of community, left out of account in the objection, and unknown to the mere self of the earthly relation; an answer that I, believing our spiritual life to be far richer than its incarnate content, fully accord with. But, at this point, the difficulty reappears under another form, viz., its apparent conflict with the metaphysical obstacles to the division made between the empirical and the noumenal self. In such a division we seem to forget that the phenomenon is not externally related to the noumenon, but that the noumenon is the reality of which the phenomenon is the appearance. The only answer I can see to this is that we are only partially expressed in the terrestrial consciousness. This view and answer must necessarily appear dogmatic to all save the mystic himself. But it was the doctrine of Plotinus, and is suggested to-day under such names as subliminal consciousness and transcendental subjectivity.

C. Y. L.

Madame Bernhardt.

SIR,—Can you or any of your readers kindly give me information as to the quality of the mediumship and clairvoyance of Madame Bernhardt, who has for some time advertised in "LIGHT"? If any gentleman or lady who has sat with her would report his or her experiences to you, and if you would kindly send the information on to me, it would greatly oblige.

L.

Mr. Maitland and His Critics.

SIR,—Although I fully share your Reviewer's reluctance to prolong this correspondence, it is none the less obligatory on me, in the interests of truth and fact, to make an attempt to dispel the dense fog in which he has contrived to envelope the subject in debate. Judged by his last letter, his standpoint is that of the agnostic, who holds that we neither know, nor can know certainly, anything about man's real nature and destiny; nor can have any sure criterion whereby to distinguish truth from error; that the wise of old were equally the victims of mere opinion; and that any interpretations which we may give to the symbols in which they veiled their results are but guesses, and incapable of verification. And in support of this contention, he gives utterance to a tissue of irrelevances, more or less fantastic and grotesque, and all of them tending to obscurity rather than to elucidation. Meanwhile, the real question at issue fails so entirely to find recognition, as to make it impossible for me to credit him with any but the most cursory and superficial acquaintance with the teachings concerned.

This is the question, whether the teachings committed to Mrs. Kingsford and myself do or do not represent something so different in kind, as well as in degree, from aught that has been put forth in modern times by other claimants to intercourse with the invisible world—whether spiritualists, occultists, or psychists—as to require for their appreciation a faculty and a method differing from and transcending any that is employed by them, or that is requisite to test their results. This is a question the answer to which has been rendered in no hesitating or uncertain tones by the order best of all qualified to judge in the matter. This is the order represented by the term "Mystics," which consists of those who, in virtue of their own spiritual maturity and development, have been enabled to transcend the outer and lower spheres of the consciousness, the material and the astral, and to attain to the inner and upper, the kingdom within of the soul and spirit, and who are able, therefore, to discern the principles of things where others can discern things only, and thus to know the realities of which things are the appearance. Between these and the whole mass of the persons who are engaged in the pursuits represented by the terms "spiritualism," "occultism," "psychism," and so forth, a great gulf is fixed. For whereas the latter occupy a standpoint which lies without and below the region which is the subject of their investigation, and work with a faculty and a method which involves but their external sensitiveness to the existence of such a region, and in no degree such spiritual unfoldment as would enable them to penetrate the circumferential and reach the central spheres of that region, and thus to obtain certain knowledge respecting it—the former, whom I have styled Mystics, have for their standpoint the innermost and highest spheres of that region and behold all things from within from its spiritual sun and centre and radiant point, and are able to discern the universal order and the values of the various spheres, as alone they can be discerned; and are qualified to affirm, as with one consent they do affirm, the perfect accordance between the results of the two methods of investigation which are represented by the terms inductive and deductive, experimental and intuitional.

By this order of duly qualified judges, as represented by its present living exponents, irrespective of creed, nationality, and race, the teachings in question have been recognised, and pronounced, in terms of unmeasured approbation, to be a full and faithful exposition of the nature of existence such as has never before been given to the world; and at the same time to be identical with all those sacred mysteries, Scriptures and religions of antiquity, which, though in the world, were not given to the world, but were reserved from general cognition by being concealed beneath a symbology which required a key to unlock its meaning. And inasmuch as that key has for long ages been lost, these teachings are regarded as representing its restoration in such plenitude as to constitute a full interpretation of those mysteries, the appeal on its behalf being to the understanding; and also as given at the time and in the manner and under the conditions of church and world, in which it has been declared in numerous prophecies, Biblical and others, it would be given, as has been amply shown in our published works.

As my only purpose in this present writing is to show your readers what reason there is for regarding our teachings as requiring for their comprehension and appreciation an equipment both mental and temperamental, widely differing from that

which, thus far, your Reviewer has brought to bear on them, and I have now said as much as will suffice for this purpose, I will pass on to the second of my critics, my excellent friend, "Quæstor Vitæ."

To most of the questions raised by him the answers are given at length in our two chief books, "The Perfect Way," and "Clothed with the Sun," his questions having arisen from a certain want of explicitness due to my effort to be brief. Certain other of his questions, those which treat of the relations between "Mediumship" and divine inspiration, find their answer in the instruction concerning inspiration and prophesying, also contained in those books, which I have previously cited. The passage now in point is as follows, and it may be given here with advantage:—

"Inspiration may indeed be mediumship, but it is conscious; and the knowledge of the prophet instructeth him.

Even though he speak in an ecstasy, he uttereth nothing that he knoweth not.

But when a man speaketh that which he knoweth not, he is obsessed; an impure spirit, or one that is bound, hath entered into him.

God obscureth no man; God is revealed; and he to whom God is revealed speaketh that which he knoweth."

By "bound" in this connection is meant the soul in prison of the astral, and unable to transcend that level. There is a vast difference between being of the astral and in the astral. The former implies mere magnetic emanation and *débris*, the latter denotes a soul not yet emancipated from the astral, and able to rise to its proper celestial sphere, where alone it has full illumination. The ascended soul may utilise its shed astral phantom as a means of communication with the living, to impart teachings truly divine. But in such case, the astral is but as a lens to transmit the ray from above mechanically and without any appreciation of the message, which is from soul to soul, and may be given directly and without intervention of any astral medium. Such is the true "communion of souls." It depends upon the spiritual condition of the recipient whether the astral be requisite. Such intercourse does not constitute the recipient a "medium," but only a sensitive as regards his spiritual part. For the appeal is to his own consciousness. The two hold converse as friends.

The main point of contention between "Quæstor Vitæ" and myself turns on the nature and source of the knowledge called by us "intuition." The teaching given us insists on the correspondence between the outer and the inner, declaring the method to be one and the same, and all knowledge to be by experience of its possessor. According to this definition intuition is inborn experience, that which the soul knoweth of old and of former lives, having learned it by experience; and illumination is the divine light of the spirit which, when directed into the recesses of the soul, enables the man to discover and to understand the knowledges there stored up, which are to him an everlasting possession and in constant course of accumulation. But the knowledges must first be there, otherwise the ray would reveal but an empty chamber.

This account accorded perfectly both with our reason and with the manifold and various experiences received by us, and was in all respects so satisfactory that it was with no small surprise that I found so thoughtful and intelligent a student as "Quæstor Vitæ" dissenting from it and proposing an alternative in which, if I rightly understand him, experience and recollection from within are dispensed with in favour of accretion from without, as the source of knowledge, to the destruction of one's own experience as the condition of knowledge, and of memory as a proof of prior individual existence.

His hypothesis is, moreover, fatal to the doctrines of evolution and regeneration, each of which alike involves the persistence of the substantial Ego and the multiplicity of its earthly lives. It is fatal, too, to the value of our memories of the past portion of our present lives as evidence that we have lived before the present moment, and have not at this instant sprung into existence. For, if the apparent recollections of our spiritual Ego be no proof that it has lived previously to its present life, the apparent recollections of our physiological Ego are no proof that we have lived before the present moment. For we may have come at this very instant into existence through the sudden agglomeration and combination of a number of diverse independent atoms of substance, each having its share of the consciousness which together constitute what we take to be our memories!

I do not say that this is a correct account of "Quæstor Vitæ's" hypothesis, but only that it is what, as described by

him, that hypothesis seems to me to amount to. In which case this statement of my view of it will do him the good service of affording him an opportunity of re-stating his case in such way as to correct my impression, if wrong.

EDWARD MARRIAGE.

Elementals and Elementaries at Séances.

SIR,—In a letter to "LIGHT" (September 22nd), "Quæstor Vitæ" stated that "Human selves evolved into the celestial sphere . . . may use as intermediary a highly-evolved psychical self in the psychical sphere as a relay through which to project a thought current to man." This seems to me to be highly probable, and if we consider still further the question of spirit communication from the point of view of the successive planes of interior consciousness in which the universe exists, and each of which, as Theosophy teaches, corresponds to a similar interior state of human consciousness, we shall, I think, not only see why Theosophy tells us that ordinary manifestations at séances are due to elementals and elementaries, and why it warns us against such manifestations; but at the same time we shall reconcile the theosophical tenet with the claims of Spiritualists, that at least sometimes the manifestations come from the dead. The Psychic Plane is that on which the Thought Form of the dead personality passes its intermediate stage of readjustment previous to the passage of the soul into its Devachan. The Astral Plane is that where the elementals and the elementaries of the above-mentioned Thought Forms abide. It is also the formative plane where all that manifests upon the physical plane is planned and furnished, so to speak, with a definite scheme of correlated laws. Now let us suppose that one lately deceased and now living on the Psychic Plane desires to communicate with someone living upon Earth. It may communicate directly to his mind because of the correlation between the psychic plane and the lower manas. But if the brain it wishes to impress is not sufficiently evolved, and if it still wishes to force communication, it must then render its message objective on the physical plane. It must, in fact, transmute the psychic energy of its message into physical energy, and as the message cannot reach the physical plane without passing through the astral plane it is here that the psychic power is transmuted. In a word, an elemental is controlled and made to pass the message on as physical force, audible to us as table-raps. In experiments I have undertaken this is just what appears to have happened. The psychic entity has controlled an elemental, and thus rapped out its message. This done, it ceases to exercise further control; but for all that, the elemental does not cease to rap, though now its messages are either stupid or thoughts evidently suggested by myself; nor does the table cease to swing or dash about. Now, the first danger from this sort of spirit communication arises from the power the elemental may have (either derived from the medium or inherent in itself, or due to a weak control from the other side) of mixing up and distorting a true message from the psychic plane. The next danger is due to molecular automaticity. When once vibrations have been set up between a medium and an elemental they are liable to automatically repeat themselves when there is no "spirit control" present, and the medium becomes infested. If, again, the Kama-lokic entity wishes to force communication from the physical plane by affecting the sense of sight, it must materialise itself; and to do so it must again pass through the astral plane, that world of shadows. Can it be doubted that here by the aid of elemental forces it seizes on a shell or elementary, perhaps its own, and thus passes its psychic power once more on to the physical plane? Without going into the question of how far the astral substance of the medium is necessary to help on this process, one thing is certain: if we accept the philosophy of planes of consciousness, then, except by using an elementary as a means of passing its message down, the psychic entity cannot communicate. The danger from this species of communication is, again, due to molecular automaticity, which may result in such automatic repetitions of molecular vibrations, once they have been vibrated, as shall attract the shell to the medium when no controlling spirit animates it. As an elementary represents the purely animal tendencies of the departed, this shell may first vampirise him of his own vitality, and then re-act upon him, with the strength of this acquired vitality, to increase his own passionate nature by the addition of those passions belonging to and peculiar to itself.

Thus, while not in the least denying the possibility of communications from the spirits of the dead to the living, I do believe that these cannot be objectified as table-rappings or u. ch. rappings.

tions, without the intermediary of elementals and elementaries, and that these bring with them, as after effects, dangers of such magnitude that it seems to me that we Theosophists are fully justified in the antagonistic attitude which we assume towards promiscuous intercourse between spirits and ourselves.

THOMAS WILLIAMS, F.T.S.

Magnetic Healing.

SIR,—Seeing several cases of magnetic healing in your paper I should like to add my testimony to its marvellous effects, through the mediumship of Mr. W. H. Edwards, of Chepstow Hall. My son, Douglas Beck, aged four years, had a withered leg which would not develop in size nor generate natural heat, and in fact had no life or use in it whatever. I had taken him to the hospitals, and several doctors had treated him without the smallest result, and finally a lady magnetiser had treated the case for thirteen months without affecting any improvement in the limb, and it really seemed that the boy would never walk. The doctor who last saw him said, "There is no more life in the limb than there is in a dead leaf," and I had given up all hope when I was recommended to go to Mr. Edwards, who had been very successful in some cases of infantile paralysis. He undertook the case last November, at once located the disease as due to an entirely different cause from that usually ascribed to it, and now, thank God, the lad can walk nearly half a mile without any assistance. I consider this case as much a miracle as anything I know of, and am also acquainted with another case, one of total blindness in one eye, of a boy thirteen years of age, certified to by two hospitals, which the same gentleman also cured.

As I think it a duty to make these facts known, I trust you will give them publicity.

Guildford Cottage, Hawstead-road, S. N. BECK,
Catford, S.E.

Free Will and Mysticism.

SIR,—Surely "Argent" presents the answer to her (or his) own query. The development and unfoldment she refers to, which mediums undergo, occur under direction of controls; that is, under direction from transcendent or relatively subjective (to us) spheres, communicated by telepathic life currents, to the subliminal strata of the sensitive; or, in other words, by the inflowing of life of psychical degree, carrying inherent determination, the effects of which are evidenced in the unfolding of psychical faculties in the sensitive.

Therefore, as "Argent" very correctly says: "The human will cannot prevent the accretion of such psychic life powers, if its accretion be ordained." Consequently, also, a sensitive "cannot deliberately reject the conditions of inspirational influx, or set herself successfully against the Divine will."

And this practically replies to the subsequent point raised, with regard to the apparent liberty of the medium to not observe the best conditions; to indulge in dissipation and sensuality, and put his will against that of his controls. As to whether this would leave his mediumship affected or not, let me ask in return, are these apparent failings and weaknesses the effect of the return current of life flowing through man from the lower planes, to be transmuted and raised in degree thereby, in him, or not? And if so, is this transmuting function in man (with its effects entailed on him) in accord with Divine law and order and in its proper place in relation to the whole, or not?

Will "Argent" deny that man is a focus in which the stream of life descending from Divine, or transcendent, states meets the stream ascending from lower degrees or states, and transmutes or raises the latter in degree by interaction?

Human will can only affect that which is of identical or subservient mode, or external to itself. An inferior principle cannot bind that which transcends it. But human free-will pertains to the self-consciousness which claims independent existence of its own. The two are inseparable conceptions and pertain to the plane of appearances. This misconception arises from the circumferential mode of self-consciousness being discreted from its inner modes or strata, and not being in continuous conscious relation with its centre; judgments are then made from appearances. If man has free-will, then where is the will of the Universal, let me ask? I would refer "Argent" to the letter of "C.Y.L.," appearing on the same page as her own letter, in which that writer advocates self-identification with transcendental subjectivity. Not only would I agree with him that it is through the present mode of manifestation that our evolution is effected, but this transcendental subjectivity is also our *primum*, determining that evolution, which is necessarily

in harmonious relation with universal law as acting through all other selves in the coherent whole of which each forms a part; as that again is but a part in a larger whole, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

"Argent" is probably aware that the relative freedom of equilibrium is only attainable by the union of argent with orus, by which Horus is reborn or reconstituted. Will "Argent" affirm that this mystic marriage of the moon and the sun (alchemical); of wisdom and love, of masculine and feminine elements of being, can occur in this circumferential (human) plane? The "serpent of evil" can only reach up to —?, the state of equilibrium. Therefore, relative evil, or imperfection, must obtain until the "pairs of opposites" are reunited in mystic marriage; that is, in all planes external to the soul-plane. But even when equilibrated by mystic marriage, such selves remain connected with their proximate *primum* by a life-stream carrying determination. The freedom is therefore still only relative.

As "C.Y.L." says, the true mystic is the identificationist; the self through whom the central light radiates continuously from the centre to the circumference, and is there consciously identified by the percipient. The claimant of free-will or separateness of existence is a false mystic, who lives on the circumference of being; in whom that circumference is discreted from the central light, and who would claim for himself that which pertains to the Universal.

But surely isolation is not necessary for the mystic to realize that self-identification? Inasmuch as it is a process determined from within, from transcendent subjective states, the external conditions are relatively unimportant factors. The life-radiation flowing through the mystic, of which he is but the instrument, will itself determine its conditions.

This question will, however, be dealt with later in a more consecutive argument with regard to the process of becoming, into which determinism necessarily enters; in which I will endeavour to show that the self is essentially real, and process is the accomplishing or realising of reality, which may possibly interest "C.Y.L." as well as "Argent."

"Argent" states that my previous letter was dogmatic. Now dogmatism claims authority and is self-assertive. My letters are entirely impersonal. No one need accept anything therein contained. The only authority they may carry must consist in the absence of inconsistency or self-contradiction. My position is tentative. Show me that I am wrong, and I will accept truth from whatever source. I am but a searcher. But what I find I also impart; I do not retain it for self-power. And truth is necessarily affirmative; it cannot be indefinite and negative. But affirmative is not identical with dogmatic.

DER REINE THOR.

Chepstow Hall, Peckham.

SIR,—If I may again trespass on your valuable space, I would express regret at my not having been present at Chepstow Hall, on August 25th, "to examine the writings of Paracelsus" for proof of Mr. Edwards' allegation that "the terminology of modern Theosophy" is taken—*Anglicè* "cribbed"—therefrom. Still, though late, it is not too late for my friend to prove his learning by complying with my, now repeated, request for a sight of his "proofs."

I say again, most emphatically, that I did not promise to attend that meeting, and, had I so promised, I fail to see the existence of any greater occasion for Mr. Edwards to tell (as I am told he did tell) his audience, that he had written to me requesting my presence, than I can see for his informing your readers that "Mr. Campbell said he would certainly be present when the lecture was announced"! I "certainly" was "present when the lecture was announced," but not when it was given. This matter needs clearing up, so I must again ask Mr. Edwards for the before-mentioned particulars which will enable me to trace and recover that epistolary wonder that could be thought more capable of drawing me to Peckham than my voluntary "promise" to come there.

If Mr. Edwards will again read his quotation in "Isis Unveiled," Vol. I., p. 351, he may see that H.P.B. merely relates, for what they are worth, nor her own teachings, but "a few fragments of the mysterious doctrine of Re-incarnation . . . which we have from an authority,"* but the student will observe how carefully she refrains from stating that the "authority" had any more weight with her than she knew it would have with those of her pupils whom she so carefully trained to think for themselves, not according to what they

* Italics are mine.

were told, but according to the weight of evidence available in support of the teachings.

We should not overlook her significant remark on p. 352, that "even if hypothetical, this theory is no more ridiculous than many others considered as strictly orthodox," for "Isis"—a chaos of disjointed and often merely paragrahic "Tit Bits"—was not written as a text book, and is only regarded in the Theosophical world as a book to set one thinking.

Theosophists and Spiritualists have far too much in common (were it only their mutual love of the occult side of Nature) to allow of my entertaining any very burning desire to "controvert the beliefs of Spiritualism" where such beliefs are held to be "the better way." I am content to seek for truth from members of every school, and happy in the privilege of bowing at her shrine wherever she may be found.

26, Townshend-road,
Regent's Park, N.W.

J. T. CAMPBELL.

Mrs. Williams of New York.

SIR,—I was astounded in reading last issue of "LIGHT" (September 8th) to see the statements made by M. Engel—a name entirely unfamiliar to me—in "Annales des Sciences Psychiques." The experiences therein detailed are so foreign to anything which in my twenty years' mediumship has been attributed to my guides, or which in any way approaches the phenomena that hundreds of honest investigators in my circles have witnessed and described, that out of pure charity for the writer I cannot but believe him confused in his data, i. e., he has given me the credit of something he may have witnessed elsewhere. He speaks of attending a "series" of my séances. That assertion is absolutely false on the face of it, as no one attends a series of séances in my parlours except he be introduced or vouched for by responsible parties, as a gentleman, and an honest investigator; and no gentleman shoves out his feet to trip up either a spirit or even a physical entity, which he naïvely confesses to having done—Misstatement No. 1. Again, he speaks of attending one of my dark séances. Now, I never, under any circumstances, admit an absolute stranger to circles given under those conditions—Misstatement No. 2. I have it on the reliable authority of no less a personage than the conductor of my séances, that Jeanne d'Arc has never materialised through my mediumship and sung—Misstatement No. 3. He perpetrates still another fabrication in the statement that the medium's sister materialised. Not until this clever individual, in his anxiety to quote truth and fact—a commendable quality in an intelligent and sincere investigator—sought to provide me with a sister, was I aware I owned such a relative, either in spirit or earth life. But why quote more misstatements? He has so distorted his imagination in the above instances, that I fail to see why it should be necessary for him to attend séances at all when he must fall back upon his own conjuring brain to supply the result. I maintain that a mind so tinged with the feeling of fraud, deception, and falsehood, is not in the proper state of receptivity for the judge of honest phenomena.

The whole account is of such a character that I am compelled to conclude that the writer thereof is in no wise a Spiritualist, nor even a sincere investigator; but by seeking to discountenance the truth and to vilify facts, he hopes to bring ridicule upon the sublime teachings of that scientific and religious philosophy which is not only proving to us the witherward of our souls, but is opening the door to our loved ones who have gone before.

232, West 46th Street,
New York City.
September 19th, 1894.

M. E. WILLIAMS.

[We are sorry to have unwittingly done Mrs. Williams an injustice. The report to which she refers was, as we said at the time, translated from "Annales des Sciences Psychiques," a journal of good repute, the editor of which, in publishing Mons. Engel's report, vouched for the absolute sincerity and fidelity of the author. Possibly, as Mrs. Williams suggests, he had confused her with some other lady and given her "the credit of something he may have witnessed elsewhere."—Ed. "LIGHT."]

"Fortune Telling."

SIR,—The "Lancashire Daily Post," which has just issued a serial of mine dealing with hypnotism, gives the following recent case of prosecution for fortune telling:—

LADY DETECTIVES AT WORK.

At Liverpool, yesterday, Ann Jane Pennington was charged with telling fortunes. Two female detectives

visited the house. To tell their fortunes prisoner shuffled a pack of cards, had them cut thrice, and then said the lady detectives would both "marry well and do well." The stipendiary magistrate sent her to gaol for one month as a rogue and vagabond. *Many a lighter punishment has been given for a worse offence.*

J. S. HARRISON ("STEPHEN SOMERSET").

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.]

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Mr. Wallace will occupy our platform on Sunday, October 7th.—THOS. MCCALLUM, 53, GROSVENOR-TERRACE, CAMBERWELL GATE, S.E.—Sunday, at 7 p.m., clairvoyant séance; Tuesday at 8 p.m., clairvoyant séance; Monday and Thursday, at 8 p.m., developing circles.—W. G. C.

FINSBURY PARK.—On Sunday last, Messrs. Jones, Brooks, and King addressed a fair meeting, and distributed back numbers of "LIGHT" and other papers. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., a number of speakers have agreed to be present if fine.—T. B.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—Next Sunday at Cavendish Rooms, at 7 p.m., trance address, Mr. J. J. Morse, on "Scientific Corroborations of Spiritualism." Doors open at 6.30 p.m. October 14th, Miss Rowan Vincent; October 21st, Mr. W. E. Long; October 28th, Mr. Darby; November 4th, Mr. J. J. Morse.—L. H.

CHEPSTOW HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last, Mr. Audy gave a good address on "Religions, Old and New," showing how they underwent a gradual process of change. On Sunday next, Mr. Edwards on "The Age of Reason and Rights of Man." On Tuesday, Miss Gambrill, circle; and magnetic healing by Mr. Edwards.—W. H. E.

THE LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY.—The opening meeting of the autumn session of this society will be held at the Athenaeum Hall, 73, Tottenham Court-road, on Friday, October 19th, at 8 p.m. I shall then deliver a lecture entitled "The Revelations of Occultism." Reserved seats 1s. Admission free.—A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L., President, 15, Lanark-villas, Maida Vale.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—A spirit circle will be held on Sunday evening next at 6.30, at which time Spiritualists desirous of meeting together for spiritual blessings are heartily welcomed and invited to participate. We speak as the Spirit gives us utterance, and experience teaches us that the needs and wants of many are seen and ministered to in the course of the evening's exercises.—W. R. LONG.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Sunday last Mr. Dales delivered an interesting and instructive address on "Man's Responsibility towards Himself," giving illustrations from the Scriptures, and warning his hearers against setting up their own gods and then complaining of the consequences. Sunday next, flower service and naming of children, conducted by Mrs. Bliss and Miss Young. Tea at 5 p.m., tickets sixpence, followed by service at 7 p.m. Will friends kindly bring flowers for the service?—J. B.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—On Sunday last we had a full meeting. Mrs. Mason's controls gave us an excellent discourse upon harmony and mediumship, followed by very successful clairvoyant delineations. Mr. J. H. Brooks kindly presided at the organ. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Treadwell, circle; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; October 14th, Mr. W. Wallace. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., at 245, Kentish Town-road, N.W., Mr. Norton, circle; Thursday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; October 14th, Mr. J. Humphries. Organ recitals free. Inquirers welcome.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

13, BERKELEY-TERRACE, WHITE POST-LANE, MANOR PARK, ESSEX.—The following meetings will be held at the above address for experiments in the various phases of mediumship from October 7th to May 26th, 1895. Sunday, at 11 a.m., students' and inquirers' meeting; also the last Sunday in each month at 7 p.m. Monday, reading-room open at 7 p.m., for the study of Spiritual literature; and 8.30 p.m. experimental circle for inquirers. Thursday, at 8 p.m., for Spiritualists only, the study of mediumship. All meetings free. The tea and social meeting for members and friends will be held as above at 5 p.m. on Sunday, October 28th. Will friends who desire to be present at the tea kindly communicate to the above address?—J. ALLEN, Hon. Sec.

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.—We have printed, in a convenient form, suitable for enclosure in letters or for distribution at public meetings, "M.A. (Oxon.'s)" "Advice to Inquirers, for the Conduct of Circles." We shall be pleased to supply copies free to all friends who will undertake to make good use of them. The only charge will be for postage—25, 3d.; 50, 1d.; 100, 2d.; 200, 3d.; 400, 4½d.; 600, 6d., &c.