

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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CONTENTS.

"Atheism Philosophically Refuted".....	175	A Convert of Professor Barrett's	182
A Suffolk Witch Story.....	175	Pre-Earthly Existence.....	182
Transcendental Photography.....	177	Was Jesus an Essene?.....	183
"Dawn."—By H. Rider Haggard.....	178	Abstinence from Flesh.....	183
A Religion that will Wear.....	180	Re-incarnation and the Bible.....	183
Mr. Eglinton's Return from Russia.....	181	Strange Case of Mapleton Lefroy.....	184
Death of M. Nicolas Lvoff.....	181	Cradle of the Human Race.....	184
Cheap Religion and "Hades".....	182	"The Seven Souls of Man".....	184

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

I have received from Australia a small pamphlet, *Atheism Philosophically Refuted*, by Hugh Junor Browne, a name very familiar to me in the pages of the *Harbinger of Light*. Mr. Browne makes some good points in argument, as good, I should say, as any one can make in arguing about a subject with which we are all so little acquainted, as we needs must be regarding the nature of God. Atheism, with which he rather unfairly couples Agnosticism, he regards as a revolt against the crudities and absurdities of popular theology.

"There are two phases of Atheism. There is a positive negation, and a milder form that is known by the name of Agnosticism, which is a tacit denial of the existence of God on the ground of no evidence. The latter, which implies almost the same as the former, but is less pronounced, is generally adopted by the timorous because it is not so unpopular as the former. In whichever phase it is considered, Atheism is the natural revolt of enlightened reason against the absurd and contemptible views regarding God and the destiny of man popularly taught in the churches—views which all who are unprejudiced must, if candid, acknowledge are a disgrace to the intelligence of the age in which we live, and which could have found no place in the mind of any sane individual unless his judgment had been warped when young, before he was capable of reasoning."

I am disposed to say myself that I hardly believe in the existence of an Atheist pure and simple: and that I have some sympathy with the Agnostic, who declines to dogmatise about what he does not comprehend, and cannot comprehend in his present state of being, far more than I have with the too rash and presumptuous person who knows so exactly what is and is not in the mind of the Supreme, what He did, and did not purpose in creating us and our world, that he would seem, by his own showing, to have been the coadjutor of the Creator in the act of creation. "The Cosmos admits no miracle but its own creation: no insoluble mystery but the existence of God." True: and to profess ignorance respecting an "insoluble mystery" hardly seems blameworthy. Indeed, in a subsequent part of his essay, Mr. Browne expressly admits this.

"Man, being finite, can only have finite conceptions of the Infinite. He cannot demonstrate to others the existence of God any more than he can solve the problem of infinity, measure the Cause of causation by figures, or fashion the Infinite through words; he can merely state his imperfect conceptions of Deity for the consideration of his fellow men. The mind of each individual being different from all others, owing to varying capacities, experiences, and knowledge, the conceptions regarding God of no two men can absolutely agree. The one who entertains the most reasonable views of Deity, must, however,

be the nearest to the truth; for, although human reason is not infallible, it is the only arbiter between truth and error which we possess, and therefore must be our highest authority. Man's conceptions of God, unless blinded by superstitious prejudice, must, like his conceptions of Nature, advance as increased knowledge is gained, though his highest ideality of Deity must always fall infinitely short of the reality."

The writer's conception of what satisfies him as a Spiritualist is embodied in a passage which will find acceptance with many who regard, from their present standpoint of knowledge, the crude ideas of a bygone age with impatience and distaste, as dishonouring to God, and discreditable to any intelligent man. The development of the idea of God is a very important and illuminative study as a test of the growth of man's mind.

"Pantheism, which is the happy mean between Superstition and Materialism, acknowledges that God is the infinite Soul of universal Nature, not outside and apart from it—the all-sustaining principle pervading all forms of matter and occupying all space—the living power of good personified everywhere, making all things divine through His presence—the Great Spirit, who permeates and controls all things, who is self-existent, yet is dependent on matter in some state for expression, consequently mind and matter are inseparably connected together—the One Existence, who is in and around us, acting through all things, at all times, and in all places, ever changing in the external, but in the internal for ever remaining the same, without increase or diminution—the Supreme Power, who is both personal and impersonal, and who finds expression more perfectly through the human organism than in any of the lower forms of matter, though manifesting in all according to their nature. As an evidence of this One Existence and the unity of purpose in all phenomena, Pantheism points to the correlation and transmutation of forces and to the fact that every form of matter is connected with all other forms, thereby proving that there is a reciprocity of action throughout all Nature."

Mr. Browne writes with modesty as well as with force. After demolishing with ease some absurdities of popular religious belief, he goes on:—

"As has been wisely declared, 'any statement, whether revealed or otherwise, which plainly contradicts ascertained facts of Nature cannot be true or worthy of our acceptance.' Also, 'what is nonsense on a principle of reason can never be sense on a principle of religion.' If I have misstated the case under consideration I am open to correction, the object I have in view being the elucidation of the truth, and not the gaining of victory for the views I hold. I give and ask for no quarter in the cause of truth. Every doubt, I hold, is a prayer to God for more light, and thought is the lever that moves the world."

The *St. James's Gazette* (April 16th) gives publicity to a Suffolk witch story which is worth preserving, if only to show how old beliefs linger in country places with but little difference from those found in the Middle Ages. It is premised that the editor has in his possession "names, dates, *fac-simile* copies of letters," &c. The story itself may be shortly put thus. About thirty years ago a scandal occurred near Ipswich. A farmer and his coachman accused each other of being the father of a certain child, and a good

deal of bad blood was generated. By-and-bye the farmer died, but before his death he gave £100 to a friend, with orders to purchase revenge by means of witchcraft on the ex-coachman, who had married and was settled in Ipswich as a greengrocer. Some years passed before a wise woman could be got, but one (call her Mrs. D.) was at last found. She was to "lay a spite" (a malicious spell, I imagine, not, as the *St. James's* suggests, a "spirit") on the man. However, he could not be got at direct, and so was approached through his wife. To the shop came Mrs. D., ostensibly to make a purchase, really to bewitch the woman by making her swallow some uncanny stuff by means of a kiss! (Surely a funny proceeding. Was the greengrocer's wife on these affectionate terms with all her customers, I wonder?) Be this as it may or may not be, the poor woman, already an out-patient at the hospital for some affection of the knee, now became afflicted with a mysterious sickness. All the doctors in Ipswich failed to cure her, and she was finally taken home to die. This was in March, 1877.

She did not, however, do more than sink into a state of coma; a living death fell upon her. For five years she lived on "sugar, tea, and milk"—of which I should have thought the latter quite sufficient if taken in adequate quantities—and was described in the local papers as the "fasting woman." She could not speak: her mind, as she averred, was "dazed" by the influence of malignant spirits. The doctors could make nothing of her: people generally believed her to be a fraud. Among her visitors, at length, came Mrs. D., who, hoping that she and her husband had now had enough of this bedevilment, suggested that she might recover by transferring the malady to him (as per prior arrangement!), promising her at the same time the farmer's £100. These offers were indignantly rejected. So things went on till last August when Mrs. D., who seems to have felt some remorse for her nefarious deed, addressed a letter to the husband's brother, the essential part of which I transfer from the *St. James's*, where it is printed *verbatim et literatim*.

"The time is geaten near for the poear dear to be released from the great eveal spit [spirit] that shee have bean suffren from this last 10 year and i have sent thes few lins to have you be so kind as to see hear husband and geat him to break it to hear the best he can for the shock will com great to hear poer weak frame i hope you will be so kind and see your brother for shee have bean suffren for his bad deads . . . if the lord do spear hear thear is 100 pounds left for hear and it will not be long if shee is speared but that will never reward hear poear dear for the spit shee have had laid on her ondisserven The caus of me righten to you is because i thout that i could not do it beater only by doing so for if i sent the nuse to him the leater might have caused death to the poear dear for the famly might have read the leater to hear if you should see hear ask hear if shee remambe a woman coming in to ask hear for sune beans witch laid at the winder for sale and that was the time this great spite was laid on hear and i never go to my bead but what i think of the weards she sead wene i asked hear and it was if shee wold like to live or dye and these was the weards, i am hear and i am willing to sirve my hevenle father for he is my gide i pray and i am willing to bear it for his sake, and i beleav shee is a trow good wom poear dear . . . i shall send you or your brother afeu moer lins a day befor the witch leave hear and then i hope every thing will be dune for hear to restoear hear to geat hear beater but never well . . ."

Another letter came on August 16th, giving directions as to the way in which the "poer dear" was to be delivered from her possessing spirit.

"If the Lord spear hear to giet over next Saturday and Sunday shee will be geaten beater but tell your brother that it will hapen at midnight and shaken will last about 10 minits and then after that shee will be very sick and tell him to mak a holl in the earth and close it down and then do the same to hear piler [pillow] shee have laid hear dear head on . . . then

do all he can for the poer dear for hear suffer have bean great. . . ."

More minute instructions still came to the husband on August 21st. The "nuse" was on no account to be told to the sufferer. "There will be about 14 or 15 ours longer and it will be over i May pray give hear sumthing as sone as you can if abeal to take it. . . . From Mrs. D., the wicked woman." Now comes the most extraordinary part of this most astonishing story. I do not venture to alter the exact statement made in the *St. James's Gazette*.

"The 'wicked woman's' predictions were almost exactly fulfilled. At a quarter to eleven that night the sufferer, who had not been told a word as to the symptoms she might expect, was seized with violent shakings, which lasted ten minutes and were followed by sickness. It is believed that the sickness freed her from the mysterious something which she had swallowed ten years before. The husband at once buried it, with the pillow on which the woman had been lying; and from that moment she began to get better. Her speech and strength returned; but for the next month or two she suffered greatly from the 'persecution of evil spirits, in whose power she still was' (this is her own statement)."

How the husband then set to work to exorcise these evil spirits I need not stop to tell. "Not even the witches' caldron in Macbeth contained such 'hell-broth' as this man and his wife brewed for the purpose of exorcising the evil spirit." Knockings, rattlings, rappings resounded on the walls and doors of the room. "These noises were even heard by the neighbours, several of whom have signed a written attestation of the fact" (which does not amount to much, by the way). One by one the spirits went: the process continuing till the 9th of November, when the sounds ceased, and the "poer dear" was left well, but with her legs still paralysed!

"Mrs. D—— is described as 'a very fat full-faced woman,' respectably dressed. From her last letter, dated the 8th of September, it seems that she is now engaged in getting the £100 out of the hands of some one in whose care it was placed. This person will not give it up (so writes Mrs. D—— to the husband), 'becaus the suffer will not give hear consent to have you laid.' However, Mrs. D—— intends to pay the holder of the money 'a vissit, and it shall not be a weakem won,' for, she says, 'i will not give it up till i now sumthing is dune for the poer ondissirven suffer.' Thus there is a deadlock. The 'ondissirven suffer' will not permit her husband (the original intended victim) to be 'laid,' and the money will not be given up until she does. Unless, therefore, Mrs. D—— can 'lay' the obstinate stake-holder nothing can be done."

And now that I have given the salient points of this story, what is one to say to it all? Has the editor been hoaxed? His plain and direct statement that he has facts, names, dates, and *fac-simile* letters in his possession precludes that idea, unless the hoax is a very elaborate one. And I am in a measure prepared to believe that such statements might be made by the Suffolk peasantry with the utmost good faith, from what I know of the way in which such ideas linger on the East coast of England, and in, for instance, Devonshire. The Lincolnshire peasantry are quite prepared to accept such a story as I have told, and have a firm belief in witchcraft and "appearances." But what surprises me is the circumstantial account of how the woman got well in accordance with the wise woman's prediction, of which she had never been told. I am prepared to believe that she would believe herself to be bewitched, and her friends would agree with her: but the other part of the story is incredible. Is it possible, I wonder, that there is at the bottom of such stories some small germ of malign truth? Are all the stories in this and other countries of obsession, bewitching, putting spells on people, and so forth, creations of the imagination, survivals of savage legend?

TRANSCENDENTAL PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE DARK.

M. AKSAKOW'S EXPERIMENTS IN LONDON.

TRANSLATED FROM *Psychische Studien*.*(Continued from page 94).*

M. Aksakow continues:—

"This result being obtained, I announced to the circle that I considered the fact of photography in the dark to be proved, and that I now wished to pass to other experiments; at the same time expressing my wish to institute an experiment in transcendental photography of the sort which had been produced in our host's circle. During a former visit of mine to London, a long time before, I had been at a professional spirit-photographer's, in order to obtain a similar photograph. Being entirely unproficient in photography, I was, of course, unable to assure myself of the genuineness of the phenomenon, yet I was constrained to conclude fraud; for after I had examined the plate presented to me by the photographer beforehand, that I might assure myself that it was quite clean, I did not recognise the plate in the negative which was afterwards handed to me with what purported to be a mediumistic result. It had been pushed behind another plate. I had now the opportunity of instituting an experiment under conditions which, in case of success, would guarantee the genuineness of the phenomenon. Thereupon it was said to me, in the name of the invisible conductors, that they first wished to complete the experiment in the dark by the photographing of a whole form, and then they would endeavour to give me a transcendental photograph of the same form, and lastly the photograph of this same form along with the medium by the magnesium light; and that I should not leave London without having obtained this whole series of photographs. I desired nothing better, and the following séance, the sixth for photography in the dark, was fixed for the 7th July, but this séance had no result; there was not even an exposure. On this occasion I was told that for the next séance I might bring with me a new parcel of plates; their sensitiveness being so delicate that no precautions for guaranteeing the result could be superfluous.

"The seventh séance was fixed for the 12th July. The weather all day was rainy, which gave little hope of success; luckily the séance was appointed for the evening, and at seven o'clock, when we dined with our host, the weather began to clear up, and the moon shone. A very interesting incident now occurred. I must first remark that, with regard to the experiment with the magnesium light, I wished to practise previously the whole process, that in case of non-success we should not have our want of experience to blame. Mindful of our preparations at St. Petersburg, I had brought with me everything necessary, and we intended, after the close of the séance, to photograph one of ourselves by the magnesium light. Towards the end of dinner, during a conversation in which Eglinton was taking a very lively part, he suddenly made a movement, recovered himself, and said:—'How strange, I feel just now a very strong influence.' The conversation went on, but was interrupted by soft raps on the table, by which we were told that the invisible conductors of the experiments had something to communicate to us . . . Conversation was again resumed, but soon Eglinton began to draw back, to rub his eyes, and close them, becoming entranced, and turning to me he said to me under control:—'Victor (the name of the special conductor of the photographic experiments) says that in view of the unfavourable condition of the weather, only just now improving, you should have the séance as late as possible, every minute of delay being in favour of the experiment, for every minute the atmospheric condition improves; therefore occupy your-

selves first with your photographic practice, and have the séance afterwards, as late as possible.'

"We did so. Till ten o'clock we practised photography by the magnesium light; it was not the first attempt, and the result was finally satisfactory. Meanwhile the weather had quite cleared up, and the full moon illuminated the quiet night. At ten o'clock we betook ourselves to the séance. We arranged the focus, lit the red lantern, and put out the gas. From my pouch (which I always brought and took away with me) I took a new parcel of plates, as had been desired on the last occasion, opened it, and drew out two plates, which I marked by writing on the one my name in Russian, on the other '30th June, 1886' (old style). Our host put them into the slide. Eglinton took his place behind the loose window curtains, we put out the light, and formed the chain with our hands. Eglinton began almost immediately to be entranced, breathed heavily, moved uneasily on his chair, but at length composed himself. In the middle of the room appeared a light nearly three to four feet from the floor, and the same distance from me. It approached me; attentively regarding it, I distinguished the lineaments of a broad face encompassed by a veil, illumined by a light from below, seeming to proceed from the hand of this form, which was held before the breast and was likewise veiled; I distinguished, quite plainly, a large black beard. This form, as if hovering in the air, approached each of us, and disappeared in the darkness. Some time afterwards a light again appeared, bluish, soft, proceeding from a point in which this light seemed to be concentrated, and I repeatedly saw the same form, but this time, quite close to it, there moved something white, vividly illumined; I at first took it for a finger, but others remarked, 'It is a flower.' And as the form approached, I saw that it in fact held in its left hand a flower, which it turned to different sides, holding it over the point of light, which seemed to be in the hollow of the right hand, but I could distinguish neither this hand nor the object from which the light proceeded. The light disappeared in a couple of minutes, and the raps sounded.

"The exposure lasted a long time; I counted up to forty. After the lens had been closed, our host reversed the slide (still in the dark) and exposed the other plate. We expected the same form to reappear, but it did not; there were raps; a second exposure of the same duration. When Eglinton came to himself—to which end we lit the gas, opened the door to let in fresh air, and gave him something to drink—we again secluded ourselves, and proceeded to develop the plates by the light of the red lantern. On the last plate was nothing; on the first a dark spot began immediately to appear, and then the outline of the form which we had seen with the flower in its hand became gradually defined. The séance ended at half-past ten. As regards the flower, I must add that after the first exposure, when we were still in the dark, our hostess mentioned to us that she had just received into her hand a flower, which was afterwards found to be a perfectly fresh white lily; probably it was brought by the mysterious operators from the room near, in which there was a bunch of these flowers. It will also be not useless to add that during these strong light-manifestations not even the slightest smell of phosphorous or other odour was perceived.

"On the print (Plate I.), which was prepared by our host, is distinctly seen a broad face, with strong eyebrows, a large straight nose, and a large beard; the forehead and head are covered with a veil hanging down on both sides of the head. In his left hand, the fingers of which are clearly visible, the form holds in front of him a white lily, the whiteness of which comes out vividly from the dark background of the photograph; in the right hand, of which only the thumb

is seen, are held the folds of the wrapping of a small oval body, like an egg; this body served for the point of emanation of the light with which this figure illumined itself, when we saw it. On the background of this photograph, as on the former one,* no other object than the figure is seen. High up in the right corner is my mark in Russian writing, '30th June, 1886.'

"Having thus brought to a successful conclusion my photographic experiments in absolute darkness, I must nevertheless remark that the particular aim with which they were undertaken has not been attained. The photographs obtained by me serve as proof of a very interesting physical fact—the possibility of getting photographic results in complete darkness; but as regards the *fact of materialisation*, it is not proved by these, that is, by my two photographs, for I cannot deny the resemblance between the medium and the form appearing on the photographs—a resemblance confirmed by many to whom the medium is personally known. As to the hand, it is difficult to decide with confidence whether it is a man's hand or a woman's. But it is just this resemblance which, in my view, forms the best guarantee of the genuineness of the phenomenon of photography in the dark (for certainly nothing would have been easier than to avoid this resemblance); but at the same time Dr. von Hartmann will have a right to say that the photograph represents the medium himself, acting in a state of somnambulism, that the wrapping, the beard, the flower are so called 'apports,' and even the photograph in darkness the result of the medium's nerve-force, which, according to Herr von Hartmann, is convertible into any other physical force, and that consequently there is no materialisation.

"When I explained to the guides of the medium the insufficiency of our photographic experiments in this respect, and that a photograph of this sort could only prove *materialisation* if it represented a form having absolutely no resemblance either to the medium or to any of the circle, it was replied that in case of the non-success of the photograph of a materialised form along with the medium by the magnesium light, we might again try in the dark, and that 'they' would attempt to develop a female form. But as the experiment with the magnesium light succeeded perfectly, the necessity for further experiments in the dark did not arise, nor had I time left for them.

"The possibility of photographing in the dark, not only a living form—be that the medium himself, his double, or a materialised form—but also an inanimate object—*e.g.*, a lily, suggested to me that this way of photographing in the dark would be the easiest for obtaining the photograph of the medium himself together with the materialised form, and thus would be absolutely proved the fact which with the magnesium light offers so many difficulties as well for the medium as for the phenomenon. It was thereupon replied that all this could be attempted later, but at present there was the arranged programme of experiments to be gone through with.

"But if my photographs in the dark have not so far obtained the end I had specially in view, they nevertheless offer a new objective and permanent proof of the reality and independence of mediumistic forces. I have myself no professional knowledge of photography, but I understand from specialists that photography in the dark is a practical impossibility, though it can be theoretically explained by the action of the ultra-violet rays of the spectrum, which are invisible to us, but can influence the sensitive plate like the other rays; yet to collect and apply them our physics are incompetent, and therein alone consists the impossibility of the facts in question. Our traducers will certainly refer them,

as every other fact of mediumship, to direct fraud, without troubling themselves to explain how it was carried out; but if only some of them, admitting that I am not myself fraudulent, will indicate wherein the fallacy of the precautions taken by me consists, and where and how under the given conditions the fraud could have been perpetrated, I would accept these indications with sincere recognition, so that another time I might be able to institute and carry through the same experiments with still greater precautions."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The reference to Plate II. will appear in a succeeding number.

REVIEW.

"D A W N."*

In a review† of Mr. Rider Haggard's most powerful work, *She*, it was pointed out that he was fairly well up in some recent psychical literature. That this is so, and that, as was further indicated, his mind is that of a born Mystic, Occultist, Spiritualist,—call it by what name we will,—is again apparent in his more recently published *Dawn*. It is not our business to give any detailed account of this long, in many places, vigorous, and, in all its pages, interesting story. It bears all the marks of imagination and intuition found in the author's other works. It shows the same evidence of constructive ability and of dramatic power. It abounds in sensational situations and in exciting scenes. The same power of vivid description, the same ingenuity in resource, characterise it equally with the works by which Mr. Rider Haggard is so well known. But these various qualities which he uses so skilfully are present in this work in a manner which leads us to suspect that, though most recent in date of publication, it was written before the books with which his name is most widely connected. With this, however, we are not concerned, any more than we are with the course of the story, except in so far as it enables us to bring out the indications of psychical or occult knowledge contained in it.

It is chiefly, and of course, a tale of love, for the author evidently holds, as he makes one of his best characters write, "that happiness has only one key, and that its name is Love: that, amidst all the mutabilities and disillusion of our life, the pure love of a man and woman alone stands firm and beautiful, alone defies change and disappointment: that it is the Heaven-sent salve for all our troubles, the remedy for our mistakes, the magic glass reflecting only what is true and good." This he illustrates by the pure loves of Arthur Heigham and Angela Caresfoot, as well as by the guilty passion of George Caresfoot and Anne Bellamy. One of his aims is by this force of contrast to show how this pure love ennobles, elevates, and refines: how it is on earth a foretaste of that perfect union of congenial souls which death cannot sever, and immortality itself cannot terminate. While so showing with the highest skill, suggestive rather than exhaustive, he shows, too, in vivid and repulsive contrast, how the union of uncongenial souls, with passion for the motive-spring, with no real love, no true harmony of temper, is a very hell of life-long duration, terminated mercifully by death and by death alone unless the law intervenes. The little leaven that leavens the whole lump is absent, and the lump of life is only an unsavoury and unsatisfying mass.

The contrast between these two states is further illustrated by the author's treatment of the occult in connection with these two classes of character. This will be more apparent as we proceed with a short analysis of some scenes in the story. Anne Bellamy, a beautiful fiend, unscrupulous, passionate, enslaved and fascinated by that

* These two remarkable photographs are in the possession of the Editorial Secretary at Leipzig.

* *Dawn*. By H. Rider Haggard. J. and R. Maxwell. 1887.

† "LIGHT," February 26th, 1887.

other fiend, George Caresfoot, dabbles in black magic. She has powers, only slightly hinted at, which have an origin akin to her devilish beauty. She is the mere tool for vilest purposes of the man who has fascinated and ruined her. In the end her mysterious power is turned against herself, and she is shipwrecked by her own devilish arts. She can warn others of impending death; she cannot save herself. She can admire in another the pure soul, the clear-seeing spirit, which she cannot gain for herself. In Angela we have the contrast. Pure as an angel, with piercing intuitions, but with no outward dealing with the occult, she can go straight to the truth without the magical formulæ that Anne Bellamy must use and even then be deceived. Her glimpses of the future are so true, so full of deep spiritual insight, that one wonders how Mr. Haggard got them. There is a scene where these two representatives of the two opposing principles of good and evil are confronted, which is most suggestive in its truth. The bad woman, driven into a corner by the consequences of her sins, had attempted suicide. She had secreted against an emergency a mysterious vial containing a solution of sudden death. She had obtained it from an occult source: it was warranted to kill, and to leave no trace behind. But she had kept it too long, and when at last, after twenty years, she was driven to its use, it paralysed the body, but left the mind intact. There she lay unable to move, the mind still active in what was literally now the "prison house of the body." She had done her best, and with fair success, to ruin Angela, and to blight her life. As the end neared, she had a fancy to see the girl she had so greatly wronged. As their interview closed, and Angela's loving nature had overcome the degraded woman whose life was well-nigh over, Lady Bellamy, awed by her perfect purity of soul, said:—

"Stand so, where the light falls on your face. Shall I tell you what I read there? On your forehead sit resolute power to grasp, and almost measureless capacity to imagine; in your eyes there is a sympathy not to be guessed by beings of a coarser fibre; those eyes could look at Heaven and not be dazzled. Your whole face speaks of a purity and single-mindedness which I can read but cannot understand. Your mind rejects the glittering bubbles that men follow, and seeks the solid truth. Your spirit is in tune with things of light and air; it can float to the extreme heights of our mental atmosphere, and thence can almost gaze into the infinite beyond. Pure, but not cold, thirsting for wider knowledge, and at times breathing the air of a higher world . . . conscious of gifts you do not know how to use, girl, you rise as near to what is Divine as a mortal may."

And then she offers from her own studies in occult lore to put the powers that underlie nature at Angela's command. She herself had found the clues, had stumbled on some hidden secrets, but only the good and pure could penetrate far within the veil. She saw that Angela had all the qualifications necessary for success. Only she must be absolutely devoted to the quest; no earthly passion and no worldly care must disturb the fixed serenity of purpose, nor interfere with the perfect steadiness of aspiration. "Troubled waters reflect a broken image." There must be no divided service, or ruin, sharp and swift, will inevitably follow. Choose between Knowledge and Love! Angela hesitated. Within her were all the instincts that go to make the successful searcher after hidden truth: one who counts the surrender of self and of all earthly interests as nothing. She was ambitious, in the noblest sense of the word; but she was a woman, and she loved with all that intensity of a noble nature into which no taint of earthly passion has ever crept. She hesitated. The temptress was at hand. "I do not ask you to follow fantastic theories—of that I will soon convince you. Shall I show you the semblance of your Arthur and Mrs. Carr (her rival) as they are at this moment?" This coarse suggestion decided her. Not for her any of the vulgar, external, unreal, and illusory presentations of hidden truth. All her aspirations were purely spiritual; her insights and intuitions were not on the

plane of matter. Nor was she sure that the abandonment of her instincts and of her love, in order to attempt to grasp a knowledge that might in the end elude and evade her, was either wise or well. "No: I have chosen. You offer, after years of devotion, to make me *almost like an angel*. The temptation is very great; but I hope, if I can succeed in living a good life, to become *altogether an angel* when I die. Why, then, should I attempt to filch fragments of a knowledge that will one day be all my own, even if it is right to do so?" "I begin to think" (Lady Bellamy rejoined) "that the Great Power Who made us has mixed even His most perfect works with an element of weakness, lest they should soar too high and see too far. The prick of a pin will bring a balloon to earth, and an earthly passion will prevent you from soaring to the clouds. So be it."

Space forbids that we should dwell at any length on many passages that we had marked for notice. We should like, however, to direct our readers to the proof of what we have written respecting the author's knowledge, intuitive we suspect rather than practical, but very possibly both, of the bad and good side of Spiritualism or Occultism. If the story is read with a view to mark the traces of black magic, and dealings with undeveloped spirits, such indications will be found in the character of Anne Bellamy, and especially in scenes and meditations of hers scattered up and down, *e.g.*, on p. 283 (where we have her divining by her magical rites); p. 287 (where she gives a solemn prophetic and true warning of death); p. 312 (where she speculates, on the eve of her own self-inflicted death, on the niche in the future which her spirit will fill).

If we read, on the contrary, to find traces of remarkable insight into the higher aspects of the subject, we shall find them in the pure soul of Angela. Her unsullied spirit is sensible of the ghostly presence of her distant lover (p. 289). Her voice reaches him through space when he is falling under the influence of a woman less pure, more passionate, more earthly, yet not bad, and he hears it as an agonised cry of warning, and is saved (p. 333). Her vision, after recovery from madness (pp. 342 *seq.*), is an embodiment of deep truth and rich imaginative conception, which is in the highest degree beautiful. And, lastly, in her final letter to her lover, when she fears that he is lost to her forever in this world, she rises to conceptions of the eternity of love and of the certainty of reunion in the hereafter which, nobly and grandly true in themselves, are expressed in language so perfectly adapted to its purpose that it is hard to read it without tears (p. 353 *seq.*). We will not spoil the beauty and pathos of that letter by any maimed excerpt that must give but a poor and inadequate idea of the perfect whole. In our opinion, the world, especially our world, is the better for this book.

A CORRECTION.—"E.M." writes: The comma after *Alchemists* in line 12 of my letter of April 16th should be omitted, as I intended to specify the *Alchemists* only as "writing designedly in 'gibberish,'" and not *Jacob Böhme*, whose obscurity was due entirely to his lack of ability to express himself clearly.

KENTISH AND CAMDEN TOWN SOCIETY, 88, FORTRESS-ROAD, KENTISH TOWN, N.W.—On Monday, April 25th, a séance will be held. On Thursday, April 28th, there will be a trance address on "Spiritualism." On Monday, May 2nd, Mrs. Hearn will attend. We give our friends a cordial invitation.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUAL INSTITUTE, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last Mr. Robson occupied the platform, and under control answered a series of questions selected by the audience. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. A. Butcher will give a trance address.—W. E. LONG, 9, Pasley-road, Walworth.

THE LONDON OCCULT LODGE AND ASSOCIATION FOR SPIRITUAL INQUIRY, REGENT HOTEL, 31, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—Last Sunday evening we had a crowded meeting to witness Mr. Price's Mesmeric Demonstrations, which were exceedingly interesting. Next Sunday evening at seven I shall deliver the first of a series of lectures on "Egypt and the Bible," in which I shall criticise some of the views of Mr. Oxley.—F. W. READ, Secretary, 79, Upper Gloucester-place, N.W.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
16, CRAVEN STREET,
CHARING CROSS, W.C.

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Light :

Edited by "M.A. (OXON.);" and E. DAWSON ROGERS.

SATURDAY, APRIL 23rd, 1887.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editors. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable.

A RELIGION THAT WILL WEAR.

The author of *Philochristus* and *Onesimus* has done much to bring home to our minds the realities of the age of the Founder of Christianity. He has given us a series of vivid pictures which have been of the highest value in enabling us to escape from the conventionalities of the present age, and to realise the life of Jesus and His disciples, the cast of their thoughts, the surroundings amid which they were placed. In the present volume,* he takes a new departure. Dedicating his work to "the doubters of this generation and the believers of the next," he sets himself to eliminate from the Christian story the miraculous element altogether, and to show us a non-miraculous Christ. It is an open secret that the man who is so bold as to attempt this is a prominent clergyman of the Established Church; and that, though not technically in active clerical work, or having parochial cure of souls, he is placed in a position of the highest responsibility as Head Master of a great public school. It will be seen, then, that we have moved very considerably away from old ideas of orthodox belief when one of the most able, cultured, and earnest clergymen in the Church of England is not afraid to publish a work of this character.

The book is of the highest interest and importance. Some of its chapters deal with subjects to which we shall recur—Imagination, Reason and Faith: Illusions: Demonstration and Proof: the nature of Spirits: the Spiritual Resurrection—but for the present we content ourselves with giving a general *résumé* of the scope and intention of the work.

It originated in a pathetic incident. The author received a letter from a brother clergyman who was dying of an incurable disease. He had read *Philochristus*, and his state of mind, which he describes as a "reverent Agnosticism," had been a little disturbed by the perusal. "It would comfort my short remainder of life" (he wrote) "if you would come and look me dying in the face and say, 'This theology and Christology of mine is not merely literary. I feel with joy of heart that God is not unknown to man.'" The author went, and the result of the interview with the dying man was that "he urged and almost besought that something might be done soon to give young men a religion that would wear." He attributed his Agnosticism to having "been taught to believe too much when young." The present book is an attempt to fulfil that solemn charge.

* *The Kernel and the Husk*. By the author of *Philochristus* and *Onesimus*. Macmillans.

It is cast in the form of some thirty letters addressed to a young friend whose faith had sustained a severe shock during his first term of University life. He had communicated to the author the state of doubt into which he had fallen; and as a result received these various letters dealing with problems of faith and life in an extremely lucid manner. It is not the author's fault that he leaves some difficulties unsolved even to his own mind; for, as he well says, "If a revelation is to enlarge our conceptions of God, it must involve some spiritual effort on our part to receive the larger truth . . . if it prompts, without enforcing, obedience, it must excite in all some questionings as to the causes which led the Revealer not to make His revelation irresistibly convincing." That various classes of readers will find among the explanations put forward some that are not completely satisfactory goes without saying. It is characteristic of some of the subjects discussed that minds must and will conceive of them differently. The nature of God, and of Spirit; the essentials of Worship; the Spiritual Resurrection, are subjects which no writer can hope so to handle as to leave no room for difference of view. For this reason such a chapter as that on Worship seems to us flimsy and beset throughout with fallacious assumption. But, allowing this, the suggestive value of the book is undeniable. The author begins his task with a personal narrative to show his young friend that he was qualified by what he had himself gone through for the task that he was about to attempt. Left very much to himself as a child, he seems to have nourished himself on such indigestible spiritual food as Adam Clarke's Commentary—this as a boy of ten or eleven! He grew up a crude and narrow evangelical with a creed, such as it was, against which in "healthier moments conscience revolted." The natural reaction set in. There came, happily, a new rector to the parish, and he preached a reasonable scheme of salvation, the centre of which was faith in a "great Leader, human, yet Divine, who was leading the armies of God against the armies of evil." The scales fell from his eyes, and new views of truth began to dawn upon him. The teaching of Frederick Denison Maurice influenced him somewhat. *In Memoriam* influenced him more: "It exercised an epoch-marking influence on my life." At that time he had no special doubts as to miracles. Trenck's argument that the miracles of Christ were "in accordance with some latent law of spiritual nature" satisfied him. Even when he signed the Thirty-nine Articles at Ordination they presented no difficulty to his mind.

About this time people began to talk about Evolution. The author welcomed Darwin's theory "for the new light it threw on the unfathomable problems of waste, death, and conflicts." The theory "made it more easy to believe in a rational, *i.e.*, a non-miraculous, though supernatural Christianity." He was then studying the Gospels analytically, and we have no space to tell the steps by which he arrived at the irresistible conclusion that the evidence for the authenticity of the miracles was insufficient; nay, more, "indicating a very strong probability that they were false." Here was chaos.

"Amid this impending ruin of my old belief I saw one tower standing firm. It was clear that *something* had happened after the death of Christ to make new men of His disciples." . . . "What was this *something*?" Setting himself to find out, he determined to stand yet in the old ways, and to possess his soul in patience, doing the daily duties of his life. His studies led him to the light, which for him has never grown dim again. "Light dawned upon my darkness; and when the sun rose once more upon me, it was the same sun as before, only more clearly seen above the mists of illusion which had before obscured it. The old beliefs came back to me exhibiting Jesus of Nazareth as the Incarnate Son of God, the Eternal Word triumphant

over death." . . . "I think it must be now some ten years since I settled down to the belief that the history of Christianity had been the history of profound religious truth contained in and preserved by illusions : an ascent of worship through illusion to the truth."

This is the man who sets himself out of the storehouse of his own experience and knowledge to meet the objections brought against his position, and to solve the doubts of his sceptical young friend. In so doing he covers a wide area, and deals with some profound problems. We can here but briefly indicate his scope. To some of the problems more especially interesting to our readers we shall hope to recur.

The first of his controversial letters (the third in order) deals with Imagination as the basis of Knowledge : the next with knowledge of mathematical truth. With this, too, as with the first, he ingeniously shows that both Imagination and Faith are much concerned. "I believe" (he writes) "in a perfect circle by Faith. . . . A circle is a reality, perhaps more real than I am myself." We then have a dissertation on Reason : one on the culture of Faith : and an especially valuable and very clear differentiation of Demonstration from Proof : two things so constantly confused. "It is immoral to believe what cannot be proved," his young friend had written. "Perhaps" (he rejoined) "you mean by 'prove,' 'absolutely demonstrate,' and your thesis is that 'it is immoral to believe what cannot be absolutely demonstrated.'" In that case I am obliged to ask you how you can repeat such cant, such a mere parrot cry, with a grave face."

Further we come to a discussion on Illusions in general and Christian Illusions in particular. Illusion permeates all natural religion : the inspired books of the Old Testament exhibit illusions on every page : illusion has been the great means by which Christianity has survived amongst us. Into the long dissertations on Miracles, in which the author entirely disbelieves, though he accepts the "mighty works" of Jesus, we have no space to enter. The analysis by which he shows that these "mighty works" were chiefly, if not wholly, works of faith-healing is searching and masterly. Nor can we do more than indicate the equally powerful disquisition on the evidence for the Resurrection of Christ, nor the steps by which he arrives at the conclusion that it was a spiritual Resurrection, one of the spiritual, not of the natural body.

What is a Spirit? How far is Prayer right and permissible, *e.g.*, for rain, or for the dead? What is Heaven and what is Hell? The nature of Worship; Can natural Christianity commend itself to the masses as the religion of the future?—these and other questions we can but mention to show the wide range over which our author travels. Some points strike a careful reader in the tone and treatment of the subjects handled. There is not in any single page of the book one flippant or irreverent word. In this it differs greatly from the usual run of anti-orthodox writing. Not only are the arguments serious and as far as possible removed from captiousness, but the author's tone throughout, more especially when dealing with the Central Figure of Christianity, is reverent, loving, and tender. There is a letter, too, on the Culture of Faith, full of excellent advice as to the danger of resting in a hard intellectual criticism to the exclusion of all that could be derived from the emotions or the imagination. "You need" (he writes) "some emotional and moral exercise to counterbalance your mental and intellectual training. You are not aware how much of the most valuable knowledge, conviction, certainty—call it what you will, but I mean that kind of moral and spiritual knowledge which is the basis of all right conduct—springs in the main from spiritual and emotional sources."

Only very seldom does the author touch subjects with which we specially deal. He is acquainted evidently with the telepathic theory : once he rather admits the possibility

of "brain-wave sympathy" in effecting a cure at a distance. He is not indisposed to think that the Jewish nation may have had a peculiar gift analogous to what the Scotch possess in second-sight. When the Lord Jesus appeared to St. Paul in a "vision," the author "firmly believes that there was a spiritual act of Jesus simultaneous with the conveyance of the manifestation to the brain of the Apostle," *i.e.*, not wholly, though in some degree, subjective.

There is one very singular passage which leads to the belief that the author in some measure grasps the importance of the age in which we live. He has been speaking of the importance of the work wrought by this thirteenth Apostle, who had never looked on the face of Christ, save in a vision, yet he adds, "In the face of persecutions outside the Church, and discouragements and jealousies inside the Church, he first converted the Roman Empire to the Christian faith : then, fifteen centuries after, reconverted and purified a large section of the Church from mediæval corruptions : and now, as I believe, some nineteen centuries after, is on the point of still further purifying the Church from antique superstition and from modern materialism.*" What shall we say of the mighty vision that originated these stupendous results? Shall we take the view of the modern scientific young man, and lecture the Apostle on the folly of that indiscreet journey to Damascus at noon-tide, when his nerves were a little overwrought after that unpleasant incident of poor Stephen? Shall we say it was all ophthalmia and indigestion—that flash of blinding light, those unforgettable words, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?'—all a mere vision? Is a fact that changed the destinies of Europe to be put aside with the epithet 'mere'? Would not even a materialist stonemason recognise that a vision which built St. Peter's and St. Paul's is of some tangible importance?"

MR. EGLINTON.

Mr. Eglinton, after a long series of highly successful séances in St. Petersburg and Moscow, has returned to London, bringing with him many handsome and valuable souvenirs as evidence of the great interest which was taken in his work in Russia. We have already informed our readers of Mr. Eglinton's approaching marriage, and are now able to add that the ceremony, which will be quite private, will take place by special license on Thursday next, the 28th inst. We are sure that Mr. and Mrs. Eglinton will have the hearty and sincere wishes of a multitude of friends for their future welfare and happiness.

THE HERMETIC SOCIETY.—We are requested to state that owing to the prolonged illness of the President—Dr. Anna Kingsford—and the consequent continued absence from England both of the President and of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Edward Maitland, the opening of this year's session has been postponed until further notice.

DEATH OF M. NICOLAS LVOFF.—We regret to announce the death, on the 8th inst., of M. Nicolas Lvoff, of Moscow, at the early age of fifty-two. The deceased gentleman had been a Spiritualist for more than twenty years, and was one of the pioneers of Spiritualism in Russia. For many years past he had generously used his large fortune to promote the cause in his own country; and it was mainly to his influence that M. Bredif, the French medium, and Mr. Eglinton were enabled to visit Russia. The deceased, who occupied a leading position in Moscow society, is mourned by a large circle of acquaintances, and his loss is more deeply felt by the Moscow Society of Spiritualists, of which he was President, and the members of which had learned to love him for his many inestimable qualities.

* The italics are ours.

CHEAP RELIGION AND "HADES."

Perhaps no more significant evidence of the decay of all true religion in this country could be produced than that furnished by a considerable portion of the cheap religious Press.

For buffoonery larded over with an air of sanctimony few things can surpass the utterances of such specimens of the pulpit mountebank, as are some of the teachers and expositors whom the *Christian Globe*, *Christian Commonwealth*, and their congeners delight to honour. One feels more respect for the jeers of the "Freethinker" than for the coarse similes and fatuous rhetoric of these men, and if religion be of any importance to a nation, the outlook must be a bad one when such prophets are honoured both in and out of their own country.

In curious contrast to these papers, which have a singular habit of putting the adjective "Christian" before their names, is the *Church Times*. This, which is one of the organs of extreme Ritualism, is almost entirely taken up with letters about banners and so forth, and disquisitions on the Eucharist. Naturally it is scholarly and cultured, and to a student of the occult deeply interesting, as the physical as well as the moral effects of the Eucharist are curiously insisted on; nevertheless we cannot help feeling that, even here, form is of more importance than reality. The ceremony is there, but the spirit of it is lacking or misunderstood.

The "penny Christian (!) dreadful" is a thing worse than the "penny dreadful" of the ordinary world, which, by-the-way, it imitates sometimes in having a column devoted to answers to correspondents. Here supernal knowledge is triumphant, and the mysteries of life, death, heaven, and hell are an open book. It would perhaps be as well, though, for these Whiteleys of divinity to let the unseen alone, as the following extracts from the correspondence column of the *Christian Million* seem to show:—

"G. D." (Matlock Bridge) says: "I do not think we have any Scripture that informs us how the disembodied spirits are employed, but from Rev. vi. 9, 10, it does appear that they are conscious of what is taking place."

* * * * *

This same correspondent offers an explanation of our Lord's descent into Hades. She thinks that even the worthiest of the Jews, though they knew that God accepted their obedient offering of sacrifices, died without any clear perception of how they were saved. The spirits of these just ones had been gathered together in Hades against our Lord's coming thither, and He then "told all His waiting people how the types and shadows of the Old Testament Scriptures pointed to Himself, and how He had fulfilled them; and although the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins, yet as the saints had obeyed God in offering them they were justified through His blood which He had poured out."

This lady further adds: "So when the Lord's Spirit came out of Hades, the spirits of all His saints came out with Him; and when He ascended into Heaven they ascended with Him. There is therefore now no Hades, but the spirits of the dead who die in Christ go direct to Heaven, and are united to those who have gone before to be happy in His presence (for St. Paul says to depart and be with Christ is far better than remaining in the body), waiting to be united to the bodies when our Saviour shall come the second time."

This brings out the correspondence editor, who says:—

I have given this letter my best attention, and will mention a few of the thoughts which occur to my mind in reference to it. "G. D." offers no explanation concerning the spirits of the Old Testament saints during the forty days between our Saviour's resurrection and His ascension into Heaven. Again, I cannot think that those once admitted—say, in the hour of death—to the full blessedness of Heaven will be called from their happy home for any purpose. And once more, the cry of the souls beneath the altar (Rev. vi. 9, 10), a cry for the destruction of those persecuting the Church on earth, I can hardly consider to proceed from those who had entered upon the full and complete blessedness of the saints' everlasting rest.

Comment is needless.

II.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is desirable that letters to the Editor should be signed by the writers. In any case name and address must be confidentially given. It is essential that letters should not occupy more than half a column of space, as a rule. Letters extending over more than a column are likely to be delayed. In exceptional cases correspondents are urgently requested to be as brief as is consistent with clearness.]

A Convert of Professor Barrett's.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I cannot help giving you an incident of which you will see the humour no doubt in view of Professor Barrett's position in the Society for Psychical Research.

I crossed to Liverpool in the "Sardinian" with the Professor and about 100 members of the British Association as fellow passengers. The Professor favoured us with a lecture one evening in the saloon on psychical subjects, giving a *résumé* of the efforts made to investigate. Up to that time I gave no thought to such subjects, believing that the sunlight of common sense, if allowed to assert itself, would scatter such shadows from any brain.

But, sir, you will be pleased to hear that the Professor's lecture led me to see that I had a hidden power hitherto unknown, and the result is that I have been developed in several phases of mediumship, and am pleased to know I have been of much assistance to numbers who are investigating psychical subjects. A man in middle life, I am to-day indebted to Professor Barrett for having called my attention to these matters two years ago, though the Professor has little idea of the good work of which he has unconsciously been made the instrument. Your good paper is a welcome weekly visitor, and, as I much prefer its tone to that of any other exponent of Spiritualism, I shall do what in me lies to promote its circulation.—Yours faithfully,

Truro, Nova Scotia.

JOHN M. HOCKIN.

April 1st, 1887.

Pre-Earthly Existence.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In reading the very deeply interesting and instructive address of Mr. W. Paice, "Whence and Whither," the correspondence of A. J. Penny, "Have Animals Souls?" and that by Mr. G. D. Haughton, "Liberated Spirits," in your paper of March 19th, I was much surprised at the confidence expressed in the probability of the human race having had an existence of some kind prior to their birth into this world.

Before, however, offering any remarks upon this subject, I will preface what I have to say with two quotations from the Bible: "Canst thou by searching find out God?"; "It is appointed unto men *once* to die."

If there is any truth at all in these statements (and I do not see any reason to suppose that the writers were not inspired, or that they had not received special instruction from the Spirit to write what they have said), there cannot be any foundation for this theory.

Were it true, it might reasonably be supposed that from the many millions of persons who have lived and died upon this earth, some kind of experience of a previous state of existence would have been given, if that state was to have been a benefit or help to this state.

It seems to me quite outside of and beyond science of any kind to solve such a problem. Depend upon it, science will not help us at all to find out the deep and secret purposes of God; it is to the humble-minded that the Spirit imparts instruction. Again, if we had a previous existence lower than humanity, we must have come within the category of necessary agents.

Take the visible part of creation, and it will be seen that the will of God is accomplished by two different kinds of agents, the one necessary agents, the other moral agents.

Necessary agents perform the will of their Creator necessarily, by an exercise of His own power operating in them, and continuing uniform and equal as they were at first put into action by Him, and, therefore, would not require purification to fit them for another state. Moral agents, on the contrary, were formed to accomplish the will of their Creator, not by any exercise of His power acting in them in the way of impulse, but by their own free, spontaneous, and affectionate co-operation in His designs—and how short-coming we have been requires not my pen to describe: here the necessity for our purification, before or after dying unto this state, in order that we may be

fitted for that future state where nothing unclean or unholy shall enter.

I will now tell you what the Spirit saith—being very anxious to learn the truth of the matter. I, a few evenings ago, put numerous questions to my guide in reference thereto, and was positively assured that there was not any truth whatever in the theory—mankind had not a previous existence of any sort; and upon this I was told to be candid for Holy angels were guiding me.

Last evening (April 5th) I had the privilege of holding converse with Beusiris, the Ancient of Days, and he also said that this theory was untrue; we have not had a prior existence to this our earthly one.

Touching upon the subject, "Have Animals Souls?" I inquired if there were dogs in Heaven (for it was about dogs that this article treated), and I was answered, "Yes!" I then asked if they were the spirits or souls of dogs that had lived upon this earth, and I was emphatically answered, "No!"

W. H. R.

[It is a matter of common experience with Spiritualists who have long studied the subject that a preconceived opinion rooted in the mind will find a responsive echo through almost any medium. Problems of the kind to which our correspondent refers are not to be solved by the opinion of any spirit, whatever he may profess to be.—Eds.]

Was Jesus an Essene?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have to thank an anonymous critic for a kind review of my work, *Buddhism in Christendom*, in your columns. I have to thank also "M.A. (Oxon.);" and Dr. Wyld for their sympathetic remarks. The latter writer contends, however, that it can be proved from certain passages in the New Testament that Jesu was not an Essene.

In my work I say the same thing. There are many texts that prove Him to have belonged to that section. There are others, inserted, and I think intentionally inserted, to induce an opposite conclusion. Which were the earliest?

To simplify matters, let us first put aside the individual opinions of Christ and take up the more general question, Did Christianity emerge from the dominant or anti-mystical Judaism? or from Essenism or mystical Judaism? If we consider the crucial evidence of rites, but one answer seems possible. The rites of the Essenes were baptism and the bloodless oblation. The earliest rites of Christianity were baptism and the bloodless oblation. This latter phrase occurs in all the early rituals.

This brings us to Christ. To which of the two great sections of Israel did He belong? Dr. Lightfoot, to whom Dr. Wyld seems to bow as an authority, answers this without any hesitation. He declares that Christ was a partisan of anti-mystical Israel. He further holds that, according to Christian teaching, "mysticism," or a belief that there can be any intercourse between the seen and the unseen worlds, is a "shadowy" thing; that "Gnosticism," which was the word selected in those days to denote interior or spiritual knowledge, was a "heresy," a "monstrous development," and so on. If Christ was a disciple of dominant Israel all this is a corollary, for a prophet in the old law could only utter that which the priests approved of. They were the sole judges in controversy; and death was the penalty if they disapproved.

But it seems to me that if we accept these premises of Dr. Lightfoot, we must carry his conclusions to lengths little dreamt of by their author. If Christ came down on earth to perpetuate every jot and tittle of the law as interpreted, as the doctor holds, by the dominant party, then almost every incident of Christ's life, as recorded in the Gospels, must be a fiction. He could never have conformed to Essene rites on the matter of baptism and the bloodless oblation. He could never have been condemned to death by the Sanhedrim. He could never have set up as a reformer. He could never have preached and taught. It is all very well to call the leaders of dominant Israel blind guides. The Jewish law made them sole judges on all these questions, and prophets were stoned.

The reasons that have induced me to believe that our Gospels have been tampered with cannot be set forth in a short letter. One prominent fact may be mentioned. At the date of Irenæus and Pope Victor the Church of Rome was assailing two adversaries, the "Essene-Ebionite" Church of Jerusalem, as Dr. Lightfoot calls it, and the Marcionites. The first represented the teaching of James and Peter, and the second the

disciples of Paul. In the previous century these sections had bitterly opposed each other. And yet what do we find? At the date of Irenæus both are still gnostics and mystics, and both used water and not wine at the communion. What is the inference? Plainly the Gospel of the Hebrews, which was in the hands of one, and the Gospel according to Luke which was the Gospel of the other, could not have then contained the passages which represented Christ as belonging to anti-mystical Israel, and enjoined the use of wine in the Communion.

ARTHUR LILLIE.

"An Abstainer from Flesh for Conscience' Sake."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Your correspondent who signs as above in last week's "LIGHT" accuses me of "reiterated endeavour to make Jesus a flesh-eater," but why he should say so I do not know, as I have no recollection of having often done so in print.

That Jesus did occasionally partake of other animal food as well as of fish is at least most probable, from His habit of sitting down to meat with sinners and from His denunciation of those Pharisees who laid stress on the spiritual efficacy of certain modes of eating; and I think the rigid vegetarians sometimes make this Pharisaical mistake. For myself, my instincts are all in favour of a non-flesh diet, but I have not found that my rigid vegetarian friends are physically, morally, or intellectually better than those of my friends who are temperate in all things.

When President of the Theosophical Society, I, for one year, was almost an entire abstainer from the flesh of animals, but I much regret to say that I did not find myself to be so good and infallible, in consequence, as I hoped to be; nor do I find that the inhabitants of the tropics, who live on rice and fruit, are more truthful and moral than the Esquimaux, who live on blubber; or that grass-eating sheep are of a higher nature than insect-eating birds.

I am sometimes rather surprised that those of my *Occult* friends who are *rigid* vegetarians fail to see that the "initiated," that is, those who are "in the spirit," and who can thus "convert stones into bread," logically cannot be injured by animal food. But I again repeat that all my instincts are in favour of a non-flesh diet, and that it seems to me a terrible thing that we should eat the bodies of slaughtered animals.

Your correspondent seems to imply that I am a worshipper of an historic personage, while he has "Christ in his heart," but it seems to me that intolerant vegetarians are somewhat idolatrous in their worship of certain forms of food.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

Re-incarnation and the Bible.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—With regard to the argument against Re-incarnation, from the absence of direct statements on the subject in the Bible, I should like to refer Mr. Haughton to the book entitled *Laux Orientalis*, &c., of the celebrated Joseph Glanvil. The following passage is rather long, but perhaps you may find space for it:—

"Few speculative truths are delivered in Scripture, but such as were called forth by the controversies of those times. And Pre-existence was none of them, it being the constant opinion of the Jews, as appears by that question, 'Master, was it for this man's sin or his father's, that he was born blind?' which supposed it of the Disciples also. Wherefore there was little need of more teaching of that, which those times were sufficiently instructed in. And, indeed, as the case stands, if Scripture-silence be argumentative, 'twill be for the advantage of Pre-existence; since it being the then common opinion, and the Disciples themselves being of that belief, 'tis very likely, had it been an error, that our Saviour or His Apostles would have been witnesses against it. . . . Now that Pre-existence was the common opinion of the Jews in those times might be made good with full and convictive evidence . . . but . . . a brief touch of it will suffice us. One of the great Rabbins, therefore, Mr. Ben Israel, in his Problems *De Creatione*, assures us that Pre-existence was the common belief of all wise men among the Jews, without exception. And the author of the Book of *Wisdom*, who certainly was a Jew, probably Philo, plainly supposeth the same doctrine in that speech:—'For I was a witty child, and had a good spirit, wherefore the rather being good, I came into a body undefiled.' As also did the Disciples in their fore-mentioned question to our Saviour; for except they supposed that he might have sinned before he was born, the question had been senseless and impertinent. Again, when Christ asks them, whom men said he was, they answered, that some said John the Baptist, others Elias, others Jeremias or one of the prophets, which sayings of their's suppose a belief of a metempsychosis and consequently of Pre-existence. These,

one would think, were very proper occasions for our Saviour to have rectified his mistaken followers, had their supposition been an error, as he was wont to do in cases not more considerable. Therefore, if the enemies of Pre-existence will needs urge Scripture's supposed silence against it, they have no reason to take it amiss if I show them how their argument recoils upon themselves, and destroy their own cause, instead of their adversaries." (Chapter IV.)

What other "full and convictive evidence" of the current belief on this subject among the Jews of that time there may be,* I must leave others more learned than myself to inform us; but it is easy to see how the doctrine of Pre-existence and Metempsychosis, if really prevalent in the Rabbinical schools, became lost or suppressed in the Roman world of Christianity, and hence in the subsequent history of the religion, though the opinion has not been without defenders among learned divines of different times. I rejoice to find it so ably represented by your powerful and accomplished correspondent "E. M."

C. C. M.

The "Strange Case" of Mapleton Lefroy.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The psychological phenomena presented in this case appear to me susceptible of an explanation other than that Lefroy was simply a medium under obsession of some extraneous spirit. This is, that the "third man," by whom he evidently was haunted, was no other than one of his own former astral selves, most probably that which had been evolved by him in his last previous incarnation, and which had been shed, therefore, at his last previous dissolution.

Summarising the various intimations clairvoyantly received concerning Lefroy—some of them prior and some subsequent to his execution—which have come under my cognisance, I find his history indicated as follows:—

1. He was a murderer, not only in his last life but in previous lives, being so through a radical defect of character, due either to his having receded from his true human grade, or to his having never fully reached that grade, the human form having been attained by him before putting off the character of carnivore. This theory is supported by the fact that in one of the views obtained of him as he was at the time of the murder, his external form only was that of a human being and his interior personality that of a tiger, which would hardly have been the case had he not been either a tiger in process of becoming a man, or a man in process of degenerating into a tiger; perhaps in a future incarnation to assume that form.

2. Having been, for murder or murders committed in his previous life, compelled to close that life by a premature and violent death, not only was his astral envelope necessarily full of vigour at the time of his death, but he himself was under compulsion again to re-incarnate after an interval too brief to allow of his astral being sufficiently attenuated and weakened to be powerless to affect him. Hence, on re-entering into life on the last occasion, after a sojourn in the purgatorial sphere all too short for his soul's needs, he found himself confronted by his own bad past in the shape of this still-animated and energetic relic of himself, and able to resist and escape it only by the steadfast renunciation of his past tendencies, and cultivation of those of a contrary character. This, however, he failed to accomplish, and repeated in his last life the faults of his previous one, by encouraging precisely the dispositions which had before brought him to grief, and his indulgences in which gave his astral power over him. By doing this he attracted the phantom to him and re-inforced its vitality and power, until from being—as befits a phantom—but a faint, feeble, and decaying reflect of his past, it became his master, stronger in instigation than he in resistance, and under its promptings he once more became a murderer.

It was, thus, not the man's *double*, properly so-called, that appeared to him as the "third man" who impelled him to his crime. Detached from his double he would have lacked the physical force wherewith to make the requisite effort, since the withdrawal of the double leaves the subject in a state of exhaustion and collapse. Nor was it the astral itself that committed the crime, since the astral of itself has no physical force and can but influence the mind. The criminal was the man himself under impulsion of his former astral self, which he had discerned as separate from himself, and therefore took

* Glanvil's Annotator adds:—"That this was the common opinion of the wiser men among the Jews, R. Menasse Ben Israel himself told me in London with great freedom and assurance, and that there was a constant tradition thereof."

to be a "third man" but failed to recognise as his own former self.

According to *The Perfect Way* (Appendix II.), "a soul may have as many of these former selves in the astral sphere as a man may have changes of raiment."

E. M.

The Cradle of the Human Race.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I do not know whether any one has noticed the remarkable book by Professor Warren, *Paradise and Cradle of the Human Race found at the North Pole*. It is replete with learning of the true kind and gives the key to all the ancient myths about the origin of man. It seems to me to harmonise all of them with the modern discoveries of science and with what there is of truth in the theories of scientists. I should like to commend this book to your readers who are interested in the subject, but may have been repelled by the apparently incredible fact announced in its title. Fact, however, it is proved to be—that the climate of the Polar continent which then existed, and is now submerged, was at one time of a tropical nature when the axis of the earth was perpendicular (not oblique as now); and there began the human race in the region of perpetual light where the year is one day (of ten months) and one night (of two months).—Yours faithfully,

I. O.

"The Seven Souls of Man."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In a critical notice, last week, of Mr. Gerald Massey's lecture on "The Seven Souls of Man," the writer says:—"Into the author's learned argument it would not be for the advantage of our readers that we should follow him." This is treating your readers in a manner unnecessarily tender and grandmotherly; some of us can run alone and can form our own opinions on occasion; and it is hardly fair to the writer criticised. Neither is it quite seemly in a "journal of psychical, occult, and mystical research" to say in reference to some psychic experience of Mr. Gerald Massey which you quote—"Into these high mysteries we do not seek to pry."

Mr. Massey has, as you say, a "whole-souled belief in Spiritualism," and, however opinions may differ on the tendency of his works, there can be no question that he has been, and is, an able, laborious, and devoted worker in departments of research which are of the highest interest and value to mankind, and should be especially so to Spiritualists. He deserves, therefore, more consideration from you than to be weighed in level scales with a Mr. Coleman, whose claims are not obvious, and who seems to have attacked and misrepresented Mr. Massey in a form and manner in nowise commendable.

April 18th, 1887.

R. H.

[We thought a review over a column in length ample notice of a small pamphlet, and desired to introduce the subject generally to our readers. The passage quoted by "R. H." was not intended to refer to the experience to which he refers it, but to the "illusions" spoken of before the quotation.—Eds.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Many letters are unavoidably left over from want of space.

MR. GEORGE FORSTER, 39, Blake Town, Seghill, Northumberland, desires to acknowledge the receipt of £1 from A. H. S. on behalf of the distressed Northumberland miners.

We have received the first number of a small publication, *Light on the Way* (Dover: Mass., U.S.A.), which starts with a large programme. "Believing that spirit-communion has been established beyond all controversy, it will not attempt to argue on the subject but will be content to simply announce immortality, and to present telegraphic communications received from the spirit-world!" It will "not seek to stir up strife in the ranks of Spiritualism, but will attempt to harmonise all discordant elements." Ah! there is a wide sphere of usefulness there. But the opening article, which is a hardly veiled defence or even advocacy of the foulest plague spot that ever fastened on Spiritualism in America, is not very promising.

An indifference to this knowledge of invisible things, or a premature despair of attaining to it, may be accounted an indication of some normal or intellectual deficiency—some scantiness of one proportion of mind.—HALLAM.

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PLATO'S MEDITATION ON IMMORTALITY.

(Born 429—Died 347, B.C.)

"It must be so: Plato, thou reasonest well;
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after Immortality?
Or whence this secret dread and inward horror
Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the Soul
Back on itself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis Heaven itself that points out hereafter
And intimates eternity to man."

—ADDISON.



PLATO MEDITATING BEFORE THE BUTTERFLY, SKULL, AND POPPY.

(The portrait of Plato is copied from an exquisite gem of high antiquity in the British Museum.)

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Mr. ENO.—Dear Sir,—I suffered severely for three months, consulted three eminent Medical men, and had three changes of air without any good result; my Liver and Digestive Organs felt as if they had ceased to act; my Stomach was distended with flatulence (wind), that every part of the body was afflicted. My head at night seemed to hear a hundred bells ringing. I was compelled to be propped up in bed; I got very little sleep, for the severe pain under my shoulders and on my left side produced a restlessness not easily described; in a word, prior to using your "Vegetable Moto" my Nervous System was out of order, rendering life a burden to myself and all near me; I felt there was a very short span between my life and the end of the chapter. Five weeks ago I tried your "Vegetable Moto," after three days I was able to take sufficient food to support nature, sleep gradually returned, and my health assumed its usual condition; I continued the "Motos" five weeks. I can only express my gratitude by saying, make what use you like of this.—Yours, &c., TRUTH. London, 1886.

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To J. C. ENO.—Sir,—For several years I was troubled with a severe Dyspeptic, Bronchial disturbance, causing shortness of breath, particularly in the morning. I took many cough remedies, but they, in fact, only aggravated the irritation in the stomach. At length I tried your "Vegetable Moto," and after a few doses found all the bad symptoms leaving me as if by magic; the "Moto," by its tonic action, had evidently found the source of the disorder, and I can assert it is the finest remedy I ever had, its effect being so lasting, yet so mild, and if I wish to hasten its action have only to take a small draught of ENO'S FRUIT SALT. An occasional dose of the "Moto" is all that I now require, but I would not be without a supply of it on any consideration.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully, VERITAS. Asylum Road, Old Kent Road, S.E., Feb. 7, 1887.

BILIOUSNESS, SICK-HEADACHE.

A GENTLEMAN writes:—The "Motos" are of great value. I have suffered from Biliousness, &c., for upwards of forty years; I have taken ENO'S FRUIT SALT for upwards of twelve years, the "Motos" about two; I have never known them fail. There is nothing drastic or any discomfort in using them.—X. Y. Z. 1887.

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