

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	597	Dark and Light Seances	600
The Late Lady Caithness	598	Letters to the Editor	601, 605-8
A Human Electrical Machine	599	'Forbidden by God'	602
The Materials of Bye-Gone Years	599	'The Proper Limits of Occult In-	
Spirits Transporting Coin	600	Investigations'	603

NOTES BY THE WAY.

The meeting of the Psychical Research Society last week presented us with a fresh view of the field, and a veritable shower of good old ghost stories—in fact, quite a Christmas number of the Society's Proceedings. The audience went away thoroughly primed for a good old-fashioned, creepy evening round the fireside. But, seriously, after the Eusapia depression, the recitals by Miss X. and Mr. Myers were most uplifting, and likely to satisfy the most exacting Spiritualist.

We not only gladly but gratefully printed Mr. Myers' letter last week. We confess it has shown us that our Note may have been misunderstood. We never for a moment intended to convey the impression that Mr. Myers, or anyone connected with him, had been unkind. All we meant to say was that the report of the experiments suggested a sort of vivisection in the interests of science and truth. We knew that two detectives (Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Maskelyne) were there on purpose to find Eusapia out; we knew that these two gentlemen had, in the very strongest way, committed themselves to the theory of fraud; we followed the tortuous course of the various experiments, with the innumerable remarks of the sitters, and we confess we came to the conclusion that we should hesitate to subject any real 'sensitive' to the operation. 'That way madness lies,' and that way success does not lie. That was all we meant; and we cannot too earnestly protest that we never intended to suggest personal unkindness on the part of anyone.

It is as we surmised. The very important lectures now being given at Oxford by Mr. Conybeare, on Demonology, turn out to be lectures on Spiritualism, but Spiritualism on the dark side. We hope to have 'a good time' with the lecturer when his book is published. In the meantime, the reports will be useful. For instance, we find the following amongst the opening sentences, in the report of the first lecture:—'In this century, educated men have generally abandoned a belief in a personal devil and possession by evil spirits; but Jesus and his disciples, and all the writers of the New Testament appear to have a profound belief in the devil and in evil spirits.' This is only one half of it. Jesus and his disciples also believed in God and in the angels—not far off, but near. Well, if we are driven to it, as between Jesus, his disciples and all the writers of the New Testament, on the one hand, and the 'educated men of this century,' on the other, we shall have to vote for Jesus and his disciples.

But we must not be tempted on. The book will appear some day, and we hope to have eyes and a hand when it does.

Certainly, one of the oddest facts about Spiritualism is that clergymen and ministers are so horribly afraid of it, and, in some cases, so scornfully hate it. We can quite understand people disliking to be much mixed up with a subject which, at the present stage, is so exposed to the contempt of the ignorant and the cheating of the fraudulent; but that is not it. It is the subject itself which so many religious teachers shrink from or detest. We think we know why, but we at present only note the fact, concerning which a writer in the 'Philosophical Journal' says:—

Some days ago a friend sent to a clergyman a copy of the 'Journal' which contained an article, not relating to Spiritualism, that he wished his friend, the clergyman, to read. The paper was returned with a letter from the rev. gentleman, who said that he was so opposed to Spiritualism that he did not wish to receive in his home a paper containing any article in favour of the subject.

This clergyman is a man of education, and he is respected by his society as a religious, moral, and spiritual teacher, and he possesses, no doubt, personal qualities which command the respect of those who know him.

He is, too, regarded as a preacher of liberal religious views, yet his attitude in relation to Spiritualism is far from liberal. It is, indeed, illiberal. It is also irrational and unscientific. Nevertheless it is the attitude of many, including a large number who congratulate themselves upon being emancipated from authority and being open to the truth from every source.

The clergyman referred to has never investigated the phenomena of Spiritualism and knows little or nothing of the subject; but he is so prejudiced against it that it gives him pain to read anything about it, or even to open a paper which contains any words in favour of it.

If this is not bigotry, by what milder name might it be fitly designated? But so it is with thousands.

Professor A. E. Bostwick, writing in the 'New Science Review,' has another try at the fourth dimension problem. We shall not attempt to follow him; but his conclusions have special bearings upon our own problem. He says:—

If a man were limited to two dimensions instead of three—if, for instance, he lived on a sheet of paper as a picture does—he would know of nothing outside of that sheet. A race of men might live in every one of a pile of a million sheets of paper, and it would be physically impossible that they should ever communicate or even be aware of the possibility of each other's existence, though the distance separating any two would be less than the thousandth of an inch. So, three-dimensional universes may be packed closely together in four-dimensional space, and we may be surrounded—almost touched—by myriads of beings like ourselves, of whose existence we are unconscious, and into whose sphere we cannot come. The removal of dimensional conditions would open all these to us. To one who believes in a future world, the certainty that there is space enough for universes upon universes, almost in touch with every point of our own space, is much more pleasing than the relegation of all departed spirits to a planet hundreds of millions of miles distant.

In fact, upon anyone who reflects much on the subject, the conclusion must force itself with almost irresistible cogency that here must be the refuge from the materialism that is seeking to hem us in on every side. The materialistic arguments are sound so far as they go; in their own sphere they are convincing; yet they reckon entirely within the sphere of our own

tri-dimensional universe. That there must be more than this is, as we have seen, an inevitable consequence of the great foundation-law of that universe. It is not necessary here to point out in exactly what way this may be applied to explain the observed facts regarding spirit as opposed to matter; it is enough to show that here is a field so wide that its prospect almost takes one's breath away. So far as appears now it offers a complete escape, indeed the only escape, from materialism as opposed to all that is higher, from realism as opposed to idealism, from unbelief as opposed to spiritual religion. That it has not been appreciated as such, and that it has been relegated on the one hand to students of pure mathematics, and on the other to idle speculators and visionaries, is one of the most significant facts of our times. It shows that most of us are of the earth earthy, and that we do not care to escape from the mire.

Marcus Ward and Co. are publishing some exceedingly pretty Christmas and New Year messages - cards, we cannot call them. They are little poems, daintily printed in four pages and daintily illustrated, and in a ribbon-tied cover, also prettily set forth in colours. One is by Mr. J. Page Hopps, for the New Year; of course hopeful and cheering. One by Mr. Le Gallienne, for Christmas, is unspeakably sorrowful—a Christmas greeting of almost dreadful dolefulness, without a ray of light or hope. Is it the difference between belief and unbelief? We well remember Mr. Le Gallienne's awful onslaught upon the believers in the selfish foolishness of immortality. And this has come of it:—

For us, sad heart, the soft effacing snow,
The calm white sleep that ends the year's long pain,
The numb oblivion of the spirit's past,
Locking the heart that never thaws again,
That beats not even for the love it lost,
Nor warms to any dream it once did know.

And that is all of it: and a Christmas message too! Truly, we do want to at least 'give God the benefit of the doubt.'

'My Transcendental Experiences with Spirits,' by Henry Lacroix (Boston, U.S.: Colby and Rich), we would commend if we could; but we can only say, with the editors who (as he tells us) declined the MS., 'It is too big a dose.' We find here, for the first time, what we have long asked for, a description of the actual process of re-incarnation. If it had any official or authoritative endorsement we would risk the quotation; but, merely on its merits, it is too utterly ridiculous and indecent. We are still open to hear from Mrs. Besant or Mr. Herbert Burrows, or any experienced Theosophist, as to what actually happens at a re-incarnation.

The 'English Mechanic' quotes a physician as saying: 'Instead of colds coming from atmospheric changes, as people generally suppose, they generally originate, in my opinion, by breathing impure air. Ninety-nine per cent. of what are termed colds are nothing more nor less than the poisoning of the mucous membrane by bad air.' We entirely agree. Indeed, we believe that more than half of our maladies are caused or kept by impure air. We talk of 'the sick room.' In truth, many rooms are very sick!

THE EVENT OF THE YEAR.

The attention recently given by the 'Daily Chronicle,' a London journal of large circulation, to the Society for Psychical Research, to Eusapia Paladino, and to Mr. Maskelyne's assertive report of a séance with that lady, has made of 1895 a record year in more than one important sense. It is with pleasure, then, that we inform our readers that next week a four-page supplement will be issued with 'LIGHT' (free of extra charge), which will be devoted mainly to a commentary on Mr. Maskelyne's statements, from the pen of an old and experienced investigator, who has chosen for his paper the title, 'Mr. Maskelyne and Eusapia *versus* Psychical Research.'

THE LATE LADY CAITHNESS.

In the November number of 'L'Aurore,' the interesting monthly journal which this deceased lady founded in Paris, and directed for a period of nine years, there is an appreciative notice of her remarkable career. As some of our younger readers may not be acquainted with the prominent incident of her story, we translate some portions of the article:—

One of the most striking things in the life of the Duchess was the persistence of her faith. She did not seek her mission; her mission sought her in order to impose itself in a sovereign manner on her will, and to identify itself with her. She has told in one of her books the origin of her mysterious relations with the spirit of Mary Stuart, the unfortunate Queen of Scotland, the noblest of Queens, and the most seductive of women. This passion for Mary Stuart is, in fact, the characteristic of Lady Caithness—the key to her soul. There is, perhaps, in the annals of modern Spiritualism no history more poetic or more touching. It is not that one finds here material proofs of what has by consent been called supernatural, and which is really only the heart and soul of nature; the evidence in her case is entirely moral and subjective. But what strikes one is the profound ingenuousness of the soul which received this revelation, the nobility of sentiment, and gravity of thought which flowed from it. Nothing seemed to urge Lady Caithness to a mystic life. Beautiful, rich, happy, she enjoyed a high social position. Her equable temperament and gaiety of mind apparently destined her for fashionable life. . . . For a long time the name and personality of Mary Stuart had magical attraction for her; her thoughts dwelt on her beauty, her grace, and her misfortunes. This mystic passion was as sweet as a budding love, as serious as a religion. She spoke of it to no one, and by-and-by she felt that she was in communication with the object of it, whose warm breath appeared to float about her. She heard her voice, sometimes in her own room in the silence of midnight, sometimes on the wild hillsides in Scotland, or on the rugged coasts of Caithness, where they dominate the stormy Pentland Firth. She heard it more clearly when the sky was serene, and light and foamy ridges were on the sea, though the latter was blue and splendid as the Mediterranean. One day the sweet voice ordered her to go at midnight into Holyrood Chapel at Edinburgh. She did not hesitate an instant in her belief that it was the Queen who made the appointment, and that she would see her. 'The thought that I was about to meet this beloved being gave me courage to go, alone and fearless, in the middle of the night to the place indicated, and to walk over the graves of my family.' The guard had been prepared, and she entered and knelt on the stones, much moved by the desolate aspect of the ruined cloister illumined only by the flickering light of the stars. After a fervent prayer the visitor asked aloud, 'Where are you?' 'Here, beside you!' said a soft voice, in reply. Turning round, Lady Caithness saw at first only a vague form, which, however, gradually assumed more definite proportions. She imagined that she was to hear some particulars of Queen Mary's earthly adventures—some fresh details of her life and troubles. Instead of this, the voice became grave and solemn, spoke of the various spirit spheres in nature, of angelic circles and of their desire to manifest to mankind, predicting for earth a new religious cycle in which humanity would once more become conscious of the Invisible—conscious of it in itself, and become its reflex and image. Finally, the voice asked if Lady Caithness wished to devote herself to the service of God, and in response, the following solemn undertaking was registered: 'I swear to consecrate my life, and all that I have received from Him, to His service, henceforth and for ever.' She then was charged with that mission to which she remained faithful to the last.

The Editor of 'L'Aurore' says:—

Each one is entitled to give to this order of psychic phenomena an interpretation which conforms to his personal experience, to his beliefs, or to his philosophy. What has never been in doubt—what the most sceptical and the most scoffing have always respected in the Duchesse de Pomar is the absolute sincerity of her conviction, and the touching grace of her invulnerable faith.

Although in the days to come there will, doubtless, be many a pilgrimage of foreign and other friends to this new

shrine at Holyrood, it might not be an unfitting way of commemorating the faithful services of the deceased in the cause for which they are themselves contending, if the young Edinburgh Society of Spiritualists, at present struggling—and, we hope, successfully—into existence, thought of calling itself by the name of the gifted lady whose mortal remains have now been laid within the precincts of their ancient Sanctuary.

A HUMAN ELECTRICAL MACHINE.

The account of Dr. de Jodko's experiments in 'LIGHT' of November 30th reminds me of a performance in which I was an actor in 1838. It was at the home of Ross Winans, a noted American inventor, to whom the world is indebted for the most important improvements ever made in the rolling stock of railroads. To his wonderful gifts of intellect Ross Winans added a remarkably genial and jovial disposition, which made his house a centre of attraction to all the young people of his neighbourhood. The weather and the season at the time I speak of favoured electrical experiments; and on the evening in question quite a number of young folks, mostly girls, were present in his parlour. After some time spent in joviality, Ross proposed showing them a new electrical machine he had invented, assuring them they would be able to get a real good shock from it. The desire to see the machine and get the shock was unanimous. When the inventor called for four glass tumblers, and proceeded to place one under each leg of a chair, a suspicion arose that the funny man had some trick in contemplation, and his manœuvres were watched with great interest, the suspicion being heightened when the housemaid was called in and told to be seated in the chair. This maiden was a comely lass of some twenty-three summers, with a profusion of long, straight, dark hair. She was directed to place her feet on the front rung of the chair, and her dress was then carefully lifted clear of the floor and tucked securely under her. Being thus completely insulated, the electricity of her body was readily excited by simply combing the hair, which was done with a horn comb. At intervals of one or two minutes the brass knob of a Leyden jar was applied to her hands, arms, neck, and face, the electric crack being distinctly heard at each contact, accompanied by an exclamation from the girl and an amused laugh from the company. The jar was thus soon charged, and the company joining hands a circle was formed, and the contents of the jar discharged into the ring with such force as to break all hands instantaneously asunder, each link of the human chain giving vent to an 'Oh!' and a laugh at the unexpected violence of the shock.

Ealing.

T. H.

'THE ENGLISH THEOSOPHIST.'

We have received a copy of 'The English Theosophist,' an eight-page, double-column quarto, published monthly by the followers of Mr. Judge. We have sought in vain in it for anything such as we have been accustomed to consider 'Theosophy.' It is quite filled with controversial matter with respect to the late split in the Theosophical Society; for instance: 'It actually seems as if since the day that the war for keeping up the respectability of the Theosophical Society by means of false pretences began, an epidemic softening of the brain has taken place among the members of 19, Avenue-road;' or, again, 'He (Mr. Sinnett) personally declared to me that Mr. Judge was trained in all his frauds by Madame Blavatsky. . . Mrs. Besant knows that both Colonel Olcott and Mr. Sinnett believe Madame Blavatsky to have been fraudulent; but she has had as yet neither the moral courage nor the honesty to say so.' If the friend who sent us 'The English Theosophist' thought that we should be pleased or amused by this kind of miserable bickering, he is mistaken; it fills us with pain and regret to see how low the Theosophical Society appears to have fallen.

THE MARVELS OF BYE-GONE YEARS.

Physical phenomena are evidently on the wane, and would seem to be dying out, for we hear nothing now of the marvellous occurrences that Spiritualists of twenty or thirty years ago were familiar with. I remember the veteran pioneer Spiritualist, J. Murray Spear, in one of his prophetic trance utterances, asserting that 'phenomena would cease,' and it looks as if what he said is coming to pass; for, in this country at least, we hear nothing of levitations, materialisations, direct writing, &c., taking place, all of which were of frequent occurrence at a former period.

The remarkable case of Mr. Home being carried out of one window and brought in at another, published recently in 'LIGHT,' would, doubtless, be new, and, perhaps, appear incredible, to the staid Spiritualists of the present time, who deem it something to get a few raps, or movements of furniture; but I am about to refer to a phase of phenomena of a more astounding character than levitation, materialisation, elongation, &c. not but what these are all wonderful enough, and perfectly incomprehensible; I allude to the transportation of persons from one locality to another with the rapidity of lightning, in spite of 'locks, bolts, and bars,' and brick walls and closed doors intervening.

One of the most notable examples of the kind was the transference of Mrs. Guppy from her residence at Highbury to Lamb's Conduit-street. It occurred in this wise. One evening Mrs. Guppy was writing in a housekeeping memorandum book, at the dictation of a Miss Nichols, who acted as a sort of housekeeper and companion. She was writing the word 'onions,' when she was suddenly missed, and on Mr. Guppy being informed of the absence of his wife, a search was made, but no trace of the missing one could be found. The search was then given up, Mr. Guppy remarking, 'I suppose the spirits have taken her away,' and comforting himself with the belief that the spirits would take care of her, remained at ease the rest of the evening. About ten o'clock Mrs. Guppy returned, and accounted for her absence. It turned out that a séance was being held at Mr. Williams' house, in Lamb's Conduit-street, eight persons being present. They were seated round a table in the dark, when something was felt to be on the table in their midst; and, on striking a light, it was found to be Mrs. Guppy, lying on her back, with her slippers on, with pen and memorandum book in her hands, just as she was when she was missed, about the same time, at Highbury, a distance of some three or four miles. This, of course, seems very incredible, but there were eight reliable witnesses to attest it, one a Manchester merchant, besides Mr. Guppy and Miss Nichols at the other end of the transit.

Soon afterwards a somewhat similar event occurred under the following circumstances: Mr. Henderson, a London photographer, accompanied by his wife, attended a séance at Mr. Guppy's as investigators. The company sat round the table in the usual way, all hands joined. Light being observed coming from the hall, the tablecloth was taken off the table and laid along the door to exclude light. Violent motions then took place in the table, and to get out of the way of harm, the sitters rose and the hands became disconnected. Mrs. Guppy spoke to Mr. Henderson, who had been seated next her, but getting no reply, ordered a light to be struck, when it was found that Mr. Henderson was no longer in the room. Consternation reigned, and a search about the house threw no light on the mystery. Mrs. Henderson, who was somewhat disconcerted, remained till late in the evening, and then returned to her home at Forest Hill. The following afternoon Mr. Henderson put in an appearance and accounted for his absence. He said he found himself slipping off the roof of an out-house in a back yard. He tried the back door of the house, and not being able to get in went to the front, and was surprised to find it occupied by two of his young lady assistants, and he then explained, as well as he could, what had brought him there. The time was noticed, and was observed to be about the same as when he was missed at Highbury, a distance of two and a-half miles, and though the roads were dirty, unusually so, there was no trace of dirt on Mr. Henderson's shoes. This happened on Sunday, and on Tuesday I happened to call on Mr. Guppy, who explained to me all the circumstances of the case, pointing out the spot where Mr. Henderson stood at the time, and explaining that he could not have left the room except by the door which had the table-cloth

along the bottom of it to exclude the light. It was afterwards rumoured that Mr. Henderson had in some way played a trick, but on his calling one day at the office of the 'Spiritual Times,' and being questioned on the subject, he maintained the truth of the occurrence, which he said was a mystery to him.

Another case of the kind, which was considered well authenticated, occurred to Dr. Monck, who was conveyed in some mysterious way from Bristol to Swindon. He went to bed at night, as usual, at Bristol, and found himself, at early morning, in the front garden of the Rev. Rowland Young, partially dressed, at Swindon. The distance between the two places is over a hundred miles, and there was no train during the night. Mr. Hearne was also reported to have been carried in the same way on more than one occasion, but I don't remember the particulars—if I ever heard them. In one of the 'Lives of the Davenport Brothers' it is stated that Ira, the eldest, was on one occasion conveyed from his home in Buffalo to his grandfather's residence, some sixty miles distant. He found himself lying in the snow, in a field close by his grandfather's house. No footmarks were observed in the snow, showing that he must have been deposited on the spot where he was lying. I questioned the subject of this remarkable experience, and he assured me that it was quite true.

Now, these are certainly very remarkable facts, if they are facts, and they would seem to be so, for they are as well attested as the ordinary run of spiritual phenomena. How are they to be explained? I can understand, in some measure, the transportation part of the business. Given the necessary force, such as is manifested in the movement of furniture, &c., and the levitation of Mr. Home, and we can understand the phenomena in question so far, but there is the rapidity to be considered, also the transmission of the body through the walls of a house, which, according to our notions of matter, its properties, and the laws that govern it, must undergo disintegration to allow of the passage of the one through the other. The passage of one material substance through another is a recognised fact in the experience of Spiritualists, but the difficulty is increased when living organisms are the subject of the operation. Scores of times I have been present at séances when flowers and birds have been brought into closed rooms that had no opening whatever, and to put the matter beyond doubt experiments were made with a box, which were perfectly successful, an account of which was given in 'LIGHT' of November 1st, 1891. It will thus be seen that the transportation of the human body under the circumstances described, is but an extension of the bird and flower phenomena—the same sort of thing on a larger scale. We cannot draw the line between the possible and impossible, or assign a limit to the operation of these mysterious agencies. All we can do is to accept the facts on the evidence of our senses. For my part, I never could see how the theory of the fourth dimension afforded an explanation of these phenomena. In view of the marvellous and incomprehensible facts under consideration, I am rather inclined to take refuge in Bishop Berkeley's theory that there is no such a thing as matter—it is merely a mental conception.

In conclusion, I would observe that I know of only one instance in history resembling these aerial flights, and that is the carrying of Philip from Gaza to Azotus, some thirty miles, by the 'spirit of the Lord'; and that took place in the open!

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

OBITUARY.

We learn with regret of the decease of Miss V. M. Thatcher, late of 36, Devonshire-street, W., who was well known to many of our friends. She passed away on Sunday last, after a brief but acute attack of pneumonia.

SEANCE WITH MR. GEO. SPRIGGS.—On Thursday evening, the 5th inst., Mr. Spriggs gave a séance at the house of Mr. A. J. Sutton, Woburn-place, W.C. Some seventeen sitters were present, including Mr. and Mrs. Sutton (the host and hostess), Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mr. and Mrs. T. Everitt, Mr. E. W. Wallis, and Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Cooper. The manifestations were chiefly confined to the phenomenon of the 'direct voice,' in which 'Skiwaukie' (Mr. Spriggs' control) conversed with the friends present for a considerable time, his full deep tones being very impressive. Occasionally the clear rapid utterance of the volatile 'Znippy' was heard (through the mediumship of Mrs. Everitt), and as time passed on other invisible friends were able to manifest their presence orally, although in some cases their utterances were subdued. It is worthy of note that both Mr. Spriggs and Mrs. Everitt were in the normal state throughout. This was the last séance given by Mr. Spriggs before his departure from this country on the following day.—D. G.

SPIRITS TRANSPORTING COIN.

In the 'Revue de la France Moderne,' Ismala says: 'We know a Spiritualist family at whose sittings pieces of money of the value of half-a-franc have several times been brought. They were found in all sorts of places, according to the indication of the spirit-guides. This continued throughout a fortnight, and then entirely ceased. The money was misshapen, worn, and the inscriptions half effaced, which confirmed the statement of the spirit that the pieces had been lost for a long time, and that there had been some difficulty in finding them. Here was a novel way of making a fortune. It was only necessary to ask the spirits to do the same again and a little more. Life would, however, be too easy, carried on in such fashion. The spirits will tell you "We cannot steal money in order to bring it to you. Except where it has been lost for a very long period, it always belongs to some one." Another reason given is, "We are not near you in order to save you from work, but to guide you towards good, to give you good advice, and to preserve you from danger." When spirits have discovered treasures or mines, they have always taken care to choose worthy people to administer benefits to the poor from the riches derived from the discovery. Such is the teaching of the spirits.' That may be quite correct with regard to the particular circles of whom Ismala writes, but we think we have heard of wealth acquired through unseen influences in the case of persons who turned out to be anything but worthy of the kindness—if it was a kindness.

DARK AND LIGHT SEANCES.

D. D. Home's memory ought not to be besmirched with the mud records of alleged dark sittings with him; dark sittings as I knew them in the past years, produced by closed shutters to windows, and curtains so drawn as to exclude every ray of light, and the sitters sitting round the family table, with their knees and feet partly under the table, waiting in the darkness, while the fingers and toes of semi-conjurors did duty in tapping and rapping and table tiltings, with more or less alertness in fun and trick. Knowledge, during the past, enables me to denounce those dark meetings as the hotbeds of jokers and swindlers, trying to gull earnest persons present in search of evidences of the continued life of their relatives.

No one in England knew more of Mr. Home's opinions and method of conducting sittings for evidences of spirit power than I did, as my home in South Norwood was often, very often, his resting-place during illnesses brought on by a wearied consumptive body and séance meetings. I assert that *he was opposed to dark sittings*. I assert that, at the many sittings with me at South Norwood and elsewhere, I never was present at or heard of a dark sitting, though I have seen and heard of sittings in the calm summer twilight, and of extraordinary phenomena, including Mr. Home floating in the air, taking place as the twilight deepened, and our eyes were so toned that the furniture, windows, and the sitters were still *seen* till the close of the sitting.

The fact of the sitters' knees and feet being, of course, partly under the table, and their being pressed on the knees by spirit hands, and also other incidents occurring under the table, while the room we were in was *gas-lit*, cannot honestly be called *dark séances*; when other evidences of spirit power were transpiring, as, for instance, the table above our knees rising off the floor several feet, vacant chairs and music stool floating in our sight along the carpeted floor; the accordion keys in our sight moving and tunes playing as we asked for them; such occasions ought not to be called dark séances, though the operators were, owing to their ethereality, unseen by us.

Dark séances are the camping grounds for sham mediums. Evidences of spirit power in the light have been blurred by semi-conjuring tricksters playing pranks in the dark, and ordinary sittings getting the dishonour. Those sham mediums are our *enemies*, who, in darkness, sow tares in the fields of wheat; they mar the scene and injure the repute of the soil and of the farmers.

Spiritualists, let your light shine so that the mass of sceptics as to soul life after physical death may have the truth made manifest to them and to others throughout the world.

South Norwood, S.E.

J. ENMORE JONES.

MRS. BESANT left London on Friday, December 6th, *en route* for India, whither she goes to attend the Theosophical Convention to be held at Adyar, Madras, after which she will go on to Benares, and then home again in April next.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The 'Psychological Climate.'

SIR—The calm, temperate, and most judiciously worded contribution of Professor W. F. Barrett, in regard to the 'Psychological Climate,' is most timely and to the point. One who, like myself, has had the most profound experience as a mesmerist (engaged in both curative and experimental practice for years—possibly before many of our now well-known Psychical Researchers knew the A B C of mesmeric phenomena) fully realises and has realised the importance of a right 'Psychological Climate,' which Spiritualists understand by the vague yet comprehensive term, 'right conditions.' Mesmeric sensitives are affected most profoundly by the mental or psychological atmosphere by which they are surrounded. The lucid somnambule of yesterday, whose utterances were undoubtedly true, and gave most satisfaction, to-day talks the veriest twaddle, blunders, and resorts to the most childish and stupid tricks—childish, because all intelligent persons would have realised that such attempts would be easily and readily detected at once. In most cases, with mesmeric sensitives, *the expected and looked for* happened. If for mesmeric sensitives we substitute mediums, the same holds true for good or ill.

Mesmerism led the way for the advent of modern Spiritualism, although it is confessed that neither mesmerism nor Spiritualism contains aught that is new, or at least in some aspect was not known to our forefathers. But in this age mesmerism preceded Spiritualism. And in mesmerism we find the key to Spiritualism; and in the conditions of mesmerism to the 'conditions' favourable to Spiritualistic phenomena, and not the least of these is the 'Psychological Climate.' I have no desire to repeat what Professor Barrett has so graphically and ably stated. I trust some of his Psychical Research friends for themselves, and we for ourselves, will *inh breathe*, from the purer atmosphere of sympathy; and from higher, healthier, more vigorous, and much more sympathetic organisations, give off those conditions of climate—personal magnetism—of mind and body, in which sensitives may live, so that the facts of the super-side of human life may become better understood and more readily investigated.

I have no particular sympathy with dark séances, and less with childish devices adopted by fraud-hunters to prevent the fraud which their presence and their 'climate' serve to bring about. Nevertheless, the dark séance has its place, as the history of the phenomena abundantly testifies. Let it have that place till the time comes in which other and happier conditions admit of phenomena of such character, as to demonstrate, by the undoubted nature of the facts, that the phenomena are real, and are not caused by the conscious or other action or actions of medium and sitters. I do not distrust mediums who insist on sitting in darkness, or in partial darkness, if the character of the phenomena appears to demand these conditions. There is much more to be dreaded than the mere exclusion, whole or partial, of physical light, viz., the inclusion in the sitters' minds that mediums who demand conditions favourable to the elucidation of phenomena must necessarily be rogues, and that the main if not the only duty of the sitters is to devise methods to prevent the mediums from indulging in trickery. There is assuredly a *dynamic power in human thought*, a subtle noumenon, which underlies all phenomena, mental or psychic, and which—incarnate or discarnate—can alter and modify shape, colour, taste, odour, and cause things and ideas, or ideas and shapes subjective, to appear objective, and cognisable. It is illogical to treat sensitives as tricksters, and then condemn them because they are unable to rise and live beyond the atmosphere of positive, pedantic, and intensely selfish minds by which they are surrounded. If Home, and a few others, at times were able to do this, it was at a terrible sacrifice of health and energy, and, without doubt, at a cost which either ended in driving them out of the movement, or of causing their premature decease. If convincing mediumship is to prevail, we must get back to the more genial ways and the 'Psychological Climate' of older investigators. Surely we have had too much of the telepathic hypothesis, and too much of the fraud theory, and far too little of the honest scientific spirit, in recent investigations among certain very learned and pedantic investigators of modern Spiritualism.

Personally, I do not lay much weight upon the opinions of men of science regarding either Mesmerism, Phrenology, Psychometry, or of Spiritualism. I have ever found them too fond of

a priori methods, and intolerant of facts which were not likely to fit in with pet theories, or were not sufficiently fashionable to get a hearing from their patrons—Church, Bar, and, last but not least, bank magnates.

We want more men of Professor De Morgan's type; more women of the character and courage of his devoted wife, more Colemans and Coopers; and then mediums, of pure and undoubted ability, would flourish in the climate which such genial, cultured, true and honest souls would create.

Glenbeg House, Rothesay.

JAMES COATES.

(For remainder of Correspondence see p. 605.)

RECEIVED.

- 'The Lyceum Banner,' for December. (London: 26, Osnaburgh-street, N.W. Price 1d.)
- 'The Spiritual Review,' for December. (London: 113, Edgware-road, W. Price 6d.)
- 'The Coming Day,' for December. (London: Williams & Norgate, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden. Price 3d.)
- 'Modern Astrology,' for December. (London: 1 and 2, Bouverie-street, E.C. Price 6d.)
- 'The Queen,' Christmas number. With two coloured plates. (London: Windsor House, Bream's-buildings, E.C. Price 1s.)
- 'Chapman's Magazine,' Christmas number. Tales fantastic and supernatural. (London: Chapman & Hall, 11, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, W.C. Price 6d.)
- 'The New Age': A Magazine of Spiritual Knowledge and Psychical Research, for November. (Edinburgh: Alex. Duguid, 25, Springwell-place, Dalry-road. Price 4d.)
- 'The Claims of Christianity Examined from a Rationalist Standpoint. By CHARLES WATTS. (London: Watts & Co., 17, Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C. Price 6d.)
- 'Transactions of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society,' for December. 'Dreams.' By C.W. LEADBEATER. (London: Theosophical Society, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. Price 1s.)
- 'A Handbook of Palmistry, after the Ancient Methods.' By ROSA BAUGHAN. Sixth (revised) edition; with five plates. (London: George Redway, 9, Hart-street, Bloomsbury, W.C. Price 1s. net.)
- 'Spiritual Truth and Common Sense.' A Plea for Spiritualism. By BRIAN HODGSON, Hon. Sec. Birmingham Spiritual Evidence Society. (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers, 37, New-street. Price 6d. net.)
- 'The Arena,' for December. With this number, Vol. XV. commences, and the price has been reduced from fifty cents to twenty-five per copy. (London agents: Gay & Bird, 22, Bedford-street, W.C.)
- 'Tales from the Bible.' A Rational and Ethical View of the Old Testament, suited to the Capacities of Children. By F. J. GOULD. (London: Watts & Co., 17, Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C. Price 1s.)
- 'The Windsor Magazine,' Christmas number. With a water-colour drawing by Her Majesty the Queen, and a copy of Conan Doyle's novel, 'A Story in Scarlet,' 224 pages. A wonderful shillingsworth. (London: Ward, Lock & Bowden, Salisbury-square, E.C. Price 1s.)
- 'Animisme et Spiritisme.' Essai d'un examen critique des phénomènes médiumniques spécialement en rapport avec les hypothèses de la Force Nerveuse, de l'Hallucination et de l'Inconscient. Comme réponse à l'ouvrage du Dr. Ed. von Hartmann, intitulé: 'Le Spiritisme.' Par ALEXANDRE AKSAKOFF, Directeur de la 'Revue Psychique Studien' (Recherches Psychiques, à Leipzig). Translated by Berthold Sandow. (Paris: Librairie des Sciences Psychiques. Editeur, P. G. Leymarie, 12, Rue du Sommerard. Price 10fr.)

THE 'Palmist and Chirollogical Review,' edited by Mrs. K. St. Hill and Mr. Charles F. Rideal, which enters into its fourth year in January next, will with that month's issue be considerably enlarged and improved, and a supplement dealing with Phrenology, Graphology, Physiognomy, and their allied sciences, added. The December number contains a study, with illustrations, of the hands of Mr. H. Beerbolm Tree.

THE 'ARENA.'—The 'Arena' is always good, but the number for December is specially so. It commences a new volume, and the price for each monthly issue has been reduced from fifty cents to twenty-five. The new number has beautifully printed portraits of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, J. G. Whittier, Dr. E. E. Hale, and Professor Richard T. Ely; and there are several able and interesting articles on psychical subjects. The London agents are Messrs. Gay and Bird, 22, Bedford street, W.C.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 2, DUKE STREET, ADELPHI,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14th, 1895.

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

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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

• 'FORBIDDEN BY GOD.'

Every few months, with quite touching regularity, we are challenged with the old warning and remonstrance: 'You are guilty of necromancy; you are trafficking with devils; you are disobeying God.' We should prefer to let the warning and remonstrance pass, like a gale from the north-east, with no more notice of it than is involved in putting on an overcoat, or ordering up an extra scuttle of coals: but there may be some utility in accepting these challenges. Our replies should be 'familiar in our mouths as household words.'

We are bound to say, however, that our challengers do not give us much encouragement to respond. They say so very little that is new. In fact, to be perfectly frank, they are rather tiresome. So far as they are concerned, it is useless to answer them. After the few allotted months, they return to the arena, and, as though they had never been there before, they solemnly repeat the same old warnings and seem to expect us to surrender on the spot. Take the instance at this moment before us. Here is a vigorous pamphlet with the following title: 'Spiritualism Forbidden of God: Its Source Satanic not Divine. Being a Letter to One in Danger of being Ensnared Thereby.' Published in Paternoster Row. It is not badly written. In fact, it is good as a specimen of sturdy, yet simple English. But a fatal prepossession vitiates it all—for us. We can quite understand, though, that over some minds, at certain stages of experience, it might have real influence. And that is why we reply to it.

We have, first of all, to note that the writer of this pamphlet admits and even insists upon the reality of the phenomena of Spiritualism. They all do. Here is a selection of his own admissions:—'I am perfectly convinced that the REAL thing is a REALITY (if you understand what I mean), whatever spurious imitations may be also afloat.' 'Men may ridicule and try to laugh the thing down, but their laughter is but an exhibition of their own ignorance.' 'I am perfectly convinced that *real* Spiritualism is *real*, and no sham.' 'Spiritualism, or intercourse with the spirit world through mediums, is . . . "as old as the hills."' 'Spiritualism is shown to have been in existence amongst the seven heathen nations whom the children of Israel were commissioned by God to drive out of the land of Canaan; that is, Spiritualism was raging upwards of three thousand years ago.' Of course we are duly grateful for these very useful admissions.

But another admission is made. Spiritualism is also spreading. He says, 'People are now everywhere becoming more or less familiar with the thing, and hence most rapid strides are being made, and many are getting ensnared; and I anticipate far greater advances shortly.' We hope so; but, for the moment, we doubt it, as the 'spurious imitations' are pitifully in evidence; and the effect of that may be to chill off sympathy and postpone adhesion to a

never popular cause. The writer of this pamphlet, as we have shown, very strongly distinguishes between the genuine and the spurious, but the world does not and will not; and, try as hard as we will to hunt down shams, we are debited with every one that is exposed.

The theory of this writer is that Spiritualism is sheer demonism—from first to last demonism; and he tells us how he knows it. It is the old vitiating assumption; 'I need hardly say that my appeal will be simply and entirely to Scripture, for it is Scripture alone that settles all these matters'—a statement which we like less every time we meet with it. It is, or ought to be, well known that the Old Testament denunciations refer to a particular kind of spirit communion; to put it plainly, to a spirit communion not in the line of Jehovah-worship. The best proof of this is that, while the Old Testament denounces certain kinds of spirit communion, it exalts to the highest place certain other kinds. This is precisely the point that is usually missed. The Bible is really full of spirit communion: but only that which is connected with Jehovah-worship is tolerated.

Of course, if we assume that the Jehovah of the Jews was the only real God, and that the Bible is the only inspired book, it is easy to believe, with this writer, that the spirit communion approved by Jehovah was not, in our sense, spirit communion at all, but only the manifestation of Himself and His messengers: and, if we are very resolute, we might go on to believe that God really 'commissioned' the Jews to destroy the heathen, that He 'decreed exterminating judgments against them' because they were Spiritualists, and that He killed Saul because he visited mediums. Only, in that case, we should be landed in a conclusion concerning God which would make it very hard to reverence and love Him.

We are told in this pamphlet that 'none but wicked men have indulged in Spiritualism, or intercourse with the spirit world through mediums'—a reckless statement which will only recoil upon the person who ventures to give expression to it; but it is useful as a kind of gauge which enables us to estimate the amount of temper and prejudice which enters into the composition of such a judge. It is even suggested that we know Spiritualism is demonism, and that we are only slowly disclosing our real object—hence we are horribly guilty in the sight of God. It is useless to argue against such gross exaggerations. We know well enough that Spiritualism has its dark side, and we welcome the help of all discriminating seekers after truth in pointing that out and guarding us against it; but these wild declaimers are worse than useless. They may, perhaps, hold off the timid, but they only provoke the courageous; and one extreme is apt to beget another, to the loss of influence and the obscuring of the better way. This writer has only one recommendation to offer;—*Shun it*. 'Shun it,' he cries; 'shun the thing wherever you may meet with it.' Is this the way to find out the truth? Is this the way the truth has *ever* been found?

The pamphlet ends with the old, old horror—Jesus will come with his mighty angels, 'in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God'; and they shall be 'punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.' Dear Jesus! what blasphemy has been spoken in thy name!

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of the members and friends of the Alliance will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 for 7.30 p.m., on Friday *next*, the 20th inst., when the Rev. J. Page Hopps will give an address on 'Experiments with Miss Kate Fox, and an Experiment with the Psychical Research Society.' We shall look for a large attendance.

'THE PROPER LIMITS OF OCCULT INVESTIGATION.'

BY MR. RICHARD HARTE.

Address delivered before the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance on the evening of Friday, November 29th, 1895.

The proper limit of a journey to Paris is Paris, and it seems equally evident that the proper limits of investigation depend on what you want to know. But there are timid folk who fear the Channel, and who limit their journey to Paris at the South Coast of England: and so, also, there are timid investigators who, for one reason or another, never arrive at whole-hearted investigation of the Occult. The ideas which these timid people have about the dangers of investigation are rather vague and incoherent; but those ideas all fall under one of three heads, namely, that occult researches are prohibited by religion; that they are harmful to oneself; that they are harmful to others. Some people, too, call such investigations waste of time; but that begs the question, for we cannot tell what useful things we may not find out. I propose therefore, this evening to consider these three objections to occult investigation in their order, and then draw my conclusion. Firstly, Is the prohibition of occult investigation by religion lawful, and therefore binding?

Although dealing also with the mysteries of life and death, religion has no sympathy with occult investigations—it is, in fact, necessarily prejudiced against them. Its dogmas cover all the ground; and it claims a monopoly of the whole field; it, therefore, regards independent research in that field as a manifestation of doubt or disbelief in its own authoritative teachings. The desire for knowledge for its own sake, and the *intellectual* as opposed to the *emotional* proof of a life beyond the grave, are conceptions quite foreign to all the old religions, and until recent times confined, in every age, to a few philosophers. Religion, therefore, admits of no compromise with psychical research; it is bound, whether justly or unjustly, to condemn it.

Now, priesthoods claim a monopoly of occult practices, and it is these, rather than occult investigations, that religion directly prohibits. But since it is only by experience and experiment that we can carry on occult investigations, as distinguished from mere Theosophical speculations, to prohibit occult practices is equivalent to prohibiting occult inquiry. The religious prohibition of occult practices acts rigidly in two directions; within the bosom of the Churches, or the boundaries of any established religion, it is universally unlawful for anyone but a priest, or a person licensed by the priesthood, to have any intercourse with supernatural beings, or to handle occult forces. And outside the boundaries of every Church, where, in occult matters, evil influences are supposed to reign, all interference with superhuman agencies is forbidden both to priest and layman. There can hardly be any doubt, for example, that if the Christian priesthood had now the power which it formerly possessed, the clergy could and would effectually prevent the holding of Spiritual séances. Unfortunately, the clergy are still able to create a strong prejudice against Spiritualism by indirect means, now that they cannot put it down authoritatively. The clergy by calling Spiritualism the work of the devil, and by declaring it wicked, influence even those who reject their doctrines, for they are able thus to keep alive the vague dread of the invisible world, which we find so often in the adult mind, as the echo of early teaching, and as the result, perhaps, of hereditary tendencies to belief. These indefinite fears militate against the serious investigation of occult things; and they can be banished only by the clear perception of how baseless are the theories of the priests concerning celestial and infernal beings.

I shall, therefore, assume that I have your permission to freely examine the religious doctrines, on the strength of which both priest and parson denounce Spiritualism as wrong and dangerous. I am, of course, to be held alone accountable for any unorthodox opinions I may put forward; for nothing is further from my wish than in any way to compromise either individuals, or the respected Association under whose auspices I have the honour of addressing you to-night.

Now, we have, both in the Bible and in the Sacred Books of other religions, the strongest evidence that every priesthood claims occult efficacy for its own rites, and arrogates supernatural powers to itself, the source of both of which is its own particular gods. No priesthood, however, denies to another

priesthood the credit of working wonders in the name of its own gods; although, indeed, the charge of vulgar trickery is sometimes brought against a rival priesthood; and its wonders, when allowed to be genuine, are called 'delusions of Satan,' instead of divine miracles. The contention of the priests of all religions has always been that their god is the strongest god, and the most beneficent god, and, therefore, a better god to serve than any of his rivals; who, the priests say, are 'false' gods, and broken reeds to those who lean on them. It is evident, indeed, that since all gods call for belief and worship on the same grounds, to dispute the real existence of one god would be to discredit the reality of all gods, which is by no means the object of the priests. When, therefore, in former times, the worshippers of the strongest god became powerful enough to suppress the worship of the weaker gods, they did not claim to have destroyed those gods. The dethroned deities were stripped of their honours and deserted by their worshippers, and this treatment was supposed to turn them into bitter enemies of the conquering god and of his followers—in other words, the conquered gods became evil spirits or devils. The possibility of getting into communication with these conquered gods is never denied by theologians; but, as this intercourse with a deposed ruler is treason to the reigning god, and implies the desire or intention of injuring his servants and worshippers, it has always been most strictly prohibited.

It is of this terrible theological crime that orthodoxy more or less openly accuses those who attempt any kind of psychical research; for everything supernormal occurring outside of its own priesthood each religion regards as the work of evil spirits. You, doubtless, know that the position taken up by the early Christian Fathers was that the deposed heathen deities are very living demons and devils, who for some good reason are permitted by God to trouble for a season the Church and the world; and that this is still the attitude of Protestant missionaries towards the gods of the heathen, and the attitude of the Church of Rome towards Spiritualism. That Church, as you know, does not deny the reality of the phenomena, but it attributes them to Satan, the enemy of Jehovah, the reigning God, an enemy whom it regards as a kind of synthesis of all the deposed heathen deities, now known as devils. This theodemonology also explains the position of the Luciferians, who are said to follow a ritual that is very similar to the ritual of the Church of Rome; and who go so far as to claim that Lucifer and his attendant demons, whom they worship, are not only actual realities, but are still our rightful celestial sovereigns, who ought to be acknowledged by all religious and virtuous men in place of the present occupant of the heavenly throne, a Being whom they declare to be an enemy in disguise and an audacious old Hebrew usurper.

The resemblance between the liturgy of the Luciferians and that of the Catholics is very suggestive. If we go back to early times, we find that all religious ceremonies were essentially of the nature of Magic; that is to say, their efficacy entirely depended upon the ritually correct performance of rites, by properly accredited or ordained persons; and I think it must be allowed that the popular religion of Christendom is still very largely imbued with this magic character. When the prayers and sacrifices were addressed to the reigning or conquering god, they were White or priestly Magic, which may still be regarded as synonymous with ceremonial religion; when the prayers and sacrifices were addressed to the conquered and discredited god, they were Black Magic, which, with the orthodox, is even now synonymous with devil-worship. But the difference between White and Black Magic does not lie in the nature of the ceremonies themselves, nor in the kind of favours sought, nor in the frame of mind of the worshipper; the whole difference consists in the fact that the prayers and sacrifices that are intended to obtain the assistance of the Higher Power are ostensibly addressed in the one case to the reigning sovereign and in the other to the deposed one. Do not suppose that the adherents of the deposed gods ask those gods only to do evil, or that the worshippers of the reigning god beseech him only to do good; although the White magicians call the more ancient religion 'Black Magic,' that religion is still capable of calling forth true devotion; and whoever be the god addressed, man's wants and his selfishness are about the same. It is true, indeed, that the bad reputation given to the fallen gods makes cruel and disgusting rites appear appropriate to them; but I think that this idea is fanciful. At all events, we need not be surprised that in both White Magic and Black the

burden of the supplication of the pious practically is : 'Do good to me, oh Lord, for I am thy servant and friend ; and do evil to my enemies, oh Lord, for my enemies are thy enemies also.'

What are we to think of all this ? It is evident that we have got into a theological morass, out of which we must find our way as best we can ; and the easiest way to get out seems to be to go straight ahead. I may say, therefore, that, all things considered, it appears to be contrary to all reason to suppose that a powerful, wise, and beneficent being, who had ruled the world from time immemorial according to his own good will and pleasure, and who always had the good of humanity and the triumph of virtue at heart, could by any possibility be driven out of his kingdom by an upstart god. It seems equally hard to believe that this ancient protector of humanity and friend of virtue, even were he conquered and dethroned, would immediately turn into a bitter and relentless enemy of man, and into the friend of vice and patron of every kind of iniquity ; yet that is virtually the story put forward by the priests, and that story seems to be their only justification for trying to prevent occult investigations.

Now, the tendency of modern scientific Theology also is to contravene the old stories of gods turned devils. It has become a commonplace in recent religious thought that, behind all the different names which men have given to God, there stands only one and the same Divine Being, who is, however, so imperfectly perceived that each religion thinks its own distorted conception of Him to be a separate individual God. According to this essentially monotheistic view, when an old Egyptian worshipped Set or Satan, an ancient Phœnician offered sacrifices to Beelzebub, and an old Roman said his prayers to Lucifer, they were all in reality addressing the same great Being with whom, under the name of Jehovah, the British clergy expostulate every Sunday with such pleasing familiarity. This, of course, quite precludes the idea that Satan, Beelzebub, and Lucifer are living demons and devils. Those names can, in that case, be nothing but so many designations for the little broken glimpses of the same everlasting God, now postulated by religion ; and the man who calls upon Lucifer or Beelzebub to have mercy upon him and save him is not a horrible blasphemer and devil-worshipper at all, but simply a peculiar kind of church-goer, who is using in his worship names and forms that have gone out of fashion.

But how about the reigning gods of India, China, and other Eastern countries ; are not those gods officially regarded as demons or devils by the Christian Churches, although they have never been conquered and deposed ? The answer is, that the theologian considers every god but his own a 'false' or 'strange' god, and therefore diabolical, whether deposed or not. Indra, Vishnu, Buddha, and other Eastern gods and demi-gods, are not popularly recognised in England as devils, as Satan, Lucifer, and Beelzebub are, simply because they have not come in contact with popular Christianity ; but Christian theologians are obliged to theoretically regard them as demons, and the missionaries, who make the acquaintance of those gods in their own territories, stigmatise their worship as undoubtedly that of the devil—of a devil whose worshippers have not yet found out his true character. But when we examine this theological view of the devil critically, we discover one of those logical awkwardnesses that are so common in Christian Theology ; for we find that those spiritual Powers whom the Christian calls 'devils,' are not only recognised by the heathen as 'gods,' but that they actually perform all the duties and functions of gods for their worshippers, quite as satisfactorily as the Christian God does for his own. The logical conclusion, were this point pressed, would evidently be that, whatever or whoever the respective Celestial Potentates of Christendom and Heathendom may really be, they are equally gods or equally devils—each religion apparently mistaking its own particular Celestial Goose for a Divine Swan !

With regard to the philosophical concept of the devil as 'the Principle of Evil,' that idea is, on the face of it, an absurdity ; because, as I need hardly remind you, it is now universally acknowledged that *good* and *evil* are merely relative terms, and, therefore, that such a thing as *absolute* evil is unthinkable and meaningless. So true is this, that every attempt to portray a devil of that kind has completely failed, even in the hands of such masters as Dante, Milton, Byron, and Goethe, to say nothing of Marie Corelli. This poetic concept, of the devil as a fallen angel, whose nature is to be angelic, however hard he tries to make himself out diabolic, has nothing in common with the devil of the Churches, who is a regular old scoundrel, with

an unappeasable appetite for souls, and a dreadful fear of holy water ; and who holds Jehovah's commission to plague the good man while alive, and to torture the evil one when dead.

Scientific Theology gives still another blow to this theory of the priests ; for it tells us that religions are born, live out their lives, and die when they are no longer able to adapt themselves to their continually altering environment ; and that each religion, as it grows, crystallises round its own particular gods. Those gods, although resembling each other in general features, differ not only in name, but in individual character, some being more ferocious, others milder, than the rest ; the tendency of gods being, on the whole, towards greater benevolence and large-mindedness, in proportion as men themselves become more humane. Now, according to this theory, when a religion dies and disappears, what becomes of the god who was its animating force ? God is defined as a spirit, and therefore it seems natural to suppose that this spirit does not die with the religion it has been animating ; but that the spirit of the dead religion passes into the new-born religion ; and that this new god manifests on earth with such changes of disposition as might be expected in a god re-incarnating under such different circumstances. According to this theory, the present occupant of the Celestial throne would be, in Theosophical phraseology, the same *individual* God who reigned in ancient Egypt ten thousand years ago, but who now is manifesting himself in England in a different *personality*. It is, I know, extremely difficult to grasp the shadowy forms we encounter on the theological plane ; but we may say that this latter theory of the gods is just as incompatible as the former with the doctrine of the devil put forward by the Christian Church, which doctrine is, as we have seen, the only warrant that religion has for attempting to prevent or limit inquiry into the Occult. The theory of a re-incarnating god implies that the life long ago went out of the former personalities of God—the old heathen gods, of whom there remains now but the tradition ; and since the old gods cannot be both dead and alive at the present day, it is evident that the metamorphosis of the heathen deities into Christian devils must be a false idea, if their re-incarnation in succeeding god-personalities be true.

But modern religious thought deals another and much heavier blow to the theo-demonology of the priests. Our present religious consciousness, the outcome of our recently acquired knowledge of the illimitable extent and complexity of the universe, and the outcome also of our correspondingly developed moral conception of a divine Power, is quite unable to accept the gods and devils of the old religions as beings of the same order as Deity, such as Deity is now conceived to be by the more advanced religious minds. In one aspect Deity is now *seen* to be the Life and Intelligence, the Informing Spirit and Moving Soul of the Universe ; and, in another aspect, Deity is *felt* to be the essence of good—absolute Love, Justice, Beauty, and so on ; and it is now pretty clearly perceived that in neither aspect is Deity, as thus understood, in the smallest way identical with any of the gods of the priests—whether those gods turn into devils, or succeed each other by re-incarnating, or are all the same god, acting his leading part in successive religious dramas. Deity, the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe, is, as we see, absolute goodness and wisdom, according to the best modern religious conceptions ; whereas, the history of the gods of the priests, even of the reigning God Jehovah, as told by the servants of those gods themselves, is one long and terrible story of cruelties and injustices inflicted by them upon their 'enemies'—unfortunate human beings whose sole crime was that, in their ignorance, they offered up their piteous supplications to rival gods, their own hereditary deities ; a story varied only by the accounts of the favours heaped by the new gods upon their own 'servants,' who fed and flattered them, and who, like David and Constantine, were frequently steeped in every kind of crime and vice.

Everyone is more or less cognisant of those facts, and conscious of those ideas ; and the consequence is that disbelief in the real existence of the gods of the priests is becoming common, and the Devil is now very generally regarded as a myth by educated men and women. When people now talk of 'God' they usually have in their minds the philosophical conception of Deity. When they speak of the Devil, they generally mean an abstraction, not a personality. This incredulity, however, if logically carried out, would mean that the gods and devils of Theology have no other existence than that of fancies in the minds of those who believe in them. But

this theory is hardly tenable, for it requires us to regard all the multitudes of stories told in all ages of the visits made to mortals by celestial and infernal beings, as so many lies; whereas, according to the accounts that have come down to us, the appearance, words, and actions of those beings are in some respects so like the 'phenomena' of our séance rooms that it is impossible absolutely to discredit them. It seems much more probable that the stories which the priests tell of their gods have a foundation of fact, than that they are completely imaginary.

In fact, the logical conclusion to be drawn from the similarity of the old accounts of the visits of gods, angels, and demons with our own experiences of 'spirits,' seems to be, firstly, that there exists in some sphere contiguous to earth a hierarchy of beings very similar in character to ourselves, who, in all ages, have been able occasionally to communicate with mortals; but who, far from being in any way identical with Deity, are not even very high in the scale of super-human beings, and who, in their own sphere, are subject to laws and conditions and contingencies, just as much as we are in ours. And, secondly, that the religious men of early times, in their ignorance of material nature, of human nature, and of the divine nature, absurdly credited those beings with powers and functions that did not in any way belong to them; confounding them, on the one hand, with the forces of nature which we call blind and unintelligent, and, on the other, with the great invisible Life and Intelligence, and Fountain of Goodness, which we call Deity—the commonest confusion being, curiously enough, that between a defunct ancestor and the Lord of the Universe himself! It is chiefly this hierarchy of spiritual beings—among whom it would seem that we must number disembodied mortals—that is the subject of our investigations in the séance room.

(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 Photographs.

SIR,—I herewith forward you the spirit photo of Mrs. Humphrey and the two taken in earth life. Allow me to remark that the one with a child on her lap was taken when she was about nineteen years of age, and unmarried, and the other (the cabinet) at the age of thirty, when she was the mother of three children. In this one the face is somewhat drawn with suffering, as her health had been declining for some time. In the spirit photo all trace of suffering is gone, and the face is more mobile, but more womanly, than the early one; but as her features were strongly marked you will have no difficulty in seeing the fine eyes, the straight Grecian nose, and the mouth—in all three the same; but the spirit photo is most like the early earth life photo.

E. HUMPHREY.

[We should have been indeed gratified if, on comparing the portraits which Mr. Humphrey has kindly sent us, we had been able to say with confidence that they are portraits of the same lady. Unfortunately we cannot; but it is only fair to add that there is sufficient similarity to make the identity just possible. After all, Mr. Humphrey ought to be the most competent judge, for in the 'psychic' photo the features are so distinct that we cannot imagine any hesitation on his part in deciding whether they are those of his wife or not; but this perplexing question presents itself—how is it that this 'psychic' portrait is in every respect the same as one obtained by the Rev. J. Page Hopps a few weeks ago with the same photographer? Not merely are the features and the expression the same, but the pose, which is a very striking one, is the same in the minutest detail. In both cases the figure holds flowers in the left hand, and the form and arrangement of every leaf and petal are the same; and there are also the same flaws in each print! In fact, the two are in every respect as much alike as if they had been printed from the same negative.—ED. OF 'LIGHT.']

Reply to Mr. Vincent Goddard.

SIR,—Without entering into the question of fraud on the part of the photographer 'Z.," as insinuated in the letter of Mr. Vincent Goddard, I should like to say that the photograph to which Mr. Goddard refers as being a production of a fraudulent nature was not in any way regarded by "Z." as a spirit

photograph. It was a copy from an original and ordinary photo, painted and 'touched up,' so to speak, to meet the requirements of some person or persons, I believe, who were interested in the matter of photography, whether spiritual or material. The charge of 'fraud' is utterly unwarrantable respecting the photograph in question (so far as 'Z.' is concerned), as the picture was brought to me by Mr. Evans, a gentleman deeply interested in spirit photography, and who, no doubt, had unwittingly placed the photo amongst those brought for exhibition as spirit photographs. I should be the last man in the world to defend a dishonest action, and one of the first to expose a fraud. But in cases of this kind we require to be extremely cautious in our judgment. I know nothing whatever of the art of photography; I have no pecuniary interest in the photos in question; I have no ambition to make an exhibition of myself by rushing into print over a question which it is difficult to settle by a war of words; but I have an interest in every phase of spiritual phenomena that concern the happiness and welfare of mankind; and when I reflect upon the fact that those men who have been the first to hold these photos up to light as living evidences of spirit return, are still, apparently, awaiting a clearer proof of the genuineness of such striking manifestations I am content to hide the light I have under a bushel, until the time comes when we may be blessed with those noble qualifications of the mind that make us hold a man innocent until we prove him to be guilty.

HORATIO HUNT.

£100 for a Genuine Spirit Photograph!

SIR,—In your criticism, contained in your issue of November 30th, regarding the conditions of the production of so-called 'spirit photographs,' you remark that 'it ought to be possible to raise £50 to carry out a series of experiments by a friendly committee . . . for the purpose of finding out' the truth of this subject.

A friend of mine offered Mr. Stead some time ago the sum of £100 if a so-called 'spirit photograph' was produceable under what are apparently reasonable conditions, namely, (a) on a photographic plate procured from a manufacturer's box and duly marked; (b) the use of my friend's own camera and dark slide; (c) the medium to handle camera, dark slide, and if desired, to be present during the whole course of the experiment, but the dark slide containing the marked plate never to be out of sight of my friend, either in the studio or dark room, until the plate be fully developed and fixed. I know my friend to be a most sympathetic investigator, who postulates a spiritual world, and is very willing to believe in the possibility of the production of such photographs, but the genuineness of the evidence hitherto presented has always appeared to him to be somewhat doubtful. Mr. Stead has not accepted my friend's offer. I shall be very pleased to put you in communication with him, and, perhaps, something may be done towards the formation of such a friendly, yet critical, committee as you suggest. I enclose my card.

London, November 30th, 1895.

TRUTH SEEKER.

Spirit Photography.—The Phantoms Fully Recognised.

SIR,—In the interests of truth, as well as for the information of yourself and those readers of 'LIGHT' interested in this unique phase of occult science, I deem it my duty to make the following statement, leaving the matter in the hands of yourself and the readers of 'LIGHT' to form their own conclusions.

About July last, when residing in London, I met a Mr. Z., who has already been adversely commented upon by yourself (perhaps not without good reason) at a materialisation sitting, held near Hereford-road, Bayswater, with the object of testing the *bona fides* of the medium, who has, rightly or wrongly, been long suspected. I was given to understand, by himself, and two of the sitters (a Mr. E.) and the medium (Mr. G.) that he (Mr. Z.) had obtained recognised spirit photographs, at his studio, in the neighbourhood of Shepherd's Bush, besides other private places. The same evening, at the residence of the medium (whose *bona fides* I subsequently proved to my entire satisfaction, and reported the fact in 'LIGHT,' July 13th), I was shown several supposed spirit photographs, two of which were fully recognised, one as the niece of Mr. E., one of the sitters (who also claimed to be able to get psychic pictures at times), and the other as the spirit children of the medium, which they declared was unmistakable evidence, at least to themselves.

Mr. Z., in answer to my request, cordially agreed to give me a sitting at any time I desired, without alluding to payment. A

sitting was arranged, and in order to give greater psychic power, Mr. G., the materialising, psychometric, and clairvoyant medium, agreed to be present on the occasion—so that he might also discern and describe any phantom forms that might appear but be invisible to ordinary mortals not so gifted.

I took my wife and daughter, Blanche (both of whom are frequently controlled by disembodied people), and two Irish ladies with me, hoping that between us we should obtain a form that we recognised.

In this we were all greatly disappointed, and from the results could not help thinking that it looked very much like 'a made-up affair,' although we had no proof. During the four separate sittings my wife and daughter were under strong spirit influence, Mrs. Hutchinson having, whilst in the chair, and on my handing her a pencil and paper, written a name, known to me, in what is called 'negative writing,' which could only be easily read by holding it before a mirror. My daughter also described phantom forms moving about near the chair, as also did Mr. G., the many-phased sensitive already mentioned. From all this we naturally predicted startling results, but were much disappointed, as I have already stated, because, although the figures were easily enough seen, none out of the four were recognised. Mr. Z. let 'Borderland' have one of the photos, showing myself and a sort of Indian youth attired in a strange get-up. (See 'Coloured Boy Dressed in Table Cloth,' in 'Borderland' for last October.) I emphatically, but most sympathetically, informed Mr. Z. at the time that, although I had no reason to doubt his *bona fides*, still, as I was not an expert photographer, and consequently took no precautions whatever, unless we fully recognised some of the figures or phantom forms, the evidential value of the experiment would be *nil*. Suspicions of a grave nature arose, when on comparing these photographs with those of strangers to me, who had also sat, I found that the same spirits appeared much too often for my liking on different plates, which aroused suspicions of fraud. Still, for all that, being a veteran in occult science, and knowing the subtleties and apparent inconsistencies that frequently appear, I strongly advised all my friends to suspend their judgment, which advice I now rejoice to say was not without favourable results.

About six weeks ago a lady whom I met here gave me an introduction to her brother, living in Colville-gardens, Bayswater, London, who is greatly interested in psychic photography, and with whom I arranged to have some sittings with Mr. Z. I also made a special trip to London on November 27th, and had two sittings, one with the lady (his sister) who gave me the introduction, and one by myself. I returned the same night, and was promised that the photos would be forwarded in a few days.

Whilst seated in the chair, Mr. Z. seemed to be under control (this could easily be simulated), and stated that there was a young girl who seemed exceedingly anxious to get her picture given, and that there was another figure with her. On Tuesday, the 3rd inst., my newly-found and sympathetic friend at Colville-gardens sent me the photographs, and also one of those from his *special* family sitting. None of the forms on his four pictures were recognised, and seeing that on one of mine, where his sister sat with me, the same female phantom again appeared, he stated that he could not help it when he said that he felt almost disgusted at the result. I fully sympathised with him in this feeling, but when I examined my photos I found that on the one where I sat alone (intensely desiring that some of my own 'ascended' relatives might appear, if it were possible) there appeared two figures, which I instantly recognised as those of my wife's father and his child (her own sister), the sister having died at Cape Town a few weeks before our departure for England, and who had, an hour or two before her death, declared that her father—then already dead—was in the room waiting for her to 'go over there.'

Although the likeness was very striking, I was not intensely impressed at the moment, because I had prayed earnestly at the time that some of my own blood relations might appear; and I was also at that time—when the photos arrived—very busy; so I put them on one side until my daughter Grace, aged fifteen, came in, and when I showed her the pictures and said, 'Do you recognise the faces, or forms?' she immediately replied 'Yes; it is grandpa and Florrie'—in which opinion I fully concurred.

I then let my wife and daughter (Blanche) inspect them, but before doing so, said: 'Do you recognise any of these pictures?' when both instantly said: 'Why, it's papa and Florrie.' I then said: 'Well, if Kate and her husband' (Mrs. Hutchinson's

sister and her husband, now residing here) 'confirm our opinion, only then will I consider it good evidence that the phantoms are genuine. Still, to myself it will not be *absolute proof*, though I do not believe that Z. would be such a mean, detestable, and unprincipled being as to try and *violate* the sacred feelings of honourable and upright searchers after truth. If he does, and it was found out, as regards myself, it would not affect my belief in spirit communion one iota, because my faith is built on the rock of practical research.'

In conclusion, I would like to state that I am fairly well acquainted with all the facts of spirit photography, for and against, during the last twenty-five years; that I fully believe we do occasionally obtain genuine pictures, and that, until someone can prove to me by practical illustration how my father-in-law and his child—who were never in England or their photos seen—were placed on the negative plate by fraud, I shall gladly hold to all the joy and pleasures of the gospel of psychic photography, which belief will also be shared by my dear wife and children, and her relatives, who fully believe that their father and sister have succeeded in manifesting their presence, and thus fulfilled their promises, made when in this life, that they would do all they could to give us a proof of their existence, should they be called away first.

BERKS T. HUTCHINSON, D.D.S., L.D.S.

Langholm, 28, The Avenue, Southampton.

Psychic Photography.

SIR,—For a number of years I have spent much time in an earnest and assiduous investigation of the phenomena claimed by many to be of spiritual or super-mundane origin; but—though I have received some fairly good tests—the evidence accruing therefrom has not been of such a nature as to entirely dispel my materialistic predilections. I am wishful, by the adoption of any honest and legitimate means, to obtain all the proof possible; and, as there is another phase of phenomena I have not yet explored, viz., spirit photography, I would very much like—being a photographer—to tap this source of evidence as far as my environments will permit, in the hope that I may have 'The Veil Lifted,' and become the happy recipient of a new light, a new knowledge, a new experience that may at least help to scatter the clouds of doubt which hang in such thick, mysterious darkness overhead. If I can photograph something which is beyond the power of my natural vision to detect, I know there must be some entity or substance there which has the power to reflect sufficient light to affect the sensitive silver emulsion with which my photo plate is coated; for, as we all know, an object is only photographable in proportion to the amount of light it reflects. In short, if I can photograph a spirit or the form it builds, there must be a spirit or its form there to be photographed.

With all due deference to such a trustworthy investigator as the late Mr. J. Traill Taylor, not having seen his negatives nor witnessed any of his experiments, I cannot regard the results of his labour—as described in the pages of 'LIGHT' and elsewhere—except in the light of secondary evidence. Proof, in this case, must be personal. I shall therefore feel exceedingly grateful to any competent correspondent who may have had successful experience in this direction, for any instructions in regard to conditions, *modus operandi*, diaphragm, plate, exposure, &c. There is one condition I would feel justified in making, viz.: that no one but myself should touch the plates until after development; though, of course, I would not only be willing but very wishful to have three or four respectable witnesses to testify to the absolute absence of film-faking on my part.

I may add that I am connected with a circle of Spiritualists (five ladies and five gentlemen), in whose sincerity of purpose, honesty, and integrity of character I have implicit confidence.

Co-operative-street,

Shildon, Durham.

W. MACKERELL.

Sudden Death and Premature Burial.

SIR,—The numerous cases of sudden death reported in the Press, give rise to serious reflections on the part of the thoughtful reader.

Sudden death is not in itself an evil. Many persons anticipate with dread a long illness, physical suffering, and the trouble and anxiety imposed upon friends and relations. The late Bishop of Oxford, Dr. Samuel Wilberforce, looked upon a quick deliverance from the body as an unmingled blessing. Riding out one day he was thrown from his horse, dying instantly.

One important matter to be considered in cases of alleged sudden death is that which is now engaging public attention both here and in the United States, viz. : Is the death real or only apparent? A shock caused by fright, or a state of prolonged nervous exhaustion, sometimes culminates in an attack of trance, catalepsy, or suspended animation, or it comes on suddenly when in good health, and the patient is for a time either quite unconscious or unable to manifest the faintest signs of life. A case of this description occurred quite recently in one of the London hospitals.

Describing death-trance in Quain's 'Dictionary of Medicine,' pp. 1652-3, the writer says: 'The mental functions seem in most cases to be in complete abeyance. No manifestations of consciousness can be observed or elicited by the most powerful cutaneous stimulation, and on recovery no recollection of the state is preserved: but in some cases volition only is lost, and the patient is aware of all that passes, though unable to give the slightest evidence of consciousness.' Numerous cases of apparent sudden death are recorded where consciousness has only returned just before burial, and, it is believed, in not a few cases afterwards.

Dr. Franz Hartmann, in his recent monograph, 'Buried Alive; an Examination into the Occult Causes of Apparent Death, Trance, and Catalepsy' (a new edition of which is about to be issued by Swan Sonnenschein and Co.), has collected several hundreds of such cases, and furnished particulars of over one hundred as typical of the remainder, with suggestions for their prevention.

According to Hufeland, Hartmann, Wilder and other high authorities, decomposition is the only certain sign that life is extinct. Medical certificates (so frequently given without examination) where there is no sign of death, other than unconsciousness or absence of volition, are shown to be very untrustworthy.

Petitions have been recently presented to several of the State Legislatures in America with the object of putting an end to premature burial, and measures ought to be taken in the same direction in England. Live sepulture, it is to be hoped, will not be much longer tolerated in civilised countries. T.W.

The Theosophical Society.

SIR,—Having read the communications by 'Quæstor Vitæ,' in reference to the origin of the Theosophical Society, will you permit me to state that if Colonel Olcott did not desire that the servant of Mrs. Phillips should personate a Mahatma, he ought to deny it in the columns of your valuable journal? I have frequently heard with pleasure and edification the eloquent lectures of Mrs. Besant, and am inclined to believe

That the creatures just existing
When the change of death is o'er,
In some other form returning.
Taste of conscious life once more,

and to think that the theory of re-incarnation may be correct, but I object to any truth being bolstered up by fraud or falsehood, and want to know whether Colonel Olcott did, or did not, desire that a servant of Mrs. Phillips should personate a Mahatma.

124, Wilderspool-road, Warrington. S. KENYON.

A Dream of Music.

SIR,—A little incident has occurred here which, I think, is worth mentioning. A friend of mine, who is a professional violin player, had a difficulty in playing certain staccato passages on his violin, which difficulty often annoyed him. He has, however, overcome the difficulty from information received in a dream. On a recent Saturday night, or rather Sunday morning, my friend had a dream, in which he came across Mr. John Dunn, the famous violin player. My friend asked him how a certain passage might be played. Mr. John Dunn at first declined to say, but, on being again asked, he told my friend how to proceed. When my friend awoke in the morning, he had a clear impression of his dream, and on taking up his violin he found, to his great delight, that he could now play the passages in the way shown him in his dream.

The record of this dream might bring information as to other similar incidents, and would, no doubt, interest a good many violin players, and especially Mr. John Dunn himself, who, I believe, is in London at the present time. Wishing success to 'LIGHT,'

Pudsey, near Leeds.

JNO. SHARPE.

P.S.—The address of my friend is, Mr. Luther Gaunt, Violinist, &c., near the Post-office, Pudsey, near Leeds.

The Late Countess of Caithness.

SIR,—It would be, indeed, deplorable if a belief in Spiritualism should tend to a disbelief in Jesus, whose teachings and whose acts were Spiritualism to the core; or should lead to a supposed necessity for burial otherwise than according to the rites of the Church of which a person has become a member and never repudiated, although there may be points of opinion, marking diversity from some anterior thoughts, in one who has been awakened to the knowledge of a present movement of the spirit arousing new convictions; yet convictions perhaps not greater in difference than those existing in different Churches, or, indeed, among members of the same Church.

With regard to the late lamented Lady Caithness, it is especially difficult to conceive that she would have objected to Christian burial by the Church into which she had been formally inducted and which she had never formally renounced; inasmuch as, with all her acquired knowledge in matters of the spirit, she was a Christian to the bottom of her being; and, perhaps, the more so on account of that knowledge.

The above assertion is abundantly verified by the very last book published by the Countess, a volume of 599 pp., called 'Le Secret du Nouveau Testament' (Paris: 124, Avenue de Wagram, 1890), which book her ladyship kindly presented to me a short time ago, as she has also others during many years.

Foretelling events is not an unknown element in the Spiritualism of these latter days, and it is on prophecy that Lady Caithness lays special stress in her argument respecting the essential value of the Old and New Testament. In the summing up of this, her last and important work (page 549), a very small portion of which I here translate, she says:—

To establish the truth of a prophecy is to overthrow the whole fabric of the enemy, for that establishes the inspiration of God's Word. To establish the truth of a prophecy of the Christ is to prove, not only His authority as an instructor, but also His divinity; for that puts the seal and the sanction of God on the evidences of the Christ. See the appeal which He Himself makes to His prophecies: 'And now I have told you, before it come to pass, that, when it has come to pass, ye may believe.' (John xiv. 29.)

Such, then, are our reasons for considering the Christian religion, founded on the Jewish Bible, as possessing a Divine origin and a supreme sanction. Our proofs may be divided into proofs 'exterior' and proofs 'interior.' The *interior* proofs comprehend the character of the Christ Himself as well as the doctrine and morality taught by Christianity, and its adaptability to human needs; the logic of the Bible, and its tokens of truth, of purity, and of sincerity in its various authors. The *exterior*, or historical, proofs are those which are found in the need which man had of a revelation from God, the authority and the benefit accruing from these writings, and the argument that prophecy and miracle put the seal on such revelation, and sanction it. &c.

Then Lady Caithness has a chapter on 'The Principle of the Divine Feminine,' to which the rites of the Roman Catholic Church are especially adapted. WM. R. TOMLINSON, M.A.

The Mystery of Miss Diana Vaughan.

SIR,—Allow me publicly to thank Mr. Arthur Edward Waite for his excellent and judicious letter, which is also in several particulars of original importance. I am glad that he has taken up the question, with an information more exact and extensive than my own. I willingly commit it to him. As regards the suggestion of a translation of 'Le Diable au XIX^{me} Siècle,' I have had a letter entertaining it from a well-known publisher, but have no intention of entering on such an undertaking. Even were there no other objections in the present state of the question, I am not sufficiently in love with the subject. The fifth number of Miss Vaughan's 'Mémoires' is now to hand. There is a great deal in it about 'my ancestor, Thomas Vaughan,' which, if true of Eireneus, is very curious and interesting. Of Eugenius Philalethes, Thomas Vaughan, it is assuredly not true. But Mr. Waite may find in it much material for criticism or research, as it concerns the Origin and History of the Rosicrucians. There is not one word, even of allusion, to the criticism sent by me to Miss Vaughan through her publishers. For the present, therefore, I have nothing more to say; your readers must form their own conclusions. I shall be glad if Mr. Waite can further assist them and me in the whole matter.

C.C.M.

SIR,—I see the point in 'C.C.M's.' letter about my hinted suggestion respecting Starkey. I did not think it likely that he would venture to take his *own* master's name for many reasons,

but, as in these day philosophers correspond with each other, the brothers Vaughan might well be known to Starkey through his master, and there might have been no danger in assuming the name of Vaughan. But, of course, it is all surmise on my part. I feel with Mr. Waite that the Jesuits need not be charged with these volumes. If so, they must cordially regret them.

Edinburgh.

ISABEL DE STEIGER.

Commercial Mediumship.

SIR,—I am happy to say that during the year in which I have taken 'LIGHT,' it has come with as much regularity as a paper from New York, arriving here in ten or eleven days after its date, with perhaps a single exception. I am also glad to recognise its high character as a worthy exponent of a cause which is still on the defensive.

A most pressing question now is whether 'commercial mediumship' is worth preserving. Do the higher spirit intelligences wish to go into partnership in mundane business with a class of persons whose leading qualification is that of being passive instruments of unknown intelligences, who usually lead such instruments eventually into fraudulent practices? If not, are we wise to seek communion with those spirits who only amuse us by moving tables and beguiling our senses in the dark? At the late National Convention of the N.S.A. at Washington, very little recognition was given to the evils growing out of 'commercial mediumship,' but a powerful voice was raised for 'protecting our mediums.' Since that time President Barrett has very properly warned Spiritualists against being found espousing the cause of frauds and fortune tellers.

Eusapia Paladino may have been at first a very good medium for physical phenomena, but when the serpent beguiled her she fell. She has indeed covered herself with a certain kind of glory in so long beguiling bright and distinguished people. She has equalled the foxes who misled the dogs by going back on their own tracks.

A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN BRANCH OF THE S.P.R.
Madison, Wisconsin, U.S.A.

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.]

SUNDAY SERVICE AT CAVENDISH ROOMS.

On Sunday evening last, at the Cavendish Rooms, the headquarters of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, Mr. E. W. Wallis, of Manchester, delivered an address, entitled 'Do Spirits Return? If so, what of it?'

Apart from the interest excited by the lecture, which was a brilliant piece of oratory, the occasion was rendered noteworthy by the presence, in the chair, of Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, the President of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

The Chairman, in the course of some introductory remarks, explained why he occupied his unusual position that evening. He was induced to take the chair, not only because he had been requested to do so by the President of the Marylebone Society, but because it gave him, as President of the London Spiritualist Alliance, an opportunity of expressing the sympathy of the Alliance with the work of the association, and extending to the latter the right hand of fellowship. He took the opportunity of congratulating the society on its great success as a propagandist body. He had personally met people who had been converted from materialism by the agency of the society. In conclusion, he referred to the presence amongst them of Mr. James Robertson, of Glasgow, the President of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists, whom he called upon to address a few words to the audience.

In response, Mr. James Robertson offered a few remarks expressive of the pleasure he felt in again meeting London workers. He had been for many years acquainted with the truths of Spiritualism, and could not adequately express the great blessing it had been to him. He was one of those who could speak with knowledge and assurance of the great fact of a future life, and, as such, he deprecated the idea that it was necessary for convinced and experienced Spiritualists to revise their tenets in accordance with the dictates and prejudices of scientific investigators, many of whom were comparatively new to the subject. Mr. Robertson also made reference to some of his early experiences, and concluded with a warm exhortation to unity and fellowship amongst the witnesses to the truth.

Mr. E. W. Wallis then, under influence, delivered the address of the evening, which we regret the great pressure on our space at present prevents our referring to more fully.

At the conclusion of the address Mr. T. Everitt, the President of the society, addressed the audience, speaking in high

terms of the work and character of the gentlemen present on the platform that evening (Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mr. E. W. Wallis, and Mr. James Robertson). He also alluded to the fact that Mr. David Duguid, the well-known Glasgow painting medium, was present.

Pianoforte solos by Miss Butterworth, R.A.M., and a song by Miss Florence Morse were rendered during the evening, and formed a pleasing indication of the musical talents and resources of the society. A large audience was present, and the meeting was in every respect a success.

Next Sunday, December 15th, Miss Rowan Vincent, clairvoyance, with some remarks by Mr. David Duguid.—D. G.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday next Dr. Reynolds will occupy our platform. Mr. Savage will be the medium for next Friday. On Sunday last Mr. White delivered an excellent address, and we hope to be often favoured with his presence amongst us.—T. MACCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

WELCOME HALL, 218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END.—On Sunday last Mr. Emms delivered an interesting address, which was highly appreciated by a large audience. Mr. Downing gave some clairvoyant descriptions which were recognised. On Sunday next Mr. Wyndoe will give an address. Several mediums have promised to give clairvoyance after the address. Thursday, 19th inst., public meeting.—E. FLINT, Sec.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday last Mr. R. Beel gave us the first of a series of lectures, the subject being 'Man's Spiritual Condition,' dealing with the soul, and offering many proofs of its existence. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Beel will continue his lectures. Subject: 'Man's Mental Condition,' followed by Mr. Blackman, with psychometry.—J. B.

ISLINGTON, WELLINGTON HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. Rodger occupied the chair and spoke upon 'The World's Religions.' Personal testimony as to the value of Spiritualism was given by Messrs. Adams and Brooks, followed by Mr. Smith, of Birmingham, on the same lines; the fact of his twenty-five years' experiences in the movement adding to the interest. Some twenty of the audience gave in their names for membership of the society.—T. B.

CARDIFF, ST. JOHN'S HALL.—On Sunday last the service was conducted by Mr. E. G. Sadler, who gave an excellent address upon "Some of the Teachings of Spiritualism." Mr. Sadler has done yeoman service in a quiet way for the cause by the exercise of his mediumship, and in other directions, and we are pleased and encouraged by the ability displayed in this his maiden address from our platform, which fully qualifies him to take rank with our small band of local workers. Speaker next Sunday evening, Mr. E. Adams.—E. A.

SPIRITUAL MISSION, CHEPSTOW HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM, S.E.—On Tuesday last we held our usual weekly circle, and had a most harmonious gathering. Mr. Robson gave some remarkable clairvoyance, every description being fully recognised. We are pleased to say that our circles and meetings are steadily improving. On Sunday last Mr. Evans gave a very interesting lecture on 'Spirit Photography,' illustrating his remarks with specimens. The audience listened to his remarks with rapt attention and were delighted with the photographs he brought. On Tuesday next open circle, at 7.30 p.m.; free healing by the secretary. We hope to see many friends.—J. C. JONES, Hon. Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday last Mr. Long, in an interesting address, dealt with the subject of 'Bible Mediums,' and, by desire, especially with Samuel, his life, and the influence he had in his day and generation. Samuel, he said, was the chief man of his nation—the king-maker and king-breaker—a Biblical Earl of Warwick, without the good qualities of the latter. Samuel it was who placed Saul, 'the man of the Lord,' over the people. Having read numerous extracts from the Bible dealing with the atrocities committed by this 'man of God,' with the authority and sanction of 'the Lord,' he said that he found himself unable to identify God—'the great I Am'—with 'the Lord' so often mentioned in Holy Writ. He referred his hearers to 1 Samuel ix. for the precedent of paying a medium for information, and, in this instance, concerning the whereabouts of lost property. The discourse, too long to summarise, was interspersed with natural humour and listened to with rapt attention. The annual New Year's social festival will be held at the Surrey Masonic Hall on Tuesday, December 31st, at 8.30 p.m., and extending into 'the wee short hours ayont the twal.' The programme will comprise songs, games, and dances. Application for tickets (1s. each) to be made to the hon. secretary.—W. P.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications necessarily held over from—W.M.B.; 'Edina'; T. McB.; J.M.F.; S.A.B.; A.F.; 'N.W.'; R.S.P.; and others.

WE are asked to state that the price of Mrs. Alma Gillen's book, 'The Law of Expression,' is one shilling, and not sixpence, as stated in a recent number of 'LIGHT.'